

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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BUYING HABITS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS
IN SELECTING CLOTHING FOR THE
HIGH SCHOOL GIRL

Submitted by
Aline C. Frank

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science
Colorado State College
of
Agriculture and Mechanic Arts
Fort Collins, Colorado

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Consumer-education has greater significance today than at any previous time. Families, instead of supplying their own needs, are depending more and more on others. The spending of inadequate incomes is of great importance. With production out of the home the consumer does not have reliable information as a guide to buying. He needs basic information, help in judging values and ability to keep records as a guide for later purchases.

Business through questionable advertising, selling campaigns and the like, cannot be depended upon to give reliable information. In many cases, the producer does not want the consumer to know the quality of his goods. There is a need for the producer to give information available to him to the public in an understandable form. It is the purpose of this study to furnish material as a basis for a practical high-school unit in the clothing area of consumer buying.

Statement of the Problem

What should be taught in the high school concerning methods of buying girls' clothing?

1. Who selects the girl's clothing?

2. What factors do girls and their mothers consider in selecting ready-to-wear clothing?
3. At what type of stores was the buying of various articles done?
4. What clothing is made in the home, who makes it and how is the material selected?

Delimitation of the problem

This study was carried on at Alexis Community High School, Alexis, Illinois, during the school year 1939-40. The 61 high-school girls in the sample included all those enrolled in home economics classes and others who willingly cooperated in order to keep the necessary records.

Setting of Problem

The students of Alexis Community High School come from surrounding farms and the small town in which the school is located. The families range from well-to-do farmers and business men to those receiving government aid in some form.

The town, twelve miles from the nearest city, is limited in shopping facilities. Many make use of the mail-order system of buying while others visit the nearby cities for shopping purposes.

Methods and Materials

The study of buying habits of women and girls in selecting clothing for the high-school girls was carried on for the purpose of determining the methods used, and factors considered, in the choice of various garments of the high-school girl's wardrobe.

A representative group of 61 high-school girls including those enrolled in homemaking classes and others who volunteered to cooperate, kept weekly check sheets of their clothing purchases during the school year 1939-40. Fifty mothers, chosen at random, were interviewed to find out the determining factors in their selection of various garments and materials for clothing made at home. Information was also secured as to who bought the girls' clothing and where the purchases were made.

Only the clothing purchased for the girl from September first until the close of school in May was recorded. The check sheets were not given to the girl but were checked with her after each purchase, at which time the factors influencing and determining the purchase were recorded.

Interview sheets for mothers, worked out on the same general plan as those of the daughters, were checked during home visits or at other times when the mothers could be interviewed.

Summary

Style was the determining factor in the final selection of dresses, coats, hats, skirts, shoes, slips and undergarments. The girls, in buying blouses, sweaters, hose, anklets and materials, gave color as the determining factor in the selection, but they considered convenience and labels very little in the selection of their clothing.

The greatest share of the girls' clothing was purchased by both mother and daughter. Eighty per cent of the mothers allowed the daughter to use her own judgment when buying alone. Department stores were favored for the purchase of cotton dresses, skirts, cotton blouses, sweaters, slips, undergarments and hose while more silk dresses and shoes were bought in specialty shops.

More daughters than mothers made cotton garments, while more of the mothers worked with silk and synthetic fibers. Style was considered first by the mothers in the purchase of dresses and style and color were first in the selection of shoes. Quality was the first regard in buying hose and fit led in the purchase of slips and undergarments. The mothers also gave less consideration to convenience and labels than to other factors.

Recommendations

1. Since style and color were such important factors in the selection of various garments, it would seem advisable to put more stress on the proper use of these factors in studying the purchase of clothing.
2. Quality in relation to price should be considered with various garments in order that the girl will learn to get the best value for the money she has to spend.
3. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of labels in making a purchase. They are needed not only for the purchaser's information but also as an aid in obtaining further information from the producer.
4. With all types of stores used in the purchase of garments, more should be taught concerning the stores and salesmanship, and the advantages and disadvantages of the various types.
5. The use of the sales catalogue in ordering by mail should be stressed so that the girls will make intelligent selections in their mail-order buying.
6. More skills and experiences in clothing construction should be developed by the girls through home practices and home projects.

Limitations

1. In these data the girls and their mothers reported those factors which they considered in buying various garments but not "why" and "how" the selection was made.
2. The answers given on the check sheets might have been what the person thought she did rather than what she actually did.
3. Color was an important factor in selection of garments but there is nothing in these data to show that becoming and appropriate color was selected.
4. The factors considered in selecting garments were taught to some of the girls during the time the survey was being made and may have influenced their responses.

Suggestions for Further Study

1. What application of related art, especially in regard to color, do the girls make in purchasing ready-to-wear garments?
2. What are the reasons why mothers do not allow the girls to do the buying of the girls' clothing?

T H E S I S

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August 1 1940

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY
SUPERVISION BY ALINE C. FRANK

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Families of today are buying more and producing less than those of former generations. They are less self-sufficient and more dependent on buying to supply their numerous needs and desires. With production taken out of the home, the buyer has less and less first hand information about what goes into an article. The spending of inadequate incomes to the best advantage is of great importance. Many aspects of the problem of buying are new and the consumer does not have access to reliable information as a guide to buying. He needs basic information, help in judging values before making purchases, and a knowledge of keeping records to serve as a guide for later purchases.

