

Unit 6

CONSUMER & TEXTILE MARKET

Can you tell !

- *You must have shopped for clothes many times. Do you enjoy the experience?*
- *Do you feel satisfied with the quality of clothes available in market?*
- *Do you find the prices too high ? Do you have to bargain a lot?*
- *Have you noticed that people in specific profession dress in a specific way?*
- *Do you buy the same type of clothes in summer, monsoon?*

Every one of us is a consumer of textiles. As consumers, we are the ultimate users of the textile product. But buying textiles is not always an enjoyable experience for us. The prices change from shop to shop, we have to bargain a lot, we are never sure of the quality of the product, there is not enough information provided about the product. In case of dissatisfaction or cheating, we do not know where to go and whom to complain. The current chapter aims at educating you about all these aspects.

Do you know?

In every market there are three sectors – Manufacturers, Retailers and Consumers. If there is a good balance between all three, the market will be healthy. **The consumer is supposed to be the pivot for all market activities**, and the manufacturers and retailers are supposed to provide what the consumer wants.

6.1 PURCHASE OF TEXTILES

Purchasing textiles is a hobby for some, an unwanted exercise for some and a routine matter for some. No matter what the attitude of the person is while purchasing textiles, there

are certain factors that influence the selection of textiles. Let us look into some of these factors:

Factors influencing purchase of textiles

1) Income : This directly affects the purchasing power of a consumer. If a consumer earns less, he/she will spend very little amount on textiles as the major portion of their income will be used up in buying food. The textiles they buy or possess are bare essentials which satisfy only the basic needs.

A middle class consumer will be able to spend some more money on textiles. But they also choose their textiles as per how useful it will be.

A consumer with high income will be able to spend a lot of money on textiles. He/she will be able to buy many varieties as well as branded textiles.

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- 2) **Profession** : Certain professions require the person to be dressed in a particular way. For ex. – a manager will be in a suit, a teacher will usually wear saree or salwar kameez, advocates wear black robe, doctors wear white lab coat, workers wear uniforms, sports persons wear jersey and so on.



Pic. No. 6.1 Doctor's labcoat



Pic. No. 6.2 Sports Wear

- 3) **Climate** : The climate and weather of an area also influences the choice of textiles of people living in that area. In hot climates, people prefer loose, absorbent, thin clothes with short sleeves and open necks. In cold climate, people prefer thick, warm clothing with full sleeves and closed necks. In rainy climate, people prefer light weight, synthetic fabrics which will dry quickly.
- 4) **Fashion** : A new style introduced by a small group of people and accepted by a large group is known as 'fashion'. Fashions keep on changing and usually

follow a 'cycle' i.e. they return after every 20-30 years. Fashion affects the demand for that particular textile product. When fashion reaches its peak, the demand increases. When the fashion becomes outdated, the demand decreases. Fashion influences the purchase of textiles to such an extent that other important factors like comfort, quality etc. are often overlooked for its sake.

If a fashion remains for a very small period of time and is accepted and followed by a small group, it is called a 'fad'.

- 5) **Advertisement** : Customer comes to know about various products available in market through advertisements in the form of hoardings, posters, magazines, news papers, television, radio, movies etc. The effect of audio, visual or audio-visual advertisements is tremendous on the minds of customers. Most of the advertisements have an emotional appeal. They 'create' wants, which influence purchasing.

Internet my friend!

Browse for various trends in fashion and innovative advertisement..

Do you know?

- *Do you read the labels put on textile products? Can you understand them?*
- *Do you feel the sales persons try to influence or put pressure on you to buy certain clothes about which you are not too sure?*
- *Do you easily get lured by signs of 'Sales' and 'Discounts' and later feel cheated?*
- *Do you know where to complain and how, if you are not happy with the quality of clothes purchased?*

6.2 PROBLEM OF CONSUMERS

The main problems faced by a consumer in the textile market are as follows:

Chart No. 6.1 Problems of Consumers

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Lack of Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not knowing about fibres. not able to understand labels. | Unfixed Prices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prices change from shop to shop Prices are too high at times. | Wrong Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> wrong labelling cheating by shopkeepers. |
| Impressive Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sales & discounts. dishonest advertisements. | Non enforcement of laws <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no solid system. no penalties. | Lack of Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> disorganized consumers. consumers do not know where to complain |

- 1) Lack of knowledge :** An average consumer knows very little about textiles. Consumers may be familiar with the names of the fibres or fabric but mostly they have no idea about the different properties of the fibres or their use and care. As a result, many times the product gets spoiled.

