



# International Journal of Home Science

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## Creation of consumer awareness on care of textiles

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### Abstract

Consumers are individuals who purchase for the purpose of individual or household consumption. Consumer buys a product looking for certain specific qualities from that product. Clothing along with food and shelter has been recognized as one of the basic necessities of every individual and it fulfils many of his physical, social, psychological, emotional, aesthetic and economical needs. Proper care of clothing keeps it in good condition and increases its life. One of the most important problems in maintaining a satisfactory appearance in clothing is the removal of soil that accumulates during wear and storage. Soiling of clothes may be in the form of deposited dirt or absorbed impurities because of perspiration. Unless these soils are removed the clothes develop a bad odor, which is not conducive to good health. Dirt is not only a menace to health but also affects the appearance of the garment, the comfort of a wearer and the quality of the garment. Since clothes come into close contact with the body, cleanliness of clothing is an essential prerequisite for health and elegance. Clothing care includes activities like washing, drying, pressing and storage.

The main propose of washing is to remove soil or dirt from the fabric. All garments must be cleaned frequently as over soiling leads to fiber disintegration. Factors influencing the performance of fiber and its quality are water, soaps, detergent, and mode of washing, stiffening, blueing, drying and ironing. Some attention to the way in which clothing is stored may help to prolong the life of textile products. A garment when given intelligent care will last longer, perform better and look better than one that is neglected.

**Keywords:** Consumer, clothing, care and quality

### Introduction

Consumers are individuals who purchase for the purpose of individual or household consumption. Consumer buys a product looking for certain specific qualities from that product. Women as consumers are powerful catalyst as individuals and in groups in creating a healthier attitude for themselves, their families, their communities and nations. Women are 'double consumers'-they make decisions not just for themselves but for their families as well. A women's experience as a consumer is the basis for her further involvement in consumerism. Women play a key role as consumers. They need to be concerned with the quality of goods, rising prices, purchase, short measures and services.

Clothing along with food and shelter has been recognized as one of the basic necessities of every individual and it fulfils many of his physical, social, psychological, emotional, aesthetic and economical needs. Proper care of clothing keeps it in good condition and increases its life. One of the most important problems in maintaining a satisfactory appearance in clothing is the removal of soil that accumulates during wear and storage. Soiling of clothes may be in the form of deposited dirt or absorbed impurities because of perspiration. Unless these soils are removed the clothes develop a bad odor, which is not conducive to good health. Dirt is not only a menace to health but also affects the appearance of the garment, the comfort of a wearer and the quality of the garment. Since clothes come into close contact with the body, cleanliness of clothing is an essential prerequisite for health and elegance. Clothing care includes activities like washing, drying, pressing and storage.

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**Need for the study**

Textiles and clothing offers a vast array of goods which are different in kind and quality. This is an area for which a consumer is constantly exposed to make a selection. As wide ranges of fabrics are available in the market and hundreds of new products are added everyday, a consumer is totally confused in making the right selection for the end use. Even literate consumers are facing similar problem. They also face problems in identification of fibers, care of apparel and home textiles. Hence education in this field is imperative. Moreover, it is a topic of prime importance especially in developing countries like India.

**Methodology**

To know about consumer awareness on care of textiles survey was conducted using an in-depth structured interview schedule. Eluru city belonging to West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh was selected for this study. Thousand 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.

