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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### DESIGNING AND CONSTRUCTING MATERNITY KURTIS WITH NURSING PADS

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#### ABSTRACT

Pregnancy can be fascinating phase with so many changes taking place and so many things to look forward to such as the needs for comfortable maternity clothes. (Cumming and Cuning, 1960) Maternity wear has gained lot of importance in the recent years. The reason can be attributed to the fact that there is an increase in the number of pregnant women who are carrying out their routine activities during this period. Each woman is unique and each pregnancy is different as well. (Basavanthappa, 2006) Nursing pads, also called breast pads, are a very useful breastfeeding accessory that prevent embarrassment, and protect clothing from stains. Most importantly, wearing wet garments against the breasts and nipples can contribute to inflammation and infection. (<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-are-nursing-pads>) This paper explores the possibility of designing and constructing maternity Kurtis with nursing pads for the convenience of lactating women.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Clothing is a complex but fascinating part of everyone's life. Clothing plays a significant role in all around development of an individual, which is also true in case of lactating mothers. For many women, pregnancy is a very exciting and anxious time in their lives. Throughout the pregnancy period, a woman undergoes many physical and emotional changes. Pregnant women began to have a life outside the home. Before this time, most women would be confined to the home once a pregnancy became obvious. (Amy. T. Peterson and Ann. T. Kellogg, 1900) Maternity wear is a functional garment specially designed to address the anthropometric growth which are designed in such a way that they have enough space on waist to accommodate the maximum growth on waist and also have roominess on hip, bust and bicep during maternity. (Dr Navneet Kumar, 2010; Joanna, 2005) These days a lot of fashionable people are making maternity clothes who understand the need of fusing fashion with comfort. A woman should always feel that she is gorgeous and is responsible for bringing a new life in the world. (<http://babygearworld.com>, [http://www.maternity\\_ohlog.com](http://www.maternity_ohlog.com)) Leakages can be uncomfortable, as most people don't enjoy wearing wet clothing, and they can also cause discomfort in social settings

if the leakage appears on outer garments. Nursing pads are highly absorbent, and are usually designed to wick any breast milk which leaks out into the centre of the pad, keeping it away from the nipple without staining the bra or outer garments. Tencel fabric is an amazing eco friendly fabric that represents a milestone in the development of environmentally sustainable textiles. (<http://www.breastfeeding.about.com>, <http://www.lenzing.com/en/fibers/tencel>, <http://www.the-eco-market.com/tencel/fabric>) The researcher undertook the study to develop Maternity Kurtis with Nursing Pads. The survey was conducted among the target group to understand the desired features and expectations of pregnant and lactating women.

The researcher designed and developed maternity Kurtis with nursing pads keeping in view the inputs thus received and finally collecting the feedback from the target group on the developed garments. Such garment designs are achieved through – pattern styling features like (accommodating silhouette, appropriate trims, placket placements, etc.), construction features and attachment of nursing pads like (pockets, pouch, straps, press buttons and velcro).

In this study an attempt was made to design and construct maternity Kurtis with nursing pads which is convenient for both pregnant and lactating women.

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## Objectives

- To prepare questionnaire and analyze the clothing problems encountered by pregnant and lactating women
- To design Kurtis suitable for pregnancy and lactation
- To select tencel yarn for developing nursing pads
- To weave the tencel fabric and tested for related parameters
- To construct nursing pads
- To source suitable fabrics for the maternity Kurtis
- To construct Kurtis suitable for both pregnancy and lactation
- To evaluate the Kurtis with nursing pads by wear study

