



CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS READY-MADE APPARELS

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Abstract

Clothing consists of many ready-made apparels of various type and quality. As the availability of ready-made apparels is very huge and everyday there are hundreds of new products that are coming to the market, this makes the consumer confused in the selection of clothes for end use. This is not a problem for illiterate people only, as it is a problem of literate consumers as well. Problem is not related with selection of correct apparel but also with care of them, knowledge of symbols and ability to understand the care labels. Consumers were selected to know their awareness while selecting ready-made apparels, factors they keep in mind while selecting the apparels, knowledge about care symbols and care labels etc. Consumer awareness was felt very useful and was assessed as the basic criterion for choice of apparels.

Introduction

Those who purchase for the purpose of individual or household consumption are called consumers. While buying a product consumer look some specific qualities in that particular product. Consumer must get what he is looking for or desires and for that he would pay. A supplier needs to provide the product according to the satisfaction of the consumer. Consumer is not aware about the quality of ready-made apparel as he is supposed to get. Consumers are not well organized as they are largest group and essential segments in country and it leads to unawares and also delay in complaints disposal in consumer courts. It is important to bring awareness among the consumers (Frings et al., 2005)

Clothing along with food shelter has been recognized as one of the basic necessities of every individual and it fulfills many of his physical, social, psychological, emotional, aesthetic and economical needs. Changing life styles, technological development in textiles and international trade have brought about changes in the clothing preferences of the present day consumers. Consumers with the same needs may want different clothes depending upon their cultural background, age, socio-economic status and personality (Sumanthi 2005). The consumer tends to prefer clothing that is aesthetically attractive, socially acceptable, physically comfortable, psychologically gratifying, economically obtainable and at the same time easily maintained. Factors that could influence consumers clothing preferences are breathability, flexibility, lightweight, greater comfort and easy maintenance. Climatic conditions, geographical differences, activities, interests and opinions influence clothing practices and preferences. The main source of clothing is by outright purchase of readymade apparels.

Need for the Study

As clothing consists of many ready-made apparels of various type and quality. In this area consumer needs to make a right selection for end use among various prevailing varieties and hundreds of new products more coming to market every-day. There is lack of consumer awareness regarding ready-made apparels i.e. fabric identification, care of apparels, quality of product etc. (Paneerselvam 2007) Hence it is extremely important and urgent to educate and create awareness among consumers. Moreover, in developing countries this is a topic of prime importance.

Methodology

To know about the level of awareness in consumers for ready-made apparels, a survey was done by in-depth structured interview. Bhiwani city in Bhiwani district of Haryana was selected for this study. Two hundred women consumers were interviewed to draw data from all parts of the selected areas using the prepared interview schedule. Survey was conducted by using closed end questions. First part of the schedule was framed to gain information about socio-economic profile of the consumers and second part contained purchasing habits of the consumers. Face- to face in- home survey method was used to elicit information from the selected home makers for this study.

Results

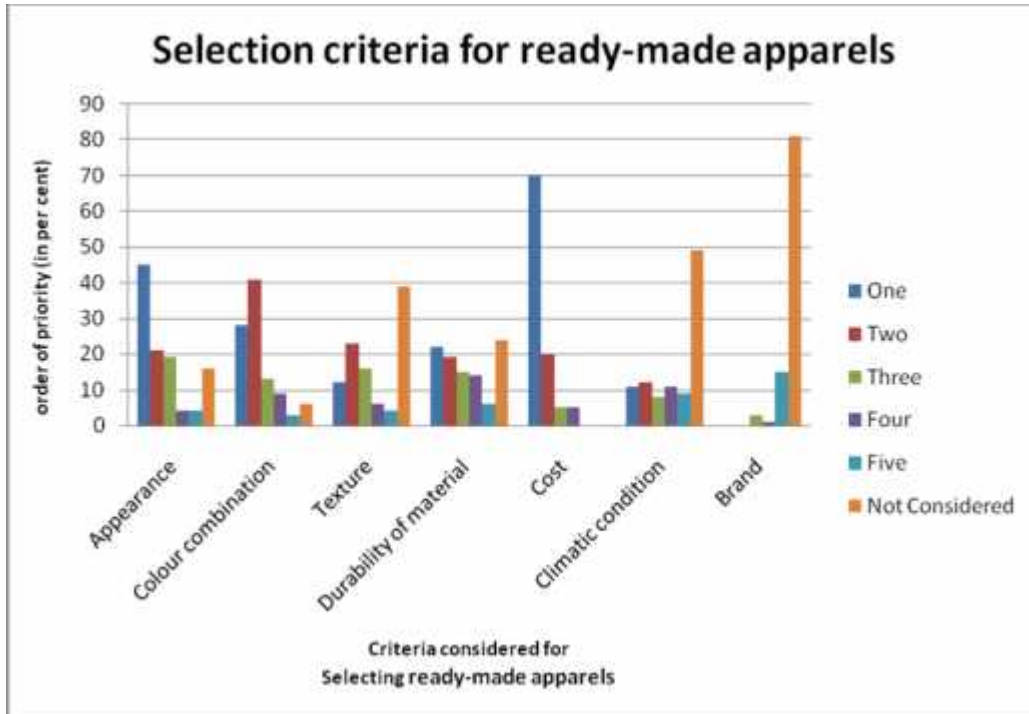
1. Socio-Economic Profile of the Selected Respondents