Manufacturers usually put labels giving information about the textiles, but the consumers are not able to use this information as they do not know the technical terms and symbols.

- 2) Unfixed Prices :** Different shops will have different price tags for the same type of products. The prices of products also change according to the city, place or area. Most of the shop keepers allow bargaining also and so the consumers are never sure about the true value of the product.

Many a times the prices are too high for an average consumer. Also the high prices do not ensure good quality.

- 3) Wrong practices :** Manufacturers and merchants both often indulge in various ways of cheating the consumers. The manufacturers often put wrong labels on their product or deliberately produce inferior quality products and sell them at high prices.

The shop owners or retailers also cheat the consumers by measuring less fabric, putting inferior quality products in boxes of good quality products and knowingly or unknowingly provide incorrect information about the products.

- 4) Impressive Marketing :** Different kinds of 'Sales' and 'Discounts' are offered to attract the consumer. Many shops and malls offer particular days or 'festivals'

during which they claim to sell products at a cheaper price. They also offer various kind of ‘schemes’ like buy two, get one free’. They give ‘membership cards’ which will avail some discount on purchases made from that particular mall or shop. Most of these sales or discounts are not genuine.

Advertisements have a great influence on the psyche of the consumers. Their real value lies in providing correct information about the product to the consumers. But many times manufacturers overhype the characteristics of the product or make totally wrong claims about them. This is called ‘**dishonest advertising**’. This type of advertising misguide the consumers. In the long run, dishonest advertising does not help as consumers feel cheated.



You should know this:

The ‘Sales’ in **KhadiBhandar** are always genuine. They are offered by **Khadi Gramodyog**, an enterprise of government of India for popularising handloom products and to provide employments in rural areas. There are two sales annually – one around 2nd October i.e. Gandhi Jayanti and the other one around 26th January i.e. Republic Day. The making and use of handloom is also ‘**eco-friendly**’. This is one more reason why every one of us should buy and use **Khadi**.

5) Non-enforcement of rules/laws : The government of India has made a number of laws about following minimum standards in the manufacturing of textile products. There are penalties if these rules/regulations are not followed. Unfortunately, there is no solid system to implement these rules, to check whether these rules are being followed and to penalise those who are neglecting them. As a result, the manufacturers do as they please and get away with it.

6) Lack of organization : As explained before, there should be balance between the three sectors of the market – Manufacturers, Retailers and Consumers. In a healthy market, the manufacturers and retailers provide products according to the requirements of the consumer. Unfortunately in Indian market, the manufacturers and retailers are having strong organizations but the consumer sector is not organized. It becomes difficult for a single consumer to take on the strong organized sectors of manufacturers and retailers. As a result of this, the manufacturers and retailers do as they please.

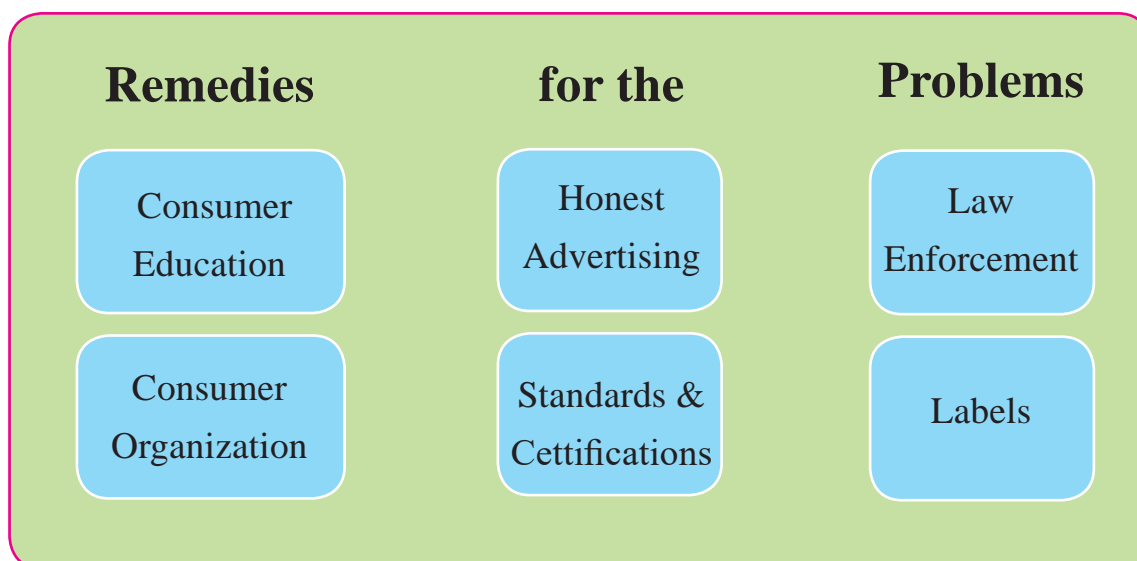
Discuss amongst your friends:

Do they face any other problems while shopping for clothes?