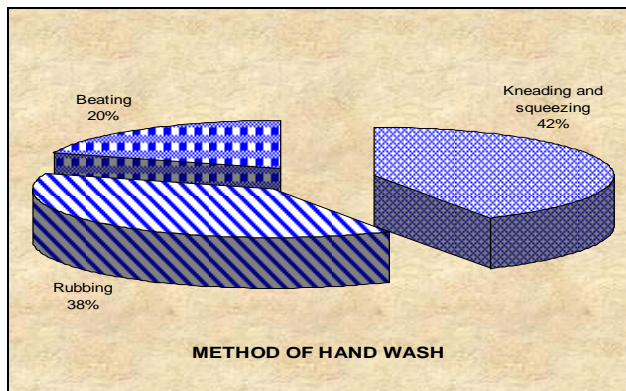
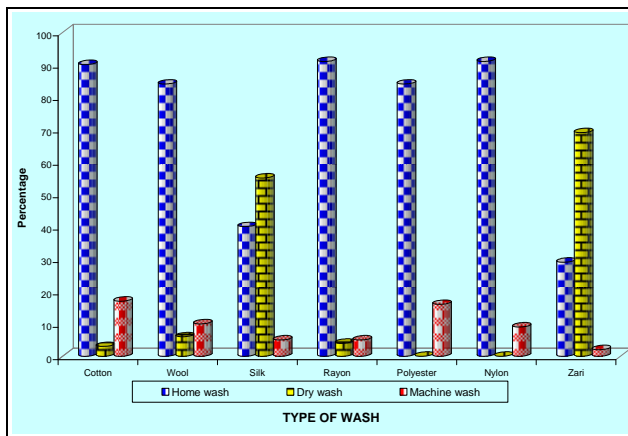
**Socio-economic profile of the selected respondents**

From the survey it was clearly evident that 52 per cent of the 1000 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.

**Table 1: Type of Wash**

S. No	Name of the fabric	Type of wash (in percent) *		
		Hand wash	Machine wash	Dry wash
1	Cotton	90	17	3
2	Wool	84	10	6
3	Silk	40	5	55
4	Rayon	91	5	4
5	Polyester	84	16	0
6	Nylon	91	9	0
7	Zari	29	2	69

Multiple responses



**Table 2: Method of Hand Wash**

S. No	Method of washing	Response in percentage*
1	Kneading and squeezing	42
2	Rubbing	38
3	Beating	20

**Table 3: Consumer Knowledge about Dry Cleaning (Yes - 84%; No 16%)**

S. No	Awareness about dry cleaning	(N=1000)In percent*	
		Yes	No
1	Wash in dry cleaning center	61	39
2	Petrol wash	53	47
3	Using dry cleaning solvents	9	91
4	No idea	15	85

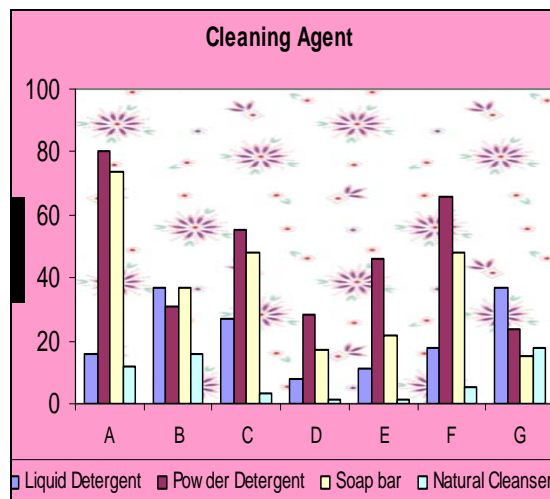
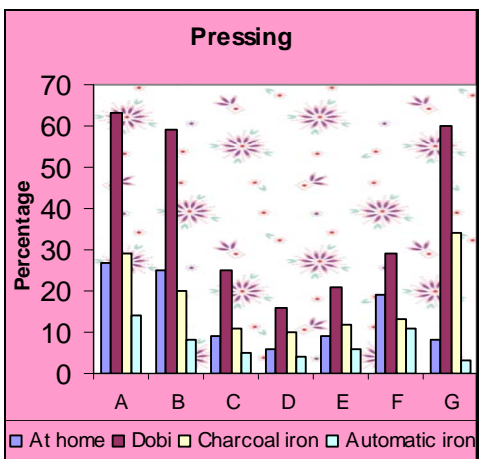
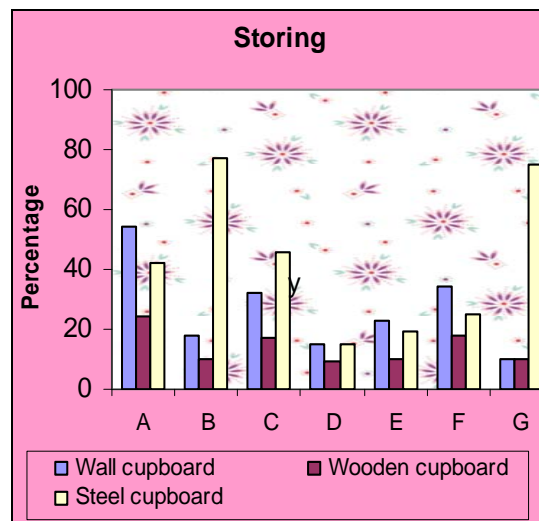
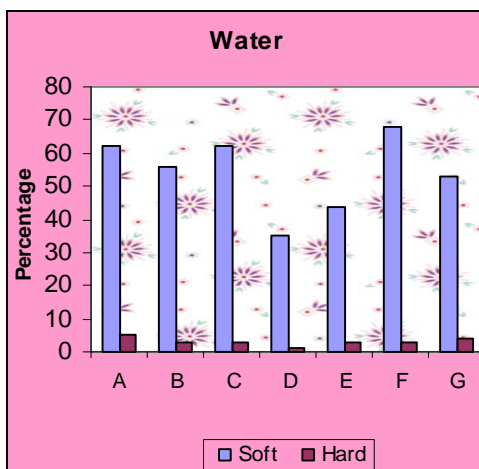
Multiple responses

