

# Maternity Kameez for Expecting Mothers

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## Abstract

*In today's world the importance of appearance and personal well being have been identified, and highly valued. Good grooming with appropriate clothing not only enhances natural beauty but also compensates for its lack. It is true that functional cum comfortable clothes influence both physical and emotional well being.*

*The pregnant woman needs clothes that are comfortable, undemanding and easily maintainable as possible. Hence the present research was undertaken to understand the requirements of the expectant mothers during different stages of their pregnancy. Their needs were analyzed and clothing preferences for various functional and designing attributes were sought out. A questionnaire was developed for personal interview to assess their clothing requirements. Various designs of maternity kameez were sketched as per their requirement. These requirements were incorporated in kameez designs and finally constructed. The developed maternity kameezes were highly acceptable in wear trial.*

**Key words-**Expectant mother, maternity kameez, pregnancy, functional attributes, designing attributes

## 1. Introduction

Clothing or dress is a system of communication that is highly visible. Verbal communication might stop, but clothing continues to convey messages about the

wearer<sup>2</sup>. Individuals choose among alternatives and attempt to select styles that will communicate the desired impression<sup>4</sup>.

Every change in life situation, i.e.; birth, entering school and college, marriage and motherhood requires special changes in wardrobe. Hence, clothes worn by an individual should be according to his or her body needs. The needs of the expectant mother for clothing are quite different from usual normal women<sup>1</sup>.

In case of pregnancy from the fourth month especially when increasing size of abdomen becomes noticeable, the mother begins to feel the need of special clothes. The dress of expectant mothers should be designed so that attention is diverted from those parts of the body where physical changes occur during pregnancy to other parts of the body, thereby creating an illusion. A beautiful neckline, bands, yoke, sleeves and other constructional features incorporated in a kameez, will serve this purpose. However the middle part of the body needs to be treated differently so that the dress is more comfortable and has a room for such physical changes. Nevertheless, comfort is an important factor in determining the designs of clothing for an expectant mother<sup>9</sup>.

Now a days more women will have the dual role of parent and member of workforce. Despite changing roles of women, nearly 96 per cent of all women marry and about 90 per cent have at least one child. Many of them are continuing to work through much of their pregnancy. This also creates a need for more acceptable and

fashionable clothing suited to special need of this special group<sup>2</sup>.

In recent years, maternity clothes have taken on new importance. This importance may be attributed to the fact, that a woman should be well dressed during this period as at any other time, has become accepted in our country. The existing maternity wear brands are limited in their appeal to the masses because of their western styling, pricing and most importantly the garment's short useful life. This market chiefly includes inner wear as compared to outerwear<sup>3</sup>. The styles available are very western so not suited for Indian socio-economic requirements.

So the need of the hour is a garment which overcomes all these problems, garment which is smart, a garment that expands with the growth of the abdomen. The kameezes that allow expectant mothers to participate in a wider range of activities in a public life. Keeping in view the fact, the present study was undertaken to design suitable maternity kameez with comfort and aesthetic attributes for the expecting mothers.

## 2. Methodology

Descriptive cum experimental research design was used. In order to study the functional and designing features of clothing, descriptive research design with suitable survey method was adopted. Experimental research design was used for designing, construction, evaluation, and acceptability assessment of maternity kameez.

Kanpur city of Uttar Pradesh state was selected purposively for carrying out the present investigation because this is the most populous and important city of U.P. One fifty expectant mothers were selected randomly from identified localities to get the

adequate information. Expectant mothers in different stages of their pregnancy ie; below 5 months, between 5 to 6 months, between 6 to 7 months, between 7 to 8 months and above 8 months were selected.

The data was analyzed by frequency, percentage, weighted score and mean. A total of ten designs of functional maternity kameezes were sketched for the expectant mothers on the basis of their preferences for functional and designing attributes, literature reviewed and imagination of the researcher. Appropriate sketches of maternity kameez were developed keeping in mind the physical changes and functional aspects during pregnancy period. Emphasis was given on the incorporation of suitable functional and designing features so that expectant mothers could not face the problems of fitting, uncomfotbilty and awkwardness of dress appeal.

The sketched designs of maternity kameezes were shown to the panel of 30 experts from Clothing and Textile field. Five most preferred designs were selected for construction. Constructed maternity kameez were subjected to wear trials and views of the respondents were taken regarding acceptance of the designed kameezes. Suitability of each feature of a kameez was taken on three point rating scale of unsatisfactory, satisfactory and highly satisfactory. Depending on the number of features in a kameez, these ratings were assigned scores and the total score obtained by each kameez is converted in to acceptability ratings<sup>6</sup>.

