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A R E A

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN CLOTHING IN THE GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF THE TEXAS  
WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF  
HOUSEHOLD ARTS AND SCIENCES

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We hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under  
our supervision by Anna Fendrich Crowder

entitled PURCHASING AND PROCEDURAL HABITS OF  
MARRIED WOMEN SEWING AT HOME IN A  
LARGE METROPOLITAN AREA

be accepted as fulfilling this part of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science

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## CHAPTER I

The fashion business is a vast empire that affects almost every person in America. Many livelihoods depend directly or indirectly on the apparel industry.

In America today, fashionable apparel is available to any person, regardless of his status in society. The industry is able to feature fashionable items in a variety of price ranges, assuring freedom of choice for persons seeking the same fashionable impression. According to Daves (5), the American system of volume production and mass distribution has attributed to a democracy of fashion.

As a result of Howe's sewing machine, hand stitching began to appear as a decoration as well as a means of fastening basic garment pieces together. The sewing machine made possible the development of an economically sound ready-to-wear business field. The editors of American Fabrics (12) discussed the fact that as commercial apparel houses gradually appeared, a great development of the home sewing field was also evidenced. While patterns for apparel had appeared in Godey's Ladies Magazine for many years, Butterick's production of the first sized commercial pattern presented a new impetus to home sewers. The traditional straight stitch machine for the home had many innovations



also. Finishes, decorative details, and specialized stitches for particular fabrics could be produced easily by an inexperienced sewer. Home seamstresses in the United States today have created a \$3 billion-dollar market, as stated by the editors of Business Week (28). Estimates are that 40 to 52 million women sew. Barmash (1) noted that persons doing home sewing include a cross-section: all ages, sizes, figure-types, and socio-economic levels.

Girls study clothing construction in school while many adult women enroll in sewing courses. Fashions of today feature garments and patterns that fit well and can be constructed easily. The editors of American Fabrics (29) observed that advertising has promoted the "do-it-yourself" trend and has encouraged women to be creative. The debatable question of economy has been another factor to encourage home sewing. Inasmuch as extensive publicity and many dollars are being expended to encourage sewing in the home, a study of the spending habits concerning clothing and the family dollar should prove to be of interest. Little research has been conducted concerning home sewing. The limited information concerning the acquisition and use of sewing equipment suggests a need for further research as related to women now doing such needlework in private homes.



S T A T E M E N T     O F     T H E     P R O B L E M

The general objective of this study was to gain an understanding of consumer behavior in a large metropolitan area as related to the purchasing and sewing habits of a selected group of women who do such activity at home.

The specific purposes of the study were to:

- 1) Determine the educational background and social status reflected in the complexity of pattern usage, cost of fabric, and amount of sewing accomplished by homemakers.
- 2) Compare the ages of selected groups of women doing the most home sewing and the reasons for such activity.
- 3) Compare shopping procedures of a selected group of women while purchasing fabrics, patterns, and/or notions.
- 4) Analyze the behavior of women shopping for fabrics and sewing notions.
- 5) Determine the use each woman planned to make of the fabric and/or pattern and notions purchased.
- 6) Collate the type pattern, kind of fabric, and price of fabric purchased by women who purchased fabric, pattern, and/or notions at specified stores.
- 7) Determine which sewing aids and notions home sewers use.
- 8) Examine pertinent facts concerning the family members who benefit from home sewing.

## R E V I E W   O F   L I T E R A T U R E

Through the years sewing has been the womanly occupation. Formerly, according to Daves (5), most clothing for the family was hand-sewn; the more affluent people were able to afford a seamstress to come into the home and construct family clothing. During the early nineteenth century, American women desired the elaborate costumes of the latest Paris-designed fashions shown on little dolls. As early as 1820, a few imported handmade pret a porter dresses were sold in America.

The development of the sewing machine lessened women's sewing labors and was influential in the future of women's dress. According to the editors of American Fabrics (12), the paper pattern was introduced by Butterick in 1863. The arrival of commercial patterns in the late 1800's made home sewing popular around the turn of the century inasmuch as garments of that period required less complicated construction than in prior years. Fashion news was carried in the women's magazines of the early twentieth century and patterns were included as an extra bonus. With the introduction of the printed pattern by McCall's in 1921, the directions for construction of garments were greatly improved. The importance of dressmaking and home sewing reached its peak between 1900 and 1910. Mass production of acceptable feminine

apparel by the ready-to-wear markets grew rapidly during the early part of the twentieth century. Wright (31) stated that during the late 1920's American women put away their thimbles, needles, and patterns and the home sewing business almost disappeared from the scene.

Pattern companies, anxious to keep home sewing alive, saw the key to the future by aiding the homemaking program in public schools throughout the entire nation. Promotional programs provided aids to homemaking teachers in the form of traveling wardrobes, sewing construction publications, and clinics for teachers.

The patterns available to the home sewers were purchased at a variety of mercantile establishments from the so-called "dime store" to the department store. Ondovcsik (20) indicated that patterns were available to any seamstress regardless of the accustomed shopping location. While pattern companies provided designs suitable for the average woman, the latest trend has been to feature haut couture fashions by well-known designers. These original creations have been sized according to the proportions of each pattern house.

New and better fabrics available at the retail level permit the customers a variety of textile selections from which to choose. Several current studies (10) indicate an

increase in man-made fiber sales. Massive growth in the use of almost all fibers is to be expected during the 1970's according to Hall (11). Knits for home sewing doubled in sales during the past two years and the continued growth is to be expected. As a result of this interest in knit goods, sewing machines are equipped now with special stretch stitches. Better fabrics and a greater variety of textiles are more available to women who sew today than heretofore possible, due to new textile industry developments which are occurring rapidly.

Market research studies (21) indicate that over \$400 million is spent annually in the purchase of sewing machines. Women are able to accomplish intricate stitching with a sewing machine today which fifty years ago had to be accomplished by hand. The sewing machine companies are doing a great deal in order to maintain the home sewing boom according to the editors of American Fabrics (13). Some companies offer courses in connection with retail sale activities. Sewing machine manufacturers, like the pattern companies, are anxious to promote sales by furnishing kits, film strips, charts, and services in co-operation with schools that teach clothing construction.

Many women think of sewing as a hobby which indicates an actual enjoyment of such an activity. Automation in the home, easy-care clothing, and ease of food preparation



provide homemakers additional time for many pursuits heretofore impossible. Wright (31) theorized that many women use this time to do sewing in the home. With all of the modern time-saving trends, even working women find time to sew. Pattern companies create apparel designs with a minimum of pieces offering quick garment construction to the woman in a hurry. According to Taylor (26), one of the latest entries into the home sewing market is package kits in which the fabric is pre-cut and everything necessary for completion of the garment is included.

According to the staff of Woman's Wear Daily (11), knit fabric sales alone have increased 100 per cent in each of the past two years. Fabric departments today have larger gross sales than were noted in previous years. With this increase in sales, many stores have found new methods for marketing fabrics and accessory items. Especially prevalent is the redecoration and expansion of the yard good departments. Some stores, not recognizing the interest in home sewing today, have not kept pace with the times; and thus, many fabric departments have been converted into other merchandising areas.

Much fashion advertising is concentrated on fabrics and style as discussed in a New York Times article (10). New fashions each season offer many choices for the woman who wishes to increase her present wardrobe. Many women study

fashion publications in order to find textures, colors, and lines which are becoming and fashionable. Such a use of printed materials is an entree for designers, manufacturers, and retailers to introduce new and unique items. In addition, the appeal of bargains and impulse sales at stores frequently attract potential customers.

Guidance for the home sewers across the nation has increased as the promoters have realized the potential for future sales within the home sewing market. Ondovcsik (19) noted that an increasing amount of space has been given to home sewing sections in leading fashion and women's magazines. A New York Times article (18) announced that one magazine had introduced an auxiliary publication including coverage of home sewing. Magazines for young girls such as Today's Girl (2) have included features on sewing of interest to beginners. Farbman (8) reported that sewing seminars and fashion shows are held in retail fabric stores to inform the customers of the latest fashions, sewing aids, and textiles on the market. Warren (30) stated that sewing advice given on television reaches 80 cities. Well-known women engaged in the womanly art of sewing were featured in a leading fashion magazine (15). In order to present a social status image today, popular magazines have pictured wives of prominent politicians in their own creations.

Another impetus for home sewing is the rising cost of ready-to-wear goods, coupled with the general increase in

the cost of living. This factor encourages women to reduce expenses wherever possible, and women are discovering sewing at home is a good investment of time and energy for obtaining new apparel items at a more economical price than is available in stores. The savings may range up to 65 per cent for an average garment as noted in a Consumer Bulletin article (9). Greater economy may occur as skill develops. The motivating factors in the early days of home sewing were related to financial gains; thus, such activity became associated with depression periods.

Since home sewing in many cases can be creative as well as economical, families may have more extensive wardrobes than otherwise possible. The educated and sophisticated women of today know the correct clothing to wear for every occasion. Women love beautiful apparel and derive much pleasure from wearing such garments. A woman gains a sense of confidence when properly dressed, thus creating a poised security regardless of the daily activities which must be met. In order to have more clothes for a variety of occasions and to enjoy the pleasure of luxury fabrics, the homemaker may resort to sewing. Now, not only are apparel items for women constructed in the home, but the entire family has possibly benefitted from the efforts of a skilled seamstress. At the present time mothers sew for small children and such activity continues as the daughters mature.

The ready-to-wear industry gives today's consumer many items that were not available in earlier times. However, there are also new problems facing ready-to-wear as was brought out in a study by the Textiles, Clothing, and Design Department of the School of Home Economics at the University of Nebraska (9). Frequently, a desired detail of styling may not be available in current ready-made garments. Also, many garments of the same color and style may persuade a woman not to buy a particular article of clothing. Certain techniques for durability may have been eliminated in order to produce a less expensive garment. Women may have individual fitting problems which are not included in a regimented sizing system. Styles may be more advanced in silhouette and hem line than the average consumer may desire. Such situations may encourage home sewing.

A growth in the number of persons doing home sewing, especially teenagers, has been evidenced by increased sales in fabric departments during the past few years as was reported in a Woman's Wear Daily article (22). Teenagers who have been enrolled in clothing construction classes in the public schools make up part of the approximately 50 million women who do sewing in the home today. As the percentage of women under 25 years of age increases, the growth of home sewers is expected to climb even higher.



## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Mitchell (17) investigated the practices within a specified group of women and found that home sewing was engaged in for a number of reasons. In this study the incomes of most women ranged between \$5,000 and \$10,000 annually. Ages of the women doing the most home sewing were between 30 and 40 years. In rank order, the reasons given for sewing were savings, enjoyment, to obtain better fitting apparel, additional originality, and to secure a desired quality of workmanship. The women estimated an approximate cost savings of 50 per cent by sewing within the home. The factor most frequently listed by the participants in this study, when purchasing fabric, was the suitability of the garment to the individual for whom the apparel was to be constructed. Other considerations, in order of importance were ease of care, color, suitability of pattern, fiber, ease of construction, durability, and the use of new fabrics. The department store was patronized most frequently for the purchase of fabrics.

In 1961, Conklyn (4) investigated the reasons why women sewed at home as well as the kind and amount of such activity. Results revealed that 80 per cent of the 282 women questioned sewed for economy, enjoyment, and aesthetic purposes. The investigation did not reveal anything new insofar as sewing practices were concerned, but a relationship did exist

between the employment status of the women and the amount of home sewing which was accomplished.

McElderry (16) studied clothing construction practices and other sewing routines among selected groups of college graduates. Findings revealed that women who had received instruction were more likely to sew, more conscious of brand names, strived for perfection, and had more problems due to higher standards, than did women who had received no formal instruction in clothing techniques. There was evidence that the women with previous instruction were inclined to sew more frequently, spent a greater amount of time at this occupation, and constructed more difficult items.

Collins (3) conducted a study of the factors which influenced a group of homemakers in construction techniques. The majority of women, who received formal training in home economics either at the high school or college level, did sew at home and the number of hand-made items rose in proportion to the degree of training. Mothers of children under the age of five sewed in a larger quantity. In order of frequency, garments most often constructed were dresses, skirts, children's clothing, and sportswear. Rank order of reasons given for home sewing were enjoyment, economy, and good sewing equipment located within the home. Pattern catalogs were the chief source of ideas for the garment styles constructed. Participants indicated their mothers were an

important influence in their learning how to sew. If the mother sewed, the daughter more likely sewed. In a similar fashion, the reasons for not sewing given by the non-sewers were dislike for such activity, lack of time, and the ability to find the desired garment in the ready-to-wear market.

York (32) questioned a selected group of homemakers concerning home sewing practices. Findings showed that 70 per cent of the group exhibited an interest in sewing and almost one-half of the group reported having sewn during the previous year. Reasons given for sewing were economy, pleasure, better fit, and more originality. Type of garments constructed most often included street and casual-wear dresses, skirts, blouses, and sleepwear. No great difference in the amount of sewing accomplished by women with higher educational background and persons with a secondary school training was found to exist. Ninety-five per cent of the women surveyed considered clothing construction a necessary part of a girl's education.

The home sewing habits of a group of married women living in a small town were investigated by Sutton (23). Results of this study indicated that the type of sewing machine and the kind of stitch produced had no relation to the number of garments created. The age of the woman, number of children, and economic level of the family had little

relationship to the frequency and type of sewing which was accomplished. Homemaking in high school was listed as the most useful source of instruction and was indicated as the basic means for learning how to sew by the largest number of women. Most of the participants had learned to sew while teenagers.

Sweeney and Thompson (25) studied the sewing practices of mothers of preschool children who were enrolled in a university nursery school in 1965. Sixty per cent of these mothers sewed. The women reported that more clothing was constructed for girls than for boys and that the greatest number of garments was constructed when the child was between four and four and one-half years of age. Garments sewn at home included play clothes, school clothes, and party garments for girls. The most popular fabrics used were cotton broadcloth and corduroy. These fabrics were usually purchased from a factory outlet store. The percentage of mothers who sewed increased as the women became older, reaching a peak at 35 years of age, then declining. The greatest amount of sewing was done by mothers in the high income level and those having higher levels of educational achievement. The main reason for sewing in the home was enjoyment. There was no evidence of economic pressure as a need to sew. Results also showed that women who were



employed in business tended to sew for children more readily than did full-time homemakers.

The sources of clothing for 16 Iowa families from two socio-economic groups were examined by Else (7). Few differences in the acquisition of clothing were apparent. The quality of newly purchased clothing was found to be associated with the income of the family. The portion of supplementary sources for clothing acquisition was associated with the socio-economic level of the family. The middle-level families of the socio-economic classification acquired the largest portion of new clothing. Families in the lower-socio-economic level accepted the most handed-down articles from outside the family. Results revealed that middle-socio-economic level families did more home production than did the lower-level families.

Observations of Sutton's investigation (23) were focused on home sewing expenditures in the United States in 1936 and 1950. Results showed that a larger number of families were engaged in sewing activity in 1950 than in 1936. Home sewing accounted for a smaller portion of clothing expenditures in 1950. The largest percentage of women reporting clothing expenditures in 1936 were from lower-income groups. Sewing in the home was important to women and families in the lower-income groups. In both years, 1936 and 1950, the greatest percentage of home sewers

resided in small communities. The average amount spent for sewing materials was greater in 1950 than in 1936. An increasing number of middle-income families were sewing within the home in 1950, even though the total amount of home sewing activity decreased from 1936 to 1950.

## CHAPTER II

### P R O C E D U R E

In the present study, six retail establishments in the Dallas environs co-operated with the author by permitting a questionnaire to be issued to women customers who purchased fabrics and who expressed a willingness to co-operate in the study. These stores also sanctioned observation of customers' methods of purchase. The retail establishments included a large department store, a chain store, two specialty fabric shops, a textile outlet establishment, and a sewing center in which sewing equipment was sold. The establishments were referred to as Store A, B, C, D, E, and F respectively. The locations within the city included suburban shopping areas and neighborhood stores.

Store A was a large department store affiliated with one of the national buying associations. Good quality, fashionable fabrics were featured.

Store B was a nationally known chain store. Economical, good quality fabrics sold over many years have given this firm a reputation of merchandising durable goods which give dependable wear for the money expended.

Store C was a specialty fabric store, a comparatively new business, which carried designers' sample fabrics, mill end pieces, and remnants from apparel manufacturers. Sales personnel in this store were the most helpful in suggesting unusual fabrics for the creations selected by the clientele.

Store D was a specialty fabric shop. This store handled exclusive fabrics of the highest quality and maintained a fine reputation established through many years of business.

Store E was a textile outlet establishment. Fabrics, with varying degrees of quality and cost, were found in this large store which maintained a high volume of business.

Store F was a sewing center in which sewing equipment was sold. Good, popular fabrics that appeal to young seamstresses were sold here.

The data for Part I was acquired by use of a questionnaire designed to obtain information concerning the personal background of participants, their sewing acquisitions, and sewing habits. The questionnaire was distributed to women who purchased fabric and who expressed a willingness to co-operate in the study. The sample was composed of married women who purchased fabric to be used in the construction of a garment. Forty questionnaires were allotted each store. A total of 240 instruments were distributed. Many of the



instruments were distributed during the evening hours and on Saturday in order to include working women in the survey.

Data for Part II of this study was secured from a fabric market survey in which 25 customers from each of the six stores were observed while shopping for fabric, patterns, and notions. A total of 150 observations constituted Part II of the study. Participants in the observational fabric market survey were not necessarily the same persons answering specific questions in Part I. Part II was not conducted simultaneously with Part I.

## PART I

### Personal Data

The personal data section was designed by the writer in order to collect pertinent information concerning the participants. Questions were asked regarding age, occupation, husband's occupation, main source of income, educational level, and age and sex of children living at home. Further inquiries were to obtain information concerning the woman's sewing background, the children in the home for whom sewing was done, and the type of sewing machines used. Estimates of status in terms of social class were established by the short form of the McGuire-White Index of Social Status (6). The McGuire-White rating of levels and kinds of occupations

was used to classify occupations listed by the women surveyed. Examples of the occupational listings in the various ratings were 1) professionals, top executives; 2) high school teachers, librarians, and others with four-year degrees; 3) grade school teachers, registered nurses without four-year degrees; 4) stenographers, bookkeepers, department store sales people; 5) dime store and grocery clerks, telephone and beauty operators; 6) waitresses, semi-skilled factory and production workers; and 7) domestic help, migrant workers.

#### Pattern Selection and Purchase of Fabric

The section of the questionnaire which concerned pattern selection and purchase of fabric included questions concerning reasons why the customer came to a particular store to shop. Inquiry was made as to the price of the pattern and the type of garment to be constructed. General questions related to both the purchase of pattern and fabric. Specific questions concerning color, texture, and construction of the purchased fabric, price range per yard, and the manner of payment followed. A check list of sewing construction details was provided. The construction details pertained to the specific garment to be constructed. Included in the instrument was a question concerning the date when the necessary notions were purchased. Since notions frequently were the last purchase made before the

ultimate construction of a garment, impulse buying might have occurred at the time of fabric and pattern selection.

Women included in the study who purchased more than one piece of fabric for construction of a garment were asked to fill out supplementary sections of the questionnaire dealing with the purchase of the fabric, pattern selection, and notions for each piece of material purchased. Seventy-three additional pieces of fabrics were purchased. A total of 229 patterns and fabric were recorded in this section of Part I of the questionnaire.

### Sewing Habits

The reasons for sewing at home were investigated. In this section of Part I, responses concerning the type of store in which the customers habitually preferred to shop were categorized. Information concerning the utilization of the home sewers' time and the amount of work accomplished daily and over longer periods of time was obtained. Self-judgment of the degree of personal ability in construction techniques was requested of the participants. Individuals were asked what help was available if needed. A list of notions and sewing aids was provided for the participants to check items owned and used. The women were requested to estimate the approximate amount of money expended for patterns in various apparel categories.