**Table 4:** Laundering Agents

S. No.	Laundering Agents	Name of the fabric (in percent) * (N=1000)						
1.	Water							
	a. Soft	62	56	62	35	44	58	53
	b. Hard	5	3	3	1	3	3	4
2.	Cleaning agent							
	a. Detergent							
	i. Liquid	16	37	27	8	11	18	37
	ii. Powder	80	31	55	28	46	66	24
	b. Soap bar	74	37	48	17	22	48	15
	c. Natural cleanser	12	16	3	1	1	5	18
3.	Drying							
	a. sun light	92	19	50	28	42	63	18
	b. In shade	10	73	39	8	12	19	68
	c. Machine	4	1	4	1	2	2	2
4.	Pressing							
	a. At home	27	25	9	6	9	19	8
	b. Dobi	63	59	25	16	21	29	60
	c. Charcoal iron	29	20	11	10	12	13	34
	d. Automatic iron	14	8	5	4	6	11	3
5.	Storing							
	a. Wall cupboard	54	18	32	15	23	34	10
	b. Wooden cupboard	24	10	17	9	10	18	10
	c. Steel cupboard	42	77	46	15	19	25	75

Multiple responses

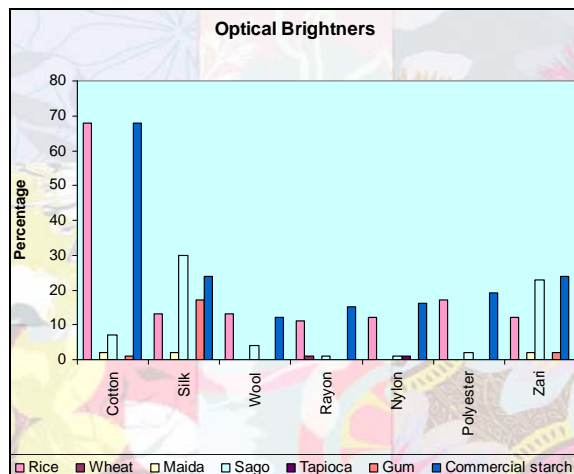
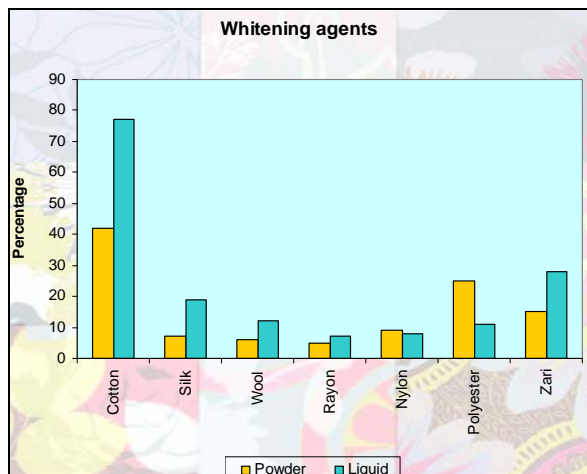
- A. Cotton
- B. Silk
- C. Wool
- D. Rayon
- E. Nylon
- F. Polyester
- G. Zari



