

M O T H E R S ' C L O T H I N G P R E F E R E N C E S
F O R P R E - S C H O O L G I R L S A S
R E L A T E D T O M A R K E T
A V A I L A B I L I T Y

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We hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under
our supervision by Dolores Marlene Bebo
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SCHOOL GIRLS AS RELATED TO MARKET AVAILABILITY

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T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

Chapter		Page
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
	LIST OF TABLES.	v
	LIST OF FIGURES	vi
I	INTRODUCTION.	1
	Review of Literature	2
	Statement of the Problem	13
II	PLAN OF PROCEDURE	15
	Mothers Questionnaire.	21
	Market Inventory Survey.	28
	Designers Questionnaire.	34
III	DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS WITH PRESENTATION OF DATA.	38
	Personal and Family Background	39
	Ages of Participants.	39
	Size of Family.	40
	Occupation of the Parents	41
	Education of the Parents.	43
	Social Status	44
	Factors Influencing Clothing Selection . .	45
	Sewing Practices.	45
	Buying Practices.	48
IV	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	79
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.	88

L I S T O F T A B L E S

Table		Page
I	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOME SEWING IN RELATION TO MOTHERS' EDUCATION.	47
II	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS' RESPONSES ACCORDING TO LABEL INFORMATION LOOKED FOR ON CHILDREN'S CLOTHING, TWO TO SIX YEARS OF AGE	50
III	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LABEL INFORMATION FOUND ON CHILDREN'S GARMENTS IN STORES.	52
IV	THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LABEL INFORMATION LOOKED FOR BY MOTHERS AND INFORMATION FOUND ON CHILDREN'S GARMENTS IN THE STORES.	53
V	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF MOTHERS' RESPONSES ACCORDING TO GROWTH FEATURES LOOKED FOR IN CHILDREN'S CLOTHING, TWO TO SIX YEARS OF AGE. .	56
VI	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF STYLE FEATURES ON GIRLS' DRESSES PREFERRED BY THE MOTHERS IN RELATION TO AVAILABILITY IN THE STORES . . .	59
VII	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS' PREFERENCE OF FABRIC DESIGNS IN RELATION TO AVAILABILITY IN THE STORES.	62
VIII	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS BUYING BY BRAND NAME AS RELATED TO EDUCATION.	68

L I S T O F F I G U R E S

Figure		Page
1	Color Preference for Children's Dresses . . .	65
2	Percentage of Homemakers Buying Garments by Brand Name	67
3	Stores for Purchasing Children's Ready- to-Wear as Cited by Mothers	75

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The healthy child craves independence very early in life. The choice and use of clothing offer an important means of developing self-confidence and achievement in the process of growing up. Gesell (21) believes that even in infancy there should be a more searching quest for the distinguishing features of individuality. Many liabilities and assets remain concealed or imperfectly recognized because of lacking social and educational mechanisms for identifying the characteristics of children. As Read (12) stated:

Clothes make growing up easier or harder. They may become a symbol of security, an extension of self, a way of identifying with someone, a means of real satisfaction. Clothes may go a long way toward making the man!

Parents and teachers should thoughtfully examine the parts that planning, selection, and attention of clothing may play in developing good habits and character traits which help make children responsible members of family and social groups. Young (22) said "selection of apparel performs a definite segment in the physical and mental development of the child." Ryan (13) commented that a better dressed child is better behaved.

of clothing for children of the past shows that too often apparel for the young has been molded on designs for adults. Before the fourteenth century children were not portrayed as children but as cherubs. From the Italian Renaissance to the late eighteenth century both painter and sculptor represented children as replicas of adults. There is pictorial and literal difficulty in finding the exact dates of costumes earlier than the late eighteenth century, the time of the first fashion newspaper in England. Even in the dated portraits the sitter often wore a "picture frock" designed by the artist for the occasion. There was a natural attitude that children's mode of dress followed that of adult standards because scant attention had been paid to the interests of childhood and expectations were that responsibilities and duties of adult life would be assumed in the very early teens.

Not until the second half of the eighteenth century, when Rousseau was urging that the interest of childhood be recognized and the child no longer considered as a diminutive man, did there take place a radical change in the manner of dressing children. Evans (5) wrote that Marie Antoinette inaugurated the change in children's clothing by dressing the young Dauphin in long trousers and a short jacket. Girls, too, benefited by the change of public opinion,

although relief from heavy stiff corsets did not occur until a few years before the Directory Period. As political and government conditions became more tense during the reign of Louis XVI, less attention was bestowed upon fashion and greater interest exhibited in the practicality, usability, and comfort of all apparel. Materials became light in weight, simple and unpretentious in color and texture for both adults and children.

During the French Revolution and the Directoire periods, Evans (5) stated that a greater simplification in both color and fabric occurred for the adult and child than heretofore observed. The younger generation was usually seen in white or pastel shades. Comfort and freedom of motion were important considerations for the active child. However, the general silhouette and details worn by the parents were still closely reflected in the dress of the child.

It was observed by Evans (5) that with the beginning of the nineteenth century, a slight change was noticeable in children's clothing. Little girls were still wearing the loose dress with frilled collar, but the year 1800 marked the birth of the "Empire" dress for both women and girls. By 1810 the costumes were not only dainty, but allowed a tremendous amount of freedom to all wearers, a detail which

subsequently was not considered again until the beginning of the twentieth century. Fashion retained some of the simplicity of the "Empire" dress until 1828 but from that time fashion was characterized by extremes for a half century. The children of a hundred years ago displayed the stiffened dresses that sadly restricted activity for the next fifty years of the Victorian period.

Modified styles appeared again between the years of 1880 and 1890. A revival of the "Empire" costume was in progress, illustrated by Spielmann (14) in the bibliography of Kate Greenaway. She was born in Hoxton, England, March 17, 1846. Kate Greenaway was known mainly for children's stories and illustrated toy-books depicting original creations in children's clothing. Discovering that the designs were becoming the vogue, Kate Greenaway was not surprised that others responded to the quaint and charming clothes. Spielmann (14) maintained that Kate Greenaway raised a lasting monument to herself in the reform of children's dress.

The costumes of 1900 were remarkably similar to the silhouettes of 1800. Heavy materials were retrospective and children were dressed in pale colors and decidedly dainty fabrics. Much the same style in dress prevailed until 1910 when the restrictions of color were overcome and children were clothed in brilliant hues.

American children of the present time have been freed from the unattractive costumes of the nineteenth century. Infants and small children have been comfortably and sensibly clothed since the beginning of the twentieth century. Small children today glorify in wearing as few garments as possible at any given time.

Assumptions have been made that the active preschool child should be exercising and acquiring new muscular skills and this necessitates that clothing be designed with such activity in mind. The contemporary trend for the young generation, according to Tate and Glisson (16), is for simple, non-restricting garments. Good design in preschool children's apparel should stress simplicity and have adequate allowance for growth, ease of care and comfort. Furthermore, clothes should be safe, should encourage independence, and should fit the child well. Moreover, the color and design should be pleasing to both the child and the parent.

Pictorial research has illustrated that business cycles correlate with fashion trends. Various sources have indicated that before the late 1930's manufacturers produced merchandise with little regard to the wants and needs of consumers. The general attitude of manufacturers was to presume that customers would buy any merchandise which had been produced. The new concept of modern production and distribution

begins by determining consumer wants. Manufacturing and marketing are based on accurate analyses of consumer requirements. Today most items offered for sale are designed, priced, and advertised to meet the needs of the consumer as determined by market research. Manufacturing and retail establishments obtain information from careful examination of consumers' tastes in both merchandise and services. Nystrom (11) also commented that changes of consumers' desires may be subjected to practical study. A continuous stream of advertising by manufacturers of wearing apparel for this age group stresses style, easy care features, and other specific qualities (16). Children's garments are available in a wide variety of name brands, sizes, and price ranges. Important decisions must be made when selecting from the vast array of clothing in today's market.

Commercially made apparel for preschool children has been one of the latest and fastest developments in the clothing industry. Such rapid growth is the result of several factors. At the present, there are many more preschool children than ever before. According to Tate and Glisson (16), in 1940 there were ten and one-half million children under five years of age. The Statistical Abstract of the United States (18) cited that in 1966 there were approximately 20 million children of this age group, almost twice as many

as in 1940. Clothing the preschool child is a sizable industry in this country at the present time.

Figures from the Statistical Abstract of the United States (18) showed that approximately 14 million women worked outside the home in 1940. Today more than 27 million women work outside the home and rely upon the ready-to-wear market for supplying the children's clothing needs. This market must satisfy an entirely different consumer from the purchaser of a few years ago. Brisco (4) described the consumer today as a better educated person, a keener judge of values, and a more independent shopper than ever before. This new type of customer is more discriminating and more critical.

A Michigan State Experiment Station research study (15) found that shopping practices were related to social status levels. The study revealed that younger, middle income, urban women have rather clear ideas of desired purchases before leaving home to shop for a specific product. The shopping expeditions of women in the lower income group often included activities other than the purchase of clothing. The same study indicated that women reared in rural areas and small cities shopped locally more often than did women reared in larger cities. Also, the higher the social status of the consumer, the greater is the tendency to shop outside the local

trade center. The greatest percentage of out-of-town shoppers was found among the higher social status group.

Further study by Stone (15) disclosed that approximately half of the homemakers were uncertain or vague concerning clothing purchases. More than a third stated a belief in knowing what was desired. Nearly a fourth of the homemakers indicated an active dislike for apparel shopping.

Several studies have been concerned with the selection, satisfaction, and preference of the preschool child's apparel. McAlister (8) investigated the preferences and satisfactions of girls' dresses as related to local market availability. Responses were obtained from 72 mothers with daughters six, eight, and 10 years of age in Vernon, Texas, and a market survey of four different type stores in Vernon, Texas. Analysis of the study revealed these findings: 1) approximately 72 per cent of the mothers usually shopped in the home town stores; 2) nearly two-thirds of the mothers preferred to purchase the daughters' dresses at a local chain store; 3) slightly less than one-third shopped in department stores or specialty shops; 4) responses showed that 38.2 per cent of the dresses were made at home, and approximately 37 per cent were purchased ready-made; 5) the market survey showed more information on dress labels than mothers indicated using when purchasing a dress; 6) blue was the predominant color

found in the girls' wardrobes, and blue was also found predominant in the market survey; 7) the stores stocked more solid-colored dresses than were indicated in the girls' wardrobes; and 8) over 83 per cent of the hems in dresses found on the local market were less than three inches in width.

