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Designing for Khadi kurtis inspired from Mughal silhouettes for contemporary women wear

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Abstract

India is being known for its rich heritage and culture. It is also known as the home of many freedom fighters that played a very important role to free our country. Mahatma Gandhi is one of them leader, who gave us freedom. He is also the creator of Khadi, a fabric which transformed our nation. Khadi is known as a simple or non-lustrous fabric among customers so the demand of khadi is not too high although it is a fabric that is environment friendly and sustains our environment. To increase and promote the demand of khadi, it is most important thing to create some innovative and modern designs. Designing creates interesting visual aspects on its surface and beautifies its appearance; it is the virtuous feature of any fabric or garment. The main objective of this study was to promote the acceptance and popularity of Khadi amongst youth. Designs were developed using fashion software using appropriate elements as per the selected theme. The evaluation of these kurtis was done on the basis of 5 point rating scale on the basis of design, colour, pattern, and aesthetic appeal etc. A positive feedback was obtained from the respondents regarding acceptability to new designs, colour combination and uniqueness of Khadi kurtis. It was concluded from the data the present study had an innovative approach and filled a new zeal in the Khadi kurtis.

Keywords: Khadi, adaptation, silhouette, designing, inspiration

1. Introduction

In India, Khadi is not only a simply fabric or cloth but it is an entire movement begun by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The movement of khadi advocated an ideology, an inspiration that Indians can be self - dependent on cotton and free from the high - priced merchandise that they are purchasing from the britishers. Soon, Khadi came into light to become the symbol of defiance as massive bonfires were lighted across the country and the people of India fought against colonialism by burning their textiles of foreign countries. Khadi continued to grow into prominence and a place of pride for Indians. Over the years, Khadi, has lost its shine during India's liberation struggle, is a symbolized self - reliance and emancipation. The same thing is due to several reasons. It is a sustainable fabric because there is no process of making it harmful to nature. In spite of being a neoliberal fabric mediated by money and power, Khadi remains dependent on Gandhian values of simplicity, participation, equality, and independence. Khadi played an important role in Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhiji's Indian independence movement. It would be a good thing to call it as a movement. Everyone wants to involve and gain information and knowledge about environmentally friendly product and eco-friendly stuff at this time of the latest fashion and trends, and for this Khadi is the the most preferable solution. It is produced in a manner that keeps the environment free from pollution. Mohandas Kramchand Gandhiji has promoted khadi as it is a way to increase non-agricultural employment. They wanted to make it clear to the Indians that they could be self-directed on cotton and be liberated from coastly foreign goods.

Introduced with the intention to boycott foreign goods, Khadi became a Gandhiji - initiated national movement. In order to propagate, produce and sell khadi All India Spinners Association was launched in 1925. The techniques have been improved, and two lakh scale employment has been created. The movement continued after independence, and All India Khadi and Village Industries Board was created, which later culminated in the creation of Khadi, Village and Industries Commission. Today, KVIC is responsible for planning, promoting, organizing and implementing programs for the development of khadi and other

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rural village industries with the coordination of other rural development agencies where necessary.

Khadi is a fabric that is versatile. Khadi is the most environmentally friendly and sustainable product that uses no electrical support. It's the only textile activity that doesn't use fossil fuel. One-meter khadi fabric production consumes three liters of water, whereas only 55 liters would be needed for a conventional textile mill. It has the distinctive property of keeping the wearer warm and cool as per the season. This fabric has not a very soft texture but it has coarse texture which can be easily crumpled, which means that starch must be added to keep it firm and stiff. Khadi cotton has to be starched so it won't crumple easily. It is not harmful to the skin and available in many colors as synthetic fabrics. In the summer season, this cotton is

incredibly soothing due to its ventilation quality; it can soak up the wetness and keeps the user cool and dry. Khadi cotton is also available in plain and printed fabrics. The most common outfit of khadi cotton are Kurta and salwar but now days, many types of attires are also manufactured from khadi cotton like saris, salwar suits, fabric yarns, western tops, shirts, trousers, skirts, handkerchief, etc. For an elegant and rich, traditional appearance, Khadi silk is also available in different colours. It requires dry cleaning and after the first wash it can shrink about 3 percent. It's a reasonably overpriced

material, giving a royal and elegant look. The various types of apparels made from khadi silk are salwar kameez, kurta pajama, saris, dupattas, shirts, vest and jackets. Clothes such as kurta, jacket, sari blouses need to be lined to ensure their longevity.

