

Consumer preferences for designing upper garments through draping technique

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■ **ABSTRACT :** The investigation entitled 'consumer preferences for designing upper garments through draping technique' was carried out in Ludhiana city. An interview schedule was prepared for the purpose of collecting the data from 90 young women between the age group of 18-24 years, selected randomly from three colleges of Ludhiana city. Tunics, classic tops, blouson, capes and shrugs were the five most preferred upper garments. Cotton fibres and fabrics, plain fabric without design in cream and black colour with single colour combination in upper garments were most preferred during summer and winter seasons, respectively. Among constructional features, straight yoke, pin tucks, gathers with elastic, knife pleats and box pleats were preferred by the respondents. Buttons were most preferred accessory in upper garments.

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Fashion draping is an important part of fashion design. A garment can be draped using a design sketch as a basis, or a fashion designer can play with the way fabric falls to create new designs at the start of the apparel design process. After draping, the fabric is removed from the dress form and used to create the sewing pattern for the garment (Anonymous, 2015).

Fashion draping is oldest method used, since the 18th century. In fashion designing, it is considered as an important process of developing the structure and design of garment by pinning and positioning the fabric on a standard size dress form. Dress forms of men, women and children, are used to develop different sizes to fulfill the requirement for various age groups. Design sketch can be used as a basis to drape a design, or a fashion

designer can play with the way fabric falls to create new designs while draping. The toile ('muslin' cloth) fabric is removed from the dress form after draping, which was used to create the stitched draped pattern for making fashionable dress to suit an individual. The knowledge of the fabric's characteristics is very important for the designers/drapers who were using draping technique, as it helps them to select the appropriate fabrics for different garment designs (Anonymous, 2012).

In fashion, the most basic technique is draping. The way the fabric falls or hangs is known as draping. In early times clothing was constructed from simple seams and draped materials. Patterns we use today were not the part of the early clothing. Roman *Toga* is the basic

design of drape where simple sheath of fabric is moved and gathered around the body and fastened by the belt or sash. Scottish kilt is another draped piece of skirt, made up of plaid wool in rectangular shape that is pinned, pleated or folded. Fabric with good drape and fall is used for draping. After finishing them properly, very impressive effect can be achieved. In Draping, exact fitting, fall and fullness can be acquired by practice (Anonymous, 2010).

The art of draping is loved by the designers because their designs come to life as they manipulate the fabric on the dress form. Usually the designer starts the draping with the design sketch, but a number of interesting designs can also be created during the draping process. Hence, this method of pattern making is reviewed as more innovative. Draping allows the designer to get a "feel" for the fabric as the fabric is draped on the form unlike the 2-dimensional process of pattern making. Draping permits the designer to make better choices of a particular fabric while keeping in mind the suitability to its design (Anonymous, 2011).

Many designers prefer to use draping methods to create their original designs. A designer can easily see the proper fit, balance and style lines of design, exactly as it will look on the bodice while working with actual materials gives a designer inspiration and a better indication of the flow and performance of the fabric (Crawford, 2005).

Draping is very important in Indian design. Without it, the designer does not know how a particular piece of cloth will hang, accept a seam or crease on the body. Three dimensional touches that make garments special and interesting can be created through draping technique. Also different creative constructional features such as pleats, gathers and flounces can be developed. An entire dress can also be created from one simple, unsewn length of fabric, using draping technique. Modern fashion can be created through draping. Earlier people used to visit dress maker or draper for mono-sized or custom clothing as it provide proper fit to garment through darts and seams (Anonymous, 2010).

The medium for draping is usually muslin, a plain weave fabric of unfinished cotton. The direction of the grain is easily visible and its relatively low cost permits free use for experimentation and development. Muslin can be marked with pencil lines, and finished muslin pattern, which is the end product of draping, can be used repeatedly. Although garments are usually draped on

dress form, the muslin pattern, when stitched together, may also be used for adjusting the fit on the human body. After understanding the basic principles of draping, an individual designer can create and add an endless variety of ideas into finished garments. Various types of fit can be developed to achieve the current fashion silhouette. The loose fit of oversizing is often very fashionable and in addition it accommodates endless variations of body dimensions and results in freely flowing apparel when soft fabrics are used. The fit or tailored garment is very precisely oversized and fabrics are reinforced with interfacing or backing to achieve a well defined silhouette (Jaffe and Relis, 1993).