There are some aspects of clothing which seem important to the adult but not to the preschool child. One study by Blake (1) listed the factors considered important by 100 mothers when buying children's clothing. From a list of nine factors, homemakers placed durability first and price second in importance. The child's attitude toward the garment was not in accord with the attributes considered important by the mothers. The purpose of the study was to determine the amount, type, fiber content, and yearly financial outlay of a school child's wardrobe. The data indicated that the clothing inventory of the preschool child varied greatly from one family to another not only in the total cost but in the size of the wardrobe. The average inventory of the preschool child's apparel averaged 62 items. The child in the lowest income group of those surveyed had 45 items as compared to 75 in the highest income level. The variation in price was greater between the income groups than was the number of garments. The average annual cost for clothing the child

in the low income group was \$74.99 as compared to \$178.75 for a child in the highest income group.

The chief complaints of the homemakers, as revealed by the Blake (1) study, were: the unreasonably high cost of apparel, the lack of size standardization, and the difficulty of maintenance and care of attractively styled garments. The next most common complaints were related to dyes not being fast in color and to ironing difficulties. The least liked features of children's clothing were: puffed pockets, small buttons, colored trim on white garments, and rick-rack. Few of the homemakers had adequate information to interpret terminology on labels. The label term most familiar to the homemakers was "Sanforized." The homemakers, participants in the study, were more interested in the colorfastness of a garment than any other pertinent information. The average homemaker paid little attention to brand names when buying children's clothing. However, more than 50 per cent of the women indicated that preschool children's shoes were bought by brand name.

According to Blake's (1) study approximately 75 per cent of the mothers purchased ready-made children's clothing, 12.4 per cent made the children's clothes, while 11 per cent had received gifts of clothing, and a little over 3.0 per cent used "hand-me-down" clothing. Approximately 6.0 per

cent of the homemakers believed that money was saved by purchasing ready-made garments. Department stores were patronized by practically all of the homemakers, while 51 per cent stated that purchases were made from mail order stores, and 41 per cent made purchases at variety stores. The homemakers were more critical of workmanship found on preschool children's clothing than of any other features. The most desired characteristics, as listed by the largest number of homemakers, concerned more durable finishes and better constructed garments in the lower and moderate price lines.

Boettke (3) made observations about the use of dresses during two years of wear to determine whether the designs would stand the test of child growth in size, whether attractiveness for the individual would be as evident at ages three and four as at two years of age, and whether the styles would be truly self-help in actual use. Responses were sufficiently favorable for Boettke to believe that self-help features had been incorporated into preschool dress designs in a manner to produce attractive and appealing garments.

Willett (19) obtained information with respect to the relationships between the selection of clothing for the preschool child and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the families and clothing practices, but no significant differences could be proven. Sewing for the preschool

child appeared to be related to the source of income in that proportionately more respondents in the salaried group sewed for children than did respondents in the wages or profits groups. There was a tendency for mothers with larger families to allow more child assistance in the selection of ready-made clothing than did the mothers with fewer children. Although two-thirds of the respondents shopped in department stores for children's clothing, this practice was not significantly related to any of the selected social characteristics.

Hunt (6) conducted a study to determine the existing relationships between the various factors assumed to influence children's clothing preferences. In obtaining data relative to the effect of age upon color, style, and texture preferences, only white children were chosen since earlier studies by Garth (6) and his associates indicated that children's color preferences varied with the age, sex, and coloring of the child. Hunt's (6) study observed that variation among the preferred colors was highly significant.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The competitive children's clothing market today offers a challenge and an opportunity to the young mother who budgets for and buys family clothing. As in other areas of daily living, the homemaker with preschool children is faced

with many problems in selecting clothes in this complex market. This study was designed to investigate the extent of the influence of mothers' desires upon the manufacturer and retailer of clothing for preschool girls. In addition, investigation included factors motivating the creation of children's clothing from the designers' viewpoint as compared to the mothers' preference of clothing for preschool girls aged two to six years.

The specific purposes of this study were to:

- 1) Investigate the availability of ready-to-wear styles in order to evaluate the needs of the growing child as stated by the mother.
- 2) Study the degree of choice the mother can exercise in the selection of the child's garments.
- 3) Examine the physical characteristics that mothers desire in children's dresses.
- 4) Categorize the factors influencing clothing selection by the mothers of children aged two to six years.
- 5) Analyze factors which influence the designers of children's clothing.

CHAPTER II

P L A N O F P R O C E D U R E

The author of the present study investigated the extent of mothers' influences upon the manufacturer and retailer. The objectives of this study were to collect, examine, and evaluate information concerning factors which influenced the design of children's clothing from the designers' viewpoint as related to the mothers' preferences of clothing for pre-school girls.

The study included 106 mothers of preschool girls aged two to six years. The author interviewed the supervisors of private and public nursery schools, day-care centers, and kindergartens in Denton, Texas, and Denison, Texas, to obtain the sample. Group A represents the Denton, Texas, participants and Group B refers to the sample from Denison, Texas. Hereafter reference will be made to Group A and/or B. Voluntary participants were selected from the total 1968 register of girls enrolled in private and public nursery schools, kindergartens, and day-care centers in Denton, Texas, and Denison, Texas. As both private and public schools were represented, data encompassed a cross-section of socio-economic levels.

Denton, Texas, is located 38 miles north of Dallas, Texas, on Interstate Highway 35 East. The 1967 census reported the population to be approximately 39,864. The total labor force is 19,480 of which only 12 per cent are involved with farming and domestic service. Five thousand workers commute daily to Dallas, Texas, and Fort Worth, Texas. Denton, Texas, is a major educational and scientific research center. North Texas State University and Texas Woman's University had a combined enrollment of 19,138 students in 1967 with 750 faculty members engaged in teaching and research. One in every 100 Denton citizens holds a doctoral degree and two-thirds of the public school faculty have earned masters' degrees.

Denison, Texas, is a major industrial city located near the Texas-Oklahoma border, seventy miles north of Dallas, Texas, on United States Highway 75 and United States Highway 69. The estimated population for 1968 was 27,500. The total labor force for Grayson County is approximately 18,000. Diversified local employment and various vocational courses at Grayson County Junior College provide a supply of skilled personnel.

Part I of the study included mothers of the identified preschool children who provided family and personal background

information related to factors influencing clothing preferences and selections for preschool girls aged two to six years. Letters were mailed to 211 mothers of girls within the defined brackets of the study explaining the enclosed questionnaire. The names of participants were listed on separate cards containing code numbers to correspond with the questionnaires. A self-addressed envelope was enclosed for the questionnaire to be returned to the author upon completion. A contact by mail or personal interview was made with the parents not responding to the first explanatory letter. A copy of the questionnaire sent to the parents as well as explanatory letters are shown on the following pages.

Part II was a market survey sheet suggested by McAlister (8). Modifications were made to fit the needs of this particular study. Direct observations were conducted in six stores of Denton, Texas, during the third week of August, 1968 in order to determine clothing details available on the current market for the age group girls in the study. For the purpose of insuring a balanced survey, representative of the ready-to-wear sources available to the women in Denton, Texas, a department store, chain store, specialty shop, discount center, mail-order store, and a variety store were used for this part of the investigation.

Permission was obtained from the cooperating retail establishments in order to check specified details to be found on the apparel racks at the time of the study. A representative collection of initial stock for back-to-school wear was on display at all cooperating stores. Certain items of outer apparel were selected for the study. Dresses were grouped to include size two through five. From the total number within each group, the author obtained information with respect to style features, construction characteristics, label information, color, and price range. The market survey sheet is shown on the following pages.

Part III consisted of personal interviews with 20 designers of children's clothing in the Dallas, Texas, area. A contact by mail or telephone was made with firms outside the Dallas, Texas, environs explaining the enclosed questionnaire. A self-addressed envelope was enclosed for the questionnaire to be returned to the author upon completion. The participants were listed on separate cards containing code numbers to correspond with the questionnaire.

The designers interview and questionnaire forms were prepared by the author to determine factors which influence the designs of girls' dresses within the defined age brackets of the study. Information obtained was compared with the mothers' preference of clothing for preschool girls aged two

to six years as related to style features, construction characteristics, label information, color, and price range. A copy of the interview for designers is shown on the following pages.

The returns were checked according to the following restrictions: all questions were completed, and only mothers of preschool girls aged two to six years were included in the data. The completed forms which did not meet these requirements were eliminated.

The socioeconomic status of the participants was assessed by the McGuire-White (9) Status Index. An index of social status in a short form and a general conversion table were used in the determination. The total index score for each parent was secured from scaled ratings based on education, occupation, and source of income. The index score was weighted and added to get a total score which was used to estimate the probable social status. The social status categories used were upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, upper lower class, and lower lower class.

Dear Parent:

As a graduate student in the College of Household Arts and Sciences at Texas Woman's University, I am investigating the factors influencing clothing selection and preferences for the preschool age girl. The results should be of interest to parents, teachers, manufacturers and designers.

In checking current lists your name appeared as the parent of a preschool child. Your opinions and suggestions would be most helpful for completion of the study. Therefore, I hope you will contribute by answering the enclosed questionnaire. Please use the self-addressed envelope to return the completed form as soon as possible.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated as the information you give will be valuable.

Sincerely,

Marlene Bebo

M O T H E R S Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

Age of child _____ Number of children in family _____

Boys _____ Girls _____

Occupation of father _____

Occupation of mother _____

Check principal source of your family income:

Inheritance _____	Earnings from employment
Investments _____	by others _____
Business profits from	Part-time employment _____
self-employment _____	Other (specify) _____

Indicate level of educational attainment by checking the appropriate blank.

Education of father

Education of mother

	Grade school	
	High school but did not graduate	
	High school graduate	
	College but did not graduate	
	College graduate	
	Post graduate work	

1. To what degree do you make the most of your child's clothing?

Always _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

2. If you make most of your child's clothing, check the answers related to your reason for sewing.

To save money _____	Because you like to sew _____
To get what you want _____	Because you have material on hand _____
To get better fit _____	Others (specify) _____

3. If you buy most of your child's clothing, rank the answers related to your reason for purchasing ready-to-wear. (Number one is your most important reason.)