## PART II

### Fabric Market Survey

Observations were made of the behavioral patterns exhibited by women shoppers in the designated stores. The survey included categories pertaining to the companions with whom the woman shopped and the actions exhibited in selecting fabrics. An inquiry was made regarding the price range categories of fabric, pattern, specific notions, total amount of purchase, and manner of payment for same at the time of the purchase.

### SEWING ABILITY EVALUATION

Responses to seven specific questions were used to determine each participant's sewing ability. The author compiled a list of specific techniques to use for evaluation. The method for establishing the degree of difficulty was based on an evaluation of the techniques by five graduate, clothing specialist students of the College of Household Arts and Sciences at Texas Woman's University. A scale of 1 (one) for the easiest technique to 5 (five) for the most difficult technique was established. Individual scores were attained by adding the technique values. The

average values for each specific detail, as rated by the graduate students, follows:

<u>Construction Detail</u>	<u>Degree of Difficulty</u>
Fabric buttonholes	5
Gussets	5
Welt pockets	4
Bias edging	3
Collar	3
Cording	3
Cuffs	3
Draped effect	3
Rolled hem	3
Ruffles (fabric)	3
Self-fabric belt	3
Set-in sleeves	3
Variation in hemline	3
Zipper closing	3
Buttons and buttonholes	2
Fabric bow	2
Flaps	2
Flared skirt	2
Lining (separate)	2
Loops	2
Partial belt, stitched in	2
Patch pockets	2
Pleats	2
Pockets in seam	2
Slits	2
Tabs	2
Trim	2
Underlining	2
Vent	2
Waistline or waistband	2
Yoke or inset	2
Front band	1
Gathers	1
Top-stitching	1

Each participant in the store survey was given a check list of construction details for the patterns purchased. The items checked were then used to establish the complexity of the purchased patterns.



Garment pattern types were divided into three categories or degrees of difficulty by three clothing specialists who were graduate students of the College of Household Arts and Sciences at Texas Woman's University. The types of garments constructed during the past year, which were checked by the home sewers, are shown below according to the degree of difficulty:

---

<u>Degree of Difficulty</u>		
1	2	3
Blouse	Cape	Bridal Wear
Hat	Culottes	Coat
Jumper	Dress	Evening Dress
Lingerie	Jacket	Slacks Suit
Nightwear	Jumpsuit	Sport Coat
Other	Shorts	Suit
Shirt	Slacks	
Skirt		
Swimwear		

---

Garments categorized as the least difficult to construct were assigned a value of 1 (one); those garments with a medium amount of difficulty were assigned a value of 2 (two); and the most difficult garments to construct were assigned a value of 3 (three). The value of difficulty was multiplied by the number of garments in each category to ascertain a difficulty score of the number of garments constructed by each participant.

Additional scores in the ability evaluation were compiled by rating answers to selected questions from the instrument. One point was given if the participant checked

that she knew the fiber content of the fabric purchased at the time the questionnaire was accepted. One point was scored if the participant checked that she remembered the fabric care directions.

The participant's self-judgment of personal sewing ability as a seamstress was rated from one to seven points as shown below:

<u>Degree of Ability</u>	<u>Rating</u>
First garment to construct	1
Ability limited	2
Construction of garment with simple details	3
Construction of basic dress with some detail	4
Mastery of most difficult techniques	5
Very secure in quality of workmanship	6
Professional dressmaker	7

The amount of time participants devoted to sewing during the previous month was rated as follows:

<u>Amount of Sewing Time During Past Month</u>	<u>Rating</u>
Less than 10 hours	1
Approximately 25 hours	2
Approximately 50 hours	3
Approximately 100 hours	4
Over 100 hours	5

A typical list of sewing aids was included in the questionnaire. The participant was requested to check all items that she used when sewing. A score of 1 (one) was given for each sewing aid the respondent owned and used,

whether seldom or often. If the article was never used, no score was given for the sewing ability evaluation.

A total of seven scores of selected responses from the questionnaire constituted a Sewing Ability Evaluation Score. These seven items were concerned with the fiber content of the fabric purchased, the fabric care, the pattern complexity, the difficulty and number of garments constructed, self-judgment of sewing ability, amount of time spent sewing, and the number of sewing aids owned and used. Each participant was then assigned a Sewing Ability Evaluation Score, according to the manner in which she rated herself on the above items.



## CHAPTER III

### A N A L Y S I S    A N D    I N T E R P R E T A T I O N       O F        D A T A

The socio-economic status of the participants was determined by the McGuire-White Index (6). The amount of sewing accomplished by different classes of women was compared to the complexity of pattern used and cost of fabrics. Ages and occupations were compared with reasons for doing home sewing. Shopping procedures of the women who purchased fabric at the various stores were compared. Tabulations were made concerning specifically purchased fabric: the kind of fabric, the price of fabric, and the use for which the fabric was intended. The ownership and usage of sewing aids and notions were noted to determine items frequently utilized by women sewers. The survey included questions related to sewing for other family members.

#### PART I

Two hundred forty questionnaires were distributed in the various co-operating stores. The number of participants who returned the completed questionnaires varied among the co-operating stores. The number of questionnaires used were as follows: Store A, 30 samples; Store B, 24 samples;

Store C, 30 samples; Store D, 21 samples; Store E, 27 samples; and Store F, 24 samples; a total of 156.

### Personal Background of Participants

The age of the participants ranged from 20 to over 60 years. A total of 154 of the 156 persons in the entire study answered the question concerning age. The age distribution of the respondents is shown in Figure 1. All participants were married women.

Examination of age distribution showed that the largest number of participants were from 30 to 39 years of age. The age range was in agreement with a survey made by the McCall Pattern Company (13) in 1968 which found the average age of the home sewer to be 33.7 years. Further comparison of the two studies revealed that 21.2 per cent of the responding participants in the study were between 20 to 29 years of age, while the McCall survey had 28 per cent in the same age group. The McCall study included teenagers; this study was confined to married women only.

The question concerning occupation was answered by 153 of the 156 participants in the study. Over 75 per cent of the participants were homemakers, while 24.8 per cent were employed full-time. Conklyn (4) also found that more non-employed women did all types of home sewing than did employed women.

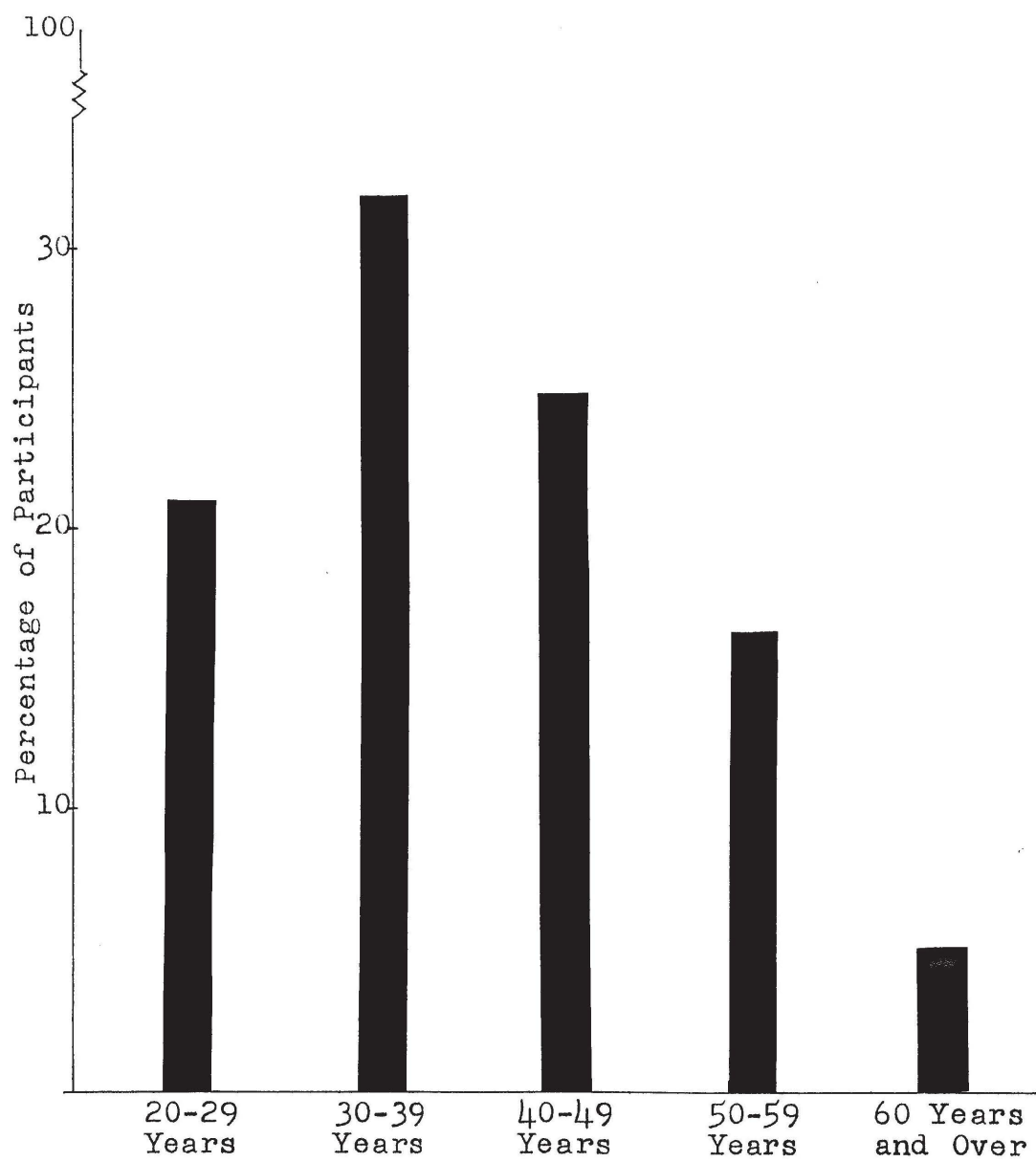


Figure 1

Age Distribution of Participants

Full-time homemakers were able to spend more time in the home than women who worked outside the family residence. Three out of four women participating in the study reported sewing at home in order to utilize available time. Women who are not employed outside the home may have less money available; therefore, there may be a desire to increase the existent income by sewing for the family.

Business occupations were the most common of the 38 working women. Nine of the participants, occupied outside the home, listed secretarial work as a livelihood. Teaching was given as the occupation of four women. Two of the working participants were hairdressers and two others were key punch operators. Other occupations listed only once ranged from professional personnel to clerks.

Occupational ratings of the participants were established by using the McGuire-White (6) suggested categories:

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>
1	0
2	8
3	9
4	17
5	4
6	0
7	0
Total	<u>38</u>

Number two category included teachers, business men, departmental managers, accountants, land or real estate supervisors, and other similar white collar jobs that required special education or training. Category number three included grade school teachers, registered nurses, and others without four-year degrees such as bank clerks, salesmen of known merchandise, and managers of small firms. Included in category number four were stenographers, bookkeepers, and department store sales people. The number five category included clerk apprentices, skilled workmen, policemen, and other similar personnel. None of the women were rated in the number one category of professionals, nor were any participants rated in number six or seven, the lowest ratings in the occupational listings. Basically, the survey included women in the middle levels of the ratings, which verified the fact that more middle-class women do home sewing than women in other social classifications.

Over 40 per cent of the participants had graduated from high school. There were 49 participants in the study, or 31.8 per cent, who held college degrees; while 22.7 per cent



had completed at least two years of college. The educational achievement of the participants were as follows:

<u>Level of Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Participants</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Completed grade eight	1	0.7
Attended high school	2	1.3
High school graduate	63	40.9
Attended college two years	35	22.7
College graduate	49	31.8
Master's degree	4	2.6
Total	154	100.0

The majority of women doing sewing in the home was found to be socio-economically within the upper-middle class, as shown below:

<u>Socio-Economic Status</u>	<u>Per cent</u>	<u>Number</u>
Upper-lower	8.3	13
Lower-middle	23.7	37
Upper-middle	62.2	97
Upper	5.8	9
Total	100.0	156

The distribution of the various socio-economic classifications for women who shopped in each store is shown in Table I. More than 83 per cent of the participants in Store C were in the upper-middle class. This may be related to the geographical location of the store. The second largest percentage of upper-middle class consumers (70.9 per cent) was found to be from Store B. Store E followed with 63.0 per cent.

TABLE I  
DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATIONS  
OF 156 WOMEN IN SIX STORES

Store	Socio-Economic Classification			
	Upper-Lower	Lower-Middle	Upper-Middle	Upper
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
A (N=30)	10.0	33.3	46.7	10.0
B (N=24)	8.3	20.8	70.9	0.0
C (N=30)	0.0	13.3	83.4	3.3
D (N=21)	4.8	28.6	57.1	9.5
E (N=27)	11.1	18.5	63.0	7.4
F (N=24)	16.6	29.2	50.0	4.2

Store F, with 50.0 per cent, had the smallest percentage of the upper-middle class clients; but the store showed the largest number of clients within the upper-lower socio-economic classification. Store A was patronized by the largest percentage of customers, 33.3 per cent, in the lower-middle class, while Store F had 29.2 per cent, and Store D had 28.6 per cent. Store C had the smallest patronage of lower-middle class clients with only 13.3 per cent falling in this category. Store A, with 10.0 per cent, and Store D, with 9.5 per cent, had the largest proportion of upper class consumers. Store B had no customers designated in the upper class, while Store C had no customers in the upper-lower socio-economic classification.

The majority of all the women, 66.4 per cent, began sewing between the ages of 10 and 19. The largest number of women, 24, began to sew at age 12. Fifteen women started to sew at the ages of 14 and 15 respectively. Research reported by Sutton (24) revealed that most women began sewing as teenagers. In the present study, 63.2 per cent started sewing by 14 years of age.

Teenagers have many opportunities to learn the techniques of sewing today as clothing construction is taught in most schools. The desire and ability to learn to sew are often developed during the teen years, which was found to be true in the present investigation. A survey by the editors of

Seventeen magazine (13) revealed that sewing was the most important hobby of teen-age girls. The largest number of the participants in the study, 66.4 per cent, began to sew between 10 and 20 years of age. The second largest number of women began to sew from 20 to 29 years of age. Over 7.9 per cent of the participants began to sew at an early age, three to nine years. The percentages of women who began to sew after 30 years of age decreased sharply as shown:

<u>Age Participants Began Sewing</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Three to nine years	7.9
10 to 19 years	66.4
20 to 29 years	19.1
30 to 39 years	4.6
40 to 52 years	2.0
Total (N=152)	<u>100.0</u>

The majority of women who had children at home reported sewing for the children. Mothers of the 240 children listed sewed for 161 or 67.1 per cent. Findings showed that the majority of the mothers who sewed made apparel for their daughters. More than 95 per cent of the daughters benefited from the mothers' sewing creativeness. Less than one-half of the boys benefited from the efforts of the mother at the sewing machine. Due to mass production of boys apparel, there is less economy in sewing for males. The reverse is true for girls. More savings and more creative stimulation are enjoyed by mothers when they sew for themselves or their daughters.

An investigation of sewing practices by mothers of pre-school children by Sweeney and Thompson (25) disclosed that mothers sewed more for girls than for boys. In the current study more than one-half of the children sewn for were school-age girls as shown below:

<u>Ages of Children</u>	<u>Per cent</u>	
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Under five years	5.6	11.8
Five to 12 years	12.4	29.2
13 to 18 years	6.2	25.5
19 to 23 years	1.9	4.3
Over 23 years	0.6	2.5
Total	26.7	73.3

The participants were requested to check a list of meaningful experiences in the development of personal sewing abilities. Listed below, in rank order of importance, are the participants' resources for securing assistance:

Help from mother or other family member  
 Self-taught  
 Homemaking in senior high school  
 Adult sewing classes or sewing school  
 Homemaking in junior high school  
 Help from friend  
 Clothing on college level  
 4-H

The findings of the present study paralleled other research which has been conducted within the past decade. Results of research conducted by Sutton (24) indicated that the largest number of women listed the senior high school as the most helpful source of instruction in clothing construction.



Collins (3) found the chief sources of sewing information to be 1) mother; 2) home economics classes, grades seven through 12; and 3) self-education.

### Store Preferences

Participants checked the reasons for patronizing the particular store in which the questionnaire was received. Table II shows the results of the question relative to shopping in a given establishment. On the average, the quality of merchandise was the most important reason for patronizing a business. The second reason was the convenience of location. Further questions did not elucidate the interpretation of the word convenience. Proximity to home or access and availability of parking may be factors relative to store preferences. After listing the quality of merchandise and the convenience of location, the participants indicated other reasons of preference in descending order as: good buys, helpful sales personnel, charge accounts, and availability to other departments. More than eight per cent of the participants indicated that additional reasons existed for buying at a particular store. Habit or tradition may have been a subconscious factor.

According to the responses, the participants at Store E listed convenience as the most important reason for shopping at this store.

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR SHOPPING  
 AT THE VARIOUS STORES  
 BY 156 WOMEN

Reasons for Patronage	Store						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total
	(N=30)	(N=24)	(N=30)	(N=21)	(N=27)	(N=24)	(N=156)
Convenient Location	26.2	23.8	20.4	6.0	45.7	40.6	27.6
Like Quality of Fabric	27.8	32.4	33.8	55.9	6.8	29.5	30.1
Good Buys	3.2	8.8	14.0	8.3	30.2	4.9	11.8
Charge Account	14.9	8.8	1.7	2.4	0.0	1.4	5.1
Sales Personnel Helpful	2.4	1.1	20.9	15.5	6.2	7.3	8.9
Availability of Other Departments	16.6	16.8	0.8	2.4	2.5	10.8	8.3
Other	8.9	8.3	8.4	9.5	8.6	5.5	8.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Store E was located in a small suburban shopping center where women felt free to dress casually. Participants at Store F, located in a shopping center with a mall, ranked this store second as to convenience. Convenience was checked by six per cent of the participants in Store D, which was located in an older area of the city. Perhaps this location was more difficult to reach. However, Store D had the quality of fabrics 55.9 per cent of the participating clients preferred. The category with the highest percentage of preference was quality of fabric.

Responses indicated that slightly more than six per cent of the clients in Store E liked the quality of fabric available within the establishment. However, the reputation of this particular store was based upon selling at the lowest possible prices. Over 30 per cent of the customers stated that the reputation for lower prices was the reason for shopping in the store. Popular low prices attracted customers to Store C, which ranked second highest in this particular category.

The ability to charge purchases was checked by 14.9 per cent of the customers as a reason for shopping in Store A. This percentage was higher than the 8.8 per cent of the participants from Store B, which had national charge accounts. Results disclosed that other surveyed stores had only a minute

percentage of customers who checked credit card use as a reason for shopping a particular location.

Customers shopping in Store C and Store D, the fabric specialty shops, indicated that the sales personnel in these stores were more helpful than sales personnel in any of the other stores. Department stores apparently offered less assistance than the fabric outlet or the sewing center, which featured the selling of equipment.

The availability of other departments was checked as a reason for patronizing the department-type stores. More than 16 per cent of the customers from Store A, and 16.8 per cent from Store B, indicated such availability as being desirable. More than 10 per cent of Store F's customers designated proximity to other sales departments as a reason for patronage, while the customers in the remaining stores were not particularly concerned with the relationship to other departments.

Most of the customers, when questioned concerning the use of the particular store in which they were shopping, signified a preference or loyalty for that particular establishment. In general, most of the customers in the investigation exhibited a preference to shop in a specialty fabric store. The department store was the second choice of consumers while the fabric outlet was third. Shoppers favoring

Store A, a department store, displayed a similar liking for a specialty fabric shop or a department store. Ordinarily these two establishments would offer similar merchandise, prices, and services. Customers shopping in Store F, a sewing center featuring equipment, indicated a preference to patronize first, a fabric specialty shop; second, a fabric outlet; and third, the sewing center or department store. Mitchell (17) illustrated that fabric purchasers shopped most frequently in the department stores. Wider selections available within such stores was theorized as the possible reason.