Draping in fabric on the dress form is a method used to create three dimensional models that will ultimately be developed into a collection of finished sample garments. Although most draping is done on muslin, the designer must keep in mind the properties of fabric to be used for finished garment. The hand, weight, construction and surface finished of the fabric all contributes to the final effect of the design. Some fabrics have such unique properties that draping the garment pattern directly in the fabric of the finished apparel is best. This, however, requires an experienced hand because the cost of most clothes makes mistakes prohibitively expensive. Although computers are used as design and communication tools throughout the industry but designers still need a basic background of draping in fabric. By draping the design, students acquire the feel of proportion, which can only be developed by seeing the design that take shape on the human figure. A feel of texture and drapability of fabric can only be attained by actually handling the fabric. Computers are, indeed, used to sketch and draft patterns for new designs, but to do this well, requires the ability to correctly visualize the proportion of the finished apparel (Jaffe and Relis, 2005).

Draped pattern making, is the element between design and creation of a specified dress. Designers sketch turns into a three-dimensional functional garment. Draping process is a way of interpreting the design without considering the style, size and shape. Until, the design is refashioned in three-dimensional form, the fabric is manipulated, molded and shaped by the skillful use of the draper/designer's. Draping does not depend on the tools of a pattern to create designs, although a draper may choose to incorporate parts of an existing pattern in the preparation of the muslin to assist

in the drape. Flat pattern making method may include some aspects of draping in creating particular designs. This improves the value of either pattern making method and also enhances the ability of the pattern maker's to create design patterns exactly and within time constraints (Balakumar, 2000).

Andrea (2004) described that the colour forecasting methods keep the customers interested. The colour is important as it inspire, motivates and creates enthusiasm. It is the first appeal to the consumer before either style or price. Hence, the present study has been planned to study the consumer preferences for designing various upper garments through draping technique.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

A survey was conducted to know the preferences of the respondents regarding different designs, fabric colours, constructional features and embellishments to be used in the upper garments. An interview schedule was prepared to study the socio- personal profile of the respondents and their preferences for design development of upper garments. Three colleges from Ludhiana city were selected randomly. A total of 90 young women consisting 30 respondents from each college between 18- 24 years of age group were selected purposively from the selected colleges. The young women were personally contacted and requested to provide unbiased and independent opinion in answering the questions.

The data collected through the interview schedule for the research study was coded, tabulated and analyzed. Simple percentages were calculated to obtain the background information. Scoring and ranking was done to get the preferences for the design and design features of different types of upper garments. The highest score was given to most preferred design/feature and one to the least preferred. Scores were computed and ranked.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads :

Preferences for various types of upper garments :

Most of the respondents choose their garments as their peer does. Preferences of the respondents for

various types of upper garments have been furnished in Table 1. The results elicited that majority of the respondents (75.56 %) prefer tunics followed by classic tops (55.56%), blouson (48.89%), capes (44.44%), shrugs (38.89%) and *Kurtis* (37.78), respectively. Gowns and *Kaftans* were the least preferred upper garments by the respondents.

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to their preferences for various types of upper garments

Types of upper garments	f (%)
Classic tops	50(55.56)
Tunics	68(75.56)
Blouson	44(48.89)
<i>Kurtis</i>	34(37.78)
Capes	40(44.44)
Shrugs	35(38.89)
Gowns	15(16.67)
<i>Kaftans</i>	8(8.89)

f-frequency, Figure in parentheses indicates percentages

* Multiple responses

Reasons for the preferences of various types of upper garments :

Data in Table 2 shows the different reasons for the preferences of various types of upper garments by the respondents. Tunic was the most preferred upper garment reported by 66.67 per cent of the respondents as it was found more comfortable followed by the blouson, classic tops, capes and shrugs by 31.11, 30, 28.89 and 27.78 per cent of the respondents, respectively. *Kurtis*, tunics, classic tops and blouson were liked by 33.33, 22.22, 16.67 and 11.11 per cent of the respondent as it gives stylish look to the wearer. More than 17 per cent of the respondents like to wear classic tops, tunics and capes for trendy look. Peer acceptance was also the reason given for the liking of the classic tops, tunics and capes by 31.11, 30.00, and 27.78 per cent of the respondents, respectively. About 11.11 and 5.56 per cent of the respondents like to wear *Kurtis* and gowns occasionally.