- *What can be the solutions to all these problems?*

6.3 REMEDIES FOR THE PROBLEM

Chart No. 6.2 Remedies for the Problems



Due to the above mentioned problems, buying is not enjoyable for the consumers. They do not get full satisfaction and value for their money. Following remedies can help in solving these problems -

- 1) **Consumer Education** : A consumer having knowledge about different fibres, fabrics and their properties will be able to select and take care of the textile products in a better way. Consumers can be educated through different courses in schools and colleges, books, periodicals, articles in newspapers or magazines, exhibitions, pamphlets etc. Such education will help the consumers to judge the quality of a textile product, its suitability for the end use and to know whether they are getting their money's worth.
- 2) **Honest advertising** : Honest Advertising provides correct and factual information about the product. It does not make tall claims which may not be true. Honest advertisements create a faith and goodwill in consumers and earn their loyalty. This

loyalty proves to be beneficial to the manufacturers in the long run and so all reputed companies, always do honest advertising.

- 3) **Law enforcement** : The government should have clear rules/laws and should implement them strictly. The procedure to pick offenders and penalise them should be swift and effective. This will create a respect in the minds of manufacturers and retailers about the law and they will stay clear of various malpractices that they indulge in. The government should also develop guidelines and standards for production to make manufacturers and retailers aware of their responsibility.
- 4) **Consumer organizations** : As described earlier, in Indian market, consumer sector is very weak and so consumers have to face many malpractices and injustice. Consumers are often unaware of their rights and responsibilities. To help the consumers, Consumer Association of India was set up in 1959 in New Delhi.

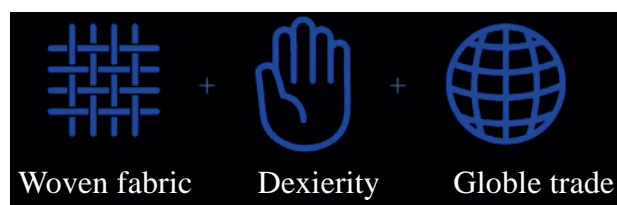
This is a non-government, non-profit body working for the welfare of the consumers. A consumer association can help the consumers in following ways :

- It makes consumers aware regarding their rights and responsibilities.
- It restricts malpractices by manufacturers and retailers.
- It helps in making the market consumer oriented.
- It helps in guiding the consumers and solving their problems.



Pic. No. 6.4 Consumer Protection

- 5) **Standards and Certification marks :** *These marks indicate specific quality of the products.* These marks are at times given by the manufacturers themselves or they are given by an independent authentic body like **Textile Association of India** or **Ministry of Textiles** in India. Once this mark is put on a particular product, the manufacturers have to ensure the same quality of the product all the time. These marks may make the product a bit costly, but the consumers are assured of the quality. These marks do not provide any other information about the product or its properties. **ISI** is an example of certification mark which is put on a wide range of products. In the field of textiles, Woolmark, Handloom mark and Silkmark are examples of such certification marks. In case of handloom products, government has authenticated more than one logo.



Pic. No. 6.5 Handloom Logos



Indian Handloom



Indian Handloom



Pic. No. 6.6 Indian Handloom Logos

- 6) **Information through labels :** Manufacturers provide the information about their products to the consumers through labels. Labels are in written form and so are more authentic. They provide **factual information** regarding the quality, contents, price, processes etc. By reading the label carefully, consumers can make a wise choice and get their money's worth.

Internet my friend!

Find out more about consumer's associations and consumers' rights.

See the different types of logos, certification marks etc. given for various textiles.

See the other various handloom marks given by government of India.

Can you tell !

- Are you in habit of checking labels before purchasing?
- What information do the labels provide?
- How do labels help us in taking proper care of our clothes?

6.4 LABEL

Label is a small piece of paper or fabric with written information attached to a product.