## 3. Results and Discussions

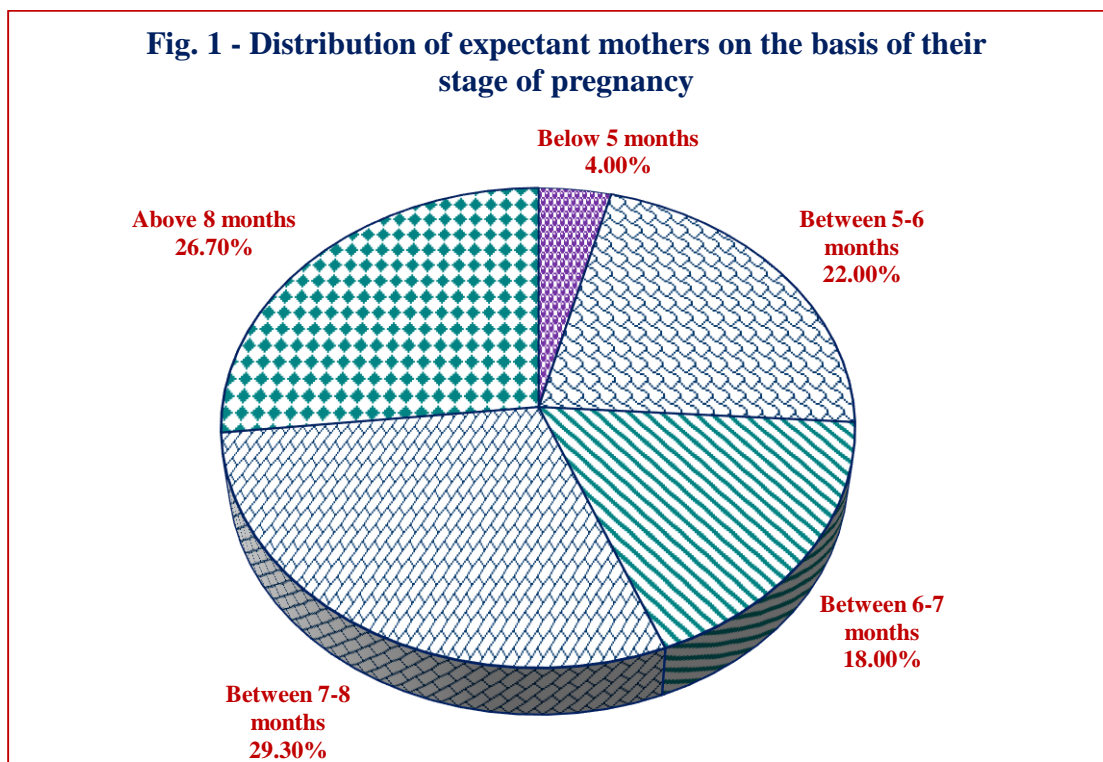
From the present investigation it was found that maximum 58.7% respondents were in the age group of 30 to 35, 27.3 per cent expectant mothers were of 25 to 30 years.

Fifty per cent of the total expectant mothers were engaged in service while 28.7 per cent were professionals and remaining 21.3 per cent were homemakers.

### 3.1 Pregnancy Stage of Expectant Mothers

Fig.-1 portrays that maximum expectant mothers, (74.0 per cent) had

entered in their third trimester of pregnancy whereas only 26.0 per cent were in the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester. Out of 74.0 per cent expectant mothers, 29.3 per cent had pregnancy of 7 to 8 months, 26.7 per cent were having more than 8 months pregnancy and remaining 18.0 per cent were 6 to 7 months pregnant. Among 26.0 per cent expectant mothers, 22.0 per cent were 5 to 6 months pregnant and only 4.0 per cent had the pregnancy below 5 months.



### 3.2 Preference for Features to be added in Maternity Kameezes

Maximum expectant mothers ie; 49.3 per cent chosen all features viz; good fit and comfortability, easy care, fullness features and fashionability except adjustability, for incorporation in their maternity kameezs. On the other hand 36.7 per cent expectant mothers want to have all features including adjustability in their maternity kameezs (Table-1).

Comfort should be the first consideration, at the same time attractiveness and styles are also important<sup>5</sup>. Maternity clothes are specially designed according to the comfort level of pregnant woman which they need during pregnancy. Comfort must be supplemented with the good look. Good looking dresses are very important to boost up confidence of

pregnant woman as they will look beautiful in specially designed clothes<sup>7</sup>.