**Table 5:** Optical Brighteners and Stiffening Agents

S. No	Optical brighteners/stiffening Agents	(N=1000) Name of the material (in percent) *						
		Cotton	Silk	Wool	Rayon	Nylon	Polyester	Zari
1	Optical brighteners							
	a. Powder	42	7	6	5	9	25	75
	b. Liquid	77	9	2	7	8	11	28
2	Stiffening Agent							
	a. Rice	68	13	13	11	12	17	12
	b. Wheat	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	c. Maida	2	2	0	0	0	0	2
	d. Sago	7	30	4	1	1	2	23
	e. Tapioca	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	f. Gum	1	17	0	0	0	0	2
g. Commercial starch	68	24	12	15	16	19	24	

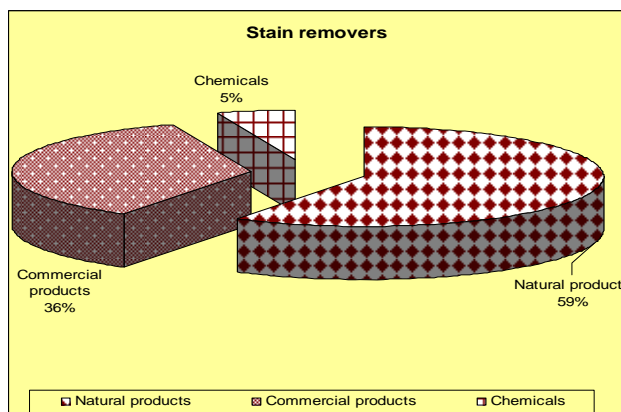
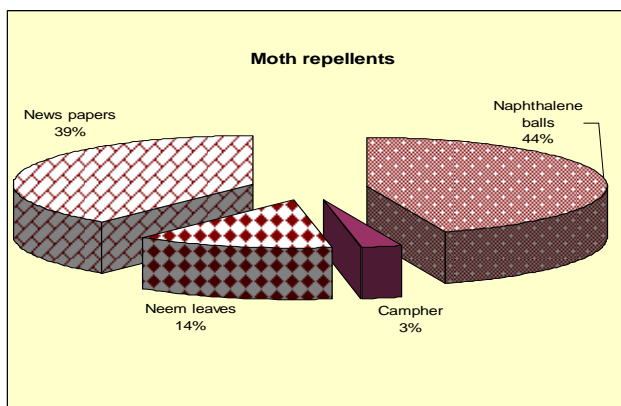
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
**Table 6:** Preference of Moth Repellents and Stain Removers

S. No	Preference of moth repellents And stain removers	(N=1000) In percent*	
		Yes	No
1.	Moth repellents		
	a. Naphthalene balls	39	61
	b. Campher	3	97
	c. Neem leaves	14	86
2.	Stain removers		
	a. Natural products	59	41
	b. Commercial products	36	64
	c. Chemicals	5	95

Multiple responses



**Table 6:** Awareness of Care Symbols

S. No	Symbol	Meaning	Response of the subjects (N=1000)	
			Before learning (%)	After learning (%)
1		Wash	12	93
2		Home wash	10	90
3		Soft wash	5	85
4		Bleach	4	71
5		Do not wring	42	100
6		Dry clean	1	68
7		Do not tumble dry	1	82
8		Dry flat	1	98
9		Pressing not allowed	22	96
10		Pressing at low temperature	4	85

\*t-value significant at 1% level.