The consumer-buyer cannot turn to business for reliable information and education because of questionable advertising, meaningless slogans and paid testimonials. High power salesmanship, campaigns to stimulate buying and other artificial devices are a detriment to a rational consumer program. The producers, in many cases, do not want the consumer to know the quality of their goods. If much of the knowledge now available to

the retailer could be available to the consumer in an understandable form, many of the questions now asked could be answered. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to furnish material for a practical high-school unit in the clothing area of consumer buying.

Statement of the Problem

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Delimitation of the problem

This study was carried on at Alexis Community High School, Alexis, Illinois, during the school year 1939-40. The 61 high-school girls in the sample included all those enrolled in home economics classes and others who willingly cooperated in order to keep the necessary records.

Background for the problem

The students of the Alexis Community High School come from a large surrounding district of farms

and from the small town in which the school is located. A few of the rural students stay in town but a greater number drive to school, leaving home by seven-thirty or eight o'clock in the morning, depending on the distance, and returning home in the evening as late as six-thirty or seven. Slightly over one-half the high-school enrollment of 164, during the past year, were girls.

The families of these girls range from well-to-do farmers to those who are receiving government aid in some form such as relief, mother's pension, Works Progress Administration work, or National Youth Administration work for students.

The town, twelve miles from the nearest city, is rather limited in its shopping facilities. One general store and a small dry goods store are the sources of supply. Because of this fact, many make use of the mail-order system of buying and seldom visit the nearby cities, while others average as much as one visit a week for shopping purposes.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various studies have been made in the past few years dealing with problems of clothing selection, need of education for efficient purchasing, consumer-buying habits in various fields and suggested recommendations for meeting the needs through homemaking classes.

In 1928, Ruth Scott (21) visited 60 homes and obtained through personal interviews with the mothers, a list of the difficulties they encountered in the selection of clothing. Using this information, objectives were set up for a unit in clothing selection. The mothers interviewed considered that the ability to select good material, the choice of economical clothing, and care of clothing should be the major objective of a clothing course.

A study of buying habits, from the point of view of the consumer, was carried on by Velma Phillips (19) in 1931. Questions asked by the consumer were gathered from the mail of five household magazines. One hundred case studies through personal interviews, analyzed the cause of poor and unsatisfactory purchases and the loss involved. The majority of women expressed

a desire for better labeling, more information in advertising, better informed and more interested sales people, and an opportunity for comparing values. Phillips suggested that the consumer could profitably organize and work through the schools, women's clubs, political organizations and business associations for a planned system of consumption. Such a system, under proper leadership, should increase cooperation through united effort.

A survey was made in 1931 by Florence Innis (14) for suggested changes in the clothing and textile course at Albright College. Questionnaires were sent to pupils of the four junior high schools in Reading, Pennsylvania, concerning the attitudes and practices of the pupils in the home. Information from the parents included activities carried on in the homes. Miss Innis found that much clothing was made in the home, but a minimum amount of consideration was given to economic factors of clothing selection. From these data it was decided that the clothing and textile course at Albright College should include greater correlation of principles of related science and art with clothing, a more intensive course in textiles, greater emphasis upon social aspects of clothing and a more elaborate problem of construction.

Ruth Jason (16) carried on a study in 1934

regarding home economics and consumer education. By means of personal interviews, review of literature in the field and questionnaires, an attempt was made to find, if possible, how much is being done in teaching consumer education on the secondary school level. In personal interviews, teachers and heads of departments were aware of the need for change in home economics education and eager to introduce new methods as soon as consumership could help solve homemaking problems and make better buyers of high-school girls. A review of the literature showed that this material was being brought up to standard, while the questionnaire was for the purpose of discovering if any methods of teaching were used beside those given in texts, courses of study and periodicals, or reported in personal interviews.

Data were collected by Mackensen (17) in 1937 through observation of 200 customers as they purchased dress goods in two department stores and through questionnaires dealing with buying practices and use and care of fabrics as practiced in the homes of about 500 home economics students. Price rather than quality was the basis for the majority of purchases, while labels were ignored or misinterpreted.

In the 1938 study, *Buying Habits of the High School Boy*, Pearl Betts (1), by means of a questionnaire, learned how the boys secured their money and the

difficulties they had in making various purchases. More than one-half reported difficulty in selecting suits; difficulty of selecting shirts came second; and one-fourth named difficulty in selecting shoes. Men interviewed agreed consumer needs might receive more attention in the curriculum. Betts recommended that a course in consumer-buying be developed around interests, needs and experiences shown in this thesis, and that because of the variety of experiences in purchasing and money management, the course be required of all boys in high school.

