

A STUDY OF PREFERENCES FOR SELECTION OF INFANT'S CLOTHING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BHOPAL CITY

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY-To determine the type of fabric preferred for infant clothing. To study the colour, print and type of fit preferred for infant clothing.

METHODOLOGY-This survey was conducted in different areas of Bhopal city. Fifty mothers were interviewed. Questionnaire consisted of structured and multiple choice questions regarding preference of clothing for their young ones. After collecting the data, it was analysed and percentages were calculated.

INTRODUCTION-Infancy, period from birth to about 2 years of age. This first stage of life is an important time, characterized by physical and emotional growth and development. During the first 24 months the average child makes considerable gains in height and weight. Hence, special emphasis should be placed upon children and their needs. The clothes should be designed and stitched according to their age and activities.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF FABRIC FOR INFANT'S CLOTHING-During this period the child is susceptible to catch cold, therefore, a sufficient and adequate care should be taken in this regard in selection of suitable clothing. Material of the clothing and quantity of clothes should have the ability to conserve adequate percentage of warmth of the body, regulated by the season and the delicate or strength built in the constitution of infant. To meet this objective, parent of infant should guard against very common tradition of covering the child with many folds of warm clothing, and confining infant regularly in hot and closed rooms; following an opposite extreme practice. The clothes should be of such type that they do not restrict the infant's body movements. The clothes should be loose enough to permit skin perspiration to freely exit outside instead of absorbed by the clothes, which are in immediate contact with body giving irritation.

The texture of the fabric should not cause irritating effect to the delicate skin of the infant. During infancy flannel material although has rough feeling has right suitability for the growing child, because it creates mild stimulus necessary for the tender skin to remain healthy. The clothes should be of perfect fitting, simple design which can be easily worn and removed without causing uneasiness to the child, because the sight of an uncomfortable dress is quite irritating to the infant, making it to cry, any forceful attempt produces mental irritation. There should be no use of pins on the dress the use which can be hazardous and even ordinary movements of the infant can prove hazardous. In infant's clothing fancy trimmings should be avoided, as it require extra care in laundering and often irritate the baby. Draw string necklines should be avoided because infant might become caught in strings. Their garments should have full front or shoulder openings. Knitted garments stretch with the body movements and are easy to put on the infant.

Clothes of the infant must be changed every day. A foremost necessity of good health is that complete change of wearing clothes is practiced every day. By not doing so washing of clothes shall not be that clean as required by the good health norms of the child and skin diseases shall take place further worsening the health. Clothes should be according to the requirement of the season. Wearing of winter dress should be started early, do not keep it aside for storage because in the spring and autumn the extreme variations of climate are experienced and during these periods there is greatest incidence of congestive and inflammatory complaints.

TABLE NO. 1 FABRIC PREFERRED FOR INFANTS

S. No	Type of fabric	Preference (%)
1.	Cotton	66.66
2.	Silk	-
3.	Synthetic	-
4.	Knitted	33.34

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According to the above table, it is clear that, now day's mothers are aware of the fabric to be chosen for their child as none of them preferred silk and synthetic fabrics. Majority of them i.e. 66.66% of them preferred cotton fabric and remaining 33.34% liked knitted fabrics.

TABLE NO-2 REASONS TO PREFER PARTICULAR FABRIC

S.No	Reasons to prefer particular fabric	Preference (%)
1.	Comfortable	63
2.	Cheap	-
3.	Durable	14
4.	Easy to maintain	23
5.	Fashionable	-

From the above table it is very clear that mother's are very much conscious about their babies clothing. 63% of them preferred comfortable clothing for their baby. 23% of them gave importance to ease-to-care fabrics, only 14% said that the clothes should be durable.

TABLE NO - 3 PREFERENCE OF COLOUR

S. No	Colour preferred	Percentage
1.	Light	56.66
2.	Medium	30
3.	Dark	13.34

Regarding colour preference, results according to the above table show that 56.66% mothers liked their young ones in light colours, 30% of them preferred medium colours for the babies and only 13.34% mothers liked dark colours for their infants.

TABLE NO-4 REASONS TO PREFER A PARTICULAR COLOUR

S. No	Reason	Percentage
1.	Pleasing to eyes	73.33
2.	In fashion	26.66

It is evident from the above table that maximum mothers had a strong liking for choosing a particular colour for their infants, i.e. 73.33% of them preferred the colour which was pleasing to the eyes.