The spinning of khadi is usually done by women and girls, and mostly by men weavers. The threads are interwoven during the spinning of khadi in such a way that the passage of air circulation in the fabric is provided.

Over the past few years, however, Khadi has taken the center stage. Khadi has suddenly transformed its branding and positioning in every sense from almost a commodity out of fashion. Now, Khadi has gained worldwide appreciation as it is made by hand, long lasting and organic. The fabric for the masses is produced by the masses. For imaginative creations, fashion designers are trying to recreate Khadi as their canvas. The products are unique in the sense that apart from being really "cottage" or "hand-spun" and "hand-woven". As India stepped in the 21st century, a high class of some famous fashion designers started to experiment with khadi to create contemporary work wear even for the bridal wear to ensure that Khadi remained in vogue. P. Ambre (2017) [4] also suggested in his study that there are so many steps are being taken into consideration towards changing Khadi's earlier image that shows it unfashionable.

Table 1.1 Showing Endeavour for promotion of khadi

S.N.	Year-wise Endeavour for promotion of khadi
1.	In 1985, designer Devika Bhojwani, a label named Swadeshi.
2.	In 1989, Devika Bhajwani displayed 85 dazzling khadi garments in a Fashion show produced by KVIC.
3.	In 1990, famous fashion designer Ritu Kumar presented her first Khadi Collection.
4.	In Sept 2000, a movement to revive shops of KVIC in India initiated by Vasundhara Raje.
5.	In May 2001, a new first air conditioned shop in New Delhi was opened by KVIC.
6.	In January 2002, some leading Indian fashion designers organized textile exhibition on khadi.
7.	In October 2012, then the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi on the eve of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary promoted khadi by appealing to all to buy and adopt khadi culture.
8.	In 2014-15, the production and sale of Khadi increased by 6%.
9.	In June 2015, some famous independent fashion designers like Gaurang Shah, Sabyasachi, Fayakun, Red Sister Blue, Cotton Rack and many others started to create contemporary khadi garments. They initiated this project with combined efforts of KVIC with international standards of quality.
10.	In December 2015, Theair India ordered for their uniforms made by Khadi worth INR 1.21 crore.
11.	In January 2016, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi appealed to the citizens of India to adopt khadi through their radio programme 'Man Ki Baat'.
12.	In July 2016, IIT Bombay ordered 350 robes for their ceremony of convocation. This initiative could be very helpful for promoting the feeling of Nationalism among students.
14.	In 2018, the production of Khadi fabric increased upto 62% with last five years.
15.	In 2019, an exhibition of memorabilia Related to Khadi, archival, prints, charkha etc was organized. Here, the Khadi was addressed as "Azadi ki khadi: Fabric of freedom". The chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath also suggested that Khadi should be used as school uniforms.

Today Khadi is a true symbol of the personal identity of Indian people. It is also stipulated that only this Indian fabric should shuffle Indian flags. Because of its declining development, the deputation of Khadi and Village Industries, MSME Government Ministry is extending its support to encourage the use of khadi among young people of India.

There are also a plenty of effort being made to promote khadi by government or other NGOs in this era of fashion. Even KVIC (Khadi and Village Industries Commission) has decided to take a time leap by appointing their advisor to Ritu Beri, who wants to change the image of Khadi from boring to chic. Apart of this, many Indian Fashion designers as Ritu Kumar, Neeta Lula, Rohit Bal, Gaurang Shah and Devika Bhojwani are also working with hand woven textiles with modern designs to promote khadi amongst youth. Their efforts have been successful in creating a modern look and enhanced appeal for the fabric. Some of their products, shawls, kurtas,

scarves and pants are now also being sold internationally. As a brand and as a designer wear, the fabric is now being promoted. These fashion designers are trying to keep Indian textiles alive by combining handloom elements with other fabrics and designs to make them trendy and fashionable.

1.1 Advantages of khadi fabric

As khadi is a sustainable, consumer - friendly fabric. It can meet all of this modern era's demands. Some of Khadi's advantages were discussed below:

- Khadi is a unique fabric because it has handcrafted self textured designs.
- Khadi is a transformable fabric, it makes feel warm in winter and cool in summer season.
- In this modern era, Khadi is also being served as a fashion fabric.
- Khadi can also be blend with many fibres that can create

a variety of blended fabrics, which are of better properties.