May Van Deusen (24), in 1938, made a comparative study of the effectiveness of a buying unit taught to first year homemaking girls. Two groups were compared as to their ability to purchase canned food effectively. The experimental group consisted of girls in the first year homemaking class who were taught a short unit on buying. The control group of 60 girls had not been taught any plan of purchasing. The same test was given to both groups in the early part of the school year and both kept records of the purchases of canned goods for a two-week period. The first group was given a short course in buying and six months later both groups were again tested and records kept of buying. Girls studying the buying unit showed considerable more information six months after having had the unit than girls who were not taught buying. Of the

control group the girls in homemaking showed better judgment when purchasing canned foods, and more of them purchased canned foods than those who were not enrolled. The study showed that the buying unit was effective, but did not show that the particular unit was the most effective one which may be taught in the field of consumer buying.

Another study dealing with the spending of money by high-school students was that of Frances Rollins (20) in 1939. Questionnaires showed that girls do have some money of their own but over one-half spend money only for personal needs and recreation. She recommends that extra money be incorporated as part of a regular allowance in order that the girls may be given an opportunity to learn the management of money. The system of teaching was found inadequate. A more progressive method was later used and seemed satisfactory.

The importance of consumer education is becoming widely recognized and more and more is being written on the subject. The word consumer was defined, in 1938, by Jessie V. Coles (6:3) as follows:

The consumer is a user of goods. The modern concept of the consumer, however, has come to include something more than that of user of commodities and services. It now includes as well, the consumer as a spender of money for the purpose of satisfying wants.

Consumer-Buying in the Educational Program for Homemaking (23:3) has this to say for the meaning of the

word:

It refers to a person who buys goods or services for consumption rather than for resale or for use in a production enterprise.

As to who spends the greater share of the family income, Nystrom (18:195,216), writing in 1933, says:

We have heard it stated frequently that 85% or more of all consumer purchases are made by housewives and that women are the purchasing agents for their respective households.

The article continues with what Nystrom terms necessary steps in a rational consumer program:

1. Determine, as frequently as necessary, what means are available for consumption and live fearlessly and as fully as possible within those means.
2. Budget and plan carefully.
3. Shop diligently and wisely.
4. Use what has been purchased properly. Do not waste. Enjoy its use.

False advertising, lack of necessary information and of informative labels are serious handicaps to wise buying. Robert A. Brady (3:251), 1928, says:

The Federal government, whose officials have expressed much solicitude for the ultimate consumer, possesses a vast store of useful information which it refuses to make available to the general public because of a general feeling that it would do great damage to business and because business, if let alone as provided in the theory of "free competition", will, through "price competition", be forced to pass the benefits on to the ultimate consumer, who presumably thinks in terms of the

cost-of-production theory.

In the words of Ruth Brindze (4:13):

The only way to get your money's worth is to accept only honestly manufactured goods, honestly labeled. ... If a sufficient number of consumers would refuse to buy unless they were assured of quality, the bulk of the inferior merchandise which is now flooding the market would be forced out.

The present conditions for buying are expressed by Bigelow (2:208), 1936:

The consumer with limited knowledge must depend for help in buying upon the store in which he buys, upon clerks who serve him, and upon information given in labels on articles he buys. In ready-made clothing there is no adequate help from any of these sources. The consumers should select the store with care.

Partial solutions to the present situation are found in Vocational Education bulletin no. 182 (23:18), 1935:

The school should provide guidance for youth and adults in consumer buying under definite goals, and instruction in procedures to be followed in securing information which will enable them to buy intelligently.

Elsie Wilson (25:69), 1933, commenting on the same subject remarks:

Classroom training that will make pupils better managers of their own clothing and that will enable them to become more intelligent consumers in the textile world, is always valuable. Growing girl's needs, and decisions she must make, differ but little from those of an adult.

The above review of related studies shows, in several cases, that there is a need for a change in the method of teaching. In several cases the data collected

were used as a basis for formulating new courses. One study, testing the value of teaching a buying unit to a group of high-school girls, showed an improvement in methods used in buying over those not studying the unit. It was found that high-school students do have money to spend and there is a need for training so that they may spend to the best advantage.

Recent literature recognizes the value of teaching consumer education. Various writers consider the need for better advertising and more information, and suggest types of organizations that may function successfully in forming a protective system for the consumer. These trends also need to be considered in planning a buying unit for the high-school girl.

Chapter III

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study of buying habits of women and girls in selecting clothing for high-school girls was carried on for the purpose of determining the methods used, and factors considered, in the choice of various garments of the wardrobe of the high-school girl.

Sixty-one girls of Alexis Community High School, Alexis, Illinois, enrolled in homemaking classes and others who volunteered to cooperate in securing these data, kept weekly check sheets of their clothing purchases during the school year 1939-40. These girls are a representative group of the high school and community.

Fifty mothers of the girls were chosen at random and were interviewed to find out the determining factors in their selection of various articles of clothing and of materials for clothing made in the home and who does the buying of the girl's clothing.

The record form which was kept by the high-school girls was formulated after careful consideration of various units of study on clothing selection and the standards stressed. This was used by the high-school girls to keep their records of clothing purchased.