To save time_____	Because you do not like
To save money_____	to sew_____
Because you cannot	Others (specify)_____
sew_____	

4. To what extent do you read labels on clothing?

Always_____ Sometimes_____ Seldom_____ Never_____

5. Check the degree to which you look for the following terms on appropriate labels?

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Durable press	_____	_____	_____	_____
Crease resistant	_____	_____	_____	_____
Colorfastness	_____	_____	_____	_____
Amount of shrinkage	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fiber content	_____	_____	_____	_____
Name of manufacturer	_____	_____	_____	_____
Water repellent	_____	_____	_____	_____
Water proof	_____	_____	_____	_____
Laundering instruction	_____	_____	_____	_____
Drying instruction	_____	_____	_____	_____
Soil resistant	_____	_____	_____	_____
Others_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

6. Rank in numerical order the following silhouettes you prefer for your daughter. (Number one will be the most preferred.)

No waistline_____	Princess_____
Waistline_____	Two piece_____
Drop waist_____	

7. Check in the proper column your reaction to the following features in your daughter's dresses.

	Like very much	Satisfactory	Use Seldom	Avoid
Puffed sleeves	_____	_____	_____	_____
Small buttons	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ribbons	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lace	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fagoting	_____	_____	_____	_____
Smocking	_____	_____	_____	_____
Applique	_____	_____	_____	_____
Pleats	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tucks	_____	_____	_____	_____
Gathers	_____	_____	_____	_____
Rick rack	_____	_____	_____	_____
Colors combined with white	_____	_____	_____	_____
Binding and/or piping	_____	_____	_____	_____
Others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

8. To what degree do you buy the following by brand names?

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Sunday dresses	_____	_____	_____	_____
School dresses	_____	_____	_____	_____
Play clothes	_____	_____	_____	_____
Coats	_____	_____	_____	_____
Shoes	_____	_____	_____	_____
Undergarments	_____	_____	_____	_____
Night garments	_____	_____	_____	_____
Others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

9. If garments purchased do not give satisfaction, do you return them?

Always _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

10. Are you familiar with the term "self-help" as applied to children's clothing? Yes _____ No _____

11. Do "self-help" features influence your buying?

Always _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

12. Check in the proper column your reaction to the following fabric designs in your daughter's dresses.

	Like very much	Satisfactory	Use Seldom	Avoid
Figured fabric design (less than two inches)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Figured fabric design (larger than two inches)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Plaid or check (one inch or smaller)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Plaid or check (larger than one inch)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Stripe (larger than one inch)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Stripe (one inch or smaller)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Solid color	_____	_____	_____	_____
Solid color with texture	_____	_____	_____	_____

13. To what degree do you take into consideration the following details when buying for your child.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Large armholes	_____	_____	_____	_____
Large neck opening	_____	_____	_____	_____
Position of opening	_____	_____	_____	_____
Front and back easy to identify	_____	_____	_____	_____
Type of fasteners	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fasteners easy for child to manipu- late	_____	_____	_____	_____

14. Do you look for "growth-features" garments?

Always_____ Sometimes_____ Seldom_____ Never_____

15. Check the frequency with which you look for the following features.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Deep hems (deeper than two inches)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tucks at waistline	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tucks at hem	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adjustable straps	_____	_____	_____	_____
Button on skirts and blouses	_____	_____	_____	_____
Dresses with in-definite waistline	_____	_____	_____	_____
Raglan sleeves	_____	_____	_____	_____
Kimono sleeves	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tucks at shoulder	_____	_____	_____	_____
Expandable waistlines	_____	_____	_____	_____
Large side seams (more than one half inch)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

16. Rank the characteristics listed below which you consider important when you buy a garment. (Number one will be the most important.)

Color _____	Wearing quality _____
Beauty _____	Ease of laundering _____
Price _____	Comfort _____
Fit _____	Child liking it _____
	Others _____

17. Put in numerical order the frequency with which you tend to select the following colors. (Number one will be your first preference.)

Red _____	Orange _____
Yellow _____	Black _____
Blue _____	Gray _____
Green _____	Brown _____
Pink _____	Others _____
Purple _____	

18. Think specifically of the last garment you purchased for your daughter. Was it the color you wanted?
Yes _____ No _____

19. If your answer is "No", please indicate why you bought this color.

-
20. Do you buy matching shoes and accessories for your child's "Sunday" dresses?

Always_____ Sometimes_____ Seldom_____ Never_____

21. Do you find matching color accessories hard to find?
Yes_____ No_____

22. Check within which price range you buy your child's play suits:

Always Sometimes Seldom Never

Less than \$3.00
\$3.00-\$ 4.99
\$5.00-\$10.00
\$10.00 and over

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

23. Check which price range you buy your child's school dresses:

Always Sometimes Seldom Never

Less than \$5.00
\$5.00-\$9.99
\$10.00-\$15.00
Over \$15.00

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

24. Check which price range you buy your child's "Sunday" dresses:

Always Sometimes Seldom Never

Less than \$5.00
\$5.00-\$9.99
\$10.00-\$15.00
Over \$15.00

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

25. Check the frequency in which you patronize the following stores.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Department store	_____	_____	_____	_____
Specialty store	_____	_____	_____	_____
Variety store	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mail-order store	_____	_____	_____	_____
Chain store	_____	_____	_____	_____
Discount store	_____	_____	_____	_____

M A R K E T I N V E N T O R Y S U R V E Y

Store _____

Date _____

Children's Department:

List the number of garments in each column.

Item Number	Description of Items	Size			
		2	3	4	5
1	<u>Dress style:</u>				
	No waist line _____				
	Princess _____				
	Waist line _____				
	Drop waist _____				
	Two piece _____				
2	<u>Garment description:</u>				
	Figured fabric design (less than two inches) _____				
	Figured fabric design (larger than two inches) _____				
	Plaid or check (one inch or smaller) _____				
	Plaid or check (larger than one inch) _____				
	Stripe (larger than one inch) _____				
	Stripe (one inch or smaller) _____				
	Solid color _____				
	Red _____				
	Blue _____				

Item Number	Description of Items	Size			
		2	3	4	5
3	Yellow_____				
	Green_____				
	Orange_____				
	Violet_____				
	Black_____				
	White_____				
	Gray_____				
	Brown_____				
	<u>Label information:</u>				
	Laundering instructions_____				
	Durable press_____				
	Crease resistant_____				
	Colorfastness_____				
	Amount of shrinkage_____				
	Fiber content_____				
	Name of manufacturer_____				
	Water repellent_____				
	Water proof_____				
	Drying instruction_____				
	Soil resistant_____				

Item Number	Description of Items	Size			
		2	3	4	5
4	<u>Self-help features:</u>				
	Position of openings:				
	Front _____				
	Back _____				
	Shoulder _____				
	Side _____				
	No opening _____				
	Kinds of fasteners:				
	Buttons (half inch or less) _____				
	Buttons (larger than half inch) _____				
	Button loops _____				
	Piped button holes _____				
	Ties at neck line _____				
	Snaps _____				
	Zippers _____				
	Hooks-and-eyes _____				
5	<u>Growth features:</u>				
	Wide hems (more than two inches) _____				
	Hems (two inches or less) _____				
	Side seams (half inch or less) _____				
	Side seams (more than half inch) _____				
	Adjustable straps at shoulder _____				

Item Number	Description of Items	Size			
		2	3	4	5
6	Expandable waist lines _____				
	Indefinite waistline _____				
	Tucks at waistline _____				
	Tucks at hem _____				
	Button on skirt and blouses _____				
	Raglan sleeves _____				
	Kimono sleeves _____				
	Normal armholes _____				
	<u>Construction characteristics:</u>				
	Puffed sleeves _____				
	Small buttons _____				
	Ribbons _____				
	Lace _____				
	Fagoting _____				
	Smocking _____				
	Applique _____				
	Pleats _____				
	Tucks _____				
	Gathers _____				
	Rick rack _____				
	Colors combined with white _____				
	Binding and/or piping _____				

Item Number	Description of Items	Size			
		2	3	4	5
7	<u>Price range:</u>				
	Dresses				
	Less than \$5.00 _____				
	\$5.00 to \$9.99 _____				
	\$10.00 to \$15.00 _____				
	Over \$15.00 _____				

Dear Designer:

As a graduate student in the College of Household Arts and Sciences at Texas Woman's University, I am investigating the factors influencing clothing selection and preferences for the preschool age girl. The results should be of interest to parents, teacher, manufacturers and designers.

Your opinions and suggestions would be most helpful for completion of the study. Therefore, I hope you will contribute by answering the enclosed questionnaire. Please use the self-addressed envelope to return the completed form as soon as possible.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated as the information you give will be valuable.