#### Pattern Selection

More than 70 per cent of the consumers who co-operated in the study purchased a pattern prior to obtaining fabric. Consumers were able to buy the exact amount of fabric necessary when pattern selection was made first. However, almost 30 per cent reported the purchase of fabric before the purchase of the pattern. The purchase of pattern and fabric simultaneously was checked by 32.4 per cent of the participants.

Responses to the question concerning the use of suggested pattern views were made by 148 of the 156 participants. More than 58 per cent of the participants planned to construct the fabric exactly as shown in one of the pattern views. More than 31 per cent of the customers definitely planned to



change the pattern. The high percentages of women who desired to make changes in the patterns might be indicative of the number of creative women sewers. Approximately 10 per cent of the seamstresses were undecided as to the use of the fabric.

More than one-fourth, 28.9 per cent, of the participants who purchased fabric revealed an attempt to match the fabric to an article already owned. Only four participants did not respond to the question.

Prices of patterns purchased ranged from \$0.50 to \$4.50 as illustrated in Figure 2. The most popular-priced pattern cost \$0.75. Patterns that cost \$0.65 were second in popularity. Few patterns that cost more than \$1.50 were used.

Participants were requested to indicate the maximum amount of money spent for specified types of patterns. The upper-middle class participants paid more for patterns than other socio-economic groups. Figure 3 shows three garment categories and the maximum amount the home sewers were willing to pay for the patterns. Pattern prices did not appear to be a determining factor for any socio-economic group in this study.

Slightly more than 15 per cent of the home sewers purchased fabric to make garments for a special occasion--indicating that seamstresses probably do plan for their needs. Seven participants did not respond to this question.

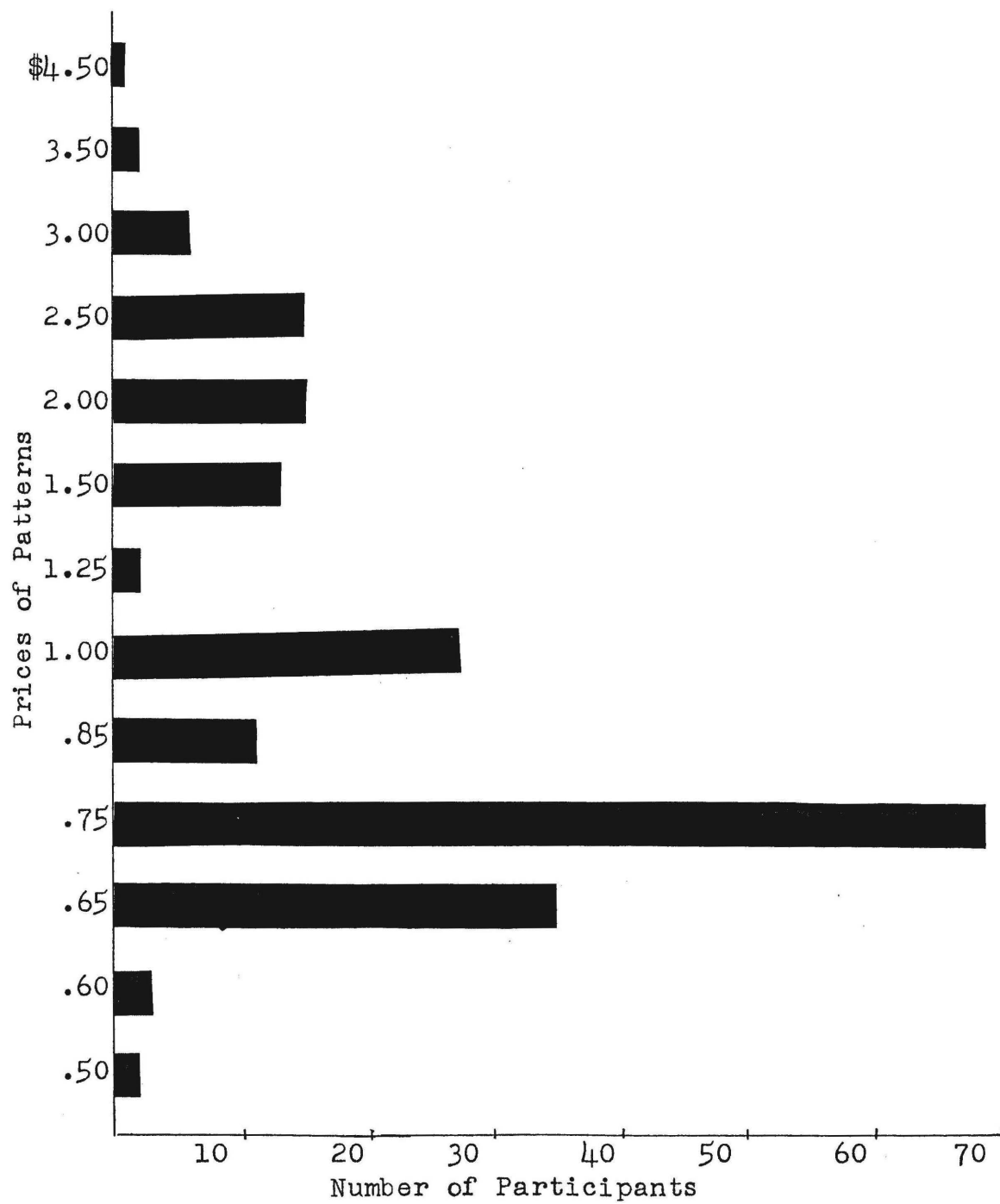


Figure 2

Prices of 202 Patterns Purchased by Participants

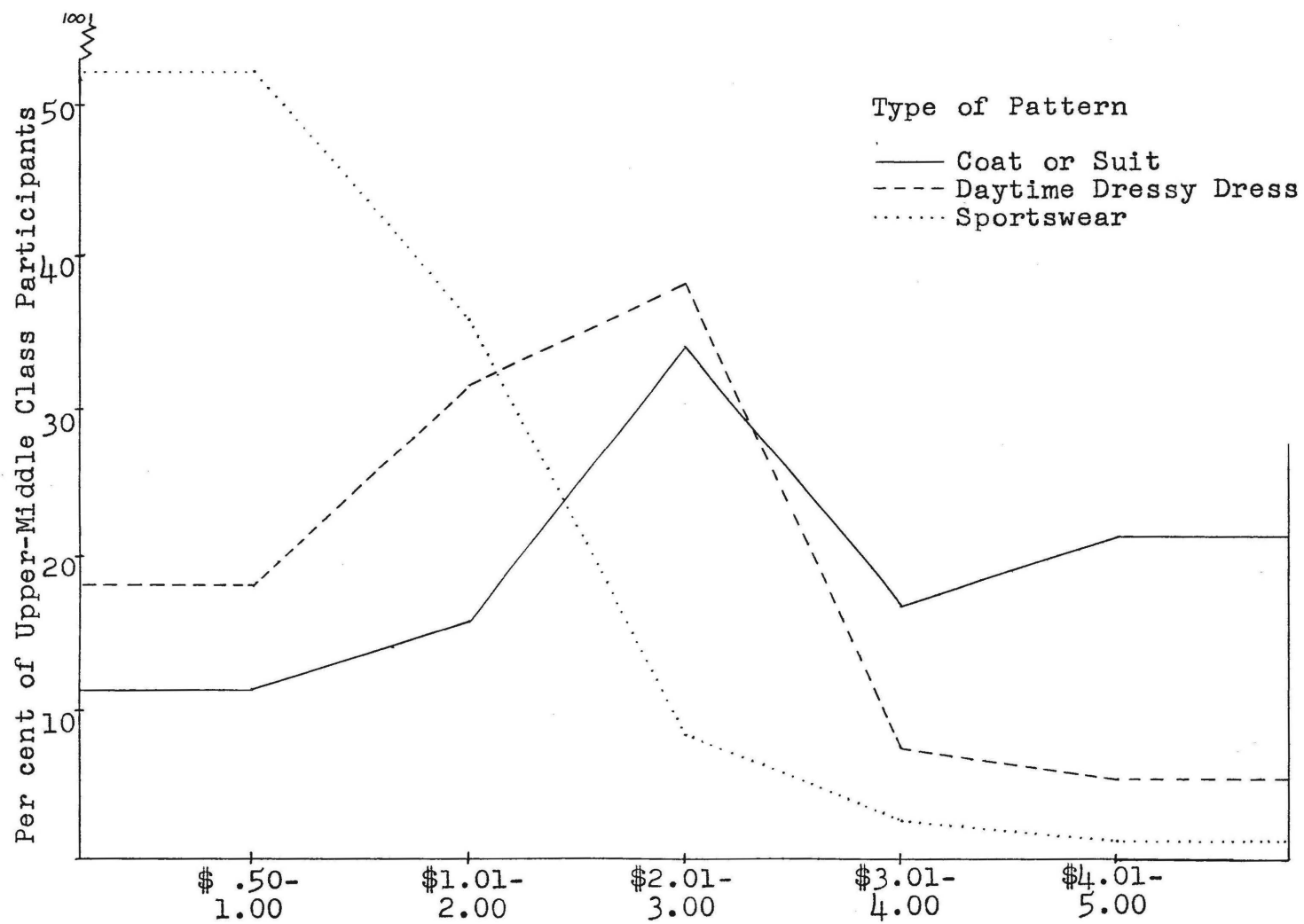


Figure 3

Maximum Pattern Costs by Upper-Middle Class Participants

Taylor (26) reported that teenagers are eager to stitch a garment quickly and wear it immediately, which indicates an impulsive desire to create a garment in a hurry. Teenagers included in such a study as the present one would surely increase the percentage of home sewers who make apparel for special occasions.

Results showed that 63.2 per cent of the purchases made would be constructed for the purchaser. The remainder of the women indicated that the purchase was for other individuals; daughters appeared to benefit the most from their mothers' sewing. Granddaughters ranked next in benefits. These findings agreed, to a large extent, with the results of research conducted by McElderry (16) in 1964, in which women sewed primarily for themselves; secondly, for children; and thirdly, for men.

#### Fabric Selection

Many different colors of fabric were purchased, and combinations of colors varied considerably. The rank order of choices of the participants who selected primarily one color of fabric were white, blue, yellow, green, black, brown, red, orange, purple, and grey. Red, white, and blue combinations were the most popular mixtures of colors. This patriotic color scheme has been a most successful fashion arrangement and may be a reason for such choices.

The fashion trend in textures of fabrics was evidenced by the popularity of soft, smooth, dull, and knitted fabrics. The largest number of all participants, 20 per cent, purchased a soft-textured fabric. Dull and smooth-surfaced fabrics were next in popularity. More than 12 per cent of the home sewers purchased a knitted fabric. The rank order of texture preference was soft, dull, smooth, knitted, rough, nubby, shiny, delicate, tweedy, bulky, and furry.

The distribution of price per yard for fabric varied from store to store as shown in Table III. Store E sold the most inexpensive fabrics, none over \$5.00 per yard. Store A's price emphasis fell within the \$1.01 to \$3.00 per yard category. Store B sold the most fabrics priced below \$4.00 per yard. The majority of textiles sold in Store F was under \$2.00 per yard, but some cloth was sold for as much as \$8.00 per yard. Stores C and D sold the higher-priced goods, with Store D retailing fabrics in the \$10.01 to \$15.00 per yard category. None of the stores, except Store D, sold fabrics over \$8.00 per yard, but most establishments had clients who purchased fabrics as high as \$8.00 per yard. Findings of the current study revealed that the average amount paid by the participants approached \$3.00 per yard. In a recent article by Pacey (21) the average price reported for material sold to home sewers was approximately \$2.00 per yard.



TABLE III

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PRICE RANGES

FOR 226 PIECES OF FABRIC

PURCHASED BY WOMEN IN SIX STORES

Price Range per Yard	Store						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total
	(N=30)	(N=24)	(N=30)	(N=21)	(N=27)	(N=24)	(N=156)
Up to \$1.00	1.3	2.7	0.4	0.0	8.0	2.7	15.1
\$1.01 - 2.00	4.9	5.3	4.0	2.2	5.7	5.3	27.4
2.01 - 3.00	4.9	1.8	6.2	4.4	3.5	1.3	22.1
3.01 - 4.00	1.3	4.0	3.1	0.9	0.9	0.4	10.6
4.01 - 5.00	0.9	0.9	3.5	3.1	0.9	0.9	10.2
5.01 - 6.00	0.0	0.4	1.8	0.4	0.0	2.3	4.9
6.01 - 8.00	1.8	0.4	4.0	1.8	0.0	0.4	8.4
10.01 - 15.00	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	1.3

The higher average amount paid for fabric by participants in the current study may have been more due to the participation of a more affluent group than may be found in a nation-wide survey. Chi square distribution showed no significant differences ( $\chi^2=1.654$ ;  $df=4$ ) in the level of education for the participants as related to the price of fabric per yard. Figure 4 shows the participants divided into levels of education and the cost per yard of fabric purchased. The greatest number of college graduates spent less than \$2.00 per yard for fabric; however, the majority of participants spent more than \$2.00 per yard.

The price paid for patterns by the participants in this study, as related to the price per yard of fabric purchased, is shown in Figure 5. Chi square distribution indicated that a highly significant relationship ( $\chi^2=23.795$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ) existed in that the more the consumer pays for fabric, the more the consumer tends to pay for the corresponding pattern. Inexpensive patterns were used with less expensive goods.

Almost one-half of the customers, 44.9 per cent, in the survey paid cash for their purchases. Checks were used by 17.3 per cent of the participants. An insignificant number of the consumers used a lay-a-way plan, 1.3 per cent. Use of credit accounted for 36.5 per cent of the total purchases. No credit or lay-a-way services were available in Store E. Store F had opened charge accounts for their customers within the past few years.

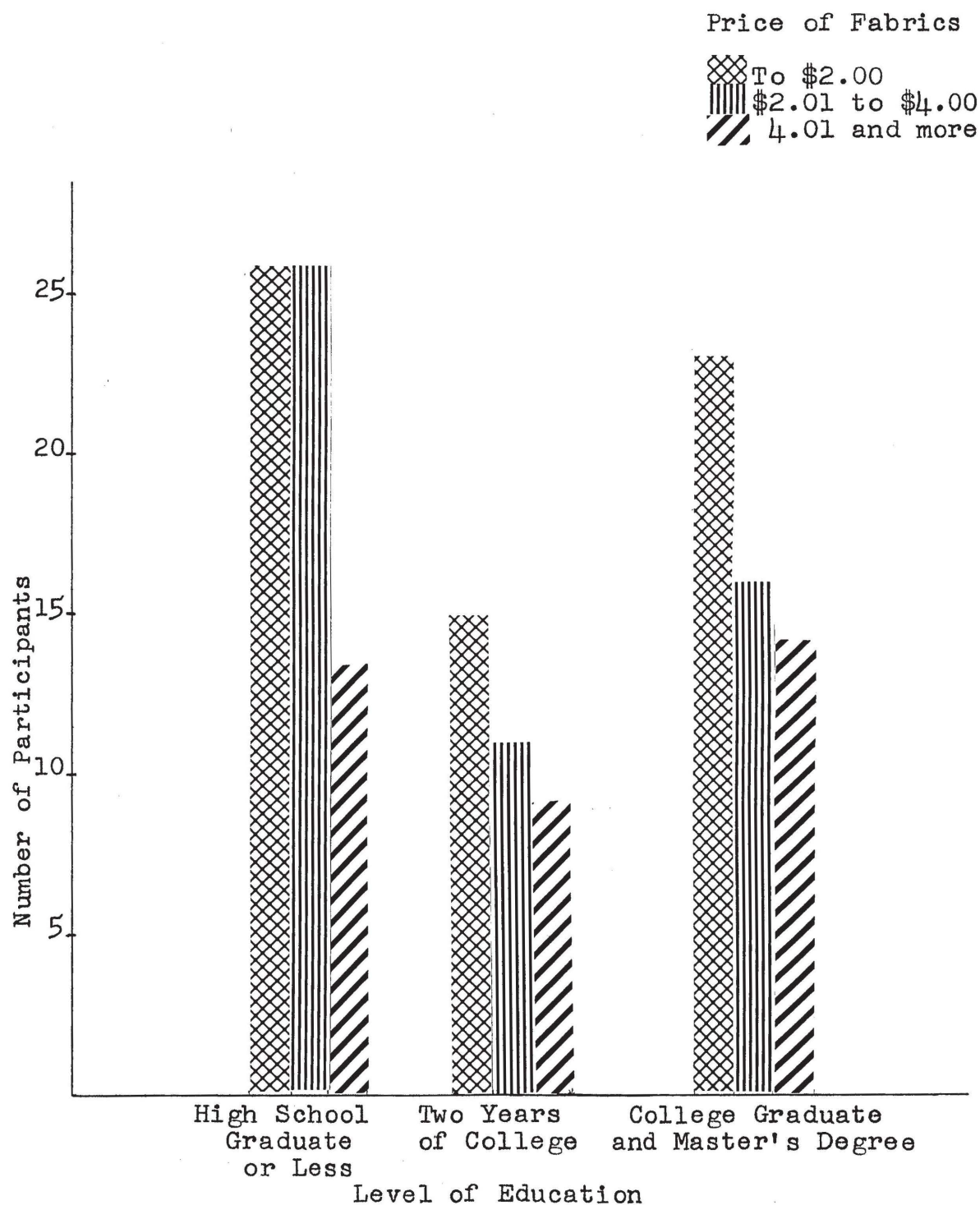


Figure 4

Level of Participants' Education as Related to  
the Price per Yard of Purchased Fabric

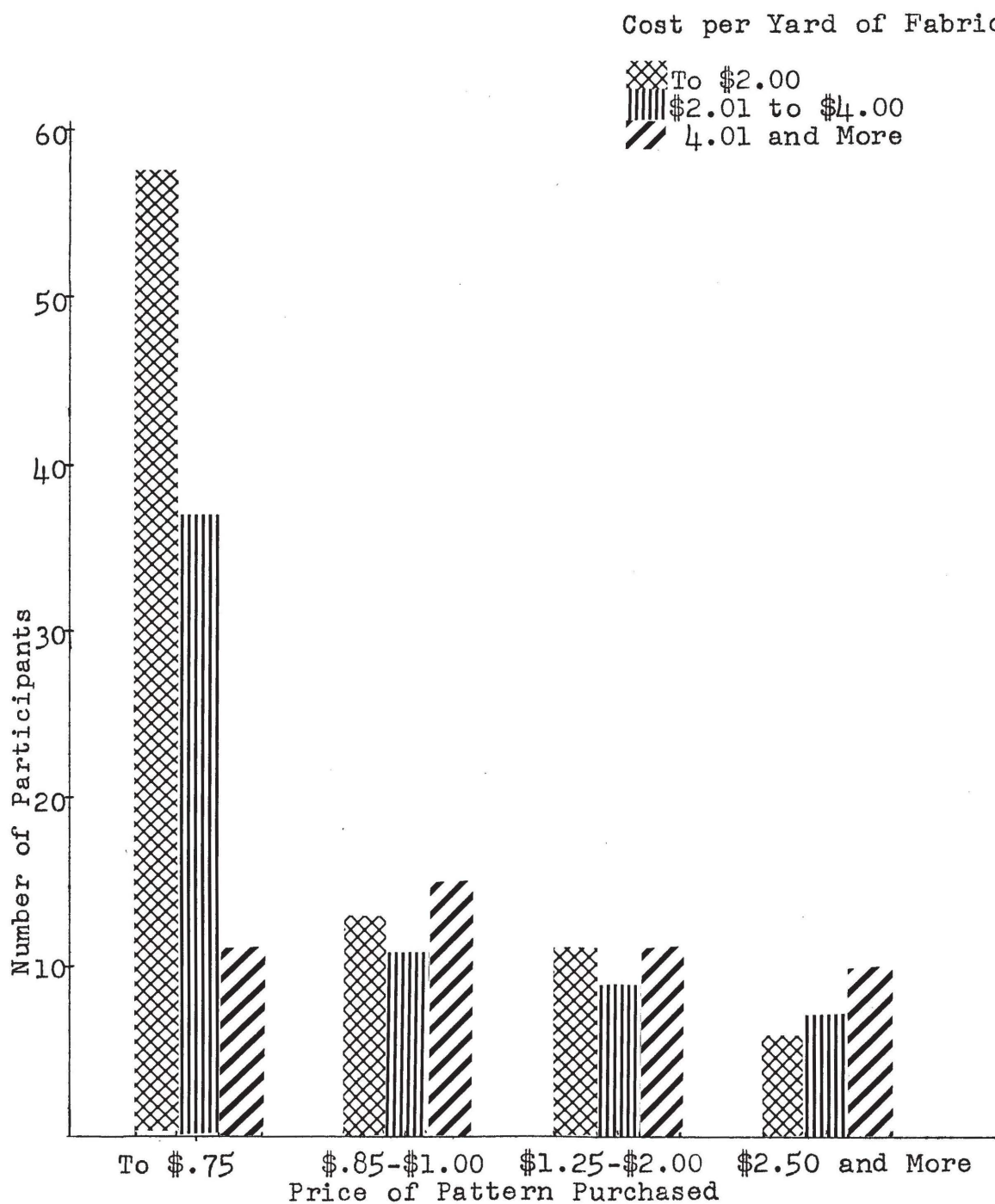


Figure 5

Price of Purchased Pattern as Related to the  
Price per Yard of Purchased Fabric



Apparently, large department stores' credit cards do attract fabric buyers. A larger percentage of participants used credit rather than cash or checks for purchases in the department stores. In the specialty fabric shops almost as many participants used credit as used cash and checks. The percentages indicated that today's clients like charge accounts and up-to-date stores need to have such services available.