From the survey it was clearly evident that 52 per cent of the 200 selected subjects were housewives and living in as nuclear family by 74 per cent. Size of the family was 2-4 members by seventy per cent. Ninety four per cent were above 18 years of age and 35 per cent of them are first child in their families. Thirty nine per cent of them were postgraduates or professional degree holders but 59 per cent were unemployed. Fifty per cent of the respondent's economic status was high income group and are involved in moderate work by 56 per cent.



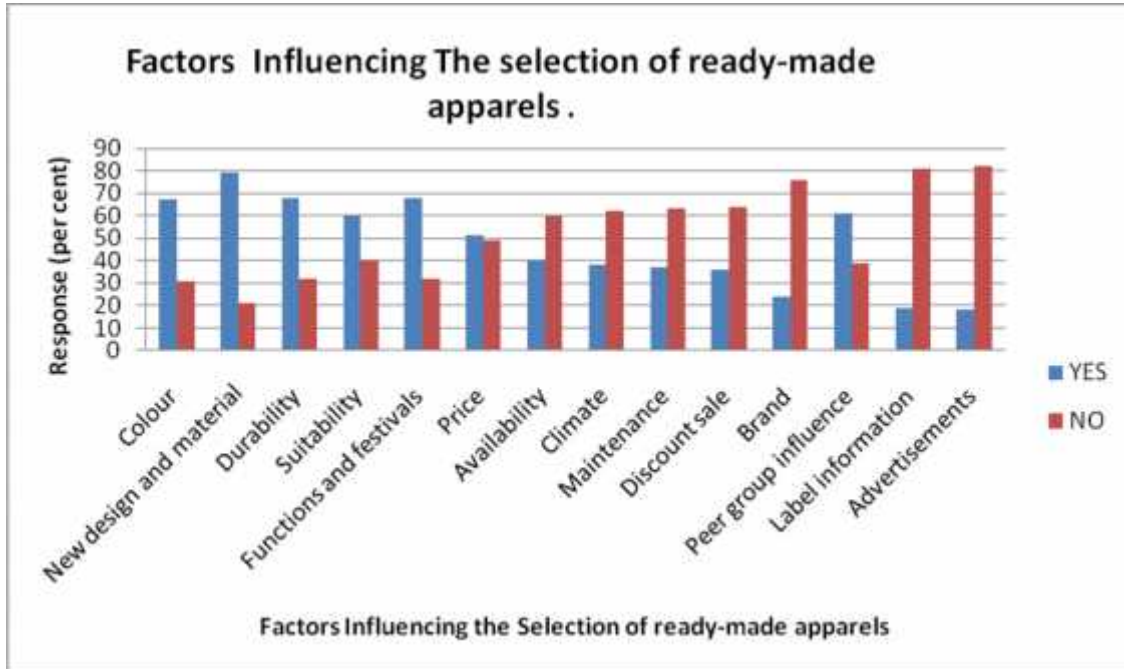
2. Selection Criteria for Ready-Made Apparels