**Table-1: Distribution of expectant mothers on the basis of preferred clothing features**  
N = 150

S.No.	Preferred Combination of Features	f	%
1.	Good Fit and Comfortable + Easy Care	8	5.3
2.	Good Fit and Comfortable + Easy Care+ Adjustable	4	2.7
3.	Good Fit and Comfortable + Easy Care+ Adjustable + Fullness Features	3	2.0
4.	Good Fit and Comfortable + Easy Care+ Fullness Features + Fashionable	74	49.3
5.	Good Fit and Comfortable + Easy Care + Fashionable	6	4.0
6.	All Features	55	36.7

### 3.3 Fitting Aspects of Maternity Kameez

**Table-2: Distribution of expectant mothers on the basis of fitting aspects**

N = 150

S. No.	Fitting Aspects of Maternity Kameez	Casual wear			Mean Scores	Ranks	Formal wear			Mean Scores	Ranks
		F	S	N			F	S	N		
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)			f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1.	Fitted	- (-)	9 (6.0)	141 (94.0)	1.1	IV	4 (2.7)	2 (1.3)	144 (96.0)	1.1	III
2.	Slightly Loose	29 (19.3)	49 (32.7)	72 (48.0)	1.7	III	37 (24.7)	18 (12.0)	95 (63.3)	1.6	II
3.	Loose	116 (77.3)	29 (19.3)	5 (3.3)	2.7	I	109 (72.7)	29 (19.3)	12 (8.0)	2.6	I
4.	Very Loose	5 (3.3)	107 (71.3)	38 (25.3)	1.8	II	2 (1.3)	16 (10.7)	132 (88.0)	1.1	III

*Multiple response for preference of sometimes and never frequency*

The statistics in Table 2 shows the preferences of the expectant mothers for

fitting aspects. It reveals that for casual wears, 1<sup>st</sup> rank was given to loose maternity

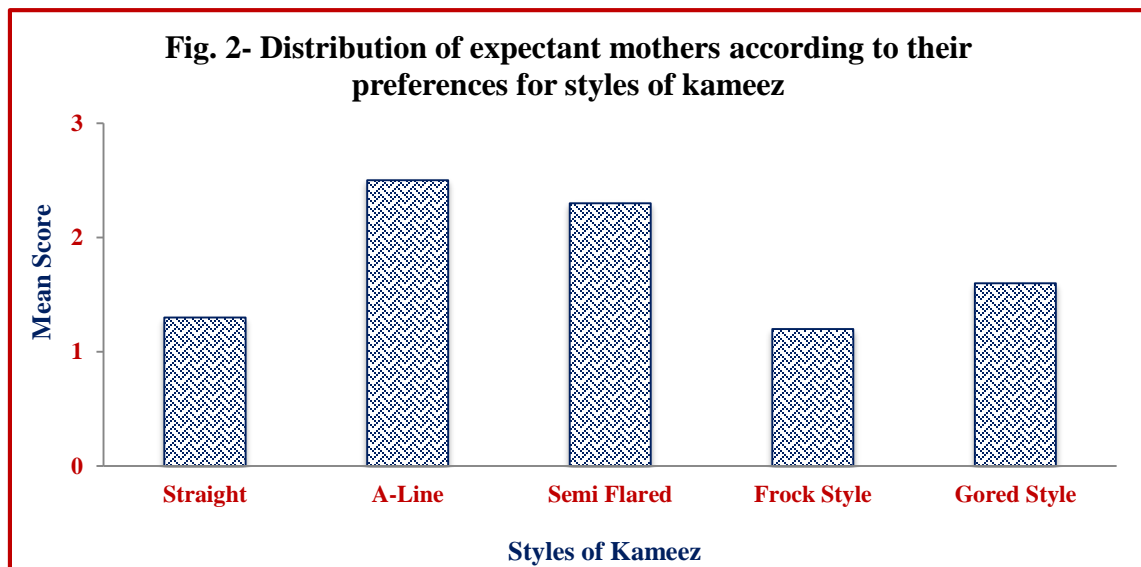
kameez followed by very loose kameezs that ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> while slightly loose kameezs and fitted kameezs were scored 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> ranks respectively. For formal wears also, expectant mothers liked loose kameezs and given rank 1<sup>st</sup> followed by rank 2<sup>nd</sup> which was given to slightly loose kameezs while

rank 3<sup>rd</sup> to both, very loose and fitted kameezs.