Clothing to be used for school wear and bought during the month of August was not included in the check sheets used as records of the clothing purchased for the high-school girl's wardrobe. In many cases this accounts for the small amount of clothing purchased during the early fall, since sufficient clothing is purchased in August for wear until colder weather. Only that clothing secured from the beginning of school, the first of September, to the close of school, the last of May, was considered. The writer kept these sheets in her possession and checked them personally with the girls after the purchase or acquisition of any article of clothing. At first a general explanation was given to the girl as to just what was meant by each point in the check sheet. The first few reports required a great deal of time, but as the girls became familiar with the form used the work was done much more rapidly. Girls who had had classwork in clothing selection and methods of buying, reported with greater ease than those unfamiliar with the terminology. Girls not enrolled in home economics needed more personal explanations and, therefore, required more time.

Interview sheets for the mothers were worked out by a method similar to that for the daughters. Much the same form was used so that a check between mother and daughter would be possible.

WEEKLY CHECK SHEETS FOR GIRLS

Name _____

Date _____

Article Purchased _____

By Whom _____

Reasons for Purchasing:

Quality _____

Style _____

Color _____

Fit _____

Becoming-
ness _____Conveni-
ence _____

Labels _____

Price _____

CHECK SHEET FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH MOTHERS

A. Who selects the girl's clothing?

1. Does mother ____, daughter ____, do all the buying of the girl's clothing?
2. Does mother ____, daughter ____, or do both ____ buy the greatest share of the girl's clothing?
3. If the daughter makes any purchases does the mother tell her what to buy ____, or does she leave it to the daughter's judgment ____?

B. Where is the buying of different articles usually done?

	Dept. Store	Chain Store	Specialty Shop	Mail Order
Cotton dresses
Silk dresses
Skirts
Cotton blouses
Sweaters
Slips
Underwear
Hose
Shoes

C. What clothing is made in the home?

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Cotton dresses	.	.	.
Silk dresses	.	.	.
Skirts	.	.	.
Cotton blouses	.	.	.
Silk blouses	.	.	.
Sweaters	.	.	.
Slips	.	.	.
Underwear	.	.	.
Hose	.	.	.
Shoes	.	.	.

Who makes the girl's clothing?

	Sometimes			Never		
	Mother	Daugh- ter	Others	Mother	Daugh- ter	Others
Cotton dresses
Silk dresses
Skirts
Cotton blouses
Silk blouses
Sweaters
Slips
Underwear
Hose
Shoes

- D. What determines the selection of ready-to-wear garments? Will you please think of one cotton dress which you have purchased rather recently and check the statements below which caused you to purchase the dress? Will you do the same for a slip, undergarments, hose, shoes?

Reasons for Purchase	Articles Purchased				
	Cotton dresses	Slips	Under- garments	Hose	Shoes
Price
Quality
Style
Color
Fit
Becomingness
Convenience
Information labels
Other reasons

Do the same for the following:

Reasons for Purchase	Materials Purchased for		
	Dress - silk or synthetic	Dress - cotton	Slip
Price	.	.	.
Quality	.	.	.
Style	.	.	.
Color	.	.	.
Convenience	.	.	.
Informative labels	.	.	.
Other reasons	.	.	.

These sheets were not given to the mothers as questionnaires, but were checked during home visits or at other times when the mothers could be interviewed. As these sheets were to be checked only once, the interviews were made at times during the school year that were convenient for both the writer and the mothers. Care was taken to approach them at a comparatively free time and they responded with willing cooperation.

The writer considers the personal interview method, while requiring more time and effort on her part, more satisfactory than a questionnaire method would have been. It gave an opportunity for careful explanation of just what was desired and there was more surety of accurate reports and valid answers. The usual difficulty of failure to return the questionnaire was eliminated and time was saved by checking with the mother rather than leaving to her the responsibility of checking and returning the sheet.

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In order to determine what should be taught at Alexis Community High School concerning methods of buying the girls' clothing, the buying practices of the girls and their mothers were investigated. The responses of the girls on the check sheets and of the mothers on the personal interview sheets will be presented in the order of the questions asked in the analysis of the problem.

Who Selects the Girls' Clothing?

From the responses of the mothers to the questions on the interview sheets regarding the person making the purchase, it was found that 86 per cent of the buying of the girls' clothing was done by the mother and daughter together. Only six per cent of the mothers and four per cent of the daughters did the buying alone (Table 1).

When the daughter made a purchase alone, the mother told her what to buy in 20 per cent of the cases, but 80 per cent of the mothers allowed the girl to use her own judgment in the final selection (Table 2).

Table 1.--PERSON MAKING THE PURCHASE (50 MOTHERS)

Purchased by	All of Clothing		Greatest Share of Clothing	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Mother	0	0	3	6.0
Daughter	0	0	2	4.0
Both	0	0	43	86.0
Neither (Gift)	0	0	2	4.0

Table 2.--JUDGMENT PERMITTED WHEN DAUGHTER BOUGHT ALONE

	Number	Per Cent
Mother tells girl what to buy	10	20.0
Girl uses own judgment	40	80.0

Implications

The fact that mothers and daughters together did the greatest share of the selecting of the girls' clothing and that 80 per cent of the mothers allowed the girls to use their own judgment when buying alone, showed that in most cases the girls' ability to make selections was recognized. As pointed out by Nystrom (18:195) 85 per cent or more of all consumer purchases

are made by housewives. The girl of today will be the housewife of tomorrow and it is important that she have early training in consumer buying. She should have actual buying experience to help her. Home economics courses can aid her in doing this. For example, by bringing samples of materials to class and discussing them before actually buying the materials for a garment, the girls are better qualified to make choices and to buy more intelligently. After such studies the girls will be better trained and probably a larger percentage of the mothers will allow the girls to use their judgment in buying.