#### Label Information

Information concerning knowledge of fiber content was obtained on 221 of the 229 pieces of fabric purchased. The fiber content of 74.2 per cent of the fabrics selected was known by the participants. One-fifth, or 19.5 per cent, responded negatively. More than six per cent of the consumers were uncertain of the fiber content of the fabric purchased. Due to the many fibers and various blends available in fabrics today, a wise consumer should be up-to-date concerning information on the latest fibers, fabrics, and finishes being marketed. American Fabrics (13) editors quoted Mr. Sandy Harris, a vice president of Weil and Schoenfield Fabrics, as saying, "The woman who sews, knows." The article added,

"Mr. Harris considers the home sewer the most knowledgeable of all consumers about fibers, fabric performance and brand identity. Since she is going to put considerable time and effort into her sewing projects, she is vitally concerned with how the fabric will perform."



Women were able to remember the fabric care directions for 57.2 per cent of the fabrics purchased. Of the 229 pieces of material purchased, information concerning knowledge of fabric care was obtained for 222 pieces of fabric. More than six per cent admitted no knowledge of fabric care directions for their current purchase. Thirty-six per cent of the customers surveyed indicated no fabric care information on the label. A high percentage of fabrics were not labeled with fabric care instructions. Further verification of this information was unavailable. Manufacturers should be alerted that the knowledgeable consumer is looking for such information.

#### Items Constructed

The participants reported that many different types of garments were being constructed from the purchased fabrics. Dresses were the most popular items made by over 42 per cent of the participants. Children's wear ranked second with 7.9 per cent of the participants reporting intentions of making garments for children. Blouses, the choice of 7.4 per cent of the home sewers, ranked third. Slacks suits, maternity wear, and jumpers followed in descending order of popularity.

A check list of possible sewing techniques was included in the questionnaire. The ability to accomplish these techniques was varied. The women, in general, did not select patterns with difficult construction details. Few women

utilized fashion details. Zipper closings and set-in sleeves were found on many of the selected patterns. Other standard details of construction, in descending order, were collars, buttons and buttonholes, top-stitching, and waistlines or waistbands. Chi square distribution did not indicate any significant differences ( $\chi^2=2.314$ ;  $df=6$ ) in the difficulty of pattern details chosen relative to the level of education of the participants.

Participants estimated the number of garments and the types of apparel that had been constructed during the prior year. The women also reported for whom the sewing was accomplished as shown in Table IV. A total of 3,461 garments were constructed by 96.8 per cent of the participants. Only five women reported having done no sewing during the prior year. The average number of items of apparel made by each participant during the year was 22.2.

Figure 6 shows the amount of sewing accomplished according to each age division of the participants. As figured by chi square distribution, there were no significant differences ( $\chi^2=9.046$ ;  $df=6$ ) in the amount of sewing accomplished according to age divisions, although women between the ages of 30 and 39 apparently sewed more than the women in the other age categories.

Findings by York (32) in 1961 indicated that the women investigated constructed an average of 18 items of apparel or home furnishings during the prior year.

TABLE IV

DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF APPAREL ITEMS  
CONSTRUCTED BY 156 WOMEN WITHIN THE LAST YEAR

Garment Type	Number of Items				
	Recipient of Garments				
	Partic- ipants	Daughters	Sons	Husbands	Other Persons
Dress	673	623	0	0	214
Skirt	107	149	0	0	22
Shirt	27	27	62	17	10
Jumper	26	100	0	0	28
Slacks	156	132	12	1	13
Shorts	42	63	16	0	15
Hat or Cap	2	3	0	0	1
Jacket	33	11	2	0	5
Suit	38	3	3	1	5
Coat	23	21	1	0	9
Cape	7	14	0	0	4
Sport Coat	2	2	5	4	0
Lingerie	8	4	0	0	2
Nightwear	14	26	21	6	17
Slacks Suit	47	42	1	0	3
Jumpsuit	40	32	11	0	4
Evening dress	30	11	0	0	6
Bridal dress	2	4	0	0	3
Swimwear	12	15	0	0	0
Culottes	45	41	0	0	1
Other	11	12	7	2	4
Total	1476	1425	141	31	388

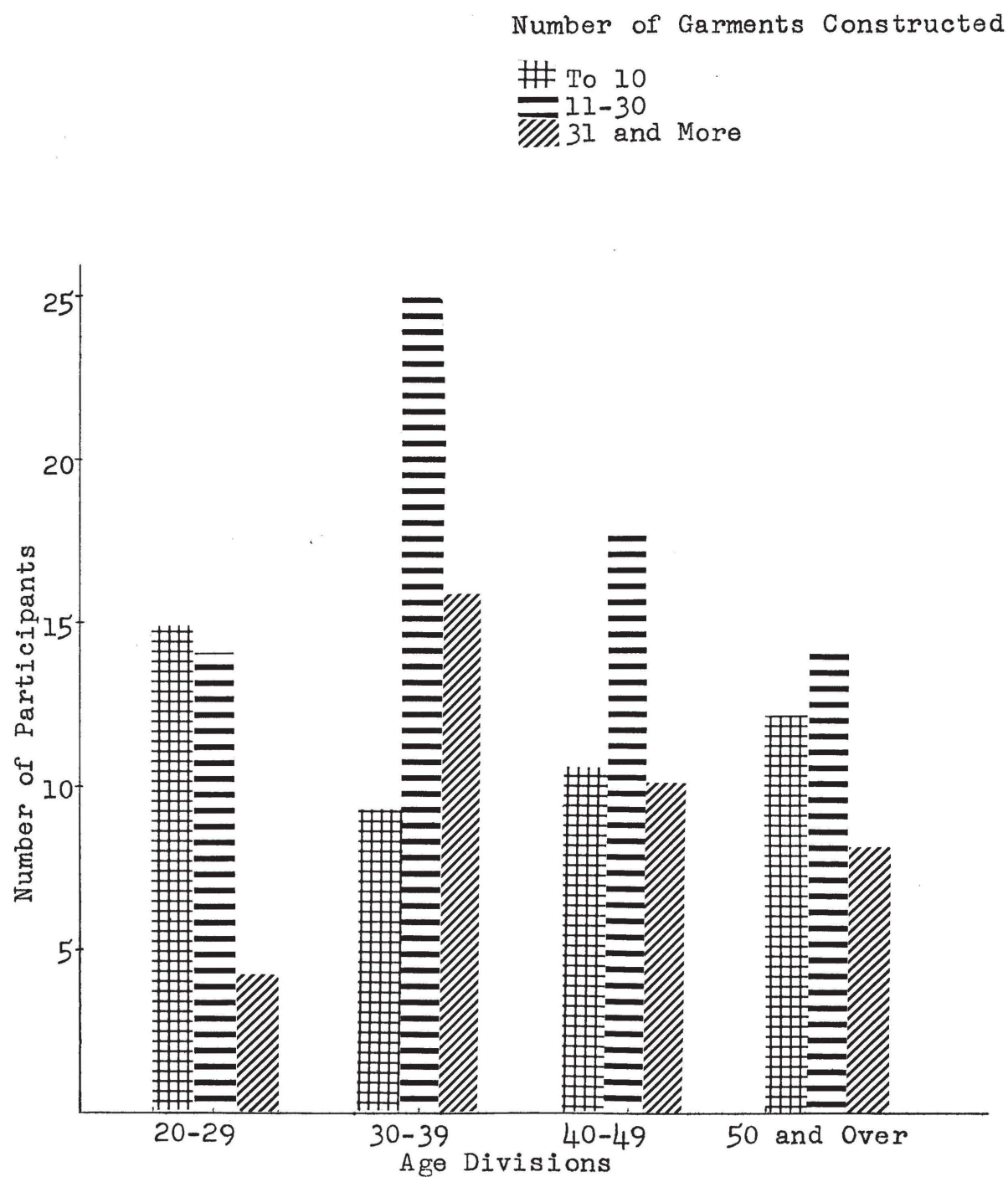


Figure 6

Amount of Sewing Accomplished by Participants  
Relative to Chronological Age



Results of the research survey by the McCall Pattern Company (13) in 1968 revealed that the average number of garments made by individuals was 13, with one out of four women making 20 or more garments.

The average number of garments sewn by each person varied from store to store. Store C participants had the highest average, 27.0 garments per person, while Store D had the lowest average, 18.3 items of apparel per person. These stores were fabric specialty shops. Store A participants reported 18.5 garments per person and Store B participants had an average of 23.4 items of apparel per person. Store A and B were department stores. No trend was apparent in either type of store. Store E participants reported making 18.9 garments per person, while Store F clients reported an average of 26.7 items of apparel per person constructed within the last year.

Dresses were the items of apparel most often constructed. These items encompassed 43.6 per cent of all garments sewn. This figure coincides closely with the 42.4 per cent of women who selected dresses to be constructed from the currently purchased fabric. Slacks were the second-most popular type of garment constructed, comprising 9.1 per cent of all the items constructed. Skirts, blouses, and jumpers ranked next in popularity.



Children's wear was not placed in a separate category. The items constructed for children were listed under each type of garment constructed for daughter or son.

Research in other surveys agreed with the results found in the current study except that slacks were the second-most-often constructed item of apparel. These data may be indicative of the current trend for women to wear bifurcated apparel. Research by McElderry (16) in 1964 disclosed that garments most frequently constructed were dresses, skirts, and blouses. Collins' research (3) also illustrated in rank order the garments most often made were dresses, skirts, children's wear, and sportswear. According to the research by the McCall Pattern Company (13) in 1968, the chief garments constructed by home sewers were dresses, children's wear, skirts, and blouses.

Results of Conklyn's research (4) in 1961 revealed that dresses, skirts, and blouses were the most frequently constructed items of apparel. Twice as many of the participants in this study made dresses for women rather than for children. Findings also disclosed that more skirts and suits were made for adults while more blouses and shirts were constructed for children.

With the exception of slacks as the second highest number of garments reported as being made in the author's study,

the other apparel items found to be constructed most frequently in the Conklyn research were the same. Findings in Conklyn's study indicated that more suits and blouses were made for the adult participants than for daughters of the participants. An equal number of shirts were made for participants and daughters, while more skirts were made for daughters of the participants.

Research in the current study indicated that almost as many dresses were constructed for daughters as for the adult participants. Cost of children's clothing has risen greatly, perhaps due to the more fashionable items available today in children's wear.

More than 42 per cent of the participants sewed for themselves while 41.2 per cent sewed for their daughters. Many participants reported sewing for daughters-in-law. Sons of the participants benefited to some degree; over four per cent of the sample reported making apparel for sons. Very little sewing was done for husbands of the participants. Sewing for other persons totaled 11.2 per cent of all apparel constructed. In descending order garments were constructed for granddaughters, friends, customers, mothers, grandsons, sisters, nieces, mothers-in-law, fathers, sisters-in-law, aunts, cousins, nephews, grandmothers, and daughters' friends.

The amount of sewing accomplished as related to the price range of fabric purchased as shown in Figure 7 was not significant ( $\chi^2=1.199$ ;  $df=4$ ) as figured by the chi square distribution. The most experienced home sewers may be more adept at finding and utilizing the more inexpensive fabrics.

### Reasons for Home Sewing

Participants indicated the degree of importance of the reasons for sewing in the home. The responses are shown in Table V. The greatest percentage of participants, 63.6, indicated saving money as a very important reason for sewing. The second largest group, 57.7 per cent, listed the desire to sew as a very important reason. A survey by McCall's, which was published in American Fabrics (17) in 1954-55, indicated that more women like to sew than sew to save money. Collins (3) in 1964 found that more women sewed for enjoyment than for economy. Research by Mitchell (17), York (32), and Conklyn (4) established that a greater percentage of women sewed in order to save money than for enjoyment, as did this current research. Other very important reasons for sewing as checked by the participants in order of importance were to achieve a better fit than is found in ready-to-wear garments, to be able to use high quality fabrics, to have well-constructed garments, to be creative, and to get more fabric and pattern selections.

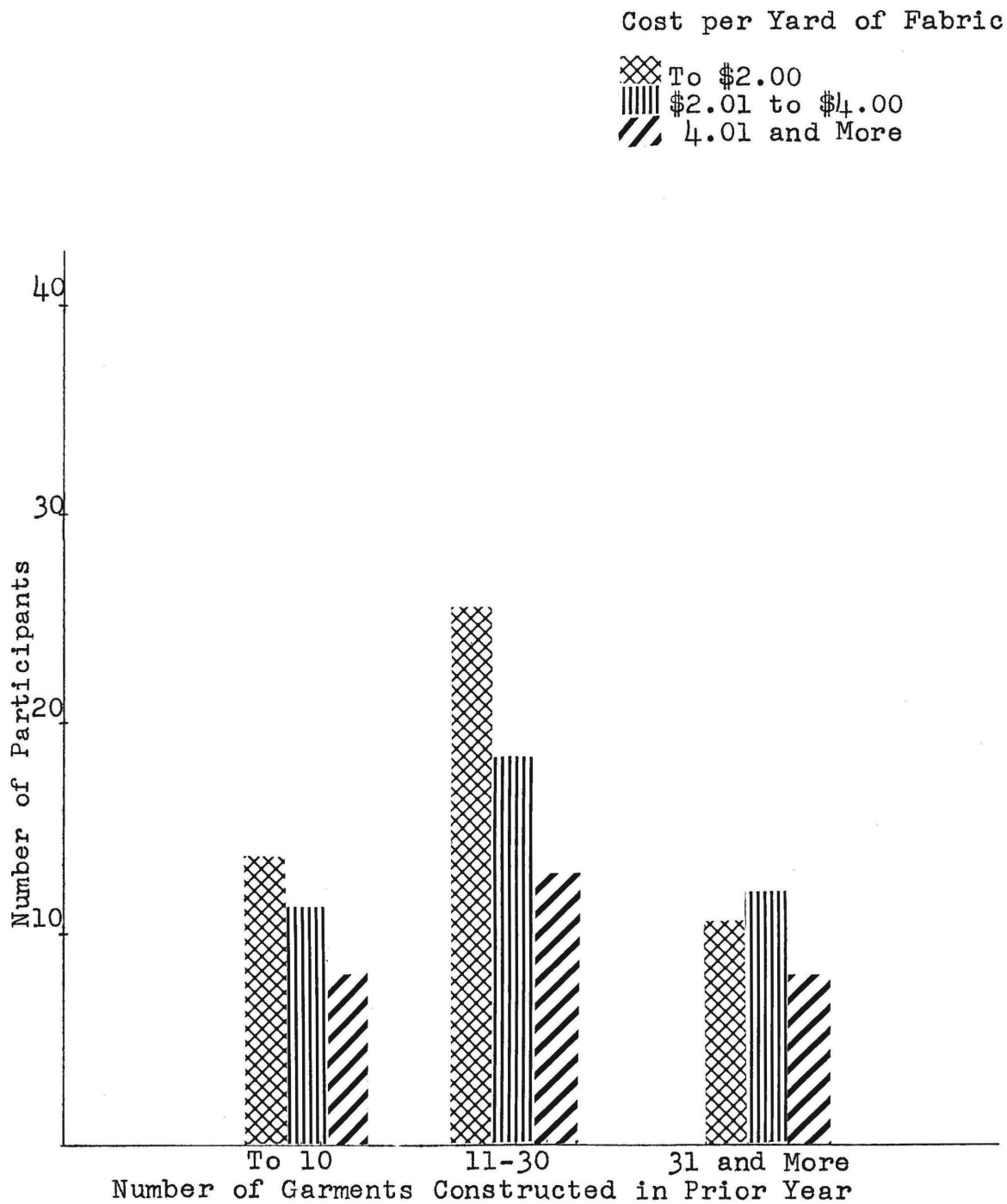


Figure 7

Amount of Sewing Accomplished by Participants  
as Related to Price Range per Yard  
of Purchased Fabric

TABLE V

## PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS

FOR HOME SEWING BY 151 WOMEN

Reasons for Home Sewing	Degree of Importance			Number
	Very Important	Important	Minor Importance	
To save money	63.6	29.1	7.3	151
To have well-constructed garments	51.5	39.1	9.4	138
To use higher quality fabrics	51.8	41.8	6.4	141
To use an idea you had of how to make a garment	33.3	31.9	34.8	135
To achieve a better fit than obtainable in ready-to-wear	53.3	26.6	20.1	139
To fill leisure hours	21.4	17.5	61.1	126
Like to sew	57.7	26.1	16.2	142
Desire to create something	50.7	30.9	18.4	136
Because mother sewed	4.2	13.4	82.4	119
Because grandmother sewed	2.6	6.1	91.3	115
To use fabric on hand	6.6	22.3	71.1	121
To re-make or remodel another garment	4.1	13.8	82.1	123
To get more selections of fabric, patterns, etc.	43.2	34.8	22.0	132



A very small percentage of the participants were influenced by mother's or grandmother's sewing ability. Knowles (14) investigated the factors that influenced the development of good taste in clothing habits for senior high school girls. The results of Knowles' study revealed that the amount of sewing done in the home did not contribute significantly to the development of the ability to select compatible fabrics and designs in clothes. If sewing in the home by mothers had any influence in the development of sewing skills, the participants were hesitant to admit such a factor.

No statistical significance as figured by chi square distribution in this study was found to substantiate a relationship between the age of the women sewers and sewing for economy or liking to sew. The lower-middle socio-economic classification of women sewers appeared to be more conscious of sewing to save money than women in other socio-economic classifications.

A comparison was made between working women and homemakers relative to the economy of home sewing. According to chi square analysis, there were no significant differences in the percentages as follows:

---

<u>Sewing to Save Money</u>	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>		
	<u>Very</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Minor</u>
	<u>Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Importance</u>
Working women (N=38)	65.8	28.9	5.3
Homemakers (N=113)	63.6	29.1	7.3
$x^2=0.343$ ; $df=2$ ; non-significant			

---

Degrees of importance in responses given for economy of home sewing varied little between working women when divided into occupational rating categories. The number of working women was so small no statistical calculations could be made.

### Source of Information and Assistance

The majority of the 151 participants, 53.2 per cent, sought a sewing friend for help when difficult procedures were encountered. Various other contacts for advice are shown below:

---

<u>Advisory Contact</u>	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>
Neighbor	4.5
Daughter or mother	12.1
Friend who sews well	53.2
Fabric shop where fabric was purchased	13.9
Extension person or homemaking teacher	8.0
Other	8.3
Total (N=151)	<u>100.0</u>

---

Possibly retail stores do a better job of helping people with sewing needs. Participants shopping in Store C indicated that the sales personnel were more helpful than did the participants who shopped in the other stores. This particular store may be more aware of the problems home sewers encounter. Customers patronizing stores may be more inclined to patronize certain stores if advice concerning selection and construction is available while shopping.