Clothes for pregnant women should have sufficient growth allowance to accommodate weight as well as bust, waist and hip girths. She needs comfortable clothes for free movements therefore she should wear slightly loose clothes<sup>8</sup>.

### 3.4 Preference for Styles of Kameez

On observing the mean scores, it is clear that A-line kameez scored 1<sup>st</sup> rank with mean score 2.5 and semi flared kameez was on 2<sup>nd</sup> rank with mean score of 2.3. On the other hand gored style, straight style and frock style scored 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> rank respectively (Fig.-2).



Expectant mothers liked A-line and flared style of kameez more than that of gored and frock style as A-line and flared styles provide room to the increasing bump without adding bulkiness.

### 3.5. Preferences for Type of Shalwar

**Table-3: Distribution of expectant mothers on the basis of type of shalwar**

N = 150

S.No.	Type of Shalwar	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Mean Scores	Ranks
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1.	Shalwar with belt	101 (67.3)	49 (32.7)	- (-)	2.7	I
2.	Shalwar without belt	-	7 (4.7)	143 (95.3)	1.0	VI
3.	Patiala	-	24 (16)	126 (82.0)	1.2	IV

4.	Semi Patiala	30 (20.0)	106 (70.7)	14 (9.3)	2.1	II
5.	Churidar with belt	19 (12.7)	107 (71.3)	24 (16.0)	2.0	III
6.	Churidar without belt	-	14 (9.3)	136 (90.7)	1.1	V

*Multiple response for preference of sometimes and never frequency*

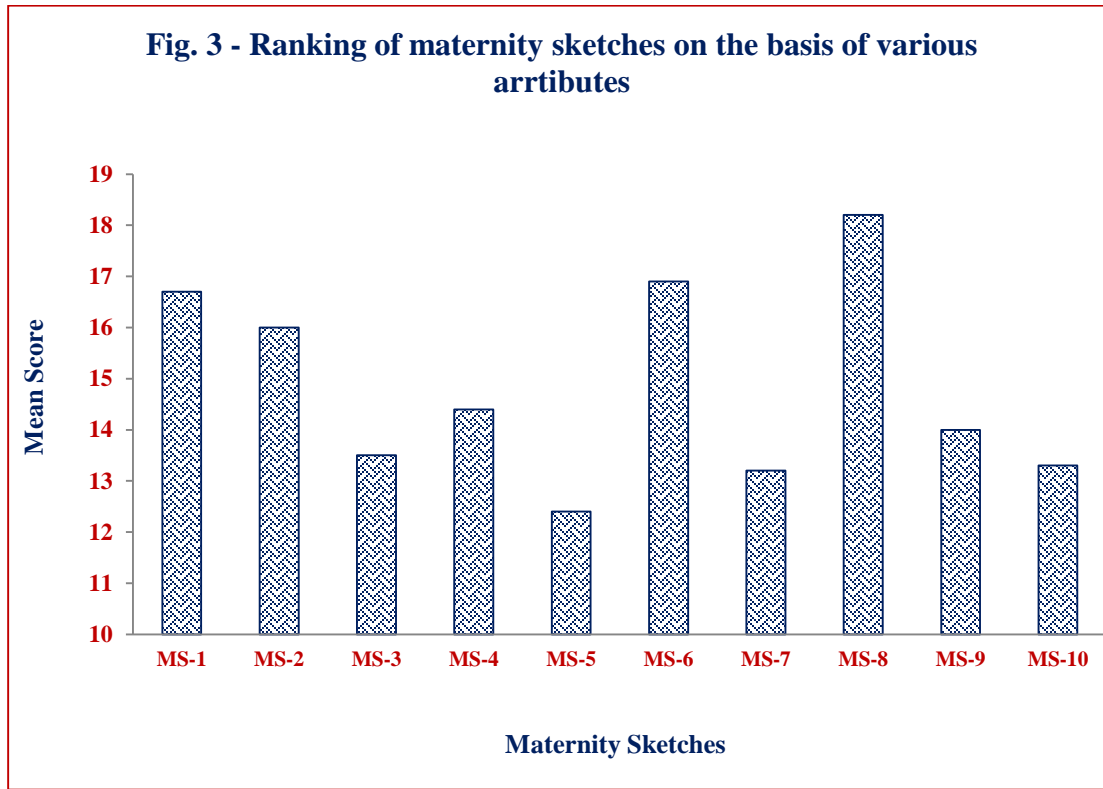
Table 3 reveals that the major proportion (67.3 per cent) of expectant mothers preferred shalwar with belt followed by 20 per cent who opted semi patiala shalwar. None of the expectant mothers frequently preferred shalwar without belt, patiala shalwar and churidar without belt. Findings also depict that 71.3 per cent expectant mothers sometimes preferred churidar shalwar with belt while 95.3 per cent never preferred shalwar without belt.

