

A Study on Acceptability of Lined Jackets Made from Jute Blended and Union Fabrics

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Abstract: *The study 'Acceptability of lined jackets made from jute blended and union fabrics' was undertaken with an objective to provide diversification for the jute fibre. An attempt was made to study various factors influencing the buying behavior of jackets. A good response towards jackets made out of jute blended and union fabrics with lining was found through a preliminary study. Jackets were worn by young adults the most and black was found as the most popular colour for jackets. The designs and the fabrics for construction of jackets were selected by a panel of judges. Construction details of jackets and preference towards the constructed jackets was assessed through a structured questionnaire for a purposive random sample of 75 females. The data collected was analyzed by percentage, ranking and two way ANOVA tests. Jacket with halter neckline and black jute-cotton blend fabric was most preferred. Overall appeal and colour were found as the important factors affecting the preference for the constructed jackets while garment and lining fabric was not considered as an important factor. There was an appreciation for such kind of attempt towards diversification for jute fibre in the segment of fashion apparels such as jackets.*

Keywords: Jute diversification, Jute blend and union fabric, Lined jackets

1. Introduction

Jute is a natural lingo-cellulosic fibre, under the category of bast fibres which is obtained from the stem of a plant. The jute fibre possesses high strength and stiffness and much lower extensibility implying that it is strong and dimensionally stable. These properties help use of jute for making of rope, twines, braids and nets. High strength, good dimensional stability and low cost, easy availability, eco-friendliness is specific characteristics of jute based fabrics used for hessian and sacks.^[3]

Owing to the low price of jute and its steady supply in sufficient quantity, jute established its position at the top as raw material for packing. But the high price and short supply of jute in the past few years have done harm to the jute industry. A large number of fibres such as polypropylene, natural fibre like cotton have tried to replace jute. In the present context, there is a need for orienting jute from its present status of struggle against other alternatives in area of packaging, to a positively prospering commodity having diverse applications such as jute pulp and paper, handicrafts including jute jewellery and gifts items, jute non-woven products for industrial applications like in the automobile industry, insulation/encasings etc., jute composites and particle boards of households, interior applications and knock-down furniture, jute geo-textiles applied for prevention of soil erosion, rural roads, embankment protection, land slide prevention, landscaping, and horticulture applications, home textiles comprising floor coverings, carpets, mats, under-laying and wall hangings etc., fashion garments and accessories, jute and jute blended fabrics / decorative fabrics.^[4]

In order to supplement the deficiencies of jute fibre such as coarseness, efforts have been made for the last two decades to blend jute fibres with other fibres, viz., viscose, rayon, wool, polypropylene, cotton etc. entirely in jute machinery

system, in order to produce a variety of products to suit different end-use requirements such as furnishing, apparels such as jackets etc.^{[1][2]}

A jacket is a type of sleeved hip- or waist-length garment for the upper torso. It is generally shorter, ending just below the waist and often lighter. Some jackets are fashionable, while others serve as protective clothing. Lining is a unit assembled in the same silhouette as the jacket. It is used to prevent the outer fabric from coming in direct contact with the body, to facilitate putting on and putting off the jacket, to provide a clean, inside finish when attached and to prolong the life of the jacket.^[5]

2. Aims and Objectives

The jute sector, once upon a time known as the sunrise industry, earned a lot of profit and foreign exchange. However, bulk handling techniques and synthetic substitutes made jute industry sick. The steady decline in markets for traditional jute products like sacks, ropes, twines, carpet backing etc. forced the jute industry to take up programmes for development of innovative jute products. Diversification of jute products is expected to open up new possibilities of reviving the jute economy and to help to improve the economic condition of farmers and workers engaged in the industry. One of the diversified products made from jute could be apparels such as jackets. Although there has always been a substantial market for jackets and coats, there has been a significant expansion in the recent years as more and more women have entered professional careers where jackets can be used as an important work wear.

Keeping the above subject in mind, the present study was undertaken to study the various product characteristics influencing the selection of jackets, to design jackets made from jute blended and union fabrics and to study the acceptability of the jackets constructed for women wear.

Volume 5 Issue 9, September 2016

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3. Methodology

In this study the methodology adopted to collect the data for analysis was as follows:

- **Sample:** The present study was done by selecting the sample by the purposive method. Fifty females belonging to age group 15 to 25 years and 25 to 35 years from the city of Kolkata were selected.
- **Preliminary Study:** Eight designs each for long and short jackets were sketched. Eight fabric swatches were taken. Close ended questionnaire was prepared and administered on ten garment industry experts. Two designs each from long and short jacket designs and four fabrics were selected for the final study. Market survey was done for lining fabric also and taffeta was the selected lining fabric.
- **Detailed study:** A structured questionnaire was constructed keeping in view the buying behavior towards jackets, preference of fabrics for jackets and construction details of jackets.
- **Physical testing of the chosen fabrics:** Fabric density, thickness, crease recovery, stiffness testing were done for the selected fabrics.
- **Construction of Jackets:** The set of four selected patterns were cut and stitched with lining using the four different fabrics selected for the study.
- **Assessment of Constructed Jackets:** The constructed jackets were shown to the respondents and they were requested to rank them. Opinion of the respondents was taken on the basis of various factors such as fabric, colour, fit, cut, construction details, comfort, overall appeal etc.

- **Collection of Data:** A survey was done by displaying all the jackets and the questionnaire was administered on the respondents.
- **Analysis of the data:** The data collected was interpreted and statistical tests were undertaken.