Sincerely,

Marlene Bebo

6. Designate the frequency with which you have the following silhouettes in your lines.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
No waistline	_____	_____	_____	_____
Waistlines	_____	_____	_____	_____
Drop waist	_____	_____	_____	_____
Princess	_____	_____	_____	_____
Two piece	_____	_____	_____	_____

7. Check the frequency of using the following fabrics.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Wash-and-wear	_____	_____	_____	_____
Durable press	_____	_____	_____	_____
Soil resistant	_____	_____	_____	_____
Crease resistant	_____	_____	_____	_____
Others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

8. Do predominant colors for your line follow seasonal fashion colors of ladies ready-to-wear?

Always _____ Sometimes _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

9. Do you use the same color range and fabrics for two year old sizes as you would use for five year old sizes?

Yes _____ No _____

10. Check the regularity of using the following resources.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
California Apparel	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fashion Show Case	_____	_____	_____	_____
Woman's Wear Daily	_____	_____	_____	_____
Apparel Mart Museum	_____	_____	_____	_____
Movies, play, television	_____	_____	_____	_____
Croquis source	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trade magazines	_____	_____	_____	_____
Others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

11. Check in the proper column the frequency with which you use style features for dresses.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Puffed sleeves	_____	_____	_____	_____
Small buttons	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ribbons	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lace	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fagoting	_____	_____	_____	_____
Smocking	_____	_____	_____	_____
Applique	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tucks	_____	_____	_____	_____
Pleats	_____	_____	_____	_____
Gathers	_____	_____	_____	_____
Rick rack	_____	_____	_____	_____
Colors combined with white	_____	_____	_____	_____
Binding and/or piping	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

12. Do you design for more than one price line? Yes___ No___

13. If you design for more than one price line, what is the big difference between the lines.

	Expensive Line	Moderate Price Line
Ease	_____	_____
Quality of fabric	_____	_____
Growth features	_____	_____
Hems	_____	_____
Seams	_____	_____
Placket finishes	_____	_____
Pockets	_____	_____
Decorative finishes	_____	_____
Handwork	_____	_____
Reinforcements at places of wear	_____	_____
Others _____	_____	_____

14. Check within which retail price range you design dresses for the 2 to 6 year age group:

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Less than \$5.00	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$5.00-\$9.99	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$10.00-\$15.00	_____	_____	_____	_____
Over \$15.00	_____	_____	_____	_____

15. Check within which retail price range you design play suits for the 2 to 6 year age group:

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Less than \$3.00	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$3.00-\$4.99	_____	_____	_____	_____
\$5.00-\$10.00	_____	_____	_____	_____
Over \$10.00	_____	_____	_____	_____

16. Check the sources most frequently used in determining what style features will be acceptable to the mothers of the 2 to 6 year age group.

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Customer survey	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sales analysis	_____	_____	_____	_____
Analysis of lost sales	_____	_____	_____	_____
Records of complaint and adjustments	_____	_____	_____	_____
Observation of fashions and their trends	_____	_____	_____	_____

CHAPTER III

D I S C U S S I O N O F F I N D I N G S W I T H P R E S E N T A T I O N O F D A T A

Data for this study were obtained from three groups, 106 mothers of preschool girls aged two to six, six retail establishments, and 11 designers of children's clothing. Mothers were selected from the total 1968 register of girls enrolled in private and public nursery schools, day-care centers, and kindergartens in Denton, Texas, and Denison, Texas. Questionnaires were mailed to 152 mothers in Denton, Texas, with 70 questionnaires returned. Of the 59 questionnaires mailed to the mothers in Denison, Texas, 36 forms were returned. Information was therefore obtained from a survey form completed by 106 participants. Retail establishments selected for the study were representative of the ready-to-wear sources available to the women. In Denton, Texas, the retail stores included a department store, chain store, specialty shop, discount center, mail-order store, and a variety store. A market survey sheet was used by the author for direct observations of style features, construction characteristics, label information, color, and price range of dresses size two through five. A total of 940 garments

represented the stock on display at the cooperating stores. A contact by telephone or mail was made to 20 designers of children's clothing. Questionnaires were mailed to the cooperating designers for determining factors which influenced the designs of preschool girls' ready-to-wear dresses. Information was obtained from 11 designers.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

The information within the mothers' questionnaire included queries related to personal and family background. The purpose of this information was to gain insight that would contribute to a better understanding of the participants.

Age of Participants

The mothers had girls ranging in age from two to six years. The following information illustrates the age range of the two groups: Group A, girls in Denton, Texas; Group B, girls in Denison, Texas. Hereafter, the two groups will

be referred to as Group A and Group B. The majority of the girls were five years of age.

<u>Age Range in Years</u>	<u>Groups</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>A</u> <u>Num-</u> <u>ber</u>	<u>B</u> <u>Num-</u> <u>ber</u>	<u>Num-</u> <u>ber</u>	<u>Per</u> <u>cent</u>
2	10	5	15	14.1
3	14	8	22	20.8
4	17	6	23	21.7
5	29	17	46	43.4

Size of Family

The number of children in the family ranged from one to eight, as illustrated below.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Groups</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>A</u> <u>Num-</u> <u>ber</u>	<u>B</u> <u>Num-</u> <u>ber</u>	<u>Num-</u> <u>ber</u>	<u>Per</u> <u>cent</u>
1	13	11	24	22.6
2	30	13	43	40.6
3	19	7	26	24.6
4	5	4	9	8.6
5	1	0	1	0.9
6	1	0	1	0.9
7	0	1	1	0.9
8	1	0	1	0.9

The data revealed that only 12.2 per cent of the families had more than three children. The largest percentage

of the sample contained two children per family. These figures are slightly higher than the information published by the Bureau of Census (9).

Occupation of the Parents

The occupations of the fathers were tabulated according to a rate number as assigned to occupations by McGuire and White (9).

Father's Occupation Rating	Groups		Total	
	A Num- ber	B Num- ber	Num- ber	Per cent
One	18	6	24	22.6
Two	26	11	37	34.9
Three	10	8	18	17.1
Four	5	3	8	7.5
Five	3	3	6	5.7
Six	2	3	5	4.7
Seven	6	2	8	7.5

Rate Number One included the higher prestige positions such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors, proprietors of large business concerns, and top executives of corporations. The opposite end of the scale, Rate Number Seven, included individuals who do heavy labor, unskilled work, and domestic services. Other divisions in the scale were: Rate Number Two, educators, proprietors of businesses valued at \$50,000 to \$100,000, managers or supervisors, accountants,

real estate or insurance salesmen, editorial writers, and land operators who did not live on the farm; Rate Number Three, grade school teachers, nurses, businesses valued from \$10,000 to \$50,000, buyers, small contractors, and farm owners with hired help; Rate Number Four, businesses valued from \$5,000 to \$10,000, secretarial work, sales, foremen, electricians, law enforcement, and small landowners; Rate Number Five, businesses valued from \$2,000 to \$5,000, clerks, beauty operators, barbers, practical nurses, apprentices, farm tenants; and Rate Number Six, very small businesses, semi-skilled workers, truck drivers, waiters, gas station attendants, and sharecroppers.

Over 34 per cent of the fathers, which was the largest collection, was in the second group rating. This was expected since one in every 100 persons in Denton, Texas, holds a doctoral degree.

The distribution of the mothers' occupations was as follows:

<u>Mother's Occupation</u>	<u>Groups</u>		<u>Total Per cent</u>
	<u>A Num- ber</u>	<u>B Num- ber</u>	
White collar position	31	22	50.0
Blue collar position	4	2	5.7

The majority of the occupations were listed in the classification of white collar positions. There were 47 full-time homemakers.

Education of the Parents

The level of schooling for the fathers was tabulated according to an educational attainment scale based on the amount of formal education (9). The largest concentration was found at the top of the scale, with 31.1 per cent of the fathers listed as having college post graduate work. Group A tended to have more fathers with a college degree than did Group B. This may be attributed to the educational character of the community.

<u>Father's Education</u>	<u>Groups</u>		<u>Total Per cent</u>
	<u>A Num- ber</u>	<u>B Num- ber</u>	
College post graduate work	27	6	31.1
Graduate, four year college	18	8	24.5
College, but did not graduate	12	11	21.7
High school graduate	7	8	14.2
High school, but did not graduate	4	2	5.7
Grade school	2	1	2.8

The average educational levels of the mothers were slightly lower than the fathers. The largest group, 30.2

per cent, attended college but did not graduate. The educational attainment of the mothers is indicated below:

<u>Mother's Education</u>	<u>Groups</u>		<u>Total Per cent</u>
	<u>A Num- ber</u>	<u>B Num- ber</u>	
College post graduate work	18	5	21.7
Graduate, four year college	11	6	16.1
College, but did not graduate	27	15	30.2
High school graduate	11	20	29.2
High school, but did not graduate	2	0	1.9
Grade school	1	0	0.9

A greater number of the mothers in Group A had attended college than those in Group B. All the mothers in Group B were high school graduates whereas, 2.8 per cent of the mothers in Group A did not complete high school. This may be accounted for by the fact that only mothers of children enrolled in private nursery schools participated in Group B.

Social Status

Probable social status was determined by the McGuire-White Status Index (9). Questions concerning the father's occupation, source of family income, and education of the father were used to determine probable social status. For purposes of data analysis the five social classes used were

grouped as: Class I, upper; Class II, upper middle; Class III, lower middle; Class IV, upper lower; Class V, lower lower. Hereafter, the social classes will be referred to as I, II, III, IV, and V. The identities of the two groups were as follows:

<u>Social Classes</u>		<u>Groups</u>		<u>Total</u>
		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>Per</u>
		<u>Per</u>	<u>Per</u>	<u>cent</u>
		<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>
I	Upper	4.3	5.6	4.7
II	Upper middle	62.8	44.4	56.6
III	Lower middle	17.1	25.0	19.8
IV	Upper lower	12.9	25.0	17.0
V	Lower lower	2.9	0.0	1.9

An investigation of the data reveal the greatest percentage were classified as belonging to Class II, the upper middle social group. These findings are in accord with the other characteristics of the groups under study.

FACTORS INFLUENCING CLOTHING SELECTION

Sewing Practices

When questioned concerning the degree to which the child's clothing was made at home, over 60 per cent of the mothers made most of the child's clothing. Blake (1) found among the mothers who sewed, 50.8 per cent made most of the

daughter's clothing. The extent to which the mothers sewed is given below:

<u>Extent</u>	<u>Number</u> (N=106)	<u>Per cent</u>
Always	11	10.4
Sometimes	57	53.8
Seldom	19	17.9
Never	19	17.9

The most frequently listed reason for this activity was economy. The next most important factor was personal pleasure, stated by 30.6 per cent of the mothers. Similar findings were reported by Blake (1). The mothers who made most of the children's clothing gave one or more reasons for sewing as listed below:

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Homemakers</u> <u>Per cent</u>
To save money	31.9
Like to sew	30.6
To get what you want	20.1
To get a better fit	11.8
Have material on hand	5.6

A tendency for the better educated mothers to make more of the girls' clothing is illustrated in the findings in Table I. While no data were obtained concerning the cost of

TABLE I
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOME SEWING IN RELATION
TO MOTHERS' EDUCATION

Education of Mothers	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	Total Number of Mothers (N=106)
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	
Grade school	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1
1-3 years high school	0.9	0.9	0.0	0.9	3
High school graduate	2.9	14.2	9.4	3.8	32
1-3 years college	3.8	15.1	2.9	7.5	31
College graduate	1.9	10.4	1.9	1.9	17
Post graduate work	0.9	8.5	4.7	6.6	22

sewing equipment, economic factors may be considered in relation to the possible family incomes which would naturally be larger in more affluent families.