Every consumer has a right to get information about a product before buying it. Labels are the most popular, effective and accurate way of providing this information. They are put on products in a no. of ways -

1. Printed label pasted on the item - Sarees, dress materials etc.
2. Tag attached to the product - Readymade garments.
3. Woven or Stitched labels - back collars of shirts, T shirts, Dresses etc.
4. Woven identification on selvedge - suiting and shirting fabrics.
5. Printed identification on the wrapper - bed sheets, towels etc.

❖ **Importance of Labelling :** Labels are important for following reasons-

1. Labels are authentic. **The information given by labels is factual.**
2. Labels give information about the quality of the product, constituents, name of the manufacturer, price, date of manufacturing etc.
3. Consumers can read labels and compare different products before making decision.

4. Manufacturers are bound by law to provide true and enough information on the label. Consumers get legal protection if the product does not match to the label.
5. Labels give information about the use and care of the product and so it does not get spoilt.

❖ **Types of Labels :** Labels are generally divided into three broad categories – 1. Informative labels, 2. Brand labels and 3. Certification labels.

1. **Informative Labels :** An informative label helps the consumer in two ways – first, it provides information about the manufacturer, size, price, fibre content, fabric construction and finishes applied and secondly, they inform the consumer about how to use and take care of the product. The information is based on laboratory tests. One important aspect of informative labels is the care instruction they provide to the consumers. As this information remains with the fabric or clothing almost permanently, such labels are called **Permanent Care labels**.



Pic. No. 6.7 Informative label

Permanent Care Labels : These labels specifically inform the consumers about how to take care of the product. They do not provide information about price, size, manufacturer, fibre content etc. They only inform the consumers about how to wash, dry, iron or bleach the cloth. They are usually on the back side of the clothing and so remain with it permanently. They can be woven, printed, sewn or fused to the clothing.



Pic. No. 6.8 Care label

One major problem consumers faced with these care labels was that they were printed in the language of the country in which the product was made. Consumers not knowing that particular language, were not able to understand the label. To overcome this language barrier, symbol systems have been developed. There are three major symbol systems prevailing in care labelling – 1. Dutch, 2. British and 3. Canadian. All these systems have the same basic symbols as shown in Pic no. 6.9-



Pic. No. 6.9 Permanent Care Label Symbols

The Dutch and Canadian systems use Red, Amber and Green colours to instruct about the different operations of laundry while using the same symbols as shown above. Table no.6.1 shows the use of colours for different instructions with the same symbols :

Table No. 6.3 Meaning of colours in Dutch and Canadian system











































| | |
|--------------|--|
| Red | Do not carry out the instruction depicted by the symbol. For eg. a red triangle means do not bleach. |
| Amber | The instructions can be carried out but some caution is necessary. For eg. an amber triangle means you can bleach but be careful with the type of bleach used. |
| Green | You can carry out the instruction without any caution. For eg. a green triangle means it can be bleached by any bleach. |

The British system uses only black colour. The care symbols and their interpretations are given in table no. 6.4.(page no.)

The American system uses written instructions regarding care and maintenance of garments.

Table No. 6.4 Care symbols

Care Label Chart

| Care Label Chart | | | | | | | Warning Symbols for Garments | |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|
|  Machine Wash |  Machine Wash HOT |  Machine Wash WARM |  Machine Wash COLD |  Hand Wash | | |  Do Not Wash | |
| |  Normal |  Permanent Press |  Delicate/Gentle | | | |  Do Not Bleach | |
|  Bleach |  Any Bleach When Needed |  Only Non-Chlorine Bleach When Needed | | | | |  Do Not Dry (Used with Do Not Wash) | |
|  Dry |  Normal |  Permanent Press |  Delicate/Gentle |  Line Dry |  Drip Dry |  Lay Flat |  Do Not Iron | |
| |  Any Heat |  HIGH Heat |  MEDIUM Heat |  LOW Heat |  NO HEAT/Air | |  Do Not Tumble Dry | |
|  Iron |  HIGH Heat |  MEDIUM Heat |  LOW Heat | | | |  In the Shade (Added to Line Dry, Drip Dry, or Dry Flat) | |
|  Dry Clean |  Any Solvent |  Any Solvent Except Inchloroethylene |  Petroleum Solvent Only | | | |  No Steam (Added to Iron) | |
| |  Short Cycle |  Reduce Moisture |  Low Heat |  No Steam Finishing | | | | |

2. **Certification Labels :** *This label indicates that a particular product has been tested in a laboratory for quality.*

It does not provide any other information about the product except that the product has been approved or guaranteed by a particular laboratory or agency. **Such labels assure the consumers about the quality or authenticity of the product.**

The government of India has established the Indian Standards Institute. The ISI mark given by this institute assures the consumers that the product they are buying is of good quality.