What Factors do Girls and Their
Mothers Consider in Selecting
Ready-to-wear Clothing?

Factors considered by the girls

In the collection of data all garments purchased for the high-school girl during the school year were recorded on the girl's record sheets, in order to discover what garments were purchased as well as the factors influencing the selection and the determining factor in the final selection of the garments.

Dresses.--In the purchase of more than 80 per cent of the dresses, the girls considered style, fit, color, quality, price and becomingness in the order named. In 77 per cent of the purchases made style was

named as a determining factor for the final selection of the dress, while color was a determining factor in 45 per cent of the purchases. Since more than one factor operated in the selection, several factors were checked by the girls as determining factors (Table 3).

Table 3.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF DRESSES
BY GIRLS (128 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Style	116	90.6	98	76.6
Fit	114	89.1	15	11.7
Color	113	88.3	56	45.3
Quality	110	85.9	2	1.6
Price	109	85.2	9	7.0
Becomingness	107	83.6	4	3.1
Convenience	56	43.8	0	0
Labels	42	32.8	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Coats and suits.--In the selection of coats and suits style, color, fit and quality were considered in more than 95 per cent of the purchases. Becomingness and price also ranked very high in making selections. In 80 per cent of the purchases style was named the

determining factor in the final selection with color (43 per cent) as next in importance (Table 4).

Table 4.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF COATS AND SUITS BY GIRLS (58 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Style	57	98.6	46	79.6
Color	56	96.9	25	43.3
Fit	55	95.2	9	15.6
Quality	55	95.2	5	8.7
Becomingness	52	89.0	9	15.6
Price	46	79.6	2	3.5
Convenience	30	51.9	0	0
Labels	25	43.3	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Hats.--For the 50 hats purchased style, color and fit were each considered 94 per cent of the time; becomingness ranked next in consideration with 88 per cent. In more than three-fourths of the purchases price and quality influenced the selection. As the determining factor for the final selection, style rated first in 74 per cent of the cases, with 52 per cent for color as second in consideration (Table 5).

Table 5.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF HATS
BY GIRLS (50 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Style	47	94.0	37	74.0
Color	47	94.0	26	52.0
Fit	47	94.0	4	8.0
Becomingness	44	88.0	4	8.0
Price	43	86.0	0	0
Quality	39	78.0	0	0
Convenience	21	42.0	1	2.0
Labels	10	20.0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Blouses.--Style was considered by 100 per cent of the purchasers of blouses. Factors rating between 90 and 100 per cent were color, fit, and price, while convenience and labels were considered of least importance. In the final selection color was the determining factor in 67 per cent of the purchases (Table 6).

Sweaters.--The purchase of sweaters showed a fairly close range among the various factors in frequency of consideration. Color (68 per cent) and style (56 per cent) were the most important considerations in the

Table 6.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF BLOUSES
BY GIRLS (82 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Style	82	100.0	45	54.9
Color	80	97.6	55	67.1
Fit	78	95.2	1	1.2
Price	76	92.7	0	0
Becomingness	57	69.5	1	1.2
Quality	49	59.8	6	7.3
Convenience	30	36.6	1	1.2
Labels	21	25.6	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Table 7.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF SWEATERS
BY GIRLS (32 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Color	32	100.0	21	65.7
Style	32	100.0	18	56.3
Fit	31	97.0	4	12.5
Becomingness	29	90.8	2	6.2
Price	29	90.8	0	0
Quality	27	84.5	3	9.4
Convenience	21	65.7	0	0
Labels	16	50.0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

final selection of the garment (Table 7).

Skirts.--In the purchase of skirts, color, fit, style, and quality were considered more than 90 per cent of the time. Labels were examined in only 26 per cent of the purchases. Style (77 per cent) and color (74 per cent) were the outstanding determining factors in the final selection of the skirts purchased (Table 8).

Table 8.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF SKIRTS
BY GIRLS (39 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Color	38	97.3	29	74.2
Style	37	94.7	30	76.8
Fit	37	94.7	4	10.2
Quality	37	94.7	3	7.7
Becomingness	34	87.0	0	0
Price	34	87.0	2	5.1
Convenience	15	38.4	0	0
Labels	10	25.6	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Shoes.--In the purchase of shoes the factors considered more than 90 per cent of the time were listed in the following order: style and color, fit, quality, and price. Style of the shoe (75 per cent) ranked first as the final determining factor in the purchase with color (31 per cent) and fit (28 per cent) coming next but of much less importance (Table 9).