TABLE NO-5 PRINTS PREFERRED IN A DRESS

S. No	Type of prints preferred	Preference (%)
1.	Nursery	63.34
2.	Geometrical	-
3.	Floral	36.66
4.	Abstract	-
5.	Stylised	-

Table above shows that 63.34% mothers liked nursery prints in infants clothing. 36.66% preferred floral prints.

TABLE NO-6 TYPE OF FITTING PREFERRED

S. No	Type of fitting	Preference (%)
1.	Tight	-
2.	Medium	60
3.	Loose	40

The data from the above table shows that today, women are aware of what is good and bad for their babies. They knew that tight fitted clothes may harm their child's health, therefore, none of them preferred tight fitted clothes for their children. 60% of them preferred medium fitted clothes and 40% liked loose fitted clothes for their babies.

TABLE NO-7 MONTHLY EXPENDITURES ON DRESSES.

S. No	Expenditure per month (Rs.)	Percentage of girls
1.	Within 1000	75
2.	1000-2000	15
3.	2000 and more	10

It is evident from the table that maximum mothers i.e. 75% of them spend Rs1000 per month on their babies clothing, 15% of them spend Rs.1000-2000 and only 10% of the mothers purchased clothing worth Rs.2000 and more.

CONCLUSION-Clothes are a form of artistic expression. The kind and variety of clothes available today seem utmost and limitless as the result of the new technology and mass garment production. Styling in infant clothing has been given much greater emphasis off-late. There are three "musts" in clothing infant are warmth, comfort and hygiene. Infant has to be watched carefully in sudden changing climate. Now a day, mothers are aware of the fabric to be chosen for their child as none of them preferred silk and synthetic fabrics. Majority of them i.e. 66.66% of them preferred cotton fabric and remaining 33.34% liked knitted fabrics. They were aware of the material selected for the infant should facilitate maintenance of body temperature, absorb body moisture readily, give up body moisture to air and also be durable and can be readily cleaned. Knitted materials provide air spaces which act as a non conductor of heat; keeps in body heat during winter-cold, and protects body from heat in summer. Cotton being good conductor of heat is best for summers, as it is soft, absorbent, comfortable, and hygienically safe by washing in extremely hot or boiling water.

It is evident from the table that maximum mothers i.e. 75% of them spend Rs1000 per month on their babies clothing, 15% of them spend Rs.1000-2000 and only 10% of the mothers purchased clothing worth Rs.2000 and more. When the mother's were asked about the clothing budget for the baby many of them said that whatever may be the income, it is usually better to have garments that will serve all occasions, purposes and seasons. Be practical. Babies aren't neat, so you'll want everything to be machine washable no matter how cute it is. Fancy clothes aren't practical at all since they often interfere with movement and aren't usually comfortable. Mother's are very much conscious about their babies clothing. 63% of them preferred comfortable clothing for their children. 23% of them gave importance to ease-to-care fabrics, only 14% said that the clothes should be durable.

Keep in mind that more expensive clothes are not necessarily better. You'll have to examine each item, especially since baby sizes are not standardized. Don't be afraid to remove items from plastic packaging. Check to see if the seams are well finished and the stitching is strong. Knit fabrics should be strong, not

flimsy. Regarding colour preference, results show that 56.66% of the mothers liked their young ones in light colours, 30% of them preferred medium colours for the babies and only 13.34% mothers liked dark colours for their infants. It is evident from the findings that maximum mothers had a strong liking for choosing a particular colour for their infants, i.e. 73.33% of them preferred the colour which was pleasing to the eyes. Rest 26.66% purchased clothing which was in fashion. 63.34% mothers liked nursery prints in infants clothing. Remaining 36.66% preferred floral prints. When asked about geometrical, abstract and stylized prints or motifs, they had very little knowledge about it.

Women are aware of what is good and bad for their babies. They knew that tight fitted clothes may harm their child's health, therefore, none of them preferred tight fitted clothes for their children. 60% of them preferred medium fitted clothes and 40% liked loose fitted clothes for their babies. It is evident from the table that maximum mothers i.e. 75% of them spend Rs1000 per month on their babies clothing, 15% of them spend Rs.1000-2000 and only 10% of the mothers purchased clothing worth Rs.2000 and more.

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