- Khadi is an eco-friendly fabric because no environmental pollution and no environment harming process takes place during the process of it.
- Khadi also supports the poor rural Indian artisans, who are totally dependent on their work to earn their livelihood.
- Khadi is a fabric with many good properties that makes it special, it can be used for many purposes like formal wear, occasion wear, casual wear etc.
- Khadi can also be used for home furnishing products i.e. table mats, curtains, bed-sheets etc.

1.2 Disadvantages of khadi fabric

As if there are advantages of something, there is also some disadvantages of that, Khadi has too many advantages, despite its many disadvantages:

- It gets easily crumpled.
- It is required to starch the fabric
- Khadi requires maintenance and care
- Khadi is expensive
- Production of khadi is less
- It bleeds of colors
- Khadi gets easily shrinkage

Although Khadi has many disadvantages, it also has some environmentally friendly qualities that make it expansive and unique from the other fabrics on the market. Khadi is the fabric with a great deal of character and an inseparable part of Indian culture. Over the decades, Khadi has moved from the identity fabric of a freedom fighter to a fashion garment. The Khadi of today has many faces that are not limited to cotton alone. The precise technology involved in Khadi's production varies from region to region, as its decoration techniques. Today there is such a growing demand for Khadi that they are unable to meet market demand despite the millions of workers across the country involved in spinning it. Yet Khadi's beauty is laid in its handmade quality with its inherent defects. Khadi is not only a sound economic proposal, but a science as well. The present study was conducted on the lines of further reviving the humble Khadi associated with Gandhian philosophy amongst the consumers. It also aimed to investigate the acceptability of Khadi as a fashion statement amongst the youth. This study would be certainly a basis for promoting Khadi kurtis and provide new designs and patterns for women kurtis, to meet the urgent demand for new designs in the era of fast fashion.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- To develop e-repository for the textures of Khadi.
- To designs for Khadi kurtis inspired from Mughal silhouettes using Fashion CAD.

- To prepare and evaluate designs sheets for Khadi kurtis.
- To assess acceptability of designs for Khadi kurtis inspired from Mughal silhouettes.

1.3 Delimitations

- The study was limited to designing of Khadi kurtis only for women.
- The study was limited to Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra only.
- Kurtis were designed taking inspiration from Mughal silhouettes only.

2. Methodology

2.1 Locale of the study

The location of the study is referred to as the location of the study. Convenient sampling method has been selected for the study. To carry out for this study, Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, was selected.

2.2 Sample selection

Sample selection was made from the study area Dayalbagh Educational Institute i.e. on the basis of convenient access to the researcher. For this, 30 Women respondents were selected from graduate and postgraduate students. The samples selected had a background in clothing and textiles so the designs were found to be correct.

2.3 Adaptation of designs for kurtis

The kurtis designed were inspired from Mughal silhouettes using Jindex Fashion studio software. An e-repository of different Khadi textures was developed and applied on the designed Kurtis. Total 10 designs were created and the designs were developed keeping in mind their suitability, uniqueness of design, fashionable and sense of aesthetic for ladies kurtis.

2.4 Preparation of questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was developed to collect information about consumer liking /disliking for Khadi kurtis, preference for applied design, colour, and construction details etc.

2.5 Evaluation of created designs

Khadi kurti designs sheets were analyzed by 30 respondents who were aware of latest fashion trends. Design sheets were displayed and judges were asked to evaluate each design on the basis of different parameters stated. Ranking method was used as a tool for visual analysis of designs.

3. Results

3.1 Developed design sheets

10 Khadi kurtis were designed and were displayed by letter 'D' accordingly.



3.1.1 Ranking of Khadi kurtis

Table 1.2: Preferences of respondents for some features of designs

Design	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10
Uniqueness	9	2	7	4	1	5	3	6	8	10
Colour combination	2	9	1	7	5	6	3	8	4	10
Aesthetic appeal	8	10	1	7	3	2	4	6	5	9
Modern	9	8	1	5	3	4	2	6	7	10

The above table shows the ranking of the created designed. All created designs were displayed for ranking. The most preferred design was given 1st rank and the least preferred

design was given 10th rank. Total 10 designs were ranked by the respondents by their most preferred and least preferred choices.