Table 9.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF SHOES
BY GIRLS (172 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Style	170	98.9	130	75.6
Color	170	98.9	54	31.4
Fit	168	97.7	48	27.9
Quality	157	91.3	8	4.7
Price	156	90.7	9	5.2
Becomingness	128	74.4	2	1.2
Convenience	110	64.0	1	.6
Labels	53	30.8	1	.6
Others	0	0	0	0

Hose.--Color in hose was considered in 100 per cent of the purchases made. Other factors named more than 90 per cent of the time were fit, style, quality and price. Color was decidedly the determining factor in the final selection, being checked in 85 per cent of the purchases made, with quality as the next choice in only 13 per cent of the cases (Table 10).

Table 10.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF HOSE BY GIRLS (208 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Color	208	100.0	177	85.1
Fit	207	99.7	16	7.7
Style	202	97.2	19	9.1
Quality	200	96.2	27	13.0
Price	194	93.3	20	9.6
Convenience	157	75.5	4	1.9
Becomingness	137	65.0	3	1.4
Labels	123	59.2	3	1.4
Others	0	0	0	0

Anklets.--One hundred per cent of the purchasers considered color in selecting anklets. Fit, style, price, and quality were considered in more than 90 per cent of the purchases. Color leads as a determining factor in the final selection of anklets (95 per cent of the purchases) while next consideration was style (only 15 per cent) (Table 11).

Table 11.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF ANKLETS BY GIRLS (231 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Color	231	100.0	220	95.3
Fit	230	99.4	23	10.0
Style	230	99.4	34	14.7
Price	206	90.0	2	.9
Quality	206	90.0	2	.9
Convenience	186	80.4	3	1.3
Becomingness	140	60.5	0	0
Labels	51	22.0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Slips.--Influencing factors considered in 89 per cent or more of the purchases of slips were style, fit, quality, color and price. Becomingness as next in importance was recognized in only 69 per cent of the cases. Style ranked highest as a determining factor in the final selection (61 per cent) with a drop to 29 per cent for quality as the next important factor (Table 12).

Table 12.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF SLIPS BY GIRLS (62 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Style	60	96.7	94	61.0
Quality	59	95.1	45	29.2
Fit	59	95.1	43	27.9
Color	56	92.3	25	16.2
Price	55	88.7	18	11.7
Becomingness	43	69.3	4	2.6
Convenience	33	53.2	3	2.6
Labels	24	38.7	1	.7
Others	0	0	0	0

Undergarments.--In the purchase of undergarments fit was recognized in 100 per cent of the purchases, with quality, price and style in more than 93 per cent. As a determining factor in the final selection, style was most important in 61 per cent of the purchases, whereas quality and fit were considered in 29 and 28 per cent of the cases respectively (Table 13).

Table 13.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE OF UNDERGARMENTS BY GIRLS (154 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Fit	154	100.0	43	27.9
Quality	153	99.5	45	29.2
Price	146	95.3	18	11.7
Style	145	93.3	94	61.0
Convenience	119	77.4	3	2.6
Color	116	75.4	25	16.2
Labels	71	46.2	1	.7
Becomingness	67	43.6	4	2.6
Others	0	0	0	0

Factors considered by the mothers

Style was found to be a determining factor in the selection of silk dresses, cotton dresses and shoes by mothers. Fit was considered in 92 per cent of the purchases of slips and in 94 per cent of the purchases of undergarments. Hose were chosen in 90 to 96 per cent of the purchases by price, color and quality. Color played an important part in the selection of all garments. The mothers considered quality, fit and style important factors in 80 per cent of all purchases. Convenience and labels were considered least often in the purchase of dresses, hose and shoes, while becomingness ranked lowest in the purchase of undergarments (Table 14).

Implications

Since the purchasers, in their selection of articles, considered factors which are stressed in the home economics course on purchase of clothing, it would seem that mothers and daughters were aware of the importance of these factors. It might seem advisable to emphasize in class quality in relation to price -- that is to lead the girls to see the need of being more careful in selecting quality when there is little money to spend, as inferior quality is especially prevalent in low-priced goods. A comparison of garments in

Table 14.--FACTORS DETERMINING THE SELECTION OF READY-TO-WEAR GARMENTS BY MOTHERS
(50 MOTHERS)

Reasons for Purchase	Silk or Synthetic Dress		Cotton Dress		Slip		Under-garments		Hose		Shoes	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Style	48	96.0	47	94.0	41	82.0	44	88.0	40	80.0	49	98.0
Fit	47	94.0	45	90.0	46	92.0	47	94.0	41	82.0	46	92.0
Color	46	92.0	39	78.0	36	72.0	34	68.0	47	94.0	49	98.0
Quality	44	88.0	41	82.0	43	86.0	40	80.0	48	96.0	41	82.0
Becomingness	42	84.0	37	74.0	21	42.0	12	24.0	29	58.0	36	72.0
Price	40	80.0	39	78.0	42	84.0	44	88.0	45	90.0	42	84.0
Informative Labels	19	36.0	21	42.0	20	40.0	23	46.0	26	52.0	13	26.0
Convenience	7	14.0	18	36.0	28	56.0	33	66.0	28	56.0	23	46.0
Others	2	4.0	3	6.0	1	2.0	1	2.0	1	2.0	2	4.0

the classroom at the same price level but of different qualities would be especially valuable to the girls in helping them select the best in the price range from which they must buy.