Of the mothers who sewed to save money, none with less than a high school education listed this practice as a reason for sewing. As shown below, more mothers with college training used sewing as a money saving practice.

<u>Education of Mother</u>	<u>Homemakers</u> <u>Per cent</u>
Grade school	0.0
1-3 years high school	0.0
High school graduate	30.4
1-3 years college	32.6
College graduate	37.0

Buying Practices

Homemakers who bought most of the children's clothing gave the following reasons for purchasing ready-made garments:

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Homemakers</u> <u>Per cent</u>
To save time	74.0
Cannot sew	18.0
Do not like to sew	4.0
To save money	4.0

Three of the mothers stated they did not own sewing machines. Since 4.0 per cent of the mothers believed that money was saved by buying ready-made clothing it could be surmised that the cost of sewing equipment may have accounted for the mothers in the lower social groups failure to sew. In view of the concept that today's homemaker has a dual role in the family, it may be expected that 74.0 per cent of the mothers stated children's clothing was bought ready-made in order to save time.

Respondents were asked the extent to which labels were examined when shopping for the preschool child's clothing. The mothers' responses as shown below indicated great awareness of labels.

<u>Extent</u>	<u>Mothers (N=106)</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Always	75	70.8
Sometimes	29	27.4
Seldom	2	1.8
Never	0	0.0

The 106 mothers who looked for labels were interested in various types of information as categorized in Table II. Nearly all the mothers, 99.1 per cent, looked for laundering instructions. Durable press was ranked second in importance by the mothers. Since finishes for easy care have been

TABLE II
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS'
 RESPONSES ACCORDING TO LABEL INFORMATION
 LOOKED FOR ON CHILDREN'S CLOTHING,
 TWO TO SIX YEARS OF AGE

Type Information	Mothers' Responses (N=106)			
	Always or Sometimes		Seldom or Never	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Laundering in- structions	105	99.1	1	0.9
Durable press	103	97.2	3	2.8
Colorfastness	96	90.6	10	9.4
Drying instruc- tions	95	89.6	11	10.4
Crease resistant	93	87.7	13	12.3
Amount of shrink- age	93	87.7	13	12.3
Fiber content	93	87.7	13	12.3
Name of manu- facturer	83	78.8	23	21.7
Soil resistant	78	73.6	28	26.4
Water repellent	50	47.2	56	52.8
Water proof	46	43.4	60	56.6

publicized, a similar type question was asked in the questionnaire for the designers. Over 45 per cent of the designers stated they always used durable press and the remaining 54.5 per cent designed with this feature to some extent. Durable press was found on 71.8 per cent of the labels in the local stores (Table III). Approximately 90 per cent of the mothers looked for colorfastness. However, information found to be most lacking on labels in the stores was amount of shrinkage and colorfastness of the garment. Rain wear items were not observed in the stores, consequently water proof and water repellent information was negative on garment tags.

Mothers' responses were often in contrast to findings on garment tags in the store. Analysis was made to determine the relationship between information mothers looked for on labels and information found on garments in the stores. A significant difference was ascertained through Z-test analysis of factors shown on Table IV.

This study indicated that homemakers were aware of "self-help" features on children's garments. Of the 106 homemakers in the study, 58.5 per cent were familiar with the term "self-help" as applied to children's clothing. Of the homemakers familiar with "self-help" features, 48.1 per cent were influenced in selecting apparel having these features. Approximately 41 per cent stated these details

TABLE III
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LABEL
 INFORMATION FOUND ON CHILDREN'S
 GARMENTS IN STORES

Type Information	Garments Observed (N=940)	
	Number	Per cent
Laundering instructions	884	94.0
Name of manufacturer	869	92.4
Fiber content	832	88.5
Durable press	675	71.8
Drying instructions	585	62.2
Soil resistant	190	20.2
Crease resistant	83	8.8
Colorfastness	6	0.6
Amount of shrinkage	4	0.4
Water repellent	0	0.0
Water proof	0	0.0

TABLE IV
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LABEL INFORMATION LOOKED FOR
BY MOTHERS AND INFORMATION FOUND ON CHILDREN'S GARMENTS
IN THE STORES

Type Information	Mothers Reporting	Garments Observed	Z Test Score	Significant Level
	Per cent	Per cent		
Laundering instructions	99.1	94.0	2.28	P<.05
Durable press	97.2	71.8	5.82	P<.01
Colorfastness	90.6	0.6	6.38	P<.01
Drying instructions	89.6	62.2	5.71	P<.01

Table Z (.01) = 2.58
Table Z (.05) = 1.96

were never an influential force in final purchases. These findings are contradictory to Blake's (1) report that 67 per cent of the homemakers had no knowledge of what "self-help" meant and that the homemakers who were familiar with "self-help" bought garments with this feature. Evidence from this study revealed that only one designer featured "self-help" garments where possible. Approximately 54 per cent of the designers said they sometimes feature "self-help" garments. However, market inventory does not reveal the prevalence of "self-help" features. Only 7.0 per cent of the garments found on the market had front openings, and 11.7 per cent had buttons larger than one-half inch in diameter. The responses to the question concerning degree of consideration given to "self-help" features are categorized as follows:

<u>Features</u>	<u>Mothers Reporting</u> (N=106)			
	<u>Always</u>		<u>Sometimes</u>	
	<u>Num- ber</u>	<u>Per cent</u>	<u>Num- ber</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Large armholes	34	34.1	41	38.7
Large neck openings	44	41.5	43	40.6
Position of opening	45	42.5	37	34.9
Front and back easy to identify	46	43.4	35	33.0
Type of fasteners	53	50.0	35	33.0
Fasteners easy to manipulate	43	40.6	42	39.6

Thirty-six, 34 per cent, of the mothers said they looked for "growth-features" when selecting clothing for the preschool child. Fifty-eight, 54.7 per cent, sometimes looked for this feature when shopping. Only 11.3 per cent of the mothers designated seldom or never being influenced by "growth-featured" garments. Comments made by the mothers were that very few items had sufficient wearing quality for this feature to be important, hem lines show when let out, and the child usually outgrows the entire garment rather than a portion. As shown in Table V, growth features most looked for were adjustable straps, deep hems, and indefinite waistlines. Least looked for features were kimono sleeves and tucks at the shoulder. Raglan sleeves were features mentioned by mothers when looking for coats. Over 70 per cent of the designers stated that "growth-features" were sometimes used. However, the stores that were surveyed indicated these features were lacking in the ready-to-wear clothing for children. Only 9.1 per cent of the garments had hems deeper than two inches. These garments were found in the higher price dresses. The only appreciable growth feature observed in the stores were dresses with indefinite waistline, 71 per cent.

Growth features were mentioned in a National Cotton Council release (10) saying: "Learn to look for deep hems

TABLE V
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS' RESPONSES ACCORDING TO
GROWTH FEATURES LOOKED FOR IN CHILDREN'S CLOTHING,
TWO TO SIX YEARS OF AGE

Features	Mothers' Responses (N=106)							
	Always		Sometimes		Seldom		Never	
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent
Deep hems (deeper than two inches)	37	34.9	49	46.2	13	12.3	7	6.6
Tucks at waistline	5	4.7	35	33.0	39	36.8	27	25.5
Tucks at hem	7	6.6	33	31.1	38	35.8	28	26.5
Adjustable straps	40	37.7	47	44.3	13	12.3	6	5.7
Button on skirts and blouses	23	21.7	40	37.7	30	28.3	13	12.3
Dresses with indefinite waistline	36	34.0	51	48.0	13	12.3	6	5.7
Raglan sleeves	7	6.6	32	30.2	38	35.8	29	27.4
Kimono sleeves	2	1.9	18	17.0	41	38.6	45	42.5
Tucks at shoulder	2	1.9	26	24.5	35	33.0	43	40.6
Expandable waistline	11	10.4	39	36.8	35	33.0	21	19.8
Large side seams (more than one-half inch)	16	15.1	32	30.2	30	28.3	28	26.4

in girls' dresses. Deep-cut armholes will allow for growth and longer wear. So will no-waistline dresses and shirts with long tails." Indications are that mothers are being educated contrary to the impracticality of growth features assumed by the children's ready-to-wear market.

In response to a question concerning silhouette preferences, 79.2 per cent of the mothers listed no waistline dresses as first choice. The drop waistline was the mothers' second preference. The mothers' choices were related to findings on the market as shown below:

<u>Silhouette Preferences</u>	<u>Mothers</u> (N=96) <u>Per cent</u>	<u>Store</u> (N=940) <u>Per cent</u>
No waistline Z=2.98 P<.01	79.2	63.4
Drop waistline Z=1.32 Non-significant	12.5	5.6
Waistline Z=4.02 P<.01	8.3	26.7
Princess	0.0	2.1
Two piece	0.0	2.2

Observation showed that 26.7 per cent of the dresses found in stores had waistlines and only 8.3 per cent of the mothers indicated a preference for the waistline dress. The possible relationship of silhouette preferences as expressed

by the mothers and market availability was investigated. Data analysis revealed a highly significant relationship ($P < .01$) of the waistline and no waistline dresses. However, Z-test analysis of the other silhouettes were non-significant. It is necessary to interject a statement concerning "timing" and the development of fashion. People's choices may be determined by things available at an earlier market. Fashion has to be introduced before acceptance by the masses. The stock observed in the study was the initial introduction of back to school wear. Waistlines are a new detail which may not have been accepted by the average consumer at the time of the survey.

While information from the designers' questionnaires was inadequate, fashion details were covered evenly in the lines under preparation. There was no indication of a single fashion detail being projected by the designers.