### Self-Ability Evaluation

Each participant was requested to self-judge the degree of personal sewing ability. More than three per cent indicated the attainment of professional dressmaking ability: category number seven. The largest number of participants, 31.9 per cent, were in category six: very secure in quality of workmanship. Category number four, the ability to construct a basic dress with some detail, was checked by 29.7 per cent of the participants. More than 18 per cent had achieved mastery of most difficult techniques: category number five. More than nine per cent were able to construct a garment with simple details: category number three. A small percentage of persons indicated limited ability. This data is shown below:

<u>Degree of Ability</u>	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>
1. First garment to construct	0.6
2. Ability limited	6.5
3. Construction of garment with simple details	9.7
4. Construction of basic dress with some detail	29.7
5. Mastery of most difficult techniques	18.1
6. Very secure in quality of workmanship	31.9
7. Professional dressmaker	3.5
Total (N=155)	100.0

The self-rating of sewing ability by the participants is shown in Figure 8 as related to the level of education. Basically, the persons with high school education or less considered themselves better than average sewers.

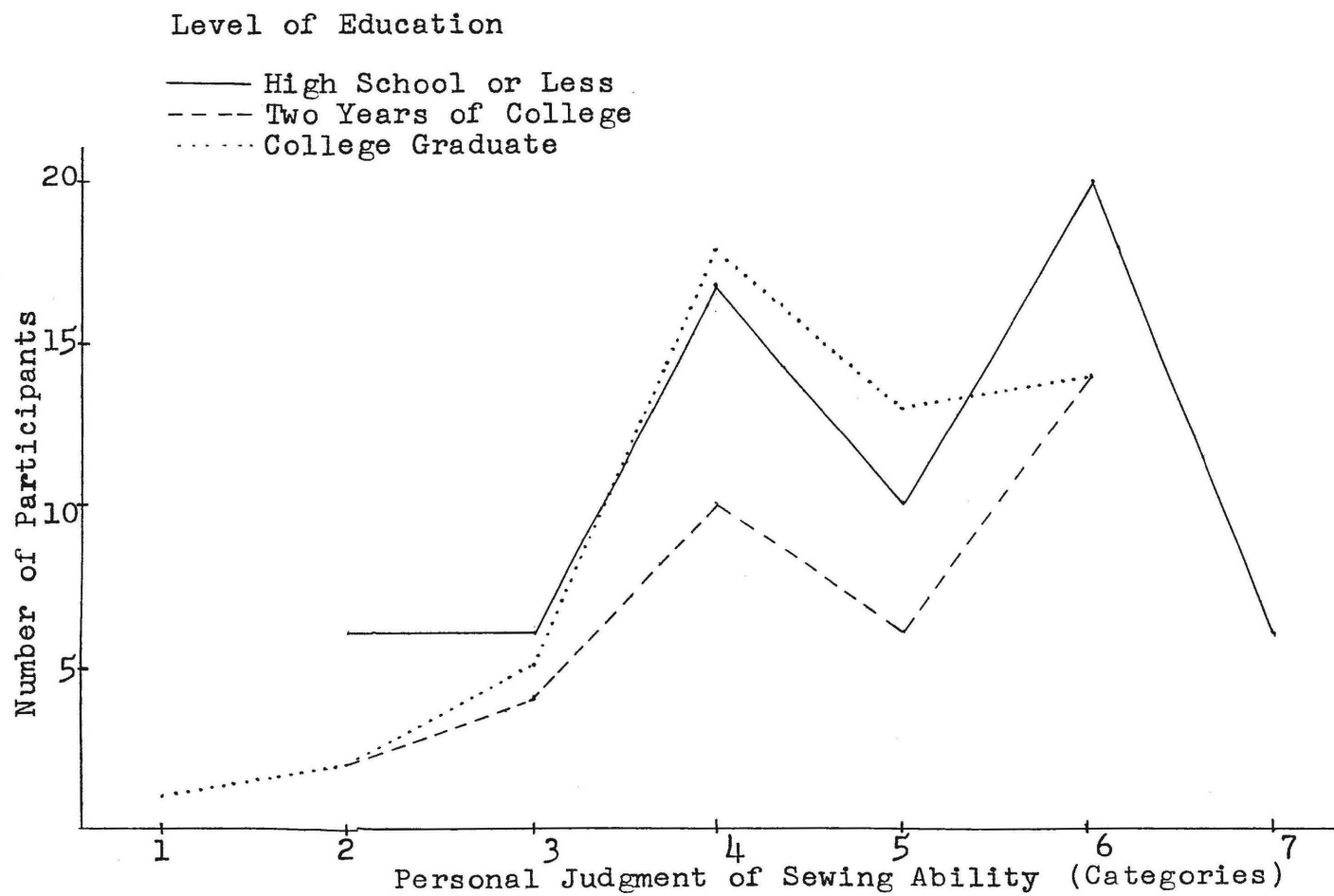


Figure 8

Personal Judgment of Sewing Ability by Participants

The college graduates may have been more hesitant to rate themselves as expert seamstresses. However, this was not substantiated statistically by chi square analysis ( $\chi^2=3.775$ ;  $df=4$ ). Categories one, two, three; four, five; and six, seven were grouped together for statistical calculations.

The self-rating of sewing ability in relation to pattern selection did not appear to be statistically significant ( $\chi^2=6.954$ ;  $df=6$ ) as shown in Figure 9. Chi square distribution was figured on a grouping of categories one, two, three; four, five; and six, seven. Some participants, who had the greatest ability according to ratings, chose the simplest patterns. In general, the sewers selected a small number of details regardless of ability.

#### Time and Home Sewing

Consumers in the survey were requested to estimate the expected completion date of the currently purchased fabric. The majority of women, 59.0 per cent, planned to use the fabric immediately. The largest number of the participants purchased fabric with good intentions of usage within three months. Interruptions in plans do not always permit work to be done on schedule; therefore, it is doubtful that all sewing was completed as planned.



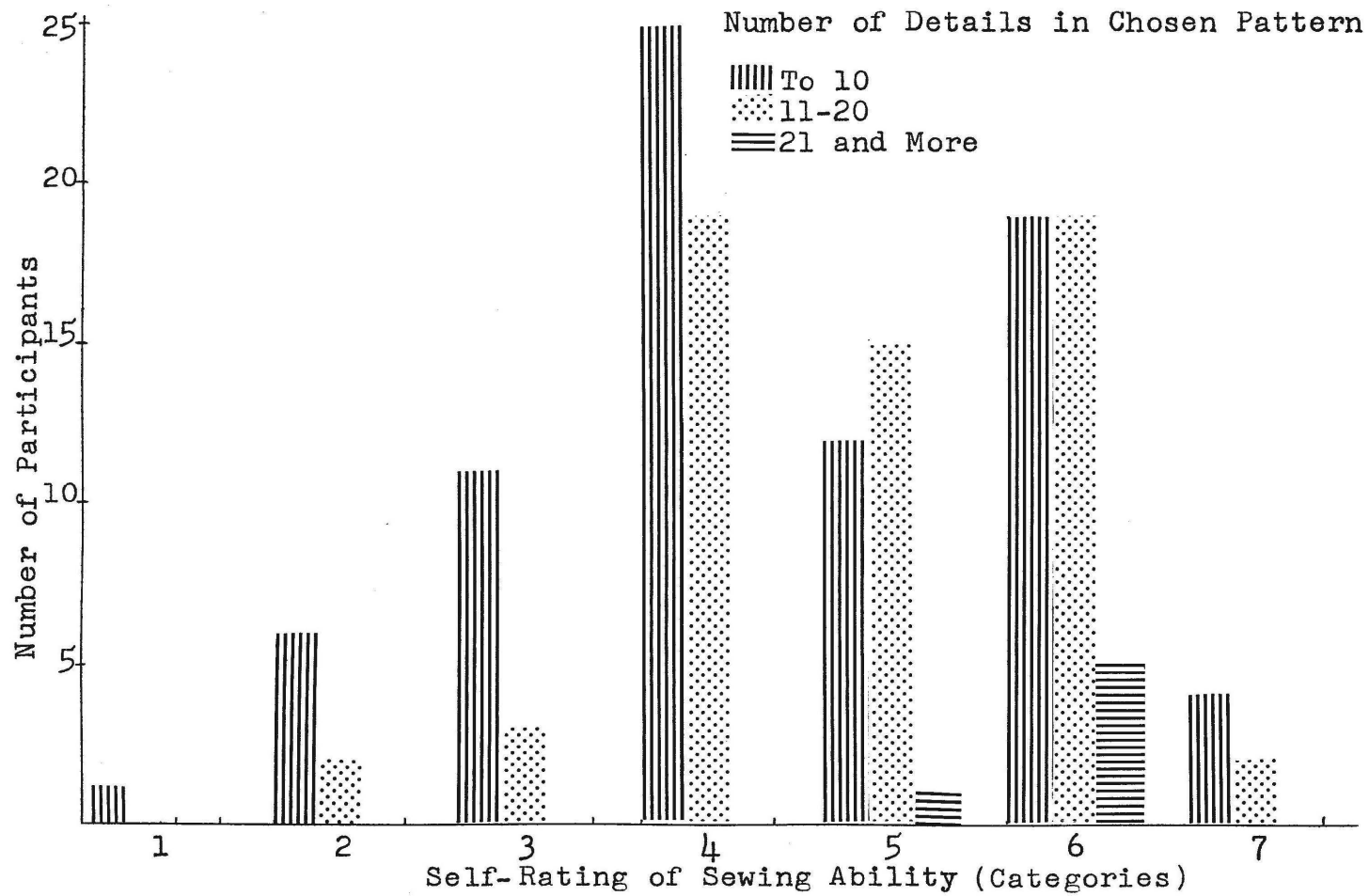


Figure 9

Personal Judgment of Sewing Ability by Participants  
as Related to Details of Selected Pattern

Below are the estimated periods of time during which the fabric was planned to be utilized:

<u>Estimated Period of Time During Which Fabric Is To Be Constructed</u> (N=227)	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>
At once	59.0
Within three months	33.9
Within six months	3.6
Within one year	2.2
Undecided	1.3
Total	<u>100.0</u>

One hundred fifty-three participants in the study responded to the question concerning the time spent selecting a pattern for fabric previously purchased. Findings indicated that 85.6 per cent of the women who purchased fabric before selecting a pattern experienced a greater degree of difficulty in finding a pattern for the fabric than was evident for the participants buying pattern and fabric simultaneously. In view of the findings in which 92.9 per cent of the consumers purchased fabrics planned for construction within three months, selection of a pattern at the time the fabric is purchased seemed most desirable.

Those participants having little or no trouble finding a pattern for fabric purchased at an earlier date may have had a good idea of what was to be created from the fabric

at the time of purchase. The percentages in the various categories are shown below:

---

<u>Amount of Time</u>	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>
Much	34.0
Some	51.6
Little	11.8
None	2.6
Total (N=153)	100.0

---

Research by Else (7) in 1965 indicated the amount of personal fabric inventory was associated with the amount of sewing accomplished. The time of clothing purchases was related to the socio-economic level: the lower level purchased for immediate use; the middle level planned ahead and made purchases before the time for usage.

Over 46 per cent of the home sewers spent less than 10 hours sewing during the month prior to the beginning of the study. As the amount of sewing time increased during the prior month, fewer participants reported in each category:

---

<u>Amount of Time Spent Sewing During Prior Month</u>	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>
Less than 10 hours	47.1
Approximately 25 hours	36.8
Approximately 50 hours	11.0
Approximately 100 hours	3.2
Over 100 hours	1.9
Total (N=155)	100.0

---

Inquiry was made as to the length of the work periods the women had available during which the sewing was accomplished. Almost one-half, 47.1 per cent, indicated many interruptions occurred while putting a garment together. Over 40 per cent of the participants had a few interruptions, while 12.4 per cent had practically no interference.

Afternoon was the time of day when the largest percentage of home sewers engaged in this activity. Some participants in the study indicated that they sewed while the children were napping. As most children rest during the afternoon, preschool mothers were assumed to have preferred sewing in the afternoon. Many homemakers like to finish housework before beginning other projects: presumably housework in the mornings; sewing in the afternoons. Many seamstresses accomplished much sewing during the morning hours, while 21.9 per cent reported the construction of apparel after the evening meal. Other sewing times were during the weekend hours. Many working women reported sewing during the weekend. The various times the women reported that sewing was accomplished were as follows:

<u>Time of Day When Most Sewing Is Accomplished</u>	<u>Per cent of Participants</u>
During the Children's naps	7.3
In the morning	26.5
In the afternoon	28.8
After the evening meal	21.9
Other	15.5
Total (N=154)	100.0

### Equipment

Almost one-half of the sewing machines owned by participants in the study were less than five years old. Apparently many people have purchased new sewing machines within the past few years. Figure 10 illustrates fewer machines in each age category as the age of the sewing machines increased. Only two participants did not respond to this question.

Figure 11 shows the various ages of the machines owned by the participants as related to the number of items constructed annually. The findings were not significant ( $\chi^2=0.730$ ;  $df=4$ ) according to the chi square analysis. Participants sewed an average amount regardless of the age of the sewing machine.

Figure 12 shows the relation between class level and sewing machine age. Chi square distribution revealed no statistically significant relationship ( $\chi^2=7.913$ ;  $df=6$ ). The age of the sewing machine in relation to the age of the women, shown in Figure 13, was a highly significant finding statistically ( $\chi^2=22.075$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $P<0.01$ ) as figured by the chi square distribution. Participants in the age group of 60 and over were grouped in the 50 to 59 years category for statistical calculations. Women over 40 years of age owned a greater number of older machines; women in the 20 to 29 age grouping owned a greater number of newer machines.



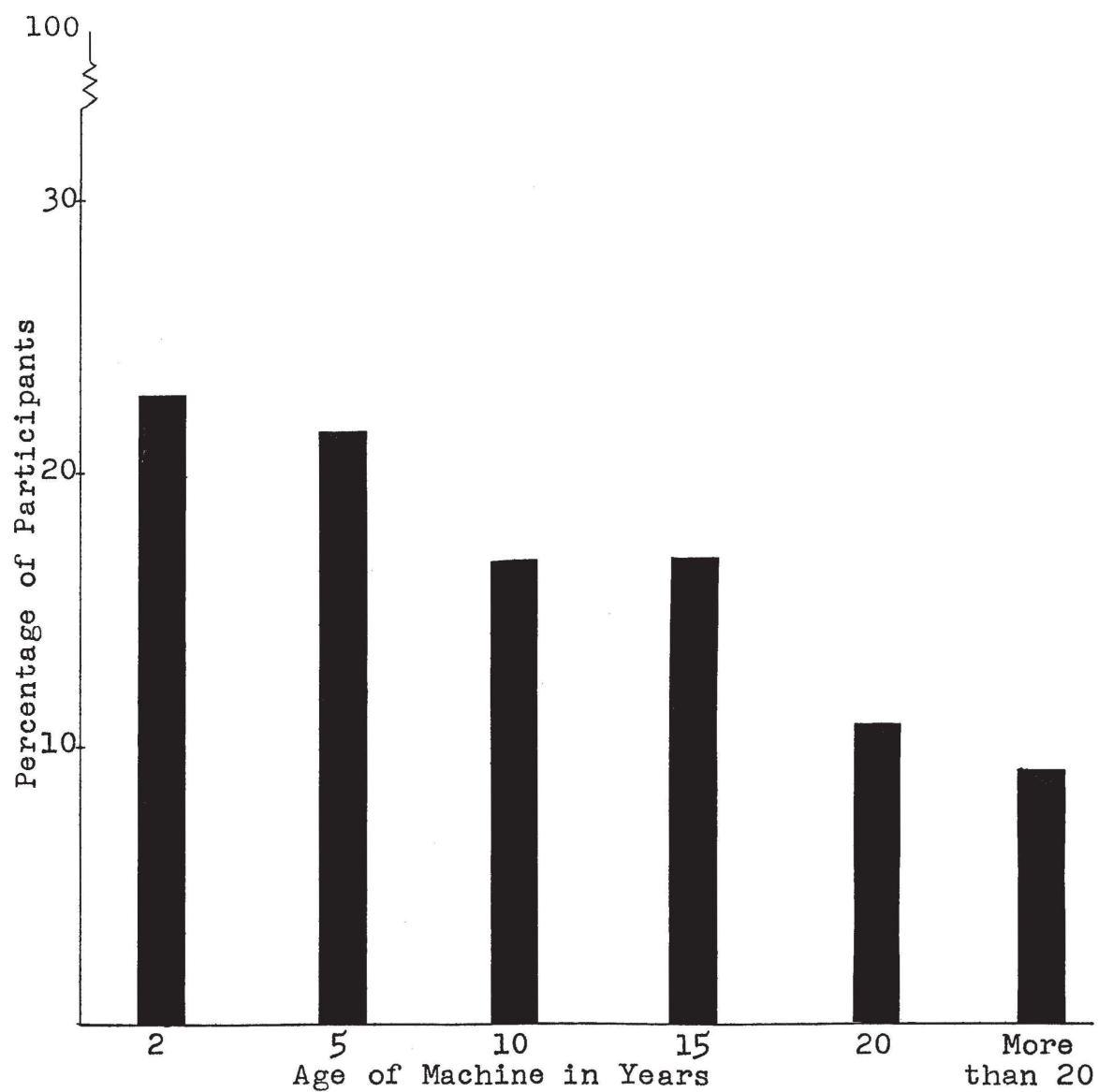


Figure 10

Ages of Sewing Machine Owned by Participants

## Age of Sewing Machines

≡≡≡ 5 Years or Less  
⋯ 6-15 Years  
||| 16 Years and Over

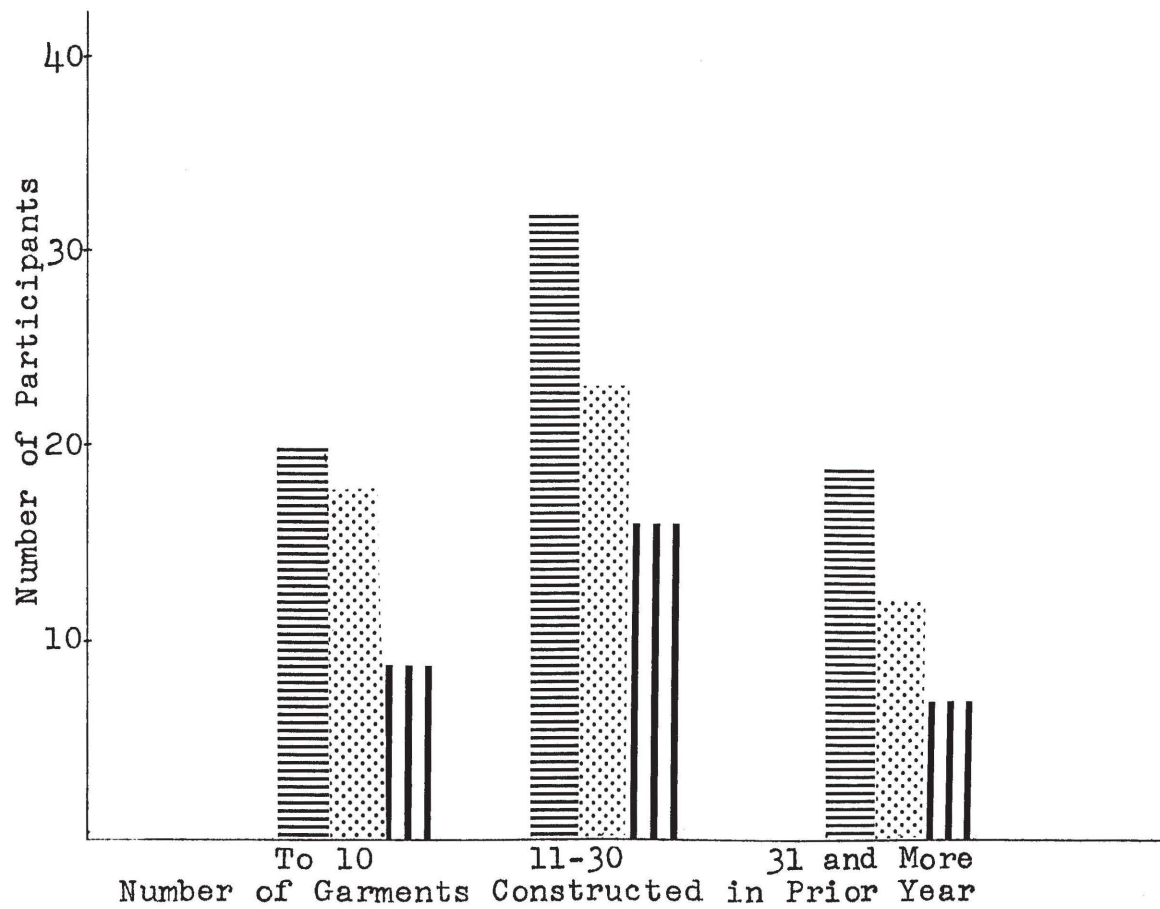


Figure 11

Amount of Sewing Accomplished by Participants  
as Related to Age of Sewing Machine

