

## **Ethically Produced Cotton and its Impact on Indian Consumer Buying Decision by Indian Brands**

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### **Abstract**

Cotton has been part of Indian textile and clothing industry since the evolution of ancient history. It has been one of the staple fibers used for producing textile and clothing in the sub-continent (Santhanam & Sundaram, 1997). India is the largest producer of conventional and organic cotton in the world (Shahbandeh, 2020). Even though cotton contributes a significant part in the overall textile and apparel production, its cultivation, processing, and manufacturing does not happen in a composite manner.

Majority of makers of apparels and manufacturers of cotton textile are not aware of the extent of damaging impact commercial cotton cultivation has on planet and people involved in its production. The problem is compounded as the large part of supply chain is highly opaque and lacks transparency and accountability.

One of the aims of the research is to document the existing patronage provided by the apparel brands in agricultural practice in cotton cultivation in India. The case study reviews how large-scale clothing businesses in India like Arvind Mills are using ethically cultivated cotton in their supply chain. The research reviews if the incorporation of ethically manufactured cotton has any impact on the cost of production. The research investigates if known to the consumer, apparels made from ethically produced cotton has any impact on their buying decision.

The study reveals that the companies like Arvind Mills have identified key areas of sustainability and cotton cultivation is one of them. The report published by the company shows that the farmers associated with the company through BCI (Better Cotton Initiative) has increased 6 times from FY 2014-15 to FY 2017-18 (Mills, 2019). Furthermore, the outcome of the research is to create an online tool kit for the brands to use while sourcing cotton fabric for apparel production in India.

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