

**AN INVESTIGATION ON THE INCONSISTENCIES IN
THE WIDTH OF SINGLE JERSEY FABRIC PRODUCED
AT ABC KNITTING MILL**

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Declaration

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any other University or Institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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Name of Supervisor: Dr. Gayani K.Nandasiri

Signature of the Supervisor:

Date: 30th August 2024

ABSTRACT

ABC Knitters (Pvt) Ltd; a leading weft knitted textile manufacturer in Sri Lanka, has been encountering a problem regarding the width of their finished single jersey fabric. They claim that certain fabric batches are found to be inconsistent in roll width after dyeing. Such fabric rolls indicate a tendency to narrow side in width. There is no reliable method in place at the knitting mill for predicting the fabric width in grey state or dyed state. It was further noted that different industrial knitters use their own methods to predict the fabric width merely based on their own experience. Thus, at the finishing stage main focus is to meet the specified width in finished fabric by using various finishing techniques such as Stenter process or a heat setting.

This research has focused on many experiments to study the factors which affect the width of knitted fabric. The effect of yarn count, machine gauge and the shrinkage of yarns during coloration process have been studied in this work. The impact of heat setting and its limitations have also been studied. The in-depth experimental analysis carried out to study the effects of knitting variables on grey fabric width and the dyed fabric width is one of the most important parts of this research.

Eventually this research has introduced two special phenomena occurring during the knitting process and dyeing process. First one is the increasing grey fabric width over minimum range of loop length. According to the existing knowledge, the smaller the loop length lesser the fabric width. It has been revealed by this research that the grey fabric reverses this known behavior at a certain value of loop length and begins to increase the width when the loop length is further reduced. Second one is the relatively high widthwise shrinkage occurring during wet process of the fabric knitted in minimum loop length range. This research has revealed the dependency of dyeing shrinkage upon the loop length. For any given weft knitting machine and a given yarn, the highest widthwise dyeing shrinkage is exhibited by the fabric sample knitted at the minimum loop length. In certain cases, at smaller loop length ranges such as 2.4mm to 2.5mm, the widthwise shrinkage may be as higher as 38% while the shrinkage at larger loop length ranges such as 2.8mm to 3.0mm may be around 30%. This unexpected higher shrinkage could be identified as the root cause of the problem encountered by the textile mill.

In addition to the fabric width, area density has also been included into the study as they are interrelated parameters from the manufacturer's perspective. The outcome of this project suggests a graphical method and a set of basic rules to be followed by the knitter while adjusting the knitting machines to produce fabrics with different area densities.

"Future works" provide suggestions on how to expand this study following same methodology. An expanded future research can involve the rest of knitting machines, yarn counts and yarn types that could not be studied during this research due to the lack of time.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE NO
	Title page	
	Declaration.....	ii
	Abstract	iii
	Acknowledgement	iv
	Table of content.....	v
	List of figures	vii
	List of tables	viii
1	INTRODUCTION	
	1.1. Background of the study.....	01
	1.2. Identifying the problem of factory.....	04
	1.3. Objectives of the study.....	05
	1.4. Scope of the study	05
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	
	2.1 Knitting variables	07
	2.2 Knitted fabric width.....	07
	2.3 Loop length control in circular knitting.....	13
	2.4 Individual cam adjustment.....	14
	2.5 Central cam adjustment	15
	2.6 Overview of literature review.....	15
3	METHODOLOGY	
	3.1 Study on the effect of fiber composition, yarn count and machine gauge on the dyeing shrinkage.....	17
	3.2 Evaluating the yarn shrinkage during dyeing	18
	3.3 Evaluating the dimensional stability of polyester blends after Resetting the width by heat setting.....	19
	3.4 Preliminary study to identify the interrelationship between knitting variables and their impact on fabric width.....	20
	3.5 Analyzing the relationship between loop length and fabric Width.....	
4	FACTORS AFFECTING FABRIC WIDTH; EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS	
	4.1 Discussion on effect of fiber composition, yarn count and machine gauge on dyeing shrinkage.....	24
	4.2 Discussion on slack yarn shrinkage during dyeing.....	25

	4.3 Discussion on dimensional stability after heat setting.....	26
	4.4 Discussion on results of preliminary study to identify the interrelation between knitting variables and their impact on fabric width.....	27
5	ANALYZING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOOP LENGTH AND FABRIC WIDTH	
	5.1 Relative bed position and loop length.....	30
	5.2 Dependency of fabric width and area density on loop length.....	32
	5.3 Discussion on the results	44
	5.4 The effect of loop length on the percentage of shrinkage.....	46
	5.5 Recommendations for adjusting the loop length during bulk production.	48
6	VALIDATING THE NEW PREDICTION METHOD THROUGH TRIALS	
	6.1 Design of validation trials.....	50
	6.2 Findings of validation trials.....	51
	6.3 Discussion on results of trials.....	52
7	CONCLUSION	
	Conclusion.....	53
8	FUTURE WORKS	
	Future works.....	54
	Bibliography.....	55

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Similarity of a loop and circle.....	08
Figure 2.2 Placement of loop circle in a course.....	09
Figure 2.3 Placement of loops in a course	09
Figure 2.4 Relationship between stitch length and fabric width.....	12
Figure 2.5 VDQ pulleys of a circular knitting machine	14
Figure 2.6 The cam adjusting wheel and central stitch length adjuster.....	15
Figure 3.1 Heat setting machine	19
Figure 3.2 “ + ” and “ - ” marks embossed on VDQ pulley.....	20
Figure 3.3 MLT Wesco yarn tension meter	21
Figure 3.4 External Gauge used to read the relative position of machine bed.....	24
Figure 5.1 Relationship between bed position and stitch length of different machines.....	33
Figure 5.2 -5.13 Loop length and fabric width/ loop length and area density.....	33-43
Figure 5.14 Shrinkage of samples..	48

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Market breakdown of the ABC company	01
Table 1.2	Details of the knitting machines available in factory.....	02
Table 1.3	Production capacity by machine diameter.....	03
Table 1.4	Share of each fabric in total production.....	05
Table 1.5	Share of each yarn type in total yarn consumption.....	06
Table 2.1	Difference between predicted width and actual width.....	10
Table 2.2	Effect of stitch length on knitted fabric quality.....	13
Table 3.1	Sample selection for dyeing shrinkage evaluation	17
Table 3.2	Yarn types selected for evaluating dyeing shrinkage	18
Table 4.1	Dyeing shrinkage of different fabric.....	24
Table 4.2	Dyeing shrinkage of slack yarns.....	25
Table 4.3	Dimensional stability after heat setting.....	26
Table 4.4	Impact of knitting variables on fabric width.....	27
Table 5.1	Bed position and loop length.....	30
Table 5.2	Fabric width & GSM against stitch length (PL30A).....	32
Table 5.3	Fabric width & GSM against stitch length (PL30A-Melange).....	34
Table 5.4	Fabric width & GSM against stitch length (PH14-36S).....	36
Table 5.5	Fabric width & GSM against stitch length (PH14- 40S)	38
Table 5.6	Fabric width & GSM against stitch length (PH17- 36S).....	40
Table 5.7	Fabric width & GSM against stitch length (PH17-30S).....	42
Table 5.8	Details of samples in each experiment.....	47
Table 6.1	Details of validation trials.....	50
Table 6.2	Summary of results.....	51