S. No.	Criteria considered for Selecting ready-made apparels	(N=200) order of priority (in per cent)					
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Not Considered
1	Appearance	45	21	19	4	4	16
2	Colour combination	28	41	13	9	3	6
3	Texture	12	23	16	6	4	39
4	Durability of material	22	19	15	14	6	24
5	Cost	70	20	5	5	0	0
6	Climatic condition	11	12	8	11	9	49
7	Brand	0	0	3	1	15	81



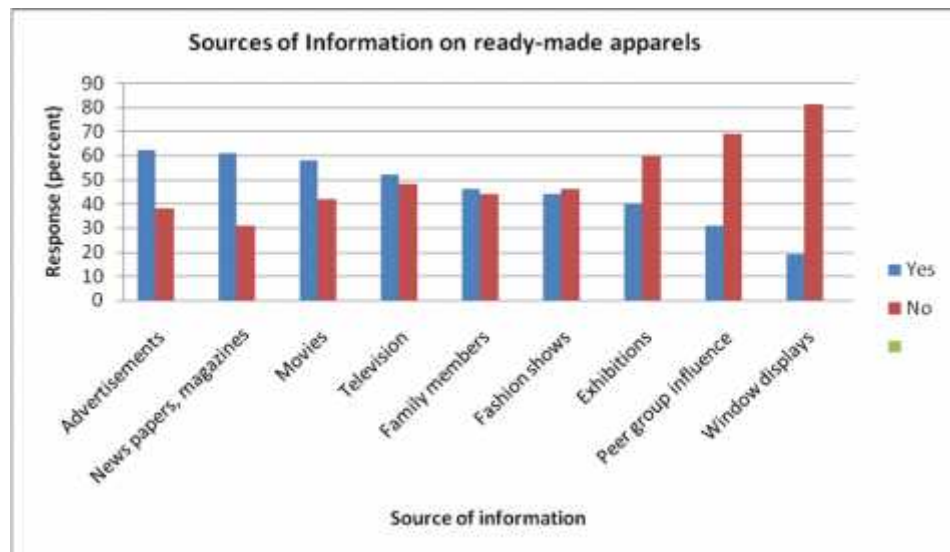
3. Factors Influencing the Selection of Ready-Made Apparels

S. No	Factors Influencing the Selection of ready-made apparels	(N=200) Response (per cent)	
		Yes	No
1	Colour	67	31
2	New design and material	79	21
3	Durability	68	32
4	Suitability	60	40
5	Functions and festivals	68	32
6	Price	51	49
7	Availability	40	60
8	Climate	38	62
9	Maintenance	37	63
10	Discount sale	36	64
11	Brand	24	76
12	Peer group influence	61	39
13	Label information	19	81
14	Advertisements	18	82



3. Sources of Information on ready-made apparels

S. No	Source of information	(N=200) Response (percentage)	
		Yes	No
1	Advertisements	62	38
2	News papers, magazines	61	31
3	Movies	58	42
4	Television	52	48
5	Family members	46	44
6	Fashion shows	44	46
7	Exhibitions	40	60
8	Peer group influence	31	69
9	Window displays	19	81



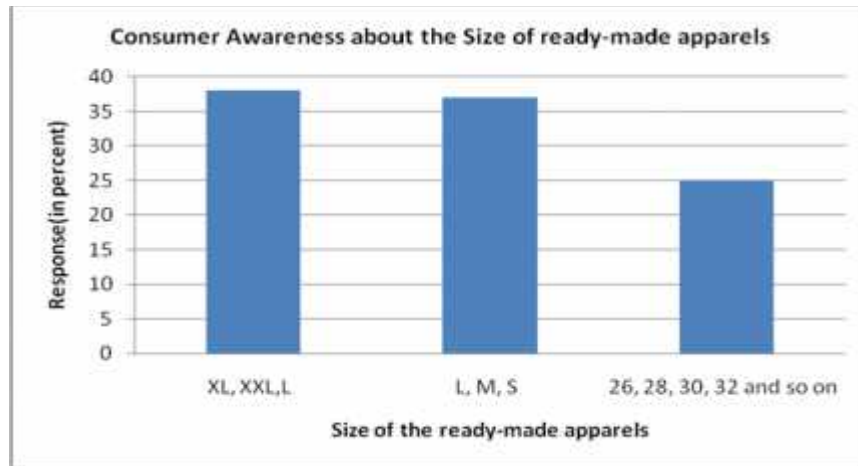


4. Consumer Awareness about the Size of ready-made apparels

Do you check the size of the apparels?