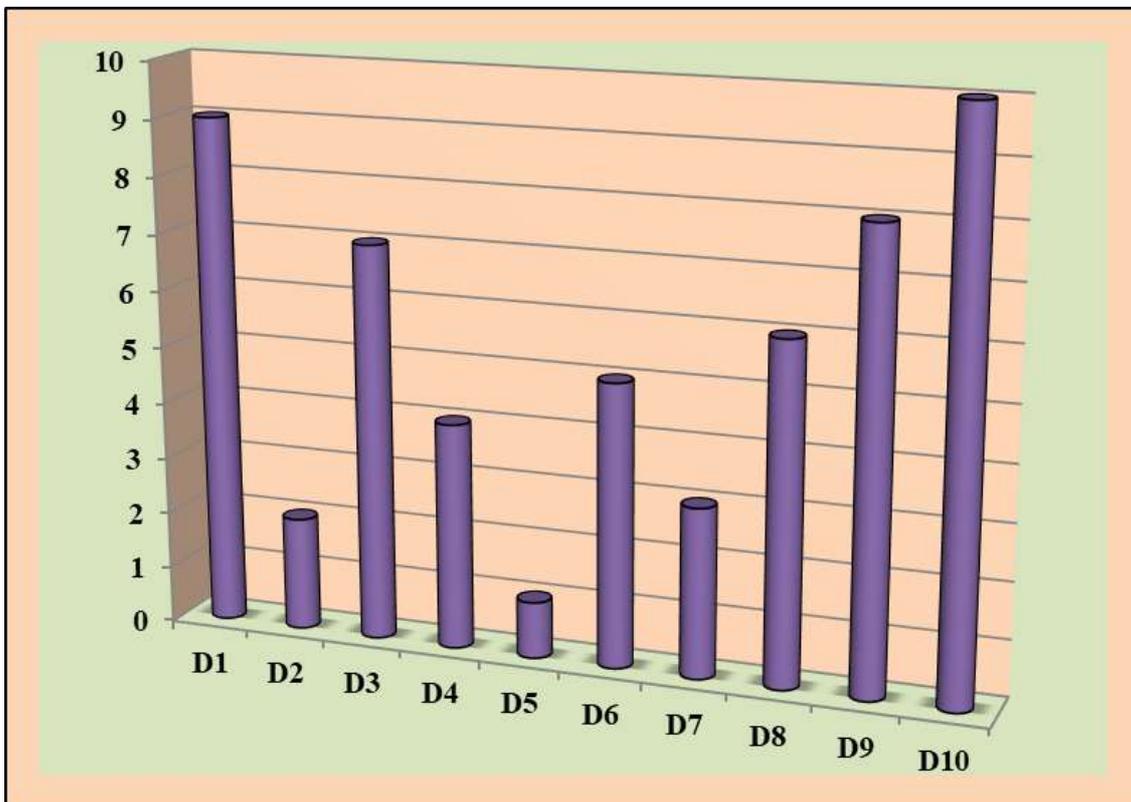


Fig 1: Evaluation of uniqueness of design

Figure 1 shows that in the selection criteria of uniqueness of design, design 5 scored lowest rank and design 10 got highest

rank, it shows that design 5 is most preferable and design 10 was least favored by respondents.