### **3.6 Evaluation and Construction of Maternity Kameezes**

The weighted score of ten maternity kameezes for the expectant

mothers is shown in Fig.-3. The MS-8 was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> (m.s =18.2) by experts and 2<sup>nd</sup> rank (m.s =16.9) was earned by design code MS-1, while ranks 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> were scored by MS-6, MS-2 and MS-4 respectively ( Plate-1). Thus a total of 5 designs for expectant mothers scored the maximum, were constructed (Plate 2).

Only maternity kameez were designed and sketched, as this was found to be the most preferred outfit by expectant mothers while shalwar preferred by majority of them was simple shalwar with belt and string for tying.



### 3.7 Assessment of acceptability of developed maternity kameezes for Expectant mothers

All the five maternity kameezes were given to two expectant mothers from the respondents for a period of five consecutive days for wear trials. A panel of 10 judges assessed the constructed maternity kameezes. A suitability index formed to assess the acceptability of the kameez. Each feature in the kameez was scored and the total score was obtained through which the acceptability of the kameez was assessed.

Views of the expectant mothers were also taken regarding suitability of various functional features. The results obtained, were in tune with the results of panel of experts.

Kameez MA-1, which has vertical tucks in the bust area and gathers from square v shaped yoke, spreading down to give extra ease at abdomen level and MA-4, with knife pleats in straight yoke, scored the highest score of 90 each and hence considered as highly acceptable.

**Table- 4: Acceptability assessment of maternity kameezs on the basis of wear trial**

S.No.	Kameez Code	Functional Features	Score of each feature	Total Score	Acceptability Assessment
1.	MA-1	Tucks	45	90	Highly Acceptable
		Yoke	45		
2.	MA-2	Adjustability with the	30		

		help of press studs		60	Acceptable
		Yoke	30		
3.	MA-4	Knife pleats	45	90	Highly Acceptable
		Yoke	45		
4.	MA-6	Gathers	45	75	Highly Acceptable
		Yoke	30		
5.	MA-8	Inverted box pleats	20	60	Acceptable
		Zippers	20		
		Yoke	20		

Kameez MA-6 (75 scores) has gathers from embroidered double yoke to give room at abdominal level was also highly acceptable. Maternity kameez MA-2 has angrakha style with adjustable kameez width and MA-8 has center gore and inverted box pleats at the side seams fastened by hidden zipper for ease, were considered as acceptable and scored 60 each.

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#### Plate-1

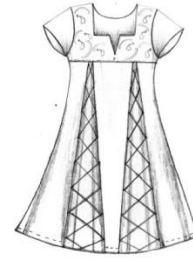




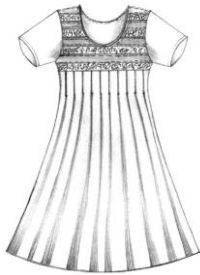
**M.S. 1: Kameez has pin tucks and yoke with gathers**



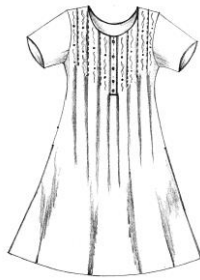
**M.S. 2: Kameez has Angrakha style and width of the kameez is adjustable**



**M.S.3: Kameez has two wide inverted pleats fastened by draw strings**



**M.S. 4: Kameez has straight yoke and knife pleats**



**M.S. 5: Kameez has box pleat at the center and knife pleats on both sides of box pleat**



**M.S. 6: Kameez has embroidered double yoke with gathers**



**M.S. 7: Kameez has smocking which create gathers**



**M.S. 8: Kameez has embroidered yoke with front gore and inverted box pleats at side seams fastened by hidden zipper**



**M.S. 9: Kameez has gathers at yoke and sleeves created by pulling draw strings**



**M.S.10: Kameez has yoke with gathers at the center and inverted box pleats at the side seams fastened with draw strings**

Plate-2



MA-1



MA-1(back view)



MA-2



MA-2(side view)



MA-4



MA-4 (close up)



MA-6



MA-6 (back view)



MA-8



MA-8(side view)