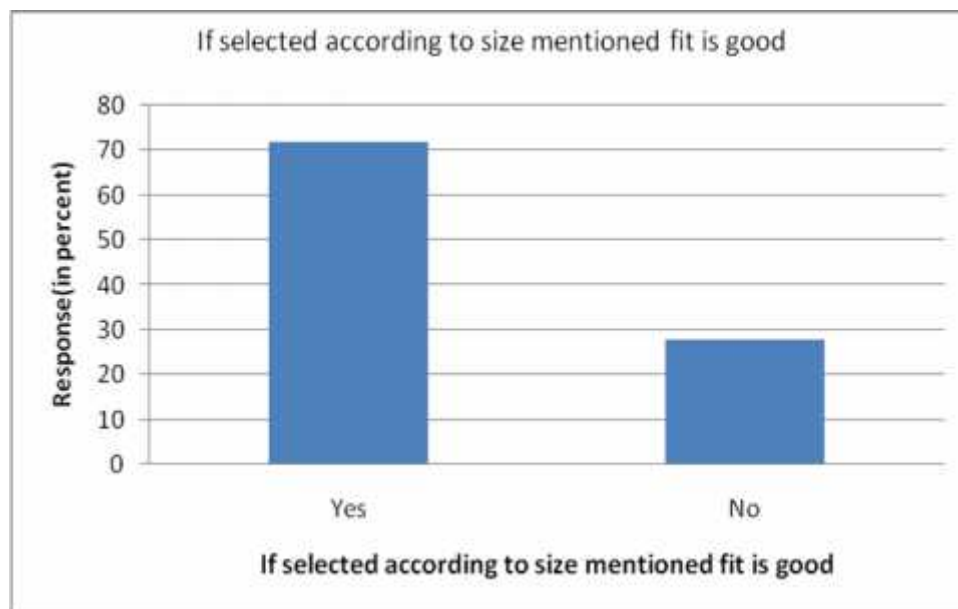
S. No	Response	(N=200) In percent
1.	Yes	90
2.	No	10

S. No	Size of the ready-made apparels	(N=200) In percent
1	XL, XXL,L	38
2	L, M, S	37
3	26, 28, 30, 32 and so on	25



If Selected according to Size mentioned Fit is Good

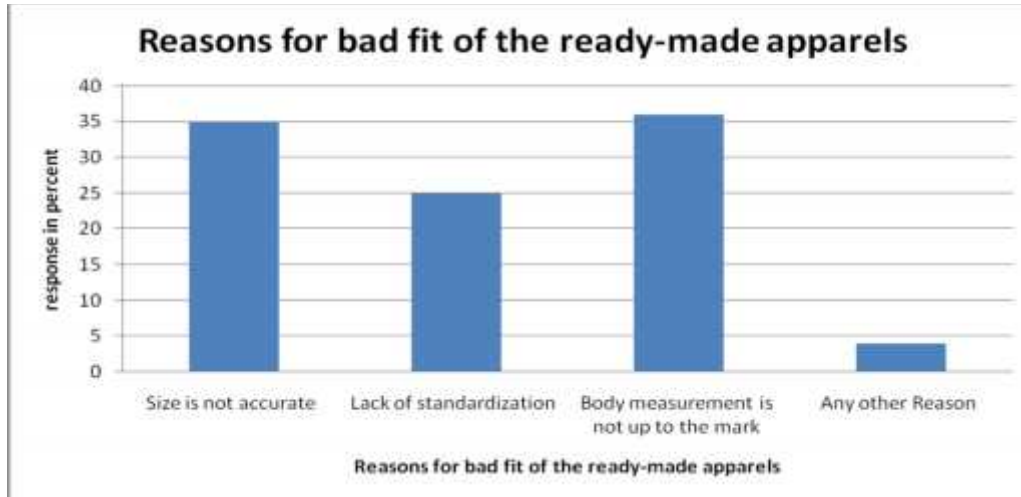
S. No	If selected according to size mentioned fit is good	(N=200) response in percent*
1.	Yes	72
2.	No	28