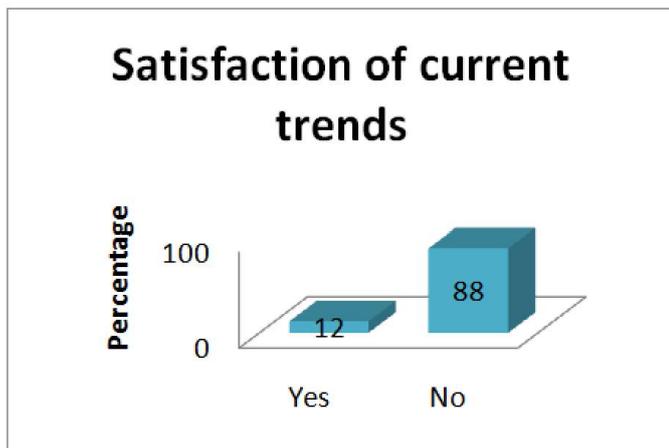
## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Hundred pregnant and lactating women were selected randomly in and around Erode district and they were interviewed at their leisure time, for the information regarding their preference for maternity wear about fasteners, placket opening, utility of maternity Kurtis and awareness of nursing pads were collected. The collected data were consolidated and analyzed systematically.

From the collected data, it was found that most of the pregnant and lactating women were in need of maternity Kurtis and washable nursing pads. Also it was found that majority of them facing uncomforness while wearing disposable nursing pads available in the market. So the investigator has planned to create maternity Kurtis and nursing pads.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

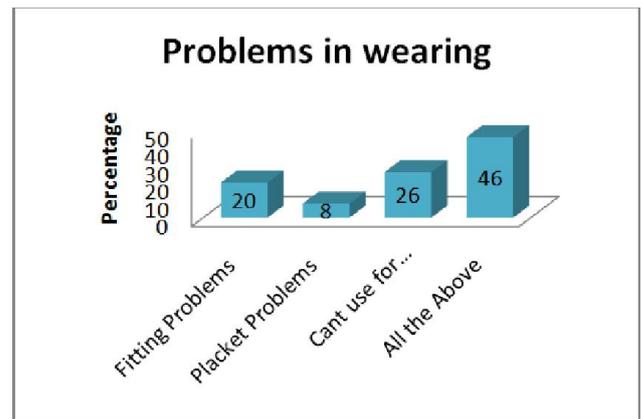
### Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding satisfaction level of current trends in maternity Kurtis



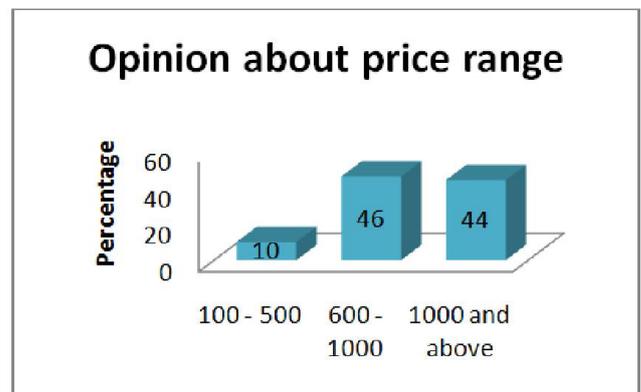
The results revealed that 88% of respondents were not satisfied with the current trends available in the market.

### Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding the problems faced by them while wearing maternity Kurtis

The results revealed that 46% of the respondents are facing problems like fitting, placket, unable to wear for functions etc while wearing maternity Kurtis available in the market.

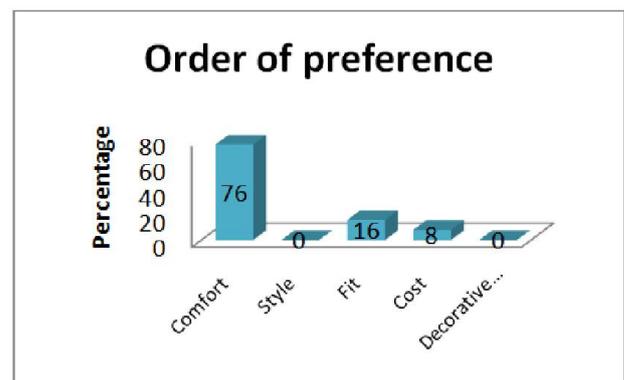


### Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding the preference of price range



It was found that 46% of the respondents preferred the price range between Rs 600-1000.