Preferences for different types of fibres in upper garments :

Preferences regarding types of fibres indicates that majority of the respondents prefer cotton fibre for upper garments in the summer season as shown Fig 1. It was given first rank (score 445) followed by the linen (score

Reasons given by the respondents	Comfortable	Stylish	Trendy	Peer acceptance	Occasional
Types of upper garments					
Classic tops	27 (30.00)	15 (16.67)	20 (22.22)	28 (31.11)	-
Tunics	60 (66.67)	20 (22.22)	15 (16.67)	25 (27.78)	3 (3.33)
Blouson	28 (31.11)	10 (11.11)	2 (2.22)	5 (5.56)	-
Kurtis	5 (5.56)	30 (33.33)	10 (11.11)	-	5 (5.56)
Capes	26 (28.89)	20 (22.22)	17 (18.89)	27 (30.00)	2 (2.22)
Shrugs	25 (27.78)	2 (2.22)	5 (5.56)	-	-
Gowns	10 (11.11)	12 (13.33)	7 (7.78)	-	10 (11.11)
Kaftans	5 (5.56)	2 (2.22)	3 (3.33)	1 (1.11)	-

Figure in parentheses indicates percentages * Multiple responses

220) and silk (score 82) with second and third rank, respectively. Wool was least preferred (score 39) by the respondents.

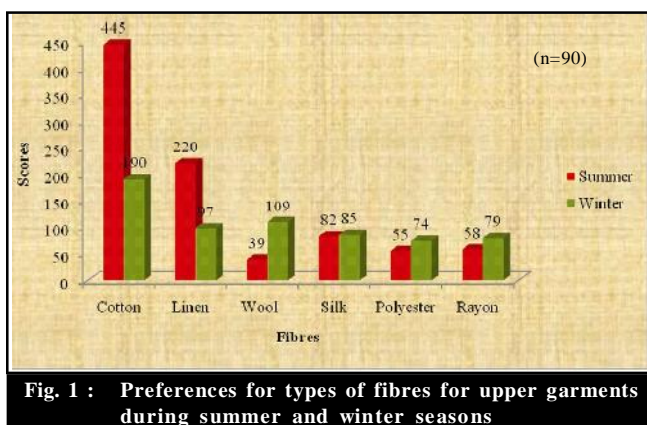


Fig. 1 : Preferences for types of fibres for upper garments during summer and winter seasons

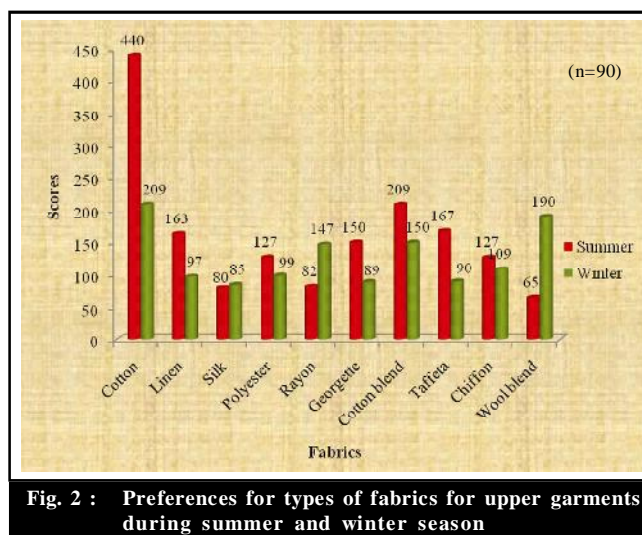


Fig. 2 : Preferences for types of fabrics for upper garments during summer and winter season

In winter season, first rank was given to cotton fibre (score 190) followed by wool (score 109) and linen fibre (score 97) with second and third ranks, respectively. Silk (score 85) was the least preferred by the respondents.

According to the Fig. 2 preferences regarding types of fabrics indicates that majority of the respondents prefer cotton fabric (score 440) for upper garments followed by the cotton blend (score 209) with first and second ranks, respectively. Taffeta fabric (score 167) was preferred for upper garments by the respondents in the summer season.