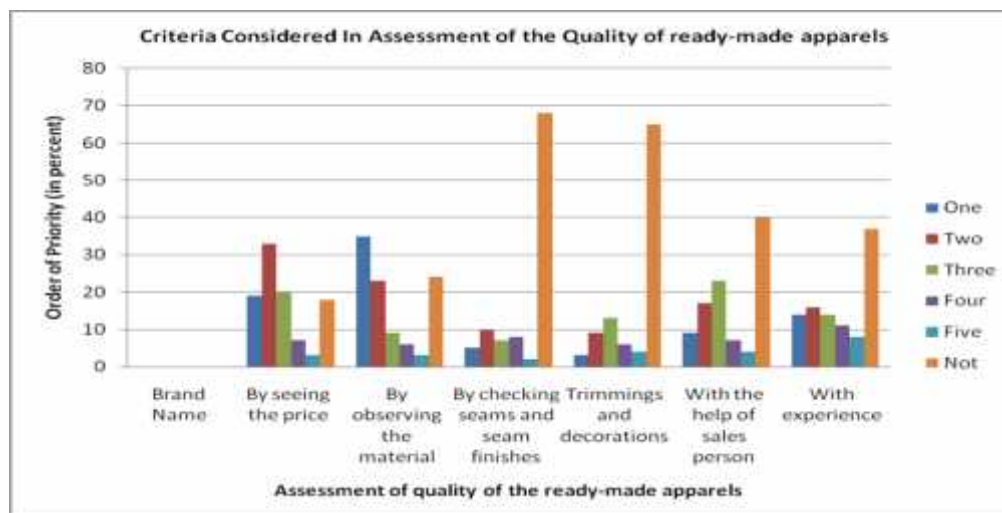
5. Fit of the Ready-Made apparels

S. No	Reasons for bad fit of the ready-made apparels	(N=200) response in percent*
1	Size is not accurate	35
2	Lack of standardization	25
3	Body measurement is not up to the mark	36
4	Any other Reason	4



6. Criteria Considered In Assessment of the Quality of ready-made apparels

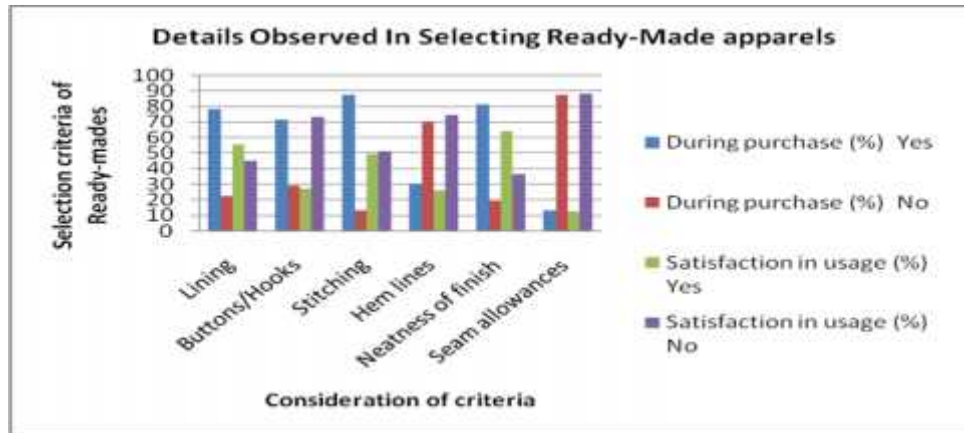
S. No	Assessment of quality of the ready-made apparels	Order of Priority (in percent) *					
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Not Considered
1	Brand Name	51	19	8	3	3	16
2	By seeing the price	19	33	20	7	3	18
3	By observing the material	35	23	9	6	3	24
4	By checking seams and seam finishes	5	10	7	8	2	68
5	Trimmings and decorations	3	9	13	6	4	65
6	With the help of sales person	9	17	23	7	4	40
7	With experience	14	16	14	11	8	37





7. Details Observed In Selecting Ready-Made apparels (Yes - 54%; No - 46%)

S. No	Selection criteria of Ready-made apparels	(N=200) Consideration of criteria			
		During purchase (%)		Satisfaction in usage (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Lining	78	22	55	45
2	Buttons/Hooks	71	29	27	73
3	Stitching	87	13	49	51
4	Hem lines	30	70	26	74
5	Neatness of finish	81	19	64	36
6	Seam allowances	13	87	12	88