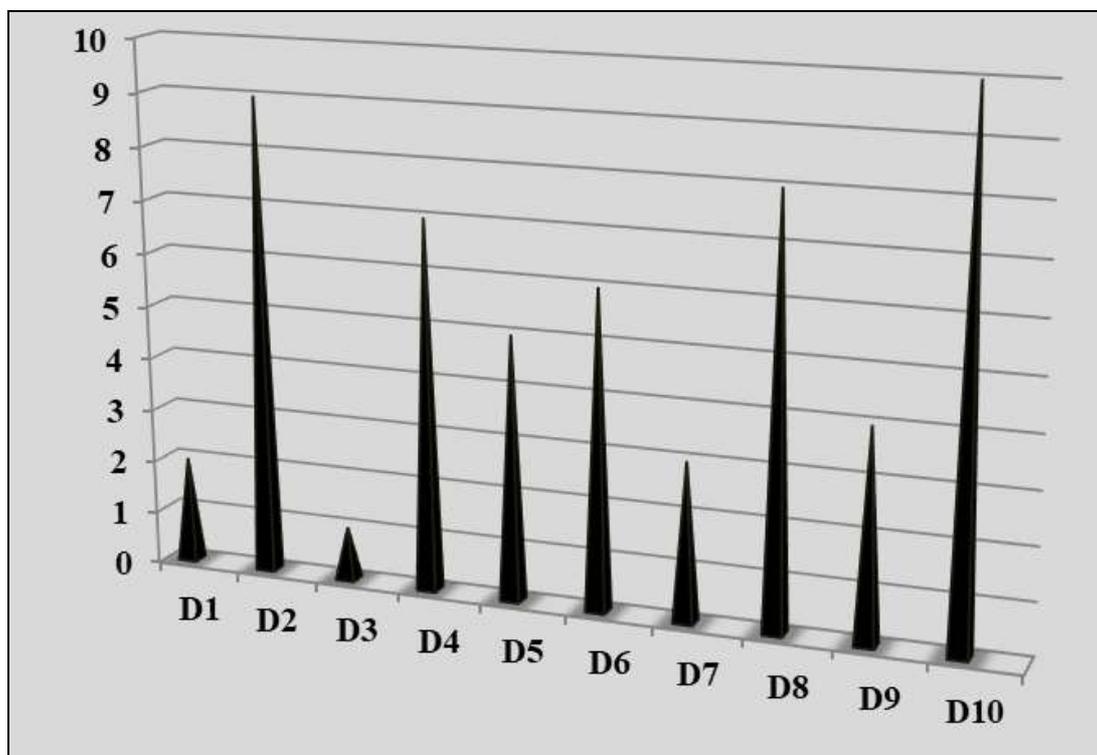


Fig 2: Evaluation of colour combination of designs

Figure 2 shows that in the selection criteria of colour combination of Khadi kurtis, design D3 obtained lowest rank and design D10acquired the highest rank. It shows that design

D3 is most preferable design and design D10 is least preferable among respondents in terms of its colour combination.

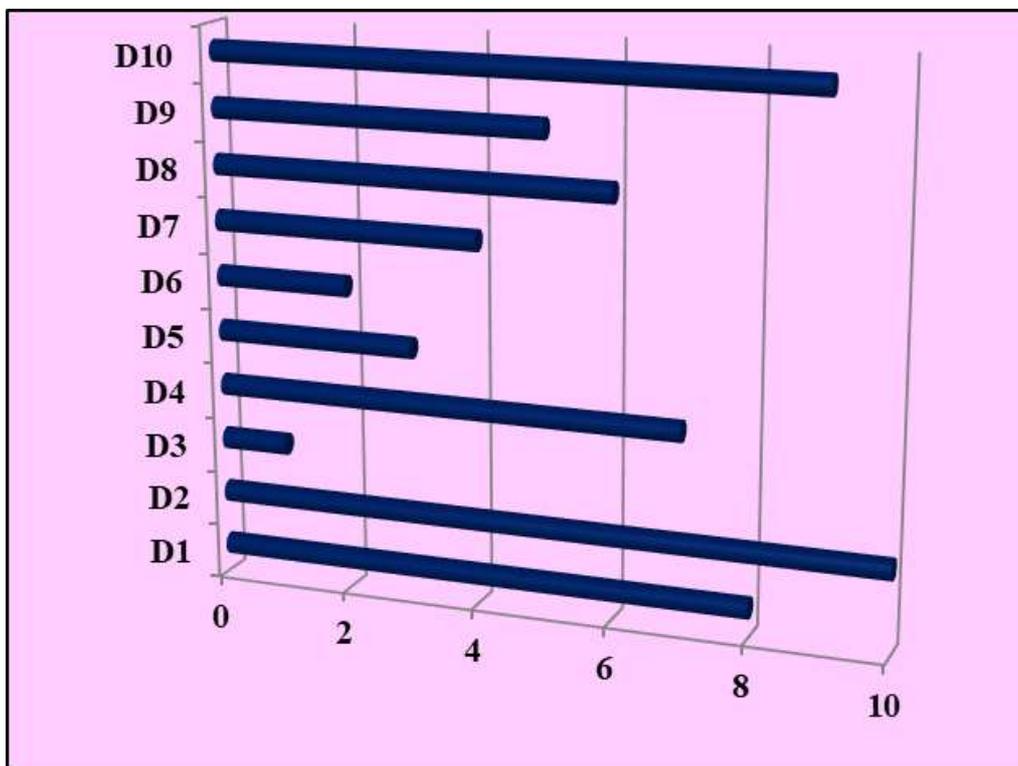


Fig 3: Evaluation of aesthetic appeal of designs

Figure 3 shows design D2 was least aesthetic while design D3 was the most aesthetically appealing to the respondents so, the

most preferred design was given 1st rank and least preferred design was given 10th rank.