As shown in Table VI the style features most avoided by mothers were puffed sleeves and small buttons. Bindings, pipings, and colors combined with white were the most liked style features. These findings were opposite to the Blake (1) study which showed that colors combined with white were least liked by mothers. While no conclusions can be drawn concerning the reasons why the women in this study identified colors combined with white as being desirable, until recently

TABLE VI
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF STYLE FEATURES ON GIRLS'
 DRESSES PREFERRED BY THE MOTHERS IN RELATION
 TO AVAILABILITY IN THE STORES

Style Features	Mothers Reporting	Stores Observed
	Per cent	Per cent
Binding and/or piping	49.1	29.5
Colors combined with white	45.3	42.8
Pleats	44.3	4.6
Lace	38.8	20.4
Applique	34.9	7.0
Gathers	34.9	43.4
Smocking	31.4	10.4
Tucks	31.1	1.2
Rick-rack	28.3	3.3
Small buttons	21.7	24.4
Puffed sleeves	16.0	12.0
Ribbons	13.2	17.8
Fagoting	7.6	0.0

there may have been a problem with the laundering of white fabric in much of the water containing high mineral content. At the present, new finishes, detergents, and washing procedure make a more practical usage of colors that heretofore were not functional for use.

Four mothers stated an unfamiliarity with fagoting. This detail was not found in the store and all designers stated that fagoting was seldom used. The designers used small buttons frequently for decorative purposes. Rick-rack was popular with 33.3 per cent of the designers although little was available in the store survey. The mothers complaint of this detail was that it rolled up in laundering and caused ironing problems.

While mothers expressed an interest in pleated garments, gathering was more prevalent in ready-to-wear clothes. Economically, gathering would be cheaper to produce and could give a similar use and silhouette. Data also illustrate that mothers like garments with detail that is not found in the same percentage of ready-to-wear clothes. In a questionnaire, mothers could be prone to ask for more than is recognized possible at popular price levels.

Z-test analysis revealed a highly significant difference ($P < .01$) between mothers' preference for applique,

rick-rack, small buttons and availability on the market. Difference between mothers' preference for pleats and the number found in the local stores were non-significant.

A greater proportion of the mothers tended to want more details than were supplied on ready-to-wear clothing. A significant difference was evident in regard to rick-rack and small buttons as desired by the parents in relation to market availability.

A similar group of questions was asked concerning mothers' reactions to fabric designs. Responses were compiled from "satisfactory" to "like very much" answers. Some mothers reported liking more than one fabric design. Table VII shows a predominant preference for solid colors. Solid hues were also predominantly stocked in the local stores. Small plaids or checks were given second preference by the mothers while stores were featuring plaids or checks larger than one inch. Such observations were mainly in the department stores and specialty shops. Twenty-five per cent of the mothers stated an avoidance of the large plaids and checks. Figured fabric of motifs larger than two inches was avoided for the preschool girls' dresses.

Similar findings were revealed between the mothers' preference of fabric designs and motifs offered by the stores.

TABLE VII
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS'
 PREFERENCE OF FABRIC DESIGNS IN RELATION TO
 AVAILABILITY IN THE STORES

Fabric Design	Mothers Reporting (N=226)*		Stores Observed (N=940)	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Solid color Z=1.5 Non-significant	72	31.6	365	38.8
Plaid or check (one inch or smaller) Z=3.3 P<.01	62	27.2	149	15.9
Figured fabric design (less than two inches) Z=1.32 Non-significant	46	20.2	157	16.7
Stripe (one inch or smaller) Z=1.23 Non-significant	31	13.5	62	6.6
Plaid or check (larger than one inch) Z=3.88 P<.01	9	3.9	176	18.7
Figured fabric design (larger than two inches) Z=6.35 P<.01	4	3.8	7	0.7
Stripe (larger than one inch) Z=2.44 P<.05	4	3.8	62	6.6

*Some mothers reported more than one fabric design preference.
 Table Z (.01) = 2.58 Table Z (.05) = 1.96

Statistical analysis showed a significant difference between some fabric motifs preferred by the mothers and the availability of these details in the stores. Mothers illustrated a preference for small checks, plaids, and striped fabrics which were not available to a great extent in the stores. Stores had larger supplies of big checks and large figured fabrics rather than the small checks. Mothers' preference of fabric designs in relation to availability in the stores was highly significant as shown in Table VII.

Further investigation revealed that 38.8 per cent of the dresses available in the local stores were of solid colors. Blue was the predominant color available in the stores. Yellow and orange, which have been fashion leaders in women's ready-to-wear, ranked third and fourth respectively in the children's market.

<u>Colors Available in Stores</u>	<u>Garments (N=365)</u> <u>Per cent</u>
Blue	25.8
Red	14.5
Yellow	13.7
Orange	12.3
Brown	11.5
Green	11.0
Gray	6.0
Pink	3.8
White	0.8
Violet	0.5

When designers were asked if predominant colors followed seasonal fashion colors of ladies ready-to-wear, 45.5 per cent indicated this trend was always followed. On further questioning, the majority of the designers wrote that the same color range and fabric was used for the two year old sizes as for the five year olds.

Over 50 per cent of the mothers indicated a preference for the color of blue (Figure 1). Pink was the second color choice of the mothers. Differences between the mothers second color choice and that available in the stores was determined by the Z-test and found to be significant at the .05 level.

Birron (2) in giving a relationship between color and people said: "Pink is a curious variation of red. You will find elderly ladies liking pink. It is a recall to youth." The fact that pink is associated with youth and "little" girls may account for the response of the mothers to this color. Least liked colors for children's clothing were brown, gray, and black.

Approximately 93 per cent of the mothers indicated no problem in finding color choices for children's clothing. When alternate color choices were made, factors such as fit, style, and price were the main considerations for purchase.

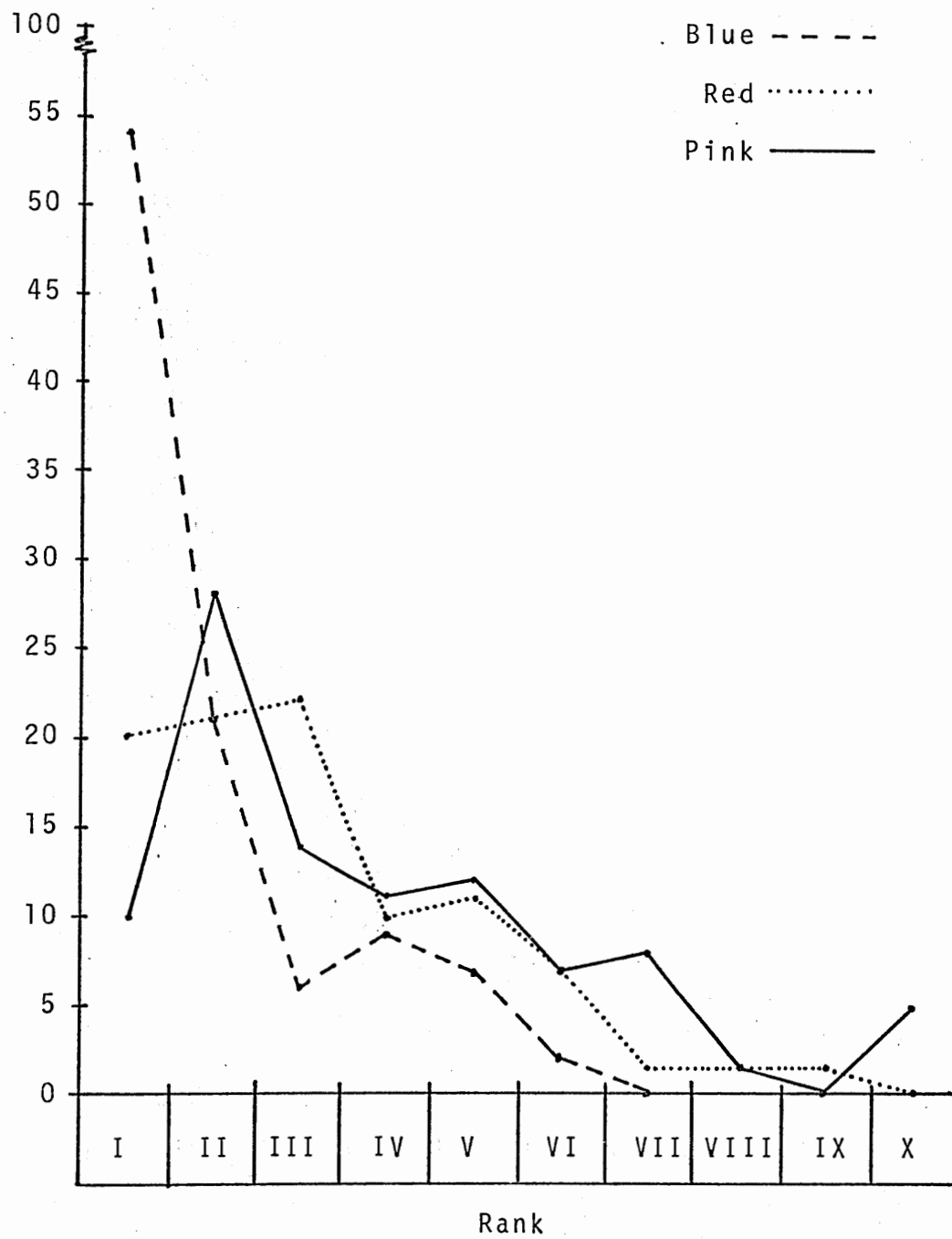


Figure 1
Mothers' Color Preferences for
Children's Dresses

A question was designed in order to determine if mothers had difficulty in finding matched color accessories for the preschool girls' "Sunday" dresses. Sixty-six per cent of the mothers indicated the purchase of matching shoes and accessories. Of the 70 mothers, 52.8 per cent stated that matching color accessories were difficult to find.

The data in this study as illustrated in Figure 2 indicated that homemakers seldom bought children's clothing by brand name. Shoes were the major item which more than half of the mothers bought by brand name. The only other items that an appreciable number of homemakers purchased by brand name were undergarments and coats. Mothers who bought brand name items reacted very strongly to this question by supporting reasons for particular preferences. Frequent reasons given were; a retained shape, wore longer, and required less care.