Pic. No. 6.10 mark for pure wool

Handloom mark, Wool mark and Silk mark are examples of certification marks provided to textile goods. The Handloom mark assures the consumers that the product is actually made on a handloom. Wool mark guarantees that the product is made of 100% pure wool. Silk mark assures that the product they are buying is made of 100% pure silk. The logos of these marks are shown in pic. No. 6.10, 6.11 and 6.12.



Pic No. 6.11 mark for wool blend



Pic No. 6.12 mark for pure silk

6.5 STORAGE & CARE OF TEXTILES

Have you noticed?

Your mother spreading out occasionally used sarees and other textiles in sun at least once a year.

Your mother putting moth balls or a small packet of spices in the bag or cupboard.

Your mother wrapping silk and zari clothes in an old cotton saree or bed sheet.

Your father putting special clothes like suits and jackets on a hanger.

Have you ever asked them why are they doing it?

We must know how to take care of our textiles in order to get maximum use and money's worth from them. There are certain simple points which should be kept in mind while storing textiles. This will help us in maintaining their appearance, protect them from spoiling and extend their usefulness. Some important points are listed below -

1. **Sorting :** Textiles are sorted by their fibre content like cottons, synthetics, silks, woollens etc. Household textiles are usually sorted like curtains, bed sheets, towels, rugs etc. Special textiles like fur articles, leather, suede, velvets, laces, crochet etc. should be kept separately.

2. **Darning and Mending :** All clothes should be checked for any wear and tear. If any button or fastener has come off, it should be sewn. Undone seams should be stitched again. If there is any hole in the clothing, darning should be done. For larger holes, patches can be used.

3. **Refreshing :** Textiles require refreshing from time to time. This can be done in two ways :

a) airing and b) brushing.

a) **Airing :** Fabrics made from natural fibres require airing. Cotton, silk and woollen clothes should be spread outdoor if possible. If that is not possible, they should be taken out of closet and spread under a fan. Airing prolongs the life of the textiles.

b) **Brushing :** Brushing removes the loose dirt on the clothes. The clothes should be brushed by a clothes brush with soft and firm bristles. Woollen garments, fuzzy fabrics, suits, jackets etc. require brushing.

General guidelines for Storage of fabrics:

1. Storage space should be clean and dry.
2. Storage area should be covered and dust proof.
3. Moth balls or moth repellent should be used.
4. While storing fabrics, they should be clean, completely dry and ironed.

Some specific guidelines about storage of textile products are given in Table No. 6.5 -

Table No. 6.5 Specific Guidelines for Storage of Textiles

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Cottons | 1. Clothes to be stored should not be starched. |
| | 2. Coloured clothes should be kept away from sunlight otherwise their colour will fade. |
| Silks & Woolens | 1. Sharp creases should not be made in silk. |
| | 2. Silk & wool should be wrapped in cotton fabric to save them from moth and mildew. Saree bags are available in market. |
| | 3. Moth balls or moth repellent should be used. |
| | 4. Suits, coats and jackets should be hung on hangers and then covered with plastic to protect them. |
| Synthetics | 1. Synthetics should be hung on hangers to maintain their shape |
| | 2. They should be stored in cool place. |
| Leather | 1. Leather garments should be padded with paper and wrapped in muslin cloth. |
| | 2. They should be powdered to absorb moisture. |
| Zari fabrics | 1. Zari fabrics should not be folded on the same crease again. |
| | 2. Zari fabrics should be folded with a layer of cotton or paper between them so that two surfaces do not rub against each other. |



Pic. No. 6.13 Cotton saree bag



Pic. No. 6.14 Jackets on hangers

Use Your Brain Power

1. Identify the terms hidden in the grid with the help of the clues given below –

- This process helps in removing moisture from clothes and keeps them fresh.
- These are small designs to show the consumer how to take care of the clothes.
- The pivot of all market activities.
- A mark certifying that the product is made from 100% wool.