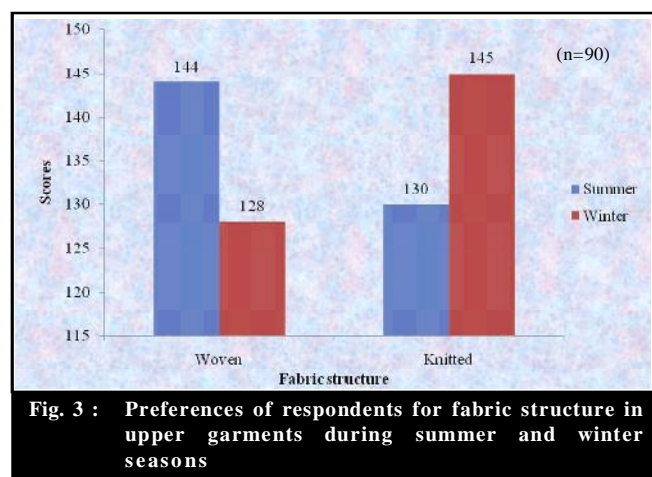
In winter season, first rank was given to cotton fabric (score 209) for the upper garments. Wool blend (score 190) and cotton blend (score 150) were also preferred by the respondents for the upper garments with second and third ranks, respectively. Sharma (2000) and Varman (1998) also reported that cotton and cotton blend fabric were the most preferred fabrics for upper

garments. Cotton fabric was also most preferred for trousers by college going girls during summer season as revealed by Kaur (2003 and 2013).

Preferences for fabric structure in upper garments:

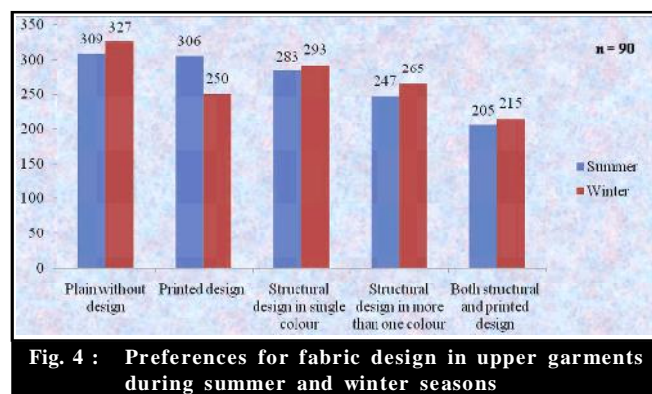
First score was given to the woven fabric for upper garments in summer season as indicated in the Fig. 3 where 60.00 and 40.00 per cent of the respondents prefer it at first and second place, respectively. For knitted fabric, first and second preferences were given by 44.44 and 55.56 per cent of the respondents and thus given second rank. In winters, knitted fabric was preferred by majority of the respondents. First and second preferences were given by 61.11 per cent and 38.89 per cent of the respondents, respectively. Woven fabric structure was given second rank and preferred by 42.22 and 57.78 per cent of the respondents at first and second place, respectively. Similar results were found by the Kaur

(2013).



Preferences for fabric design in upper garments :

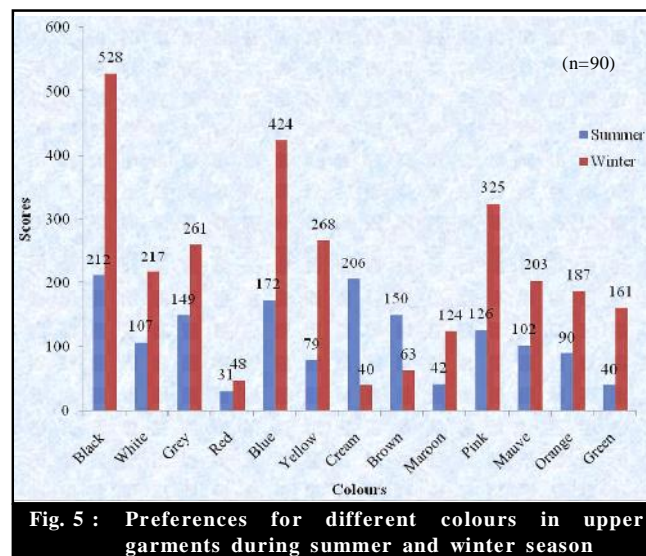
Fig. 4 shows the preferences of the respondents for various fabric designs. The plain fabric without design was given first rank in both the seasons (scores 309 and 327) for the upper garments where 41.11 and 40 per cent of the respondents preferred it at first place, respectively. Printed design was given first and second place by 27.78 and 26.67 per cent of the respondents during summer season and thus given second rank (score 306). During winter season, structural design in single colour (score 293) was given second rank. Third rank was given to structural design in single colour (score 283) during summer season and structural design in more than one colour (score 265) during winter season, respectively.