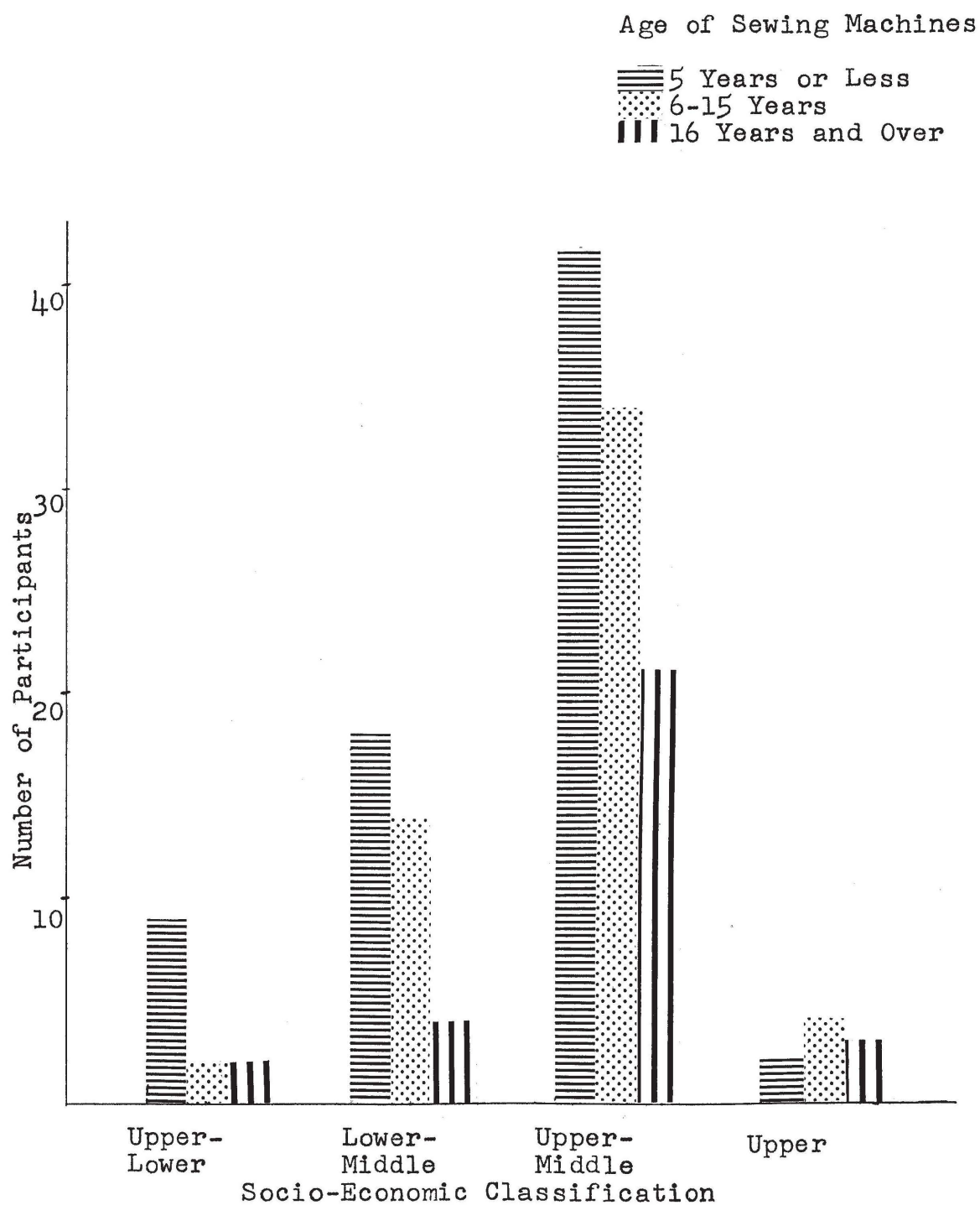


Figure 12

Age of Sewing Machine Owned by Participants  
in Relation to Socio-Economic  
Classification

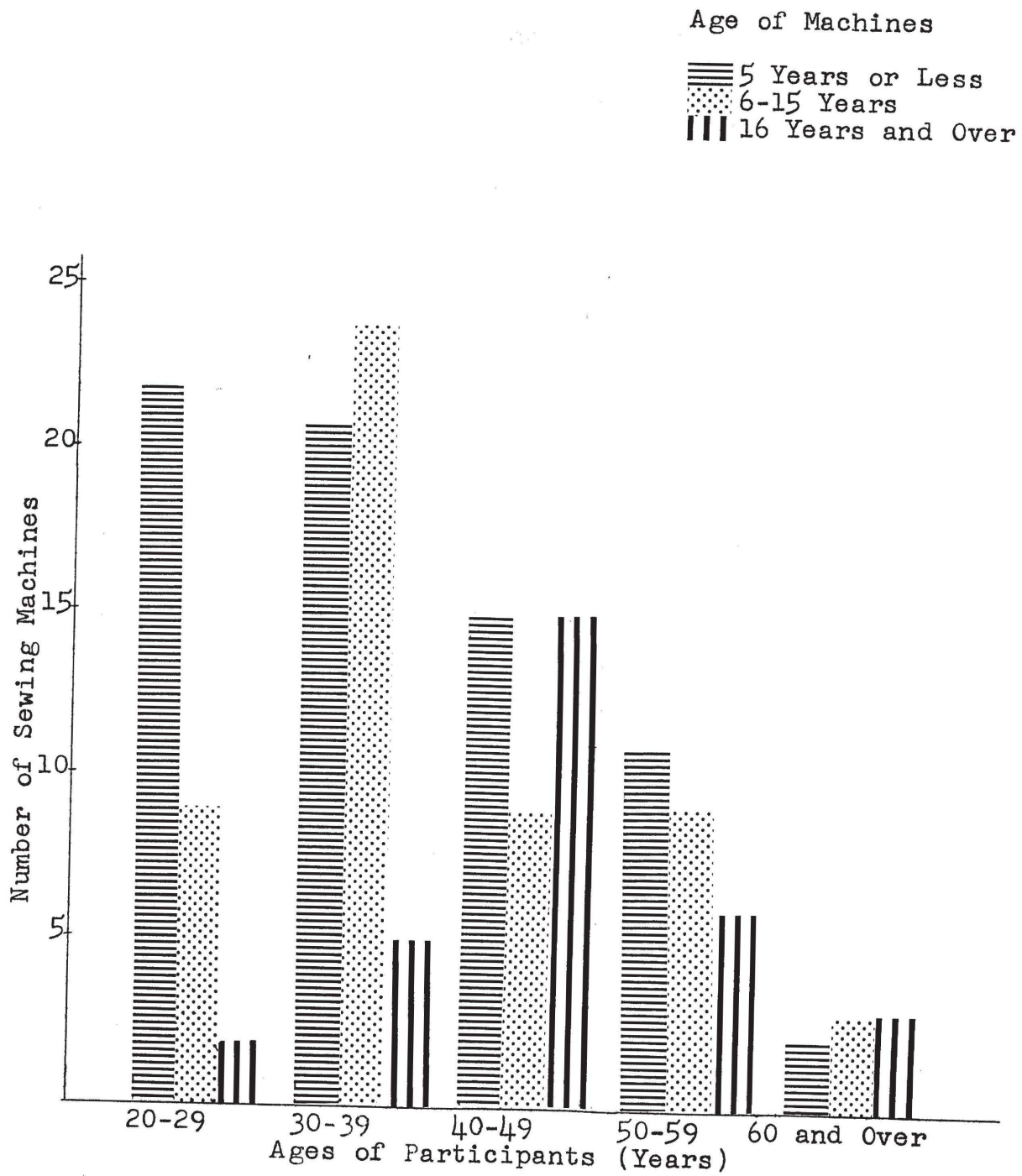


Figure 13

Age of Sewing Machines Owned by Participants  
in Relation to Age of Participants

Nine per cent of the participants owned sewing machines which were more than 20 years of age, which indicated that many older machines are still in use. No one surveyed indicated currently using a treadle sewing machine. A substantial number of new machines were found in all age categories.

None of the participants indicated renting or borrowing a sewing machine. Our affluent age may be the reason. Now almost everyone can afford to own a sewing machine if interested in sewing.

A majority of the participants, 62.5 per cent, owned a fully automatic sewing machine. Thirty-one per cent owned a regular sewing machine which produced a straight stitch. Few participants, 6.5 per cent, owned a non-automatic zig-zag machine which was probably due to the small difference in cost between an automatic and a zig-zag machine. Usually, a seamstress will pay a small difference in order to have the fully automatic machine whether it is used or not. Advertising and salesmanship may have been additional influential factors in the selection and purchase of a sewing machine. Owning a fully automatic sewing machine is perhaps a status symbol. This status symbolism may be further indicated by a much larger proportion of people in the upper-lower socioeconomic class who own a fully automatic machine in contrast to a regular zig-zag type. The popularity of the fully



automatic sewing machine is shown in the percentages of machine types owned:

<u>Socio-Economic Status</u>	<u>Kind of Sewing Machine</u>		
	<u>Per cent</u>		
	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Zig-Zag</u>	<u>Automatic</u>
Upper-lower	1.9	0.6	5.8
Lower-middle	7.1	1.3	15.5
Upper-middle	19.4	4.5	38.1
Upper	2.6	0.0	3.2
Total (N=155)	31.0	6.5	62.5

Responses of the women revealed that 64.9 per cent of the sewing machines were in a cabinet, while 35.1 per cent were portable. Many of the women may have replaced portable equipment purchased prior to marriage when permanent equipment was not desirable. This replacement may partially explain the frequency of owning machines less than five years of age.

Singer sewing machines were owned by 58.3 per cent of the sample. Kenmore machines ranked second highest in number with 12.8 per cent owned. Both White and Necchi machines ranked third with 3.8 per cent owned. Pfaff, Elna, and Universal brands followed in descending order. Many factors influence the brand name a consumer might prefer. One hundred fifty-three of the 156 participants in the study responded to the inquiry of the brand of sewing machine owned.

Women participating in the study were asked to check a list of sewing aids: first as to ownership and second as to usage. Most participants owned pins, tape measures, steam irons, and zipper feet. Some of the other items owned included:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Number Owning</u>
Shears	137
Seam ripper	115
Tracing paper	102
Invisible-seam zipper foot	68
Electric scissors	62
Pattern cutting board	44
Pressing ham	32
Personal cardboard block	3

The participants checked sewing aids which were owned but never used. The thimble ranked highest on the list of items never used. Tracing wheels, tracing paper, and hem markers were other aids owned but not used.

Statistical analysis, using the chi square distribution, of the number of sewing aids each participant owned as related to the socio-economic classification of the women was found to be non-significant ( $\chi^2=3.225$ ;  $df=6$ ). Figure 14 shows this relationship. Approximately 70 per cent of the home sewers owned 16 or more aids.

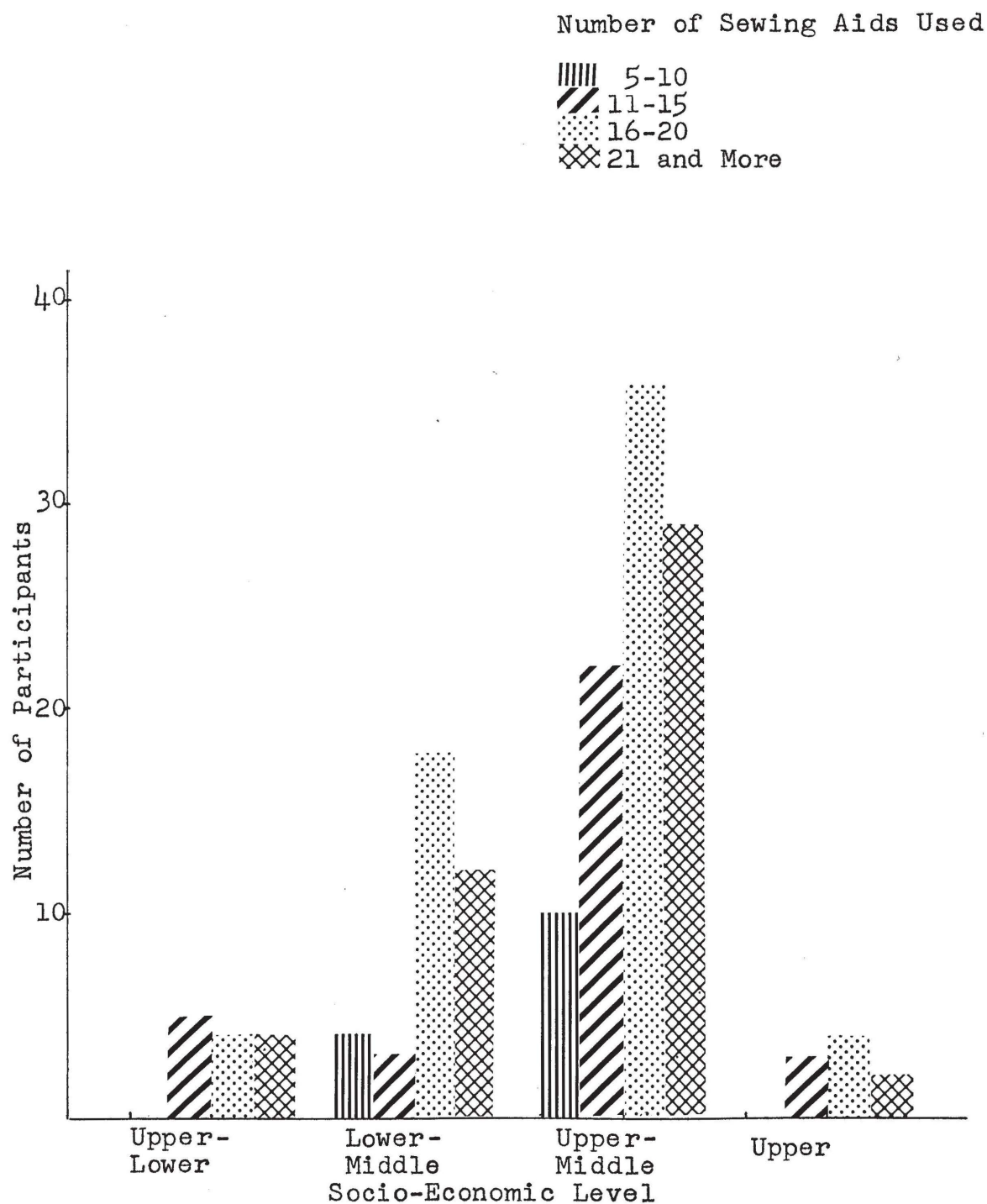


Figure 14

Number of Sewing Aids Used by Participants As  
Related to Socio-Economic Levels

According to chi square distribution, there was no significant relationship ( $\chi^2=0.990$ ;  $df=6$ ) to indicate that the difficulty of the pattern chosen by the participants had any bearing on the number of sewing aids used. As may be expected, the simpler the details, the fewer tools of construction.

Figure 15 shows the number of sewing aids used in relationship to the participants' self-rating of sewing ability. Chi square distribution, calculated with categories one, two, three; four, five; and six seven grouped together, revealed non-significant data ( $\chi^2=11.447$ ;  $df=6$ ). In general, the more adept the seamstress, the more sewing aids utilized. The persons who rated themselves as expert seamstresses indicated few, if any, additional tools were employed. Perhaps, because of the participants' advanced ability, tools of the trade were taken for granted.

Participants were requested to check the usage of notions in the categories of often used, sometimes used, or never used. Notions which were reported as often used are shown in Table VI. Mercerized thread was at the top of the list, while metal zippers followed as the second-most-used notion. In this study metal zippers were obviously preferred over nylon zippers. A list of notions should change with the development of new products.

Notions seldom used included iron-on binding and iron-on interfacing. Covered snaps, found on expensive merchandise, may have been used only by the most selective seamstresses.

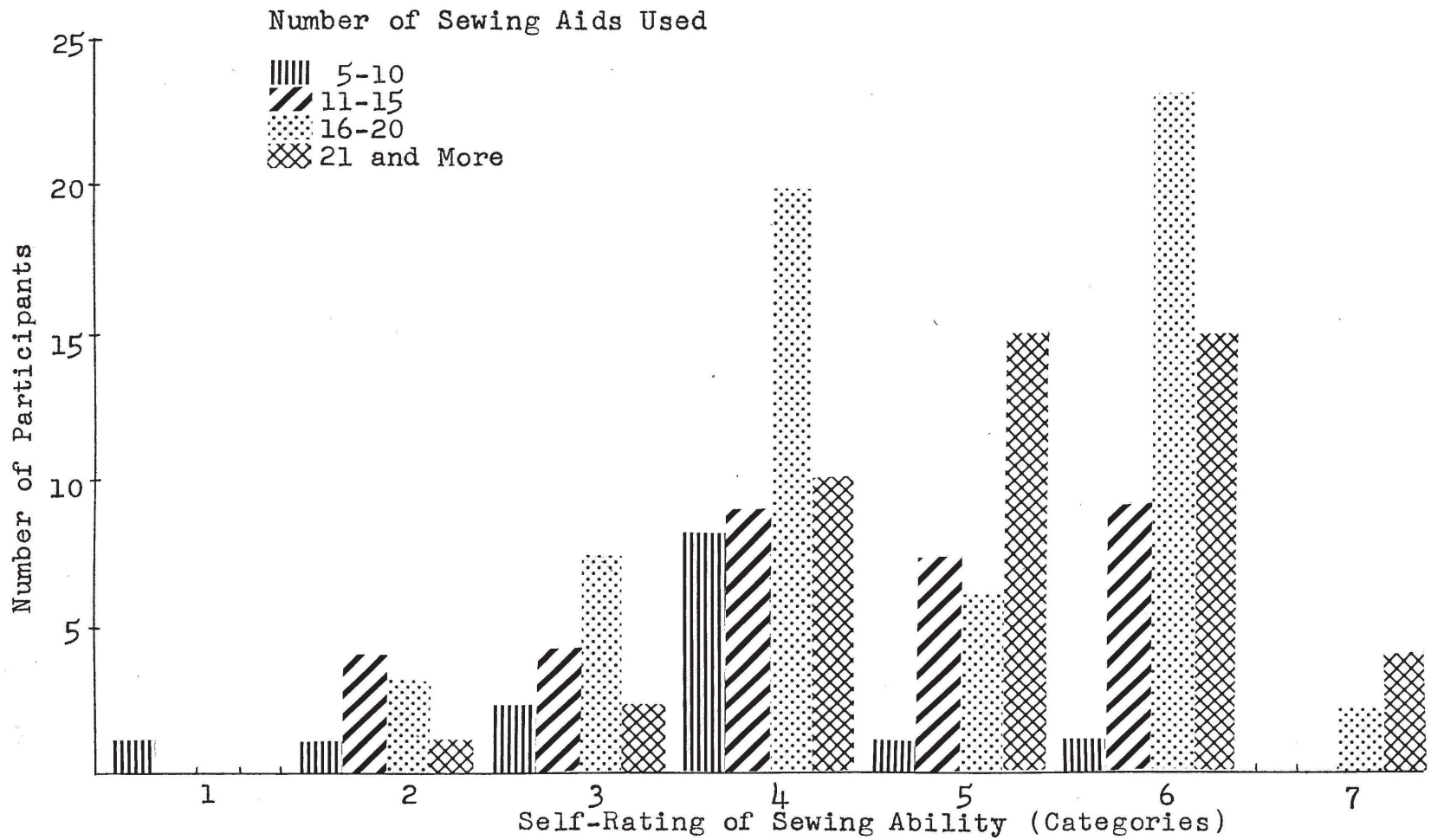


Figure 15

Number of Sewing Aids Used by Participants As Related  
to Personal Judgment of Sewing Ability



TABLE VI

RANK ORDER OF OFTEN USED NOTIONS BY PARTICIPANTS

Notion	Often Used	Number Reporting
Mercerized thread	134	150
Metal zippers	107	147
Seam tape	76	146
Polyester thread	63	141
Skirt hooks and eyes (large)	49	142
Nylon zippers	47	144
Bias binding	39	141
Woven interfacing	39	132
Non-woven interfacing	37	135
Braid, trim, rick-rack, piping	35	139
Stretch-lace tape	29	135
Buttons to cover	26	138
Invisible-seam zippers	24	130
Eyelets	11	133
Iron-on tape	10	133
Silk thread	10	127
Buttonhole twist	10	135
Nylon thread	9	129
Stretch thread	9	128
Grippers	9	127
Covered snaps	8	127
Belt buckle	7	137
Iron-on interfacing	6	120
Iron-on hem binding	6	135

## SEWING ABILITY EVALUATION SCORE

The Sewing Ability Evaluation Score calculated for each participant was derived from responses in each questionnaire concerning fiber content of the fabric purchased, the fabric care, the pattern complexity, the difficulty and number of garments constructed, judgment of sewing ability, amount of time spent sewing, and the number of sewing aids owned which were used. All participants received a score, even though some questions were unanswered and no points were given in such instances. Figure 16 illustrates the distribution of the scores which ranged from nine to 207. Table VII shows the average score of the participants in each store.