- The symbol system which uses only black colour.
- A new style introduced by a small group and accepted by a large group.
- The quality and the price for this is same everywhere.
- Written, factual information about a product.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | I | R | I | N | G | X | I | K | A | C | N |
| J | N | R | V | Z | D | H | L | P | T | O | X |
| W | X | S | Y | M | B | O | L | S | B | N | F |
| O | J | N | R | V | Z | D | H | L | P | S | T |
| O | X | B | R | I | T | I | S | H | B | U | F |
| L | J | N | R | V | Z | D | H | L | P | M | T |
| M | P | T | X | B | R | A | N | D | B | E | F |
| A | F | J | M | R | V | Z | D | H | L | R | L |
| R | P | M | E | S | K | T | Y | U | J | H | E |
| K | D | L | E | T | E | X | M | A | R | K | B |
| N | A | X | P | Z | I | N | D | J | O | V | A |
| S | P | F | A | S | H | I | O | N | Q | W | L |

2. Complete the sentences –

- Long sleeved, thick clothes are preferred in _____ .
- Certain professions like nurse, police have specific _____ .
- A fashion which is short lived and followed by few people is _____ .
- An advertisement which makes false claims is called _____ .

- e) The three sectors of market are manufacturers, retailers & _____ .
- f) The information given by the labels is _____ .
- g) Labels which tell us how to take care of the product are _____ .

- h) Certification labels ensure us about the _____ .
- i) For storage, leather garments should be padded with _____ .
- j) Moth balls should be used while storing _____ .

EXERCISE

Objective Type Questions

I. Match the following :

| A | | B | |
|----|----------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 1. | Brand Labels | a) | Advertisements |
| 2. | British system | b) | Use of different colours |
| 3. | Certification Labels | c) | Trademark |
| 4. | American system | d) | Black colour |
| 5. | Dutch system | e) | Silk mark |
| | | f) | Written form |
| | | g) | Storage of Textiles |

II. Select and write the most appropriate answer from the given alternatives for each question :

- Care label system using colours for symbols
 - Dutch
 - British
 - American
- This influences our purchase of clothes to a great extent
 - Culture
 - Fashion
 - Education
- The pivot of all markets should be the
 - Manufacturer
 - Retailer
 - Consumer
- Brand labels are provided by
 - Government
 - Manufacturer
 - Laboratory
- Garments which should be hung on hangers
 - Cotton
 - Synthetic
 - Woollen
- Advertising which makes false claims about the product.
 - Honest advertising
 - Dishonest advertising
 - hoardings

III. Write whether the given sentences are True or False :

1. The Canadian system of symbols use only black colour.
2. Honest advertising creates trust among consumers.
3. Labels provide factual information.
4. British system uses written information on labels.
5. Consumer association fights for the consumers.
6. Fashion influences purchase of clothes.
7. Silk garments should be wrapped in cotton cloth or put in cotton bag for storage.
8. Sales and discounts always offer good quality products at cheaper rate.

IV. Draw symbols for the following care instructions:

1. Luke warm washing
2. Drip drying
3. Cool iron
4. Flat drying
5. Dry in shade
6. Hand wash only
7. Hot washing permitted

V. Name the following :

1. Putting clothes out in open air and sunlight.
2. A small piece of paper of fabric attached to the textile product with written information about it.
3. This label suggests that a particular product has been tested in a laboratory for quality.

4. A distinctive design or symbol in combination with words.
5. The organization which fights for the rights of consumers.

Short Answer Type Questions

I. Explain following terms:

1. Fashion
2. Advertisement
3. Airing
4. Brand label
5. Consumer association

II. Give reasons :

1. Zari sarees are folded with paper between them.
2. Coats, jackets should be hung on hangers.
3. People prefer synthetic clothes in rainy season.
4. Branded clothes denotes quality.
5. Moth balls /repellent should be used while storing silk or wool clothes.

III. Write short notes on the following :

1. Informative labels
2. Consumer association
3. Storage of woollen fabrics
4. Fashion
5. Brand Labels
6. Honest advertising
7. Airing
8. Dutch & Canadian systems of care labelling.

9. Storage of leather garments
10. Income -a factor affecting purchase
11. General guidelines for storage

3. Explain in brief how following factors affect purchase of textiles :
 - a) Income
 - b) Profession
 - c) Fashion
4. What are labels? What is their importance?

Long Answer Type Questions

1. Write about the various problems faced by the consumer in the market.
2. Write about the remedies for the problems of consumers.

SELF STUDY/PROJECT

- Visit different malls/shops in your area and collect information about various types of labels.
- Educate your family and friends about various types of labels and what they indicate.