8. Problems Faced By Consumer in Selecting and Buying ready-made apparels

S. No	Problems faced in the Selection of ready-made apparels	Priority (in percent) *					
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Not considered
1	Assessment of quality	42	22	12	3	2	19
2	Colour fastness	44	35	3	4	2	12
3	Poor seams/stitching	16	14	17	11	8	34
4	Improper size/fit	18	20	17	6	2	37
5	Bad workmanship	3	5	10	8	1	73
6	Wrong label information	10	14	18	14	7	37
7	No instructions about care	9	11	18	13	10	39
8	Attractive display	0	2	0	0	8	90

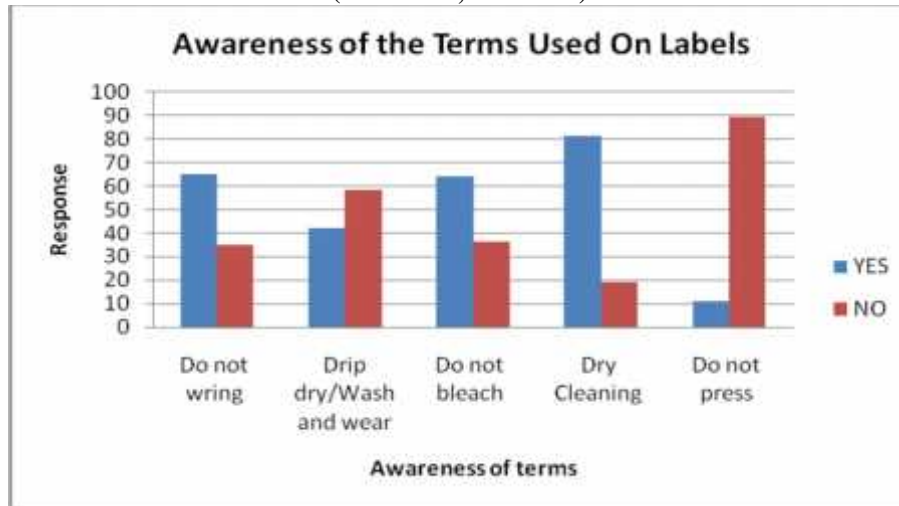




9. Awareness of the Terms Used On Labels

S. No	Awareness of terms	(N=1000)	
		Yes	No
1	Do not wring	65	35
2	Drip dry/Wash and wear	42	58
3	Do not bleach	64	36
4	Dry Cleaning	81	19
5	Do not press	11	89

(Yes - 76%, No - 34%)



Findings

- In selection of readymade apparels first priority was given to cost and appearance by 70 and 45 per cent respectively.
- Factors influencing the selection of readymade apparels were mainly Style / fashion, new design / material, durability, functions / festivals, colour, peer group influence, suitability by 84, 79, 68, 68, 67, 61 and 60 per cent respectively. All the other factors were considered by various percentages ranging from 51 to 6 per cent respectively.
- Advertisements, magazines, movies and television were the main sources for information on fashion as stated by most (62, 61, 58 and 52%) of the respondents.
- Regarding size particulars of ready- made apparels 38 per cent of the respondents were aware of the terms XL, XXL and L.
- Main reasons for bad fit of ready- made apparels was size not accurate and body measurement was not up to the mark by 36 and 35 per cent each.
- Fifty one per cent of importance was given to brand name in assessment of quality of readymade apparels
- Eighty seven per cent of the respondents consider quality of stitching while purchasing readymade apparels. But they obtained only 49 per cent satisfaction in usage. Neatness of finish is second factor considered by 81 per cent while selecting but they gained 64 percent satisfaction in usage.
- Problems faced by respondents while selecting and buying ready- made apparels were colour fastness (44%), assessment of quality (22%), wrong label information (18%) and no instructions about care (18%).
- Common label information followed by the respondents were dry cleaning by 81 percent, do not wring (65%) and do not bleach (64%).

Conclusion

Main criteria considered in selection of readymade apparels are cost and sources of information are advertisements, newspapers and magazines. Problems faced in selecting and buying readymade apparels are quality and color fastness. Respondents do not understand most of the care symbols given on labels. While purchasing saris cost and type of print is considered, colour fastness was judged by experience.



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