Sewing ability evaluations were calculated for both working women and full-time homemakers in order to discern any significant differences between the two groups. There was no significant difference between the two means according to the "t" test. Scores for women who worked fell within the same range as participants who did not work.

The Sewing Ability Evaluation Score was compared with the average number of garments constructed by the women within each store. The average scores within each store corresponded with the average number of garments constructed by the participants to some extent.

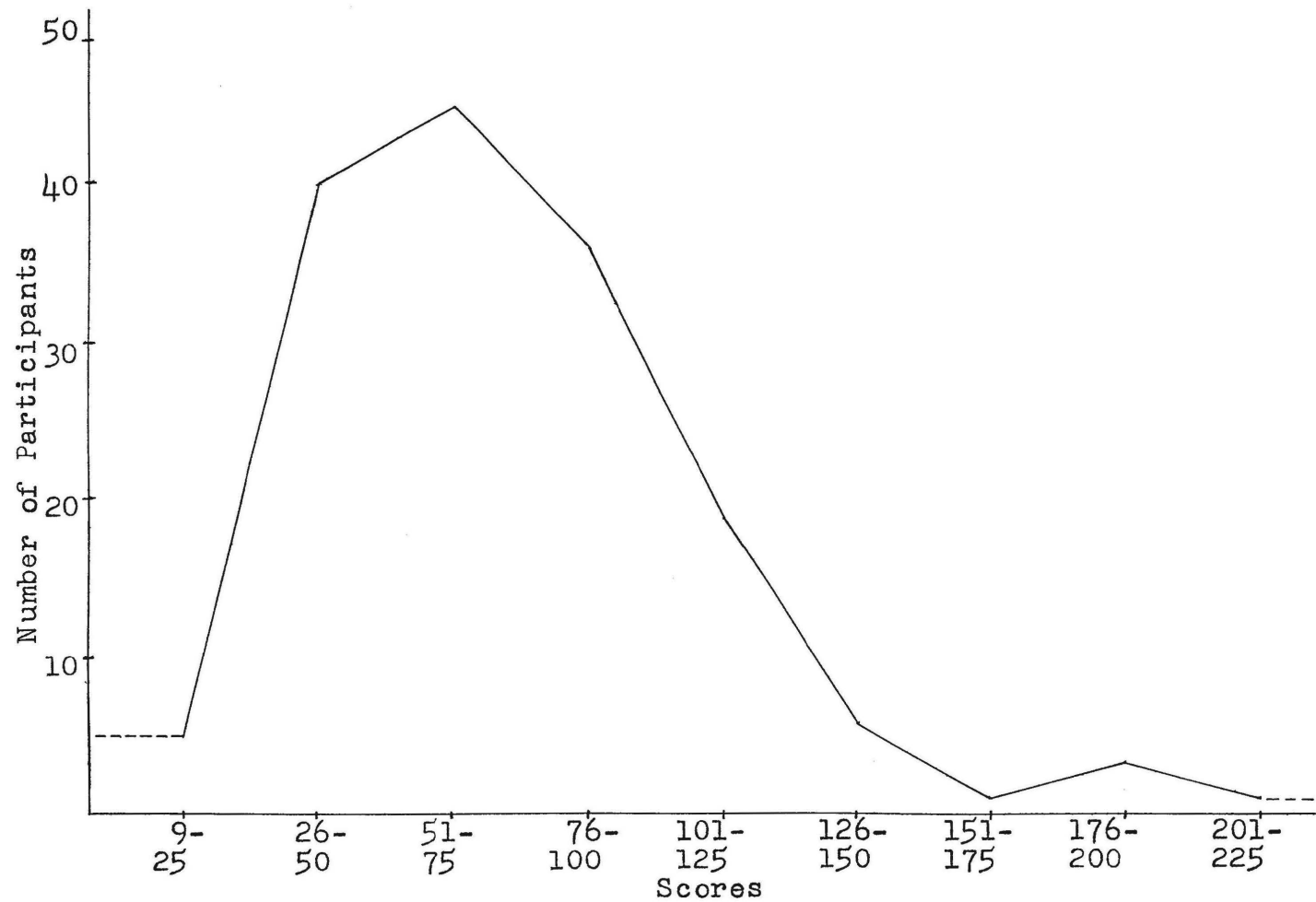


Figure 16

Distribution of Sewing Ability Evaluation Scores  
as Calculated for 156 Participants

TABLE VII  
DISTRIBUTION OF AVERAGE SCORES IN SEWING ABILITY EVALUATIONS  
FOR 156 WOMEN IN SIX STORES

Section	Average Score					
	Store A (N=30)	Store B (N=24)	Store C (N=30)	Store D (N=21)	Store E (N=27)	Store F (N=24)
Fiber	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.6
Fabric Care	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.6
Details in Garment	9.0	7.0	10.8	10.4	9.9	10.3
Number of Garments and Difficulty	33.8	41.2	50.2	31.6	32.6	47.9
Personal Judgment	4.5	4.4	5.0	4.6	4.7	4.8
Time Spent	1.7	1.6	2.0	1.9	1.4	1.8
Number of Aids Owned	15.9	16.0	18.7	20.5	15.8	17.3
Total	66.1	71.4	88.2	70.5	65.5	83.3

The higher the average mean score, the more there was a tendency to construct a greater number of garments. Comparison of the Sewing Ability Evaluation Score and the average number of garments constructed is shown below:

<u>Store</u>	<u>Sewing Ability Evaluation Score</u>	<u>Average Number of Garments Constructed</u>
A	66.1	18.5
B	71.4	23.4
C	88.2	27.0
D	70.5	18.3
E	65.5	18.9
F	83.3	26.7

The Sewing Ability Evaluation Score was compared with the price of patterns purchased by the seamstresses. Popular priced patterns were purchased by seamstresses of all abilities.

There did not appear to be any differences in the Sewing Ability Evaluation Score and the number of sewing aids owned by the participants. Scores of the Sewing Ability Evaluation of participants in all stores followed the same general trend in that there were no great differences between the participants of one store and another.



DESCRIPTION OF CUSTOMERS SHOPPING IN EACH  
OF THE VARIOUS STORES

Store A, a large department store, had more lower-middle and upper-class clients than did the other stores. Customers indicated shopping in Store A in order to charge merchandise more than did patrons of other stores. Shoppers in this store were the most inexperienced seamstresses.

Customers patronizing Store B, a nationally known chain store, were traditional, middle-class women. Findings in this study concerning Store B indicated Store B to be an average store catering to the average home sewer.

Store C, a specialty fabric store, had more upper-middle class clients than did any other store. Fewer working women patronized this store. Sales personnel in this store were reported to be most helpful to the customers. A greater variety of sewing ability was exhibited by the participating clients of this store. The clients rated themselves as better seamstresses than did the customers at other stores. The clients sewed more than patrons of any other store and reportedly spent more time sewing. These customers showed a tendency to select patterns with more difficult construction details. Customers in Store C sewed for the largest number of children. More expensive patterns were purchased here than in any other store.

Store D, a specialty fabric shop, sold the most expensive fabrics that were purchased by the total group of participants. Customers shopping here liked the quality of available fabrics; however, these customers accomplished the least amount of sewing. More customers remembered the fiber content of the fabrics purchased at Store D, perhaps because of the higher price paid for such goods. Customers at this store owned more sewing aids, on the average, than did customers from any of the other stores. Customers patronizing Store D had the least number of children, perhaps indicative of an older clientele.

Store E, a textile outlet establishment, was in a location that appeared to be very convenient for its customers. The customers were attracted to the store supposedly because of bargain prices. This store's customers also had a large number of children for which sewing was done. Store E had more customers with the lowest educational attainment. Most of the observed customers made a purchase, many of which were small items.

Store F, a sewing center featuring fabrics and sewing machines, had the most upper-lower class clients. This store was rated second by its customers for convenience of location. The customers of this store ranked themselves second in amount and difficulty of sewing accomplished and second in self-sewing ability.

Stores A, B, and F had the largest percentages of working clientele. All stores offered fabrics, patterns, and notions in one store area; only Store F offered equipment along with the above-mentioned items. Store B had equipment placed in an unrelated area.

## PART II

Customers were observed while shopping in each of the various stores in order to collect information concerning shopping habits. A total of 150 participants were observed, 25 at each store, as compared to 156 participants who responded to the questionnaire.

### Manner of Shopping

Customers were observed while shopping. Findings showed that 55.2 per cent of the observed participants shopped alone. Participants reporting in the written survey indicated that 72.4 per cent usually shopped alone. The main difference between the two groups was that more of the observed participants shopped with children than did the written survey participants. Ideally, most women prefer to be alone while shopping, but obviously they cannot do so as children must accompany the mother during shopping periods. Other persons with whom shopping was done in both the observed

and the written survey groups remained consistent with each other, as shown below:

<u>Manner of Shopping</u>	<u>Observed</u> <u>Participants</u> <u>Per cent</u> <u>(N=150)</u>	<u>Reporting</u> <u>Participants</u> <u>Per cent</u> <u>(N=156)</u>
Alone	55.2	72.4
With children	29.1	13.2
With peer	10.3	9.3
With husband or man	4.2	4.5
Other	1.2	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0

#### Observed Consumer Shopping Procedures

Over 60 per cent of the 150 participants made an actual purchase of some item while in the store. The percentage of participants making a purchase at various stores is shown below:

<u>Store</u>	<u>Participants Making Purchase</u> <u>Per cent</u>
A	56.0
B	72.0
C	60.0
D	36.0
E	92.0
F	60.0

Observation of women while shopping in the various stores gave some insight into consumer habits exhibited while in the stores. Approximately one out of every six

customers obviously tried to match fabric to another item. The observer noted that a list was used by about three per cent of the observed participants. About 15 per cent of the customers brought a pattern, which had been purchased earlier, for reference to the current purchase. A small group, about eight per cent, selected pattern and fabric together at the store. About 15 per cent consulted the back of the pattern envelope for information. Only nine per cent of the observed customers read the label on the bolt of fabric. Women looking at fabric browsed through the stores and seemed to be able to help themselves. At least 75 per cent of the consumers did not appear to be hurried while shopping. More than one-half of the observed participants appeared to know what they wanted. Some made inquiries about desired items; others appeared to find what was needed while browsing through the store. In most stores the clerk helped the customer. This effort varied considerably from store to store. Many times the clerk helped only when absolutely necessary. In other stores the clerks offered assistance to the customers.

Information sought by the observed participants was recorded as it was apparent to the observer or brought to the observer's attention by the clerk. The following gives a



rank order of questions asked the clerks in the various stores:

---

<u>Information Asked of Clerks</u>	<u>Rank Order</u>
Price	1
Fiber content	2
Suggestions for fabric	3
Care of fabric	4
Width of fabric	5
Availability of a notion within the store	6
Suggestions for pattern	7
Location of an item	8
Combining fabric and trim	9
Fabric	10

---

#### Cost of Fabrics Purchased

The price range of the fabrics purchased by the observed participants ranged from under \$1.00 to between \$10.01 and \$15.00 per yard: the same range in price as revealed by responses to the written questionnaire. The largest number of women who responded to the questionnaire reported buying fabric that cost between \$1.01 and \$2.00 per yard, while the largest number of observed participants purchased fabrics under \$1.00 a yard. Few of the observed participants bought fabrics over \$2.00 per yard. Questionnaire participants frequently purchased fabrics costing over \$2.00 per yard. The average cost per yard of fabric purchased by the written survey participants was almost \$3.00, while the average cost per yard of fabric purchased by the observed participants was

about \$2.00. A comparison of the prices paid per yard of fabric is shown:

<u>Price Range Per Yard of Fabric</u>	<u>Observed Per cent (N=76)</u>	<u>Reporting Per cent (N=226)</u>
To \$1.00	40.8	15.1
\$1.01 to \$2.00	23.7	27.5
2.01 to 3.00	7.9	22.1
3.01 to 4.00	10.6	10.6
4.01 to 5.00	9.2	10.2
5.01 to 6.00	2.6	4.8
6.01 to 8.00	2.6	8.4
8.01 to 10.00	1.3	0.0
10.01 to 15.00	1.3	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0

#### Manner of Payment of Purchases

A larger number of the observed participants paid cash for purchases than did the written survey participants. The latter group indicated a greater use of credit for the purchases made as shown below:

<u>Manner of Payment for Purchase</u>	<u>Observed Per cent (N=96)</u>	<u>Reporting Per cent (N=156)</u>
Cash	67.7	44.9
Check	12.5	17.3
Credit	19.8	36.5
Lay-a-way	0.0	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0

Amount of Purchases

A majority of the participants in the observed group made purchases of under \$5.00. Many of the women observed made no purchases. The amount of each purchase made by the observed participants in all stores is shown as follows:

<u>Amount of Purchase</u>	<u>Percentage of Participants</u>
Under \$ 5	68.8
Under 10	14.6
Under 15	9.4
Under 20	2.1
Under 30	3.1
Under 50	1.0
Over 50	1.0
Total (N=150)	100.0

Pattern Prices

Prices of patterns purchased by the observed group and the reporting participants were comparable. A larger percentage of the observed participants purchased patterns costing up to \$1.00. Other categories varied as shown:

<u>Price Range of Pattern Purchased</u>	<u>Observed Per cent (N=58)</u>	<u>Reporting Per cent (N=202)</u>
To \$1.00	86.2	73.3
\$1.01 to 2.00	5.2	14.8
2.01 to 3.00	6.9	10.4
3.01 to 4.00	0.0	1.0
4.01 to 5.00	1.7	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Notions Purchased

Metal and nylon zippers ranked highest on the list of notions purchased by the observed participants. Rank order of notions purchased was as follows:

---

<u>Notion Purchased</u>	<u>Observed Participants</u> <u>Number</u>
Metal zipper	23
Nylon zipper	19
Polyester thread	15
Buttons	15
Trim	13
Underlining	13
Mercerized thread	12
Elastic	4
Invisible-seam zipper	4
Seam tape	3
Bias binding	3
Stretch lace tape	2
Ribbon	2
Buttonhole twist	1
Hooks and eyes	1
Woven interfacing	1
Bra cups	1

---

The participants taking part in the written survey checked the notions which were purchased with the fabric. Mercerized thread was the most popular item purchased by the reporting consumers, while observed customers purchased polyester thread more often than mercerized thread. A list

of the notions reported to have been purchased with the fabric by the written survey participants follows:

<u>Notion Purchased</u>	<u>Reporting Participants Number</u>
Mercerized thread	66
Metal zipper	46
Polyester thread	33
Buttons	27
Nylon zipper	24
Seam tape	13
Stretch thread	11
Woven interfacing	11
Elastic	10

Stretch thread was purchased by the consumers in the reporting survey, while none of the observed participants purchased such an item. The percentages of customers purchasing various types of threads are shown below:

<u>Type Thread Purchased</u>	<u>Observed Per cent (N=27)</u>	<u>Reporting Per cent (N=110)</u>
Mercerized thread	44.4	60.0
Polyester thread	55.6	30.0
Stretch thread	0.0	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Metal zippers were purchased by a large percentage of the participants in both the observed and the written survey consumers. The latter purchased a larger percentage of



metal zippers than did the observed consumers, but all types of zippers purchased were comparable with both groups as shown:

<u>Type Zippers Purchased</u>	<u>Observed Per cent (N=46)</u>	<u>Reporting Per cent (N=78)</u>
Metal zipper	50.0	59.0
Nylon zipper	41.3	30.8
Invisible-seam zipper	8.7	10.2
Total	100.0	100.0

## CHAPTER IV

### S U M M A R Y    A N D    C O N C L U S I O N S

This study was undertaken in order to gain an understanding of consumer behavior in relation to the purchasing and sewing habits of women who sew at home. The specific purposes of the study were to:

- 1) Determine the educational background and social status reflected in the complexity of pattern usage, cost of fabric, and amount of sewing accomplished by homemakers.
- 2) Compare the ages of selected groups of women doing the most home sewing and the reasons for such activity.
- 3) Compare shopping procedures of a selected group of women while purchasing fabrics, patterns, and/or notions.
- 4) Analyze the behavior of women shopping for fabrics and sewing notions.
- 5) Determine the use each woman planned to make of the fabric and/or pattern and notions.
- 6) Collate the type pattern, kind of fabric, and price of fabric purchased by women who purchased fabric, pattern, and/or notions at specified stores.
- 7) Determine the sewing aids and notions home sewers use.
- 8) Examine pertinent facts concerning the family members who benefit from home sewing.

Six retail establishments in the Dallas metropolitan area permitted questionnaires to be distributed to women

customers willing to co-operate in the study. One hundred fifty-six married women who purchased fabric returned usable data. The retail establishments included a large department store, a chain store, two specialty shops, a textile outlet establishment, and a sewing center.

Part I of the study involved a questionnaire designed to obtain information concerning the personal background, sewing acquisitions, and sewing habits of the participants. The degree of achievement for each participant was determined by responses to certain selected questions in the questionnaire. The results were referred to as the Sewing Ability Evaluation Score.

Part II consisted of a fabric market survey in which customers were observed while shopping in the fabric stores. One hundred fifty women were observed in the six stores in regard to shopping manners and procedures.

The majority of the sample in this study was of the upper-middle socio-economic classification as determined by the McGuire-White Index (6). The women in the middle socio-economic groups appeared to do the greatest amount of sewing in today's homes.

Almost all of the participants had finished high school. About one-fifth had completed two years of college work, and about one-third had earned a college degree.