4. Results and Discussions

From the preliminary study it was seen that most of the respondents were keen on jackets made out of jute blended and union fabrics with lining. Out of the following categories, i.e. adolescents, young adults, middle aged adults and old people, jackets were worn by the adolescents and young adults the most. Black was the most popular colour of jackets. Majority of the people would not prefer embellishments on the jackets

The results of the detailed study showed that majority of the respondents preferred comfortable lined jackets over jackets without lining. Taffeta was found to be the most preferred fabric for lining followed by satin, lawn and muslin. Most of the respondents preferred jackets with V-neckline, collars, full sleeves, flap pockets, zippers and jackets of short length. Out of different materials generally used for jackets, respondents preferred denim followed by fur, tweed, leather and lastly jute. But when jute was compared with jute blend and union fabrics, 82% of respondents showed interest. They felt that jute blend and union fabrics were softer and smoother, had better drape, and were less stiff and less hairy. But some respondents felt that jute had a more natural and trendy look and a higher aesthetic appeal.

Table 1: Physical properties of the selected jute union and blend fabrics

Fabric	Thickness (in mm)	Bending length (in cm)		Crease Recovered Angle (in degrees)		Number of Threads Per Inch	
		WARP	WEFT	WARP	WEFT	WARP	WEFT
F1	.75	1.5	2.5	105	95	48	28
F2	.4	1	2.2	100	65	50	30
F3	.5	.75	.5	100	75	44	32
F4	.72	2.5	2.9	90	70	25	23

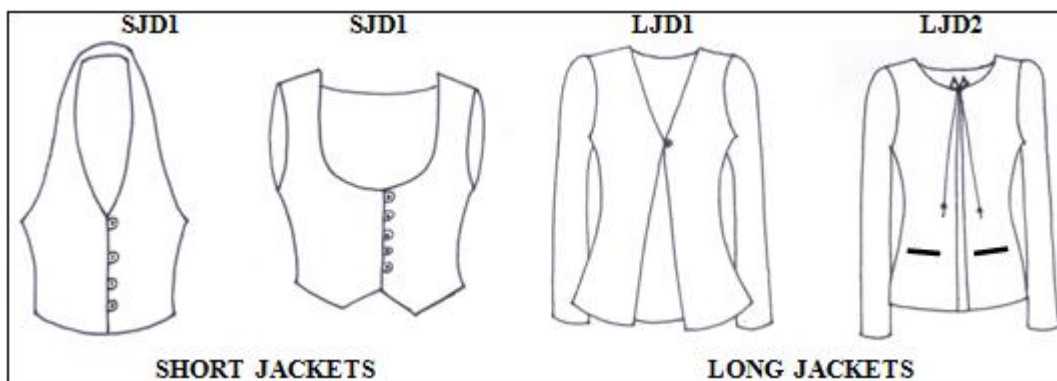


Figure 1: Designs selected for jackets

Out of the four designs selected for the study (Figure 1), jacket with halter neckline(SJD1) was most preferred. It had a more fashionable look compared to other jackets and therefore had a good response. Black coloured jute-cotton blend fabric (F3) was preferred the most which could be for the colour or for the overall softness and smoothness of the fabric.

The second preference of design was for jacket with V-shaped neckline(LJD1). Off-white coloured jute-cotton union fabric (F1) also showed high ranking. The fabric had a good aesthetic appeal which could be because of the weave and also its feel was most soft in comparison to the other fabrics, which could be the reasons for its preference.

Waistcoat being a short fitted jacket had a fashionable look which could be a reason for its 3rd rank(SJD2). Reasons for

this design's less appreciation in comparison to the previous two designs could be due to the contrast of a rounded neckline which might have clashed with a V-shaped hemline. Some respondents might have liked the design for its trendy look.

The lowest preference for jacket with round neck, full sleeves and beige colour jute-viscose blend fabric could be because of the design that probably lacked innovation and the fabric which was most stiff and lacked drape to a great extent (LJD2).

Short jackets had a higher comfort level compared to the long jackets. (F4) i.e. jute-viscose blend fabric in beige colour was stiff and had a poor drape which could be the reason for jackets constructed with that fabric had a low comfort level according to most of the respondents.

Long jackets with full sleeves had a higher preference as a winter wear. Also jackets made with thicker fabrics, i.e. jute-cotton union fabric (F1) and jute-viscose blend fabric (F4) showed preference as a winter wear.

Fabric	Jackets constructed			
	Designs			
	SJD1	SJD2	LJD1	LJD2
F1				
F2				
F3				
F4				

Figure 2: Jackets constructed

Most of the respondent liked the fabric used for lining. 75% of the respondents felt that a combination of all factors such as smoothness and softness, easy to slip in, comfort influenced their preference for a lining fabric.

As per the costing done for the jackets, selling price of the jackets was estimated. Most of the respondents felt that the jackets were low priced. The result didn't show much relation between preference for a jacket and response towards selling. Consumer buying behavior being highly complex, dependent on combination of various social,

psychological, economic and other factors; its relation to selling of a product cannot be completely understood.

5. Conclusion

For orienting jute from its present status of struggle against other alternatives, mainly in the area of packaging to a positively prospering commodity having diverse applications, the versatility and all the positives of jute need to be appreciated. To meet the dynamics of ever changing demand driven market, new designs, products and technological innovations in the jute sector is required. It

was found that such kind of attempt towards diversification for jute fibre in the segment of fashion apparels such as jackets constructed from jute blend and union fabrics was well accepted and appreciated.^[6]

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