It is apparent that the purchaser is influenced by color when selecting outer garments, but the data did not show whether or not the color selected was appropriate and becoming to the girl. The writer's observation of dress would indicate that color should be stressed in the home economics course. By placing more emphasis on art principles in clothing selection in the teaching, girls will receive more help in choosing better fitting garments, more becoming style, color and design.

With color considered of such importance by the girls in selecting hose and anklets, it may be advisable to give more attention to construction and other information as given in Better Buymanship bulletins no. 4 (9) and no. 24 (13). To aid in reducing the cost of hosiery expenditures and to encourage thrift in buying, quality needs to be stressed in studying the purchase of hosiery.

There is a definite need for emphasizing labels in the study of the selection of garments. By stressing the importance of labels to the consumer she will ask for the required information when making purchases and

encourage the producer to make this information available.

At What Type of Stores Was the
Buying of Various Articles
Done?

The department store was patronized more by the mothers in this sample than was any other type of store for the purchase of sweaters (52 per cent), hose, slips, cotton blouses, undergarments, cotton dresses and skirts (40 - 50 per cent). The specialty shop was favored by a majority of the women for the purchase of shoes (54 per cent) and of silk dresses (52 per cent). The articles provided most frequently by both the chain store and the mail-order house were slips and undergarments. Each type of store provided at least one of the articles (Table 15).

Implications

It was apparent that since the girls buy in all types of stores the characteristics of each must be realized and the girl prepared so that she might make wise selections when buying. The girls need to understand the various forms of credit offered by the stores and their effect on prices. This will help them to select the type of store from which to buy and also to determine how to pay for the garment to their best advantage.

Table 15.--PLACE OF PURCHASES (50 MOTHERS)

Article	Department Store		Specialty Shop		Chain Store		Mail-Order	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Sweaters	26	52.0	9	18.0	12	24.0	7	14.0
Hose	25	50.0	12	24.0	10	20.0	7	14.0
Slips	24	48.0	1	2.0	15	30.0	16	32.0
Cotton blouses	23	46.0	13	26.0	8	16.0	6	12.0
Undergarments	22	44.0	3	6.0	17	34.0	14	28.0
Cotton dresses	20	40.0	15	30.0	13	26.0	7	14.0
Skirts	20	40.0	15	30.0	9	18.0	8	16.0
Silk blouses	17	34.0	17	34.0	4	8.0	3	6.0
Silk dresses	13	26.0	26	52.0	10	20.0	7	14.0
Shoes	10	20.0	27	54.0	7	14.0	8	16.0

Since so much mail-order buying is being done it would be advisable to stress the use of the mail-order catalogue. A great deal of valuable information is given as to the content or construction of an article. By interpreting this information wisely the girl may make excellent purchases. Comparison of the price and description of the same type of article, for example a dress, in various catalogues would give the girls an opportunity to determine which company offered the best merchandise for the amount expended. With both the cash price and easy payment price given, the girl will learn to compare costs of buying by the installment plan with cash buying, and also to appreciate the opportunity offered by the company in making this service possible.

What Clothing Is Made in the
Home, Who Makes It and How
Is the Material Selected?

Types of clothing constructed in the home

Few types of garments were always made in the home. More than 50 per cent of the mothers reported that they sometimes made cotton dresses, skirts and blouses. Forty-eight per cent sometimes made slips, while in 42 per cent of the cases silk dresses were sometimes constructed. Hose and shoes were never made in the home, while undergarments were made in only two

per cent of the cases. Fifty per cent and more of the mothers never made undergarments, sweaters, silk blouses, silk dresses and slips (Table 16).

Table 16.--TYPES OF CLOTHING CONSTRUCTED IN THE HOME
(50 MOTHERS)

Types of Clothing	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Cotton blouses	4	8.0	29	58.0	17	34.0
Cotton dresses	3	6.0	38	76.0	9	18.0
Skirts	3	6.0	29	58.0	18	36.0
Slips	1	2.0	24	48.0	25	50.0
Silk blouses	1	2.0	13	26.0	36	72.0
Sweaters	1	2.0	6	12.0	43	86.0
Silk dresses	0	0	21	42.0	29	58.0
Undergarments	0	0	1	2.0	49	98.0
Hose	0	0	0	0	50	100.0
Shoes	0	0	0	0	50	100.0

Persons making the girls' clothing

Only a small percentage of the clothing sometimes constructed in the home was made by others than the mother or daughter (Table 17). More daughters than mothers constructed cotton dresses, cotton blouses, and skirts while the mothers lead in constructing the silk

Table 17.--PERSONS MAKING THE GIRLS' CLOTHING (50 MOTHERS)