Preferences for different colours in upper garments:

Data in Fig. 5 revealed that during summer, cream

colour was preferred at first and second place by 14.44 and 13.33 per cent of the respondents and thus given first rank (score 206) where as 22.22 and 11.11 per cent of the respondents preferred black colour at first and second place which was given second rank (score 212) by the respondents. Blue colour (score 172) was given third rank for the upper garments. While red colour was the least preferred by the respondents during the summer season.



In winter season, black colour was given first rank (score 528) where 44.44 and 27.78 per cent of the respondents preferred it at first and second place followed by the blue (score 424) and pink colour (score 325) which were given second and third rank, respectively. Cream colour (score 40) was the least preferred by the respondents during winters. Varman (1998) also revealed that cream and black colour were the most preferred colours for jackets during summer and winter season.

Preferences for different colour combinations in upper garments:

The results in Table 3 show the preferences of the respondents for the colour combinations for the upper garments. First, second and third preference was given to single colour combination by 43.33, 44.44 and 12.22 per cent of the respondents in summer and 42.22, 31.11 and 26.67 per cent during winter season, respectively. Double colour in summer was preferred by 26.67, 37.78 and 35.56 per cent and 28.89, 46.67 and 24.44 per cent

of the respondents during winter season, respectively. Multi colour combination was least preferred by the respondents and was given third rank.

Preferences for different types of constructional features in upper garments :

Regarding the preferences for constructional features to be used in upper garments, it was found that straight yoke was given first rank and was preferred by 38.89, 14.44 and 12.22 per cent of the respondents at first, second and third place, respectively. Whereas 25.56, 12.22 and 27.78 per cent of the respondents preferred

u-shape yoke and 14.44, 27.78 and 20 per cent of the preferred v-shape yokes and thus these were given second and third ranks, respectively (Table 4).

Pin tucks were given first rank followed by cross tucks and shell tucks which were given second and third rank by the respondents, respectively. First, second and third preferences for pin tucks were given by 35.56, 50 and 16.67 per cent and for cross tucks by 33.33, 24.44 and 47.78 per cent of the respondents, respectively. Gathers with elastic were preferred by 26.67, 22.22 and 35.56 per cent of the respondents at first, second and third place, respectively and was given first rank

Table 3 : Preferences for different colour combinations in the upper garments during summer and winter season

Colour combinations	Summer (n=90)					Winter (n=90)				
	Order of preference			Scores	Ranks	Order of preference			Scores	Ranks
	I	II	III			I	II	III		
Single colour	39 (43.33)	40 (44.44)	11 (12.22)	208	I	38 (42.22)	28 (31.11)	24 (26.67)	194	I
Double colour	24 (26.67)	34 (37.78)	32 (35.56)	172	II	26 (28.89)	42 (46.67)	22 (24.44)	184	II
Multi colour	27 (30.00)	16 (17.78)	47 (52.22)	160	III	26 (28.89)	20 (22.22)	44 (48.89)	162	III

Figure in parentheses indicates percentages

Table 4 : Preferences of respondents for constructional features in upper garments (n=90)