The homemakers with more formal education had a greater tendency to buy by brand name than did the mothers with less academic training. This is illustrated in Table VIII. College graduates and those with post graduate work tended to shop less frequently by brand name than did the mothers with some college education. Assumption was that perhaps this group recognized quality and preferred to use self judgment in the selection of apparel, therefore being less influenced

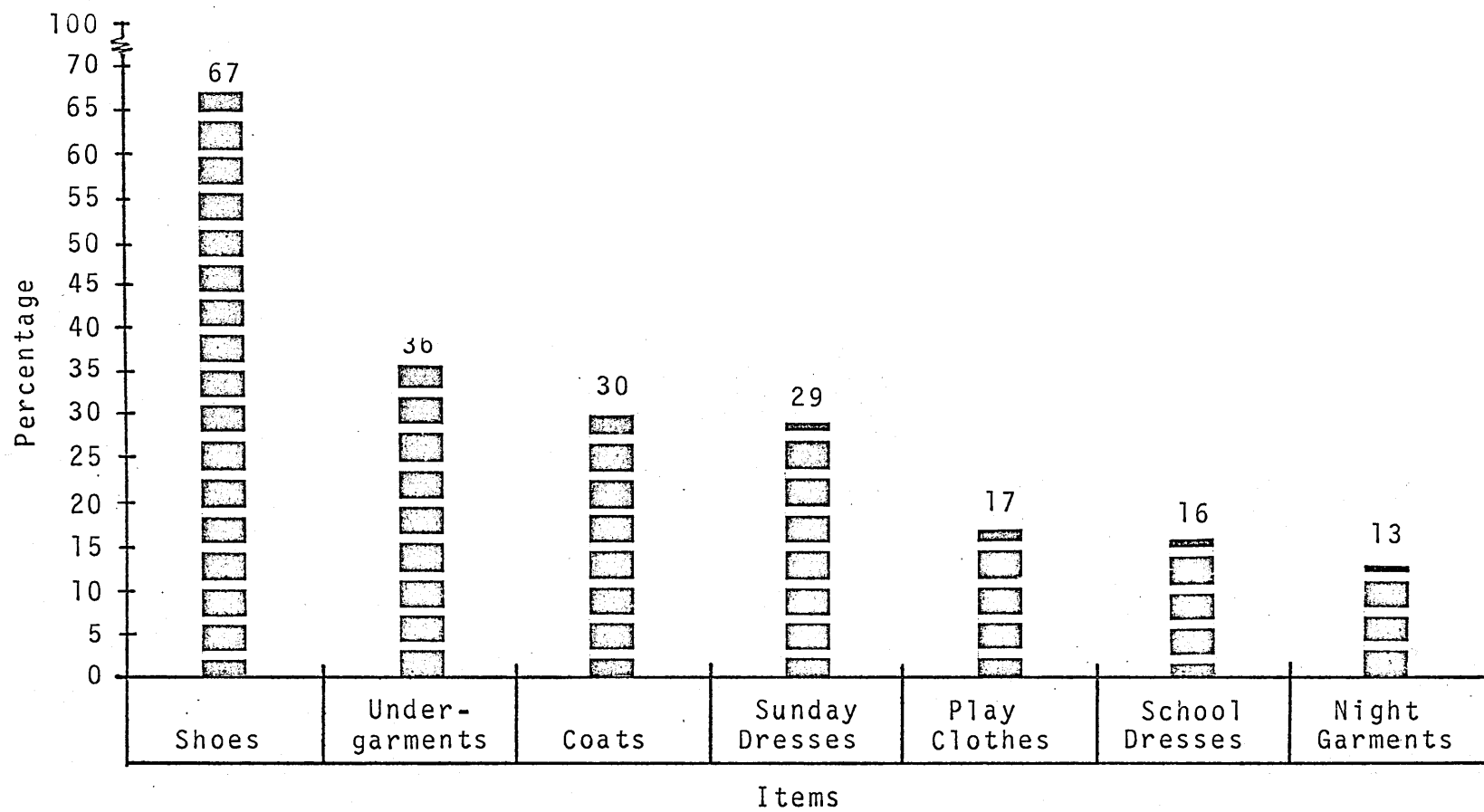


Figure 2
Percentage of Homemakers Buying
Garments by Brand Name

TABLE VIII
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS BUYING
BY BRAND NAME AS RELATED TO EDUCATION

Education of Mother	Garment Category														Number of Mothers (N=106)
	Sunday Dresses		School Dresses		Play Clothes		Coats		Shoes		Under-garments		Night Garments		
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	
Grade school	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
1-3 years high school	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.9	0	0.0	3
High school graduate	11	10.4	5	4.7	7	6.6	11	10.4	20	18.9	11	10.4	5	4.7	32
1-3 years college	12	11.3	8	7.5	11	10.4	13	12.3	22	20.8	14	13.2	5	4.7	31
College graduate	3	2.8	3	2.8	4	3.8	2	1.9	12	11.3	9	8.5	2	1.9	17
Post graduate	4	3.8	3	2.8	2	1.9	5	4.7	14	13.2	4	3.8	1	0.9	22

by brand names. Shoes were the only brand named item purchased by mothers in all educational levels.

Respondents were asked to rank the characteristics considered important when buying a preschool child's garment. The order of importance to the mother is ranked below:

<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Least Important</u>
Fit	Child liking it
Ease of laundering	Color
Wearing quality	Beauty
Price	Comfort

Fit and ease of laundering were the most frequently reported factors considered important when buying a preschool child's garment. Wearing quality and price were next in line of importance. The child liking a garment was considered the least important detail. A few tendencies appeared between selected social characteristics of families and prices paid for the preschool girls' dresses; however, price indications could not be related statistically. Over 80 per cent of the mothers never paid over \$10.00 for school dresses while 63.2 per cent indicated a usual price of over \$10.00 for a "Sunday" dress. The largest percentage of mothers stated the popular price for both school and "Sunday" dress to be within the \$5.00 to \$9.99 range. The popular price for play clothes

was from \$3.00 to \$5.00. Only two mothers stated paying more than \$10.00 for this item. These findings were in accord with designers' price lines. However, local stores stocked a larger percentage (59.2 per cent) of dresses less than \$5.00.

In order to indicate average prices paid by respondents for respective garment categories, the mothers were asked to report the prices paid for the preschool girls' clothing.. As shown below, the largest percentage of mothers paid from \$5.00 to \$9.99 for girls' school dresses.

<u>Prices</u>	<u>Mothers Reporting (N=106)</u>			
	<u>Always</u>	<u>to Sometimes</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>to Never</u>
	<u>Num-</u>	<u>Per</u>	<u>Num-</u>	<u>Per</u>
	<u>ber</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>ber</u>	<u>cent</u>
Less than \$5.00	65	61.3	41	38.7
\$ 5.00-\$ 9.99	77	72.6	29	27.4
\$10.00-\$15.00	20	18.9	86	81.1
Over \$15.00	3	2.8	103	97.2

Over 80 per cent never paid over \$10.00 for a school dress. One mother stated that this question was not applicable since the child did not go to school. This may indicate that play clothes are worn largely to nursery school.

The popular price for "Sunday" dresses was also \$5.00 to \$9.99. However, a greater number of mothers showed a tendency to pay more for "Sunday" dresses as indicated below:

<u>Prices</u>	<u>Mothers Reporting (N=106)</u>			
	<u>Always</u>	<u>to Sometimes</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>to Never</u>
	<u>Num- ber</u>	<u>Per cent</u>	<u>Num- ber</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Less than \$5.00	46	43.4	60	56.6
\$ 5.00-\$ 9.99	87	82.1	19	17.9
\$10.00-\$15.00	50	47.2	56	52.8
Over \$15.00	17	16.0	89	84.0

Few paid over \$15.00 for "Sunday" clothes. Mothers' comments were that "Sunday" dresses were often gifts from grandparents. One mother stated that she had never purchased a "Sunday" dress for her daughter because the grandmother always did this buying. Another mother inferred that grandparents, especially when financially able, purchased better quality children's clothing.

The popular price for play clothes ranged from \$3.00 to \$5.00 as shown below:

Prices	Mothers Reporting (N=106)			
	Always	to Sometimes	Seldom	to Never
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent
Less than \$3.00	64	60.4	42	39.6
\$ 3.00-\$4.99	85	80.2	21	19.8
\$ 5.00-\$9.99	40	37.7	66	62.3
\$10.00 and over	2	1.9	104	98.1

Over 60 per cent of the mothers stated paying less than \$3.00 for the child's play clothes and 62.3 per cent seldom or never purchased play clothes over \$5.00. Only two mothers indicated paying \$10.00 or more for these garments. Seventy-five per cent of the designers created play clothes in the \$3.00 to \$5.00 price group. Dallas, Texas, is an adaptive ready-to-wear market with the so-called "popular price range" or "moderate price range" representing most of the production lines in the Dallas environs. This coincides with the ranges as stated by the designers.

<u>Prices</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Less than \$3.00	37.5
\$3.00-\$4.99	75.0
\$5.00-10.00	55.5
Over \$10.00	33.3

Children's garments were available in a wide range of prices as indicated below:

<u>Price Range</u>	<u>Dresses in Stores</u> (N=940)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Less than \$5.00	556	59.2
\$ 5.00-\$ 9.99	298	31.8
\$10.00-\$15.00	75	7.9
Over \$15.00	11	1.1

Prices varied with the type of store. The chain, discount, and variety stores accounted for 59.2 per cent of the dresses under \$5.00. These stores had only one price line. This finding was in accord with fashion industry magazines (17) listing the popular price levels for most girls' dresses at \$4.00 and \$6.00. Department stores and specialty stores concentrated in merchandise ranging from \$5.00 to \$15.00 and over. Garments over \$15.00 were found in specialty shops. The most popular price lines in these stores were from \$5.00 to \$10.00.

Designers' interviews showed within which retail price range the preschool girls' dresses were grouped. As shown below, 85.5 per cent design in the \$5.00 to \$10.00 price line.

<u>Price Range</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Less than \$5.00	57.1
\$ 5.00-\$ 9.99	85.5
\$10.00-\$15.00	66.7
Over \$15.00	42.9

These findings are in accord with the mothers in this study; however, contrary to prices found in the local stores. More designers created dresses over \$10.00 than was indicated in the stores. Further questioning of the designers revealed that all manufacturing concerns in the study produced more than one price line. When asked to define the actual difference in cost between lines, the majority of the designers stated the quality of fabric, styling, growth features, and the amount of work appeared to be the determining factors between price lines.