Types of Clothing	SOMETIMES						NEVER					
	Mother		Daughter		Others		Mother		Daughter		Others	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Cotton dress	29	58.0	34	68.0	5	10.0	21	42.0	16	32.0	45	90.0
Silk dress	18	36.0	5	10.0	8	16.0	32	64.0	45	90.0	42	84.0
Skirts	17	34.0	24	48.0	4	8.0	33	66.0	26	52.0	46	92.0
Slips	17	34.0	18	36.0	1	2.0	33	66.0	32	64.0	49	98.0
Cotton blouses	16	32.0	29	58.0	0	0	34	68.0	21	42.0	50	100.0
Silk blouses	11	22.0	5	10.0	1	2.0	39	78.0	45	90.0	49	98.0
Sweaters	5	10.0	2	4.0	1	2.0	45	90.0	48	96.0	49	98.0
Undergarments	0	0	1	2.0	0	0	50	100.0	49	98.0	50	100.0
Hose	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	100.0	50	100.0	50	100.0
Shoes	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	100.0	50	100.0	50	100.0

garments. All of the types of clothing, with the exception of hose and shoes, were constructed by some of the girls.

Factors used in the selection of materials

Color influenced the selection of materials in 100 per cent of the purchases, with style and quality considered 98 and 97 per cent of the time respectively. Color was given more consideration (71 per cent) in the final selection of materials with style (49 per cent) next in importance (Table 18).

Table 18.--FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DAUGHTERS IN PURCHASING MATERIALS (115 PURCHASES)

FACTOR	Influenced Selection		Determined Selection	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Color	115	100.0	81	70.5
Style	113	98.3	54	47.0
Quality	112	97.5	29	25.2
Price	101	87.9	5	4.4
Convenience	93	80.9	6	5.2
Becomingness	85	74.0	2	1.7
Labels	54	47.0	0	0
Fit	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Factors determining the selection of materials

In selecting material for a dress of silk or synthetic material, the 30 mothers made purchases according to the following considerations: quality and color, 97 per cent; style, 87 per cent; price, 67 per cent. Materials for cotton dresses were selected for color and quality considerations in 95 and 93 per cent of the purchases, whereas price and style were each named in 84 per cent of the purchases. Quality was the influencing factor in 97 per cent of the purchases of slip material. Price, color and style were considered more than three-fourths of the time. Less than one-half of the purchases considered convenience and informative labels. The number making purchases corresponded to the number making the various garments in the home (Table 19).

Implications

Since most of the garments were sometimes made in the home, clothing construction may well be stressed in the homemaking course. There is no need for stressing the construction of these garments in the classroom, because neither the girls nor their mothers made undergarments, other than slips. As a group the girls are having experience in working with cotton materials in the home, but it is evident that not all the mothers

Table 19.---FACTORS INFLUENCING THE MOTHERS IN SELECTING MATERIALS

REASONS FOR PURCHASE	MATERIALS PURCHASED FOR					
	Dress - Silk or Synthetic N = 30		Dress - Cotton N = 43		Slip N = 33	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Color	29	96.7	41	95.4	27	81.8
Quality	29	96.7	40	93.0	32	97.0
Style	26	86.7	36	83.7	26	78.8
Price	20	66.7	36	83.7	27	81.8
Informative labels	15	50.0	23	53.5	15	45.5
Convenience	10	33.3	21	48.9	16	48.5
Other reasons	2	6.7	0	0	1	3.0

trust the girls' ability to work with silk and synthetic fibers. More skills and experiences need to be developed by the girls in clothing construction through the use of home experiences and home projects.

While all factors considered influenced the selection of materials, color was the basis of the final selection. It would seem that the purchaser, having considered the various factors in a preliminary selection, made the final selection from the color of the material. The consumer considered labels in selecting materials but there is no evidence of how adequately they judged the information on the label. The meaning and use of labels are worthy of more consideration in teaching the course.

Chapter V

MODIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR THE
CLOTHING COURSE AT ALEXIS COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

From the analysis of data and the discussion of responses as presented in Chapter IV, the following recommendations seem pertinent:

1. Since style and color were such important factors in the selection of various garments, it would seem advisable to put more stress on the proper use of these factors in studying the purchase of clothing.
2. Quality in relation to price should be considered with various garments in order that the girl will learn to get the best value for the money she has to spend.
3. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of labels in making a purchase. They are needed not only for the purchaser's information but also as an aid in obtaining further information from the producer.
4. With all types of stores used in the purchase of garments, more should be taught concerning the stores and salesmanship, and the advantages and disadvantages of the various types.

5. The use of the sales catalogue in ordering by mail should be stressed so that the girls will make intelligent selections in their mail-order buying.
6. More skills and experiences in clothing construction should be developed by the girls through home practices and home projects.

Limitations

1. In these data the girls and their mothers reported those factors which they considered in buying various garments but not "why" and "how" the selection was made.
2. The answers given on the check sheets might have been what the person thought she did rather than what she actually did.
3. Color was an important factor in selection of garments but there is nothing in these data to show that becoming and appropriate color was selected.
4. The factors considered in selecting garments were taught to some of the girls during the time the survey was being made and may have influenced their responses.

Suggestions for Further Study

1. What application of related art, especially in regard to color, do the girls make in purchasing ready-to-wear garments?
2. What are the reasons why mothers do not allow the girls to do the buying of the girls' clothing?

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