Ages of the participants ranged from 20 to over 60 years. The largest number of women was in the 30 to 39 age category.

Thirty-eight of the women participants in the study were gainfully employed. The employed participants rated in the middle occupational listings of the McGuire-White Index.

Findings of this study indicated that families benefit from the mothers' sewing efforts. Sewing was done for 95 per cent of the daughters and less than one-half of the sons. Many other relatives gained apparel from sewing accomplished by the women participants. More than one-half of the participants planned to make the currently purchased fabric into apparel first for themselves, second for daughters, and third for granddaughters.

Participants who stated reasons for patronizing certain stores gave first place to quality of merchandise and second place to convenience of location. Most of the women preferred shopping in the type store where the questionnaire was received.

The majority of the women purchased the pattern prior to buying the fabric. One-third selected pattern and fabric at the same time. About one-third of the women planned to modify the pattern, indicating creativity or inability to use

available pattern details. Patterns purchased for use with the fabrics ranged in cost from \$0.50 to \$4.50, with the \$0.75 pattern being the most popular.

The average cost of fabrics purchased was less than \$3.00 per yard. There was no significant relationship, using the chi square analysis, between the cost of the fabric and the participant's education. However, a highly significant relationship existed between the price of the fabric and the price paid for the pattern. More expensive fabric usually resulted in a more expensive pattern selection.

The fiber content of the fabrics purchased was remembered by three-fourths of the participants. More than one-half were able to remember the fabric care directions given on the bolt, while one-third stated there were none.

Dresses were the most popular apparel items constructed by the seamstresses. The complexity of the pattern chosen was not related to the level of education attained. Difficult construction techniques and fashion details were usually avoided.

Women reporting the amount of sewing accomplished in the previous year averaged more than 22 garments. Indications were that the women surveyed did a great amount of sewing. The amount of sewing accomplished did not appear



to be limited to any age group. There was no relationship between the age of the sewing machine and the number of garments completed; the seamstress constructed an average number of items regardless of age of the sewing machine. The socio-economic groupings showed no significant relationship to the total amount of sewing. Almost one-half of the sewing machines owned by the participants were less than five years old. A highly significant relationship was found to exist between the age of the sewing machine and the age of the participant. Younger women owned the largest number of newer machines; older women owned the largest number of older ones.

Two primary reasons for doing sewing in the home were economy and enjoyment. The participants' ages had little influence on the reasons for sewing. Women in the lower-middle socio-economic class appeared to be consciously aware of the economic reasons for home sewing; however, the social class appeared not to have any relationship to the woman's desire to sew. The working women and full-time homemakers gave comparable reasons for home sewing.

More than one-half of the women indicated an ability to master the most difficult sewing techniques. The group considered themselves good seamstresses, although the college graduates were more hesitant to rate themselves as experts.

Sewing aids used most frequently by home sewers were pins, tape measures, steam irons, and zipper feet; whereas, thimbles ranked highest on the list of aids never used. Little relationship between socio-economic classification and the number of sewing aids owned by the women existed. The participants who rated themselves high in sewing ability appeared to utilize the largest number of sewing aids. The notions used most frequently by the participants were mercerized thread and metal zippers; whereas, iron-on interfacing and iron-on seam binding were the items used least.

Observation of customers while shopping revealed that more than one-half of the women shopped alone, while three-fourths of the women who responded to the questionnaire stated a preference to shop alone. One-third of the observed customers purchased some sewing item while in the store. Although some women brought patterns that had been purchased earlier, some selected patterns and fabrics simultaneously at the store. A small number of customers consulted the pattern envelope for information while in the store. Very few consumers read the fabric labels on the bolts. Most customers browsed, helped themselves, and appeared not to be hurried; however, they seemed to have a definite purpose in mind.

Prices of patterns purchased by both groups were comparable. Approximately three-fourths of both groups purchased

patterns that cost \$1.00 or less, which indicated a conservative group of consumers.

Differences in the prices of fabrics purchased by the observed and reporting participants indicated that the observed group purchased more fabrics in the zero to \$1.00 per yard category, while the reporting group purchased more fabrics in the \$3.01 to \$4.00 category. Both the observed and the written survey group used cash or checks for purchases rather than credit; however, more of the written survey participants used credit than did the observed group. Credit was an attractive service mainly in department-type stores.

The average Sewing Ability Evaluation Scores of the participants from the stores surveyed ranged from 65.5 to 88.2. The scores corresponded more closely with the average number of garments constructed than in any other comparison. Again, little difference was noted in the scores of working women versus full-time homemakers.

If fashion for men and boys offers more variety and less tailoring in the future, then perhaps a study related to sewing for males might be considered. As less unity in styles prevail, ready-to-wear apparel will likely result in higher priced garments, thereby providing the home sewer additional incentives of economy, variety, and simplicity in home sewing for males.

Many new homes have been built with a planned sewing area or a separate sewing room. Further study might investigate the cost of purchasing and maintaining sewing equipment or maintaining a sewing room in relation to the amount of time a woman spends in such an area.

Information could be provided the manufacturers concerning the factors influencing pattern purchases. Details for consideration would include choice of view, overall design, individual view design, color used, information available on envelope, and place of initial observation of pattern. Further research might include an investigation concerning the theory that patterns are used more than once by most home sewers or are traded and/or loaned among colleagues for economic reasons.

The percentage of teenagers who sew in their homes has risen greatly in the past few years. An in-depth study of the same parameters included in this study would be enlightening.



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## APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

P A R T I

## Personal Data

Check your age group:           Teenage                           40-49 years  
        20-29 years                           50-59 years  
        30-39 years                           60 years or over

What is your occupation?

What is your husband's occupation?

Check the main source of your income:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Welfare check
<input type="checkbox"/>	Odd jobs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hourly wage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Salary or allowance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Retirement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Share of profit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interest from
<input type="checkbox"/>	investments

Check the category which best describes the educational level attained by you and your husband:

Self	Husband	Educational Level
_____	_____	Less than grade eight
_____	_____	Completed grade eight
_____	_____	Attended high school
_____	_____	High school graduate
_____	_____	Attended college 2 years
_____	_____	College graduate
_____	_____	Master's degree
_____	_____	Doctoral degree

Check the ages of children living at home: (Give number if you have more than one in the category).

	0	Under 5 Years	5-12 Years	13-18 Years	19-23 Years	Over 23 Years
Girls	—	—	—	—	—	—
Boys	—	—	—	—	—	—

For which of these children do you sew? (Give number if you have more than one in the category).

	0	Under 5 Years	5-12 Years	13-18 Years	19-23 Years	Over 23 Years
Girls	___	___	___	___	___	___
Boys	___	___	___	___	___	___

At approximately what age did you begin sewing? \_\_\_\_\_

Check any of the following which gave meaningful experiences to you in the development of your sewing abilities. (More than one may apply).

- \_\_\_ Self-taught
- \_\_\_ Help from mother or other family member
- \_\_\_ Help from friend
- \_\_\_ 4-H Club
- \_\_\_ Adult sewing classes or sewing school
- \_\_\_ Homemaking in junior high school
- \_\_\_ Homemaking in senior high school
- \_\_\_ Clothing on college level

What kind of sewing machine do you own?    \_\_\_ Treadle  
    \_\_\_ Electric

What is the brand name of your sewing machine? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your sewing machine do zig-zag stitching?    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No

Does your sewing machine do decorative stitching? \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No

If you do not own a sewing machine, check the way that you can obtain a machine for sewing:

- \_\_\_ Rent
- \_\_\_ Use a neighbor's machine at her home
- \_\_\_ Borrow a family member's machine and have in own home
- \_\_\_ Use a family member's machine in her home

How old is your sewing machine?    \_\_\_ Less than 2 years  
    \_\_\_ Less than 5 years  
    \_\_\_ Less than 10 years  
    \_\_\_ Less than 15 years  
    \_\_\_ Less than 20 years  
    \_\_\_ More than 20 years

How is your sewing machine cased?    \_\_\_ Cabinet    \_\_\_ Portable



### Pattern Selection and Purchase of Fabric

Check the reason or reasons why you came to this store today to shop:

- ☐ Convenient location
- ☐ Like the quality of fabrics
- ☐ Good buys
- ☐ Charge account
- ☐ Sales personnel helpful
- ☐ Availability of other departments within this store or nearby stores
- ☐ Other. Specify \_\_\_\_\_

Check the predominate color or colors in this fabric:

- |                                |                                 |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Red    | <input type="checkbox"/> Green  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grey  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow | <input type="checkbox"/> Purple |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White |                                 |                                 |

What was the texture of the fabric you purchased? Check.  
(More than one may be necessary).

- |                                 |                                   |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shiny  | <input type="checkbox"/> Nubby    | <input type="checkbox"/> Soft     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dull   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tweedy   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bulky    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth | <input type="checkbox"/> Furry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Delicate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rough  | <input type="checkbox"/> Glittery | <input type="checkbox"/> Knitted  |

Did you try to match this fabric to something you already own?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Check which you purchased first: ☐ Pattern ☐ Fabric

Did you buy your pattern and fabric at the same time?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is this garment for yourself? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you plan to make the pattern exactly as suggested in one of the views? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Check the type of garment pattern you have selected:

- |                                      |                                       |  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nightwear   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress        | <input type="checkbox"/> Suit            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lingerie    | <input type="checkbox"/> Jumper       | <input type="checkbox"/> Coat            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slacks      | <input type="checkbox"/> Skirt        | <input type="checkbox"/> Sport coat      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slacks suit | <input type="checkbox"/> Blouse       | <input type="checkbox"/> Cape            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swim wear   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jacket       | <input type="checkbox"/> Evening dress   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culottes    | <input type="checkbox"/> At-home wear | <input type="checkbox"/> Bridal          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maternity   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jumpsuit     | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's wear |

Check the time you will probably make the garment from this fabric: ☐ At once

☐ Within 3 months

☐ Within 6 months

☐ Within 1 year

☐ Undecided

Check time of purchasing the itemized notions required to make this garment:

Notion	Time of Purchase		
	Purchased with Fabric	Have at Home	Will Purchase Later
Seam tape			
Iron-on tape			
Stretch lace tape			
Bias binding			
Mercerized thread			
Polyester thread			
Nylon thread			
Stretch thread			
Silk thread			
Buttonhole twist			
Metal snaps			
Covered snaps			
Grippers			
Hooks and eyes			
Skirt hooks and eyes (large)			
Braid, trim, rick-rack or piping			
Elastic			
Metal zipper			
Nylon zipper			
Invisible-seam zipper			
Buttons			
Buttons to cover			
Iron-on interfacing			
Non-woven interfacing			
Woven interfacing			
Belt buckle			
Belting			
Other. Specify _____			

Do you know the fiber content of the fabric you purchased?

☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

Do you remember the fabric care direction on the label?

☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No ☐ Information was not on label

From the following list check the details you hope to use in the pattern for this recently purchased fabric:

<input type="checkbox"/> Collar	<input type="checkbox"/> Loops
<input type="checkbox"/> Set-in sleeves	<input type="checkbox"/> Gathers
<input type="checkbox"/> Zipper closing	<input type="checkbox"/> Pleats
<input type="checkbox"/> Buttons and buttonholes	<input type="checkbox"/> Tabs
<input type="checkbox"/> Fabric buttonholes	<input type="checkbox"/> Fabric bow
<input type="checkbox"/> Gussets	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruffles (fabric)
<input type="checkbox"/> Waistline or waistband	<input type="checkbox"/> Trim
<input type="checkbox"/> Yoke or inset	<input type="checkbox"/> Draped effect
<input type="checkbox"/> Front band	<input type="checkbox"/> Cording
<input type="checkbox"/> Top-stitching	<input type="checkbox"/> Bias edging
<input type="checkbox"/> Patch pockets	<input type="checkbox"/> Flared skirt
<input type="checkbox"/> Flaps	<input type="checkbox"/> Variation in hemline
<input type="checkbox"/> Welt pockets	<input type="checkbox"/> Slits
<input type="checkbox"/> Pockets in seam	<input type="checkbox"/> Vent
<input type="checkbox"/> Cuffs	<input type="checkbox"/> Underlining
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-fabric belt	<input type="checkbox"/> Lining (separate)
<input type="checkbox"/> Partial belt, stitched in	<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Specify _____

Did you purchase this fabric to make into a garment for a special occasion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Check the price range per yard of the fabric you purchased:

<input type="checkbox"/> To \$1.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 6.01--\$ 8.00
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1.01--\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 8.01-- 10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.01-- 3.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 10.01-- 15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 3.01-- 4.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 15.01-- 20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 4.01-- 5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> 20.01-- 30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.01-- 6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Over \$30.00

State the price of the pattern you are using for this garment. \_\_\_\_\_

Check your manner of payment for these items:

☐ Cash  
☐ Check  
☐ Credit  
☐ Lay-a-way

## Sewing Habits

Check each reason for home sewing as to relative importance. Place the check in the column that best fits your reason for sewing: Column A is very important  
Column B is important  
Column C is of minor importance

Reasons	Degree of Importance		
	A	B	C
To save money			
To have well-constructed garments			
To use higher quality fabrics			
To use an idea you had of how to make a garment			
To achieve a better fit than obtainable in ready-to-wear			
To fill leisure hours			
Like to sew			
Desire to create something			
Because mother sewed			
Because grandmother sewed			
To use fabric on hand			
To re-make or remodel another garment			
To get more selection from fabric and patterns			
Other. Specify _____			

In what manner do you usually shop for sewing or fabric needs:

☐ Alone

☐ With your children because they are too young to be left alone

☐ With your children because you want their advice

☐ With a woman friend

☐ With your husband

Rank in numerical order where you would usually shop for fabrics. Number 1 will be your first choice; number 2 the second.

☐ Fabric store (specialty)

☐ Chain store

☐ Large department store

☐ Variety store

☐ Fabric outlet

☐ Sewing center featuring sewing equipment

How continuous a period (or periods) do you have for sewing:

☐ Practically no interruptions for a long period

☐ Few interruptions

☐ Many interruptions



Check the time of day when you do most of your sewing:

- ☐ During children's naps  
☐ In the morning  
☐ In the afternoon  
☐ After the evening meal  
☐ Other. Specify \_\_\_\_\_

Try to estimate how much time you have spent on sewing during the past month. Check category which comes closest to your estimate:

- ☐ Less than 10 hours  
☐ Approximately 25 hours  
☐ Approximately 50 hours  
☐ Approximately 100 hours  
☐ Over 100 hours

How much time do you spend finding a pattern and/or design for fabric that was purchased earlier? Check.

- ☐ Much    ☐ Some    ☐ Little    ☐ None

Please check the greatest amount you would consider paying for a pattern under the following categories:

Amount	Suit or Coat	Evening Wear	Daytime Dressy Dress	Sports Wear or Separates	At Home or Work Wear
\$ .50--\$1.00					
1.01-- 2.00					
2.01-- 3.00					
3.01-- 4.00					
4.01-- 5.00					

If you have trouble fitting a pattern or in doing a special technique, where would you go for help:

- ☐ To a neighbor?  
☐ To an extension person or homemaking teacher?  
☐ To a daughter or mother?  
☐ To a friend who sews well?  
☐ To the fabric shop where the fabric was purchased?

Check the category which best describes your ability as a seamstress:

- ☐ Beginner--first garment to construct  
☐ Ability limited  
☐ Construction of garment with simple details  
☐ Construction of basic dress with some detail  
☐ Mastery of most difficult techniques  
☐ Very secure in quality of workmanship  
☐ Professional dressmaker



Would you indicate the approximate number of garments that you have constructed during the past year for each of the following persons?

Garment	Person Involved				
	For Yourself	For Daughter	For Son	For Husband	Other Persons Specify _____
Dress					
Skirt					
Blouse					
Shirt					
Jumper					
Slacks					
Shorts					
Hat or cap					
Jacket					
Suit					
Coat					
Cape					
Sport coat					
Lingerie					
Nightwear					
Slacks suit					
Jumpsuit					
Evening dress					
Bridal dress					
Swimwear					
Culottes					
Other					

This question concerns the sewing aids you own and how often you use them. Check under "Own" column if you have the article. Then check the category which best describes how often you use that article.

Article	Own	Use Often	Use Sometimes	Never Use
Tracing wheel				
Tracing paper				
Steam iron				
Pressing cloth				
Buttonhole attachment				
Zipper foot				
Invisible-seam zipper foot				
Yardstick				
Thimble				
Tape measure				
Seam ripper				
Small scissors				
Shears				
Pinking shears				
Electric scissors				
Skirt marker				
Full length mirror				
Pressing ham				
Sleeve board				
Seam presser or edge presser				
Dress form				
Metal seam gauge				
Beeswax				
Pins				
Needleboard				
Personal cardboard block				
Pattern cutting board				
Wrist pin cushion				
Marking pencil				
Tailor's chalk				
Loop turner				
Seam guide (on machine)				
Awl				

In the list below, check the category which best describes your usage of the following sewing notions:

Notions	Often	Sometimes	Never
Seam tape			
Iron-on tape			
Stretch lace tape			
Bias binding			
Mercerized thread			
Polyester thread			
Nylon thread			
Stretch thread			
Silk thread			
Buttonhole twist			
Covered snaps			
Grippers			
Skirt hooks and eyes (large)			
Braid, trim, rick-rack, piping			
Metal zippers			
Nylon zippers			
Invisible-seam zippers			
Iron-on interfacing			
Non-woven interfacing			
Woven interfacing			
Buttons to cover			
Belt buckle			
Eyelets			
Iron-on hem binding			

P A R T    I I

# Fabric Market Survey

With whom is the customer shopping?

☐ Alone

☐ Preschool child

☐ School-age daughter  
or son

☐ Grown daughter

☐ Peer

☐ Husband or man

Actual purchase?	Yes	No
1		
2		
3		
4		
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100		

Yes No

\_\_\_\_\_ Did customer try to match fabric to something?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer have a list of needed items?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer have pattern already?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer select pattern and fabric together?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer consult back of pattern for information?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer read label?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer browse? Help self?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did customer know what she wanted?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Was customer in a hurry?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Did clerk help customer?

Information asked of clerk:

- ☐ Price
- ☐ Suggestions for pattern
- ☐ Suggestions for fabric
- ☐ Fiber content
- ☐ Difficulty of pattern
- ☐ Care of fabric
- ☐ Combining fabric or trim

What was the price range of fabric per yard?

To \$1.00	\$ 6.01--\$ 8.00
\$1.01--\$2.00	8.01-- 10.00
2.01-- 3.00	10.01-- 15.00
3.01-- 4.00	15.01-- 20.00
4.01-- 5.00	20.01-- 30.00
5.01-- 6.00	Over \$30.00

Manner of payment:      Cash      Check      Credit      Lay-a-way



Total amount of purchase:    ☐ Under \$5.00  
                                      ☐ Under 10.00  
                                      ☐ Under 15.00  
                                      ☐ Under 20.00  
                                      ☐ Under 30.00  
                                      ☐ Under 40.00  
                                      ☐ Under 50.00  
                                      ☐ Over 50.00

Price range of pattern:    ☐ To \$1.00  
                                      ☐ To 2.00  
                                      ☐ To 3.00  
                                      ☐ To 4.00  
                                      ☐ To 5.00

Notions purchased by customer:

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Notion</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Notion</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seam tape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elastic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stretch lace tape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hooks and eyes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bias binding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skirt hooks and eyes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mercerized thread	<input type="checkbox"/>	Metal zipper
<input type="checkbox"/>	Polyester thread	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nylon zipper
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nylon thread	<input type="checkbox"/>	Invisible-seam zipper
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stretch thread	<input type="checkbox"/>	Buttons
<input type="checkbox"/>	Silk thread	<input type="checkbox"/>	Buttons to cover
<input type="checkbox"/>	Buttonhole twist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Belt buckle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Metal snaps	<input type="checkbox"/>	Belting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Covered snaps	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-woven interfacing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grippers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woven interfacing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trim	<input type="checkbox"/>	Iron-on interfacing