If these data are representative, the average homemaker buys preschool children's clothing at a department store, as indicated in Figure 3. Similar findings are reported by

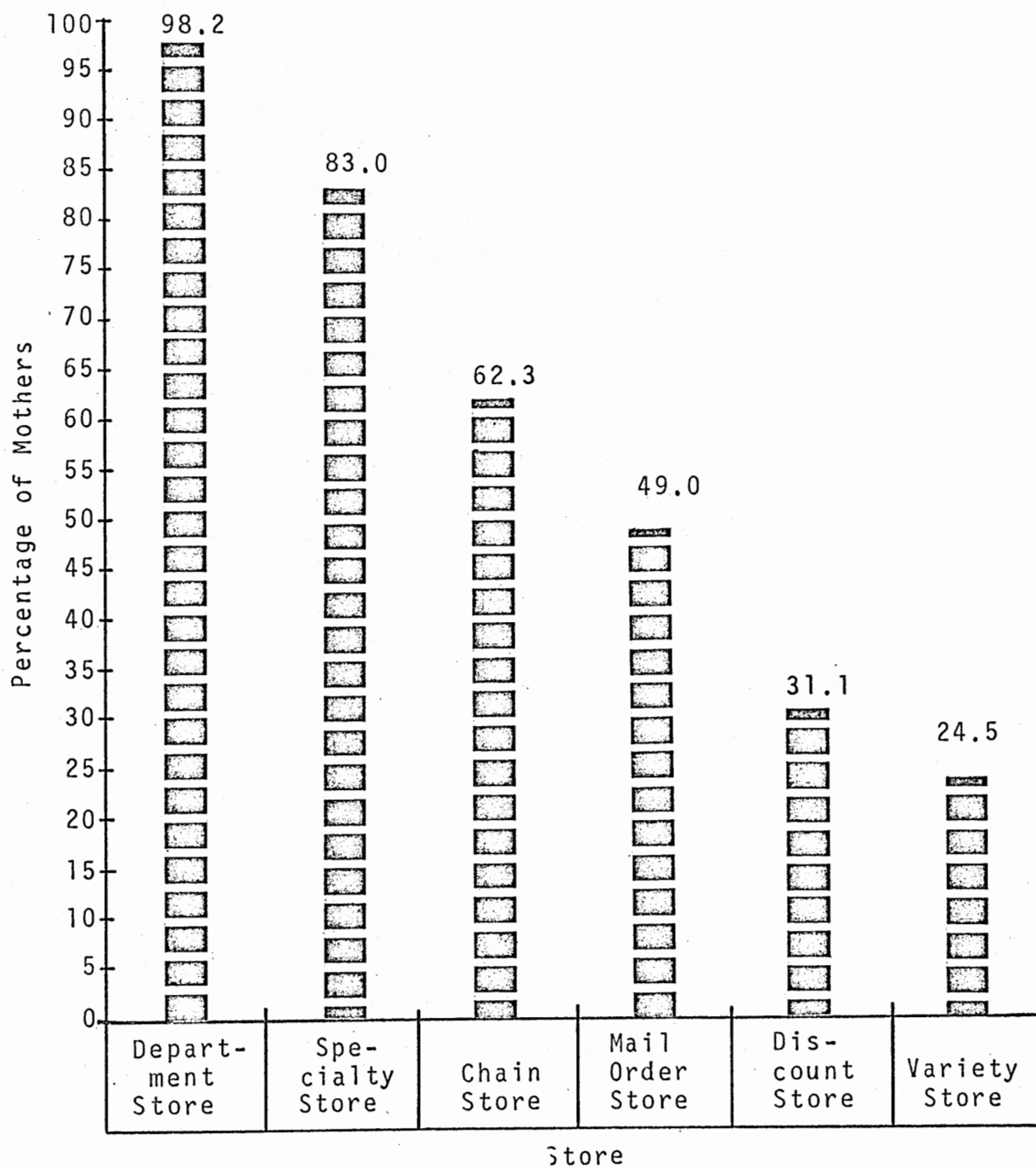


Figure 3

Stores for Purchasing Children's Ready-to-Wear as Cited by Mothers

Blake (1) and Willett (19). Contrary information was reported by Women's Wear Daily (20) which stated:

Department and specialty stores apparently are not cutting into the chains' lion share of the \$1 billion children's wear market. . . . Marketing research figures that about 51 per cent of the total children's dress units are sold by the giant chains, 28 per cent are sold by department and specialty stores, and 21 per cent by discount stores.

News magazines for the fashion industry (17) indicate department and specialty stores are alarmed by not sharing the estimated 51 per cent of unit sales in the girls' dresses maintained by the chains. Findings on the local market revealed that 51.9 per cent of children's wear were sold by chain store systems, 37.0 per cent by department and specialty stores, and 11.1 per cent by discount and variety stores.

Further investigation was made to determine if education and social levels were influential factors in the type store patronized by the homemakers. Findings indicated the possibility of the store representing a status symbol since mothers with less education and apparently less affluency also shopped primarily at department or specialty stores. However, there appeared to be a slight tendency for the lower status groups to use discount and variety stores to a greater extent than did the mothers with more formal education.

Since satisfactions and dissatisfactions with purchases influence preference and selection of a particular item, homemakers were asked the extent to which garments were returned. Over 80 per cent of the mothers indicated returning unsatisfactory purchases. The designers were asked if direct complaints from the consumers ever come to the plant. Percentage figures indicated that few of the garments returned to the stores because of unsatisfied customers, apparently ever reached the source of creation. Designers were asked to check the sources used in determining style features that would be acceptable to the mothers of the two to six year age group. All the designers referred to customer survey, sale analysis, record of complaint, and observation of fashion trends to various extents. Only 16.7 per cent of the designers seldom referred to analysis of unsatisfactory sales.

When asked about complaints concerning ease allowance, only two designers indicated unsatisfactory ease allowance in the chest area. The majority of the participants stated no complaints in the shoulder and waist areas of the garments. Approximately 72 per cent of the designers indicated using blocks conforming with the suggestive measurement by the federal government. There is a great deal of freedom in following government suggestive measurements. Fashion and

ease give the designer this freedom. Consequently, uniformity of sizes does not exist to a great degree in the ready-to-wear industry.

In an adaptive market there is less need for creativity and consequently designers may be prone to obtain ideas in the easiest physical manner. Therefore, designers were asked to identify resources used in creating children's ready-to-wear. Women's Wear Daily (20) was the most popular source of reference used by designers. Over 50 per cent indicated trade magazines as second preference. Other frequently used sources were movies, plays, television, and California Apparel news. Additional resources given by designers were: New York and Dallas department store windows, current consumer magazines catering to teen-agers and junior sizes, New York Times Sunday edition, clipping service, and French fashion magazines. Croquis sources and the Apparel Mart Museum were least used by the designers.

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 to analyze and compare information concerning factors which influence the design of children's clothing from the manufacturers and retailers viewpoint as related to the mothers' preference of clothing for the preschool girl aged two to six. The specific purposes of this study were to:

- 1) Investigate the availability of ready-to-wear styles in order to evaluate the needs of the growing child as stated by the mother.
- 2) Study the degree of choice the mother can exercise in the selection of the child's garments.
- 3) Examine the physical characteristics that mothers desire in children's dresses.
- 4) Categorize the factors influencing clothing selection by the mothers of children aged two to six years.
- 5) Analyze factors which influence the designers of children's clothing.

Data were collected from 106 mothers of girls enrolled in nursery schools, day-care centers, and kindergartens during the 1968 fall semester. Group A in the study consisted of 70 mothers of preschool girls in Denton, Texas. Group B consisted of 36 mothers of preschool girls in Denison, Texas.

Additional data were obtained from a questionnaire answered by 11 designers of children's clothing. Six retail establishments in Denton, Texas, furnished current information concerning the fall market for girls' apparel. Two kinds of questionnaires and one survey sheet were used to obtain the desired information. The first questionnaire was answered by the mothers of preschool children concerning family and personal background as well as factors influencing clothing preferences and selections for girls aged two to six years. The second questionnaire consisted of a market survey sheet which was used for direct observation in six Denton, Texas, stores to determine what clothing is available for girls two to six years of age. The third source of information was obtained from mail or telephone inquiries to 11 designers of children's clothing for the purpose of determining the factors which influence ready-to-wear designs.

The summary of background information in the questionnaire completed by the mothers indicated the average age of the child in the study was five years. Families ranged in size from one to eight children with the largest percentage having two children per family. The majority of parents were listed in the classification of white collar positions. Over 55 per cent of the fathers were college graduates. However, fewer of the mothers had a college degree than did the fathers.

Over 56 per cent of the total sample was classified as belonging to the upper middle social class group as determined by the McGuire-White (9) Status Index. Social classes were in accord with occupation and educational findings.

The findings of this study indicated that over 60 per cent of the mothers made most of the preschool child's clothing at home. The most frequent reason for this activity was economy as expressed by 31.9 per cent of the mothers. The next most important factor for home sewing was personal pleasure in such activity as stated by 30.6 per cent of the respondents. Relationship between mothers' education and reasons for sewing revealed a tendency for the more highly educated mother to use sewing as a money saving practice.

Over 70 per cent of the homemakers bought most of the children's clothing to save time. The second most important reason for buying ready-to-wear clothing was the inability to sew.

Nearly all the mothers looked for labeling information to some degree when shopping for children's garments. Analysis revealed that mothers wanted more label information than was found on garment tags in the stores. The Z-test values were highly significant. Labeling information concerning

the market. Difference between mothers' preference for pleats and the number found in the local stores were non-significant.

Similar findings were revealed between the mothers' preference of fabric designs and motifs offered by the stores. Although Z-values were non-significant mothers showed a tendency to prefer solid colors and small figured fabric designs. Small plaids and checks were the second preference of the mothers while stores were featuring large plaids or checks. Data analysis revealed the relationship of these groups to be highly significant at the .01 level.

Further investigation of solid colors showed that blue was predominantly available in stores as well as being the most popular with mothers. Second and third choices ranked by the mothers were pink and red respectively. Differences between the mothers' second color choice and that which was available in the stores was found to be significant at the .05 level. Least liked colors for girls dresses were brown, gray, and black