Constructional features	Order of preference			Scores	Ranks
	I	II	III		
Yokes (n=90)					
U- shape	23 (25.56)	11 (12.22)	25 (27.78)	116	II
V- shape	13 (14.44)	25 (27.78)	18 (20.00)	107	III
Round shape	10 (11.11)	15 (16.67)	30 (33.33)	90	IV
Straight	35 (38.89)	13 (14.44)	11 (12.22)	142	I
Asymmetrical	9 (10.00)	26 (28.89)	6 (6.67)	85	V
Tucks (n=90)					
Pin tucks	32 (35.56)	45 (50.00)	15 (16.67)	201	I
Cross tucks	30 (33.33)	22 (24.44)	43 (47.78)	177	II
Shell tucks	28 (31.11)	23 (25.56)	32 (35.56)	162	III
Gathers (n=90)					
Plain gathers	18 (20.00)	20 (22.22)	17 (18.89)	111	III
Gathers with band	9 (10.00)	10 (11.11)	18 (20.00)	65	V
Gathers with elastic	24 (26.67)	20 (22.22)	32 (35.56)	144	I
Gathers with shirring	32 (35.56)	16 (17.78)	8 (8.89)	136	II
Gathers with smocking	7 (7.78)	24 (26.67)	15 (16.67)	84	IV
Pleats and darts (n=90)					
Knife pleats	31 (34.44)	36 (40.00)	20 (22.22)	185	I
Box pleats	29 (32.22)	12 (13.33)	30 (33.33)	141	II
Inverted box pleats	15 (16.67)	20 (22.22)	12 (13.33)	97	III
Kick pleats	10 (11.11)	12 (13.33)	13 (14.44)	67	V
Darts	5 (5.56)	10 (11.11)	15 (16.67)	50	IV

Figures in parentheses indicates percentages

Accessories/ Embellishments	Order of preference				Scores	Ranks
	I	II	III	IV		
Buttons	20 (40.00)	-	2 (4.00)	5 (10.00)	89	I
Belts	2 (4.00)	3 (6.00)	7 (14.00)	9 (18.00)	40	VII
Zipper	15 (30.00)	4 (8.00)	-	7 (14.00)	79	III
Buckle	-	8 (16.00)	4 (8.00)	8 (16.00)	40	VII
Broaches	11 (22.00)	3 (6.00)	1 (2.00)	-	55	IV
Mirror disc	-	5 (10.00)	3 (6.00)	-	21	IX
Lace	11 (22.00)	2 (4.00)	1 (2.00)	3 (6.00)	55	IV
Braids	2 (4.00)	-	5 (10.00)	2 (4.00)	20	X
Ribbons	-	-	6 (12.00)	2 (4.00)	14	XI
Binding	11 (22.00)	7 (14.00)	8 (16.00)	-	81	II
Beads	7 (14.00)	4 (8.00)	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)	43	VI

Figure in parentheses indicates percentages

(score 144) followed by gathers with shirring and plain gathers which were given second and third rank, respectively. Knife pleats with first rank (score 185) were preferred by 34.44, 40 and 22.22 per cent of the respondents at first, second and third place, respectively followed by box pleats (rank 2, score 141) where 32.22, 13.33 and 33.33 per cent of the respondents prefer these at first, second and third place, respectively. Kick pleats were least preferred by the respondents.

Preferences of the respondents for various accessories /surface embellishments in upper garments :

Regarding the preferences for the accessories/surface embellishments for upper garments, it was found that more than half of the respondents *i.e.* 55.56 per cent prefer the surface embellishments on the upper garments, whereas 44.44 per cent of the respondents do not like the embellishments on the upper garments. So preferences of only those respondents were taken who prefer accessories/surface embellishments for the upper garments.

According to the Table 5 results shows that, buttons were preferred by 40 per cent of the respondents at first place as an accessory and was given first rank by the respondents followed by the binding which was preferred at first place by 22 per cent of the respondents and given second rank. Zipper was given third rank (score 79) by the respondents. Broaches and laces each were given fourth rank (score 55) by the respondents. Ribbons were the least preferred surface embellishment in the upper garments.

Conclusion

So it can be concluded that this information can be further used effectively by designers who are working for costume designing using draping technique. Tunics, classic tops, blouson, capes and shrugs were five most preferred garments. Woven fabric structure in summer season and knitted fabric structure in winter season was preferred by the respondents. Plain fabric without design was most preferred by the respondents in both summer and winter season. Most of the respondents preferred single coloured upper garments in both summer and winter season. Cream colour was most preferred in summer season closely followed by black whereas in winter black colour was preferred by the respondents. Straight yoke, pin tucks, gathers with elastic and knife pleats were preferred as constructional features. For accessories/surface embellishments, buttons were the first choice among the respondents followed by the binding. Ribbons were the least preferred surface embellishment in the upper garments.

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