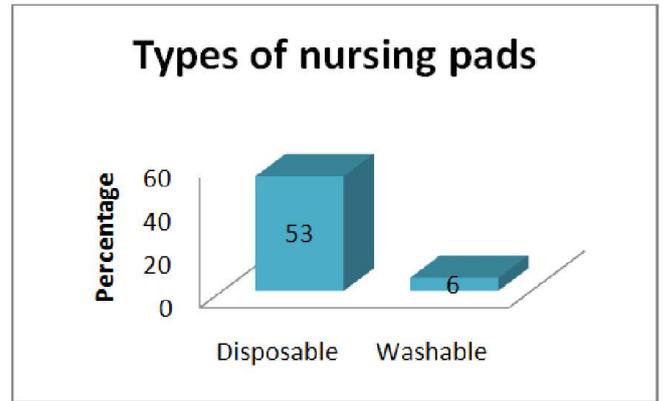
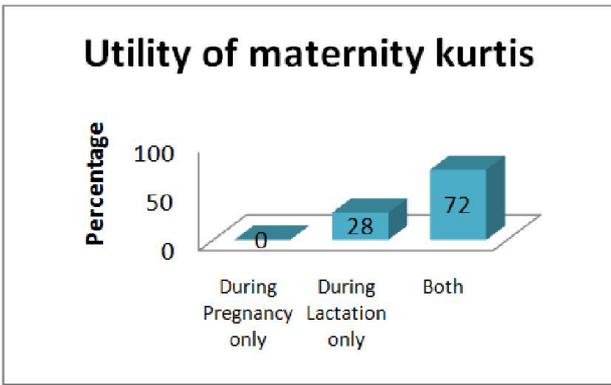
### Opinion regarding rank wise order of preference of pregnant and lactating women



It is clear that the majority of respondents (76%) preferred comfort as main preference for their maternity Kurtis.

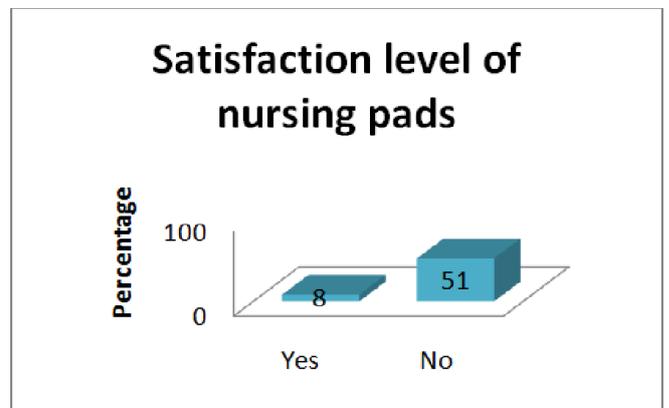
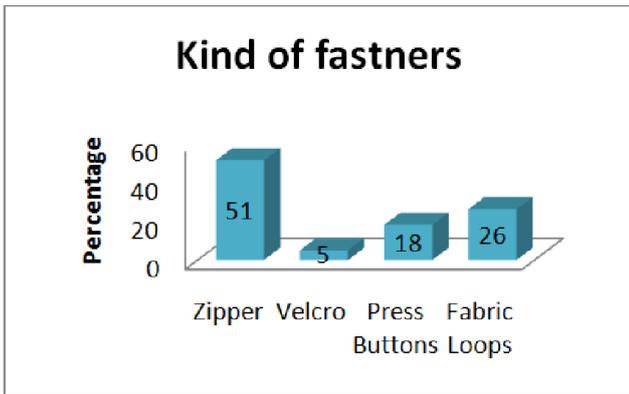
### Opinion regarding preference of pregnant and lactating women about the utility of maternity Kurtis

It was found that 72% of the respondents need maternity Kurtis for both pregnancy and lactation period.



**Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding kind of fasteners**

**Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding satisfaction level of nursing pads available in the market**

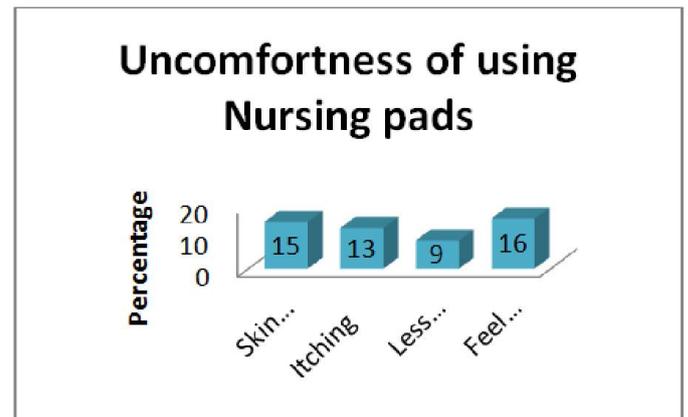
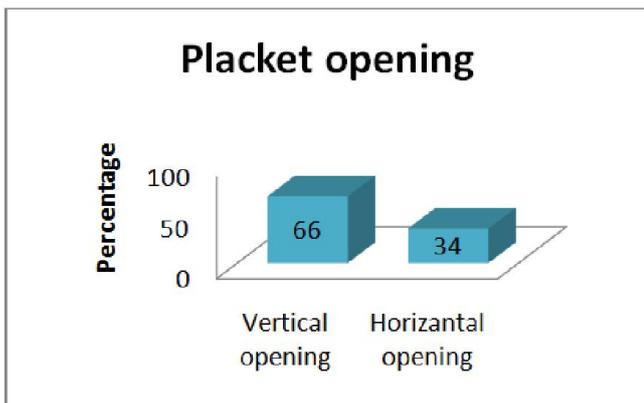


It is apparent that 51% of the respondents preferred the zipper as fasteners compared to press buttons, fabric loops and velcro.

The results revealed that 51% of the respondents were not satisfied with the nursing pads available in the market.

**Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding kind of placket opening**

**Opinion of pregnant and lactating women regarding discomfort while using nursing pads**



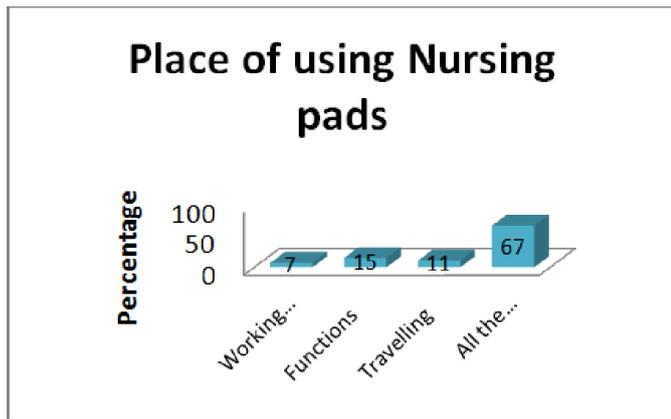
The result revealed that the 66% of the respondents prefer vertical opening compared to horizontal opening.

It is apparent that 16% of the respondents felt warm, 15% of the respondents had skin allergies, 13% of the respondents experienced itching while the rest 9% felt nursing pads available in the market is less absorbent.

**Opinion regarding types of nursing pads used by pregnant and lactating women**

It was found that 53% of the respondents were using disposable pads and rest of them are using washable pads.

**Opinion of pregnant and lactating women about the usage of nursing pads**



It was found that 67% of the respondents are need of using nursing pads in working place, travelling and during functions.

**Nursing pad**



**Designed and constructed maternity kurtis with nursing pads**

*Kurti design with pouch constructed to hold nursing pads*



*Kurti design with velcro attached to hold nursing pads*



*Vertical placket opening*

*Kurti design with press buttons attached to hold nursing pads*



*Vertical placket opening at both side of yoke*

*Kurti design with velcro attached to hold nursing pads*



*Vertical placket opening*

*Kurti design with press buttons attached to hold nursing pads*



*Vertical placket opening at both side of yoke*

### **Conclusion**

In this study, an attempt was made to introduce washable nursing pads in Kurtis for the convenience of pregnant and lactating women. At present only disposable nursing pads are available in the market. Washable nursing pads in maternity Kurtis are most cost-effective, re-usable, comfortable to wear, eco-friendly, anti-bacterial, stain-free and never cause any discomfort for pregnant and lactating women. Thus the developed maternity Kurtis with nursing pads will be very useful for the current and future mothers.

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