**Table 7:** Awareness of Care Particulars

S. No	Criteria	Right response	No. of subjects stating (N=300) (%)	
			Before learning	After learning
1	Laundering	Soft water	9	91
2	Silk	Natural cleanser	3	82
3	Cotton	Any detergent	16	98
4	Dry cleaning	Wash with petrol or solvent	0	71
5	Stiffening agent for silk	gum	0	68
6	Stain	Remove when fresh	11	89
7	Woolens	Dry flat	13	97
8	Carpets, mattresses and pillows	Vacuum cleaning	8	72
9	Natural moth repellents	Neem leaves	0	65
10	Animal fibers	Moth repellent in storage	10	90

\*t-value significant at 1% level

**Table 8:** Awareness of Stain Removal

S. No	Type of stain	Right response	No. of subjects (N=300) (%)	
			Before Learning	After Learning
1	Perspiration	Soak in warm water and detergent	9	72
2	Blood	Do not use hot water	2	87
3	Rust	Lemon juice and salt	0	82
4	Ball point ink	Combination stain	0	77
5	Oil	Talcum powder or ash	11	93
6	Urine	Vinegar	0	65
7	Coffee	Use detergent, not soap	0	81
8	Mud	Soak in cold water	18	96

\*Significant at 1% level.

**Findings**

- Common method of wash used for cotton and wool was hand wash (90 and 84% respectively) where as zari and silks were given to dry wash by 69 and 55% respectively. Washing machine was commonly used to launder polyesters by 16 per cent.
- Most of the women consumers had the habit of using kneading and squeezing methods of hand wash.
- It was concluded from the data respondents consider dry cleaning as wash in dry cleaning center by 61 percent.
- Various laundering materials used for washing were soft water and detergent powder. All the fabrics were dried in sunlight except silk and zari which were dried in shade. For pressing all materials were given to dobi. Storage was in wall cupboard except silk, wool and zari which are stored in steel cupboard.

- Survey says most of the respondents use liquid form of optical brighteners (77%) and commercial starch for various fabrics in 12-68 per cent. Only for cotton rice starch was used by 68 percent.
- Forty four per cent of the respondents use naphthalene balls as moth repellents and natural stain removers (59%) for removing stains.
- Awareness of care symbols before education process was found to be very meager except the symbol do not wring (~~☒~~) by 42 per cent. After learning their awareness and capacity to understand the symbols has increased greatly from 68 to 100 percentages. The investigator found that the selected subjects were very much interested to know about care symbols as they commonly see them in many products specifically ready-made garments. They also felt it was necessary for them to know about care symbols for proper care of the garments. Statistical analysis of t-test was significant at 1% level.
- Investigator's inference was through teaching, learning process subjects change in awareness of care particulars was by 64 per cent to maximum 84 per cent in relation to necessity of woolens to dry on flat surface when laundered. Hence an enormous change and enthusiasm was found among the learners to learn unknown or less known facts of care particulars. Teaching learning programme has been effective as calculated 't' value was significant at 1% level.
- From the instructional package used awareness of stain removal techniques used has increased from nil percentage to maximum up to 96 per cent. They were enthusiastic to know the stain removal techniques. The calculated value of 't' was significant at 1% level.

### Conclusion

Common method of wash used for cotton and wool was hand wash and silks were given to dry wash. Respondents consider dry cleaning as wash in dry cleaning center. Laundering materials used for washing were soft water and detergent powder. Survey says most of the respondents use liquid form of optical brighteners and commercial starch for various fabrics. Respondents use naphthalene balls as moth repellents and natural stain removers for removing stains.

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