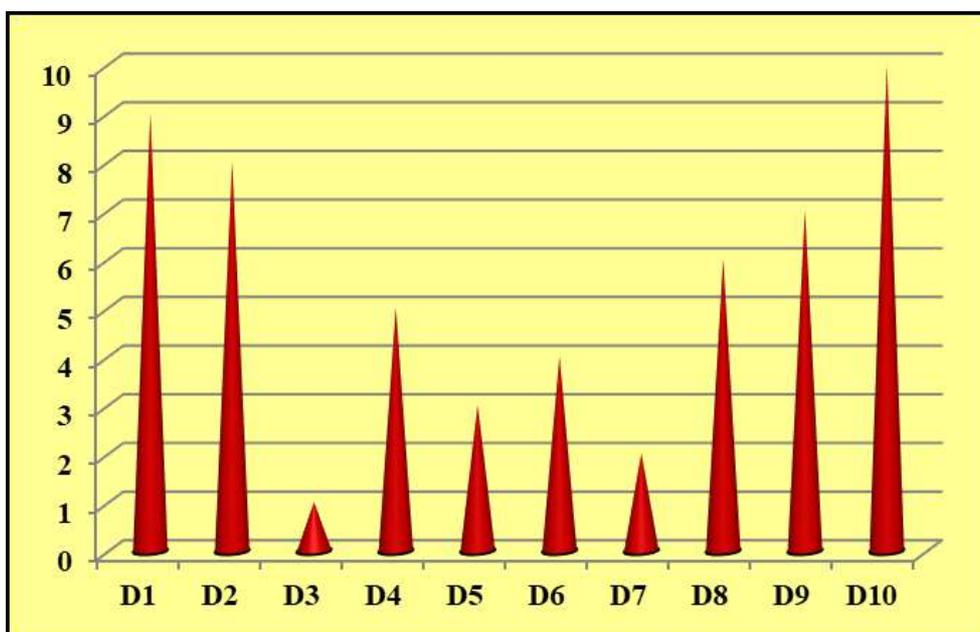


Fig 4: Evaluation of contemporary elements in the designs

Figure 4 shows that design D3 was the most preferred contemporary Khadi kurti design and design D10 got lowest rank, was the least favored contemporary Khadi kurti design by respondents.

4. Conclusion

In this modern and technological era, there are several new fabrics or materials have been taken place in the market because of that the demand for the variety of different types of fabrics has increased. Today, the fabric created by handloom can be included in the latest fashion and trends. Khaddar isn't simply a cloth, however it is a movement that

ought to be taken forward. Most of the respondents were able to purchase the kurtis at possible worth. Khadi fabric is very simple and not so much stylized fabric so, the features and quality of this fabric does not meet to the requirement of the customers but if it is combined with some new and innovative designed it can be more helpful to promote the use of it. To meet the demands of younger generation, the fabric of their attires should be more accessible, well-priced, stylish enough to fulfill the demands and needs of the customers but Khadi does not fulfill their needs, desires and feeling of uniqueness. It can be concluded from the study that all the attires were liked by respondents. Most of the respondents showed their

willingness to buy these designed khadi kurtis at feasible price.

Khadi is associated with an exclusive cloth, thus its every part is distinctive that can't be replaced with any other fabric. The features of khadi are very distinctive, its advantages are varied these days as earlier. It's a Eco-friendly fabric that can pass the air, it is elegant and most significantly, supports the tiny cotton farmers and spinners so that they can earn their livelihood. These designed kurtis fulfilled the style of modern trend and fashion and satisfy consumer's need. It was also mentioned by most of the respondents that these kurtis are very fashionable and with the feature of fashionable these are created by Khadi fabric so it is also a very good characteristic of it. Mughal Silhouette also increased the aesthetic charm in these designer kurtis. Thus, it can be said that the design technique i.e. mughal silhouette utilized in this study helped for increasing the aesthetic charm of these kurtis and promoted the sacred cloth among respondents and designed technique used in this study helped in improving the aesthetic appeal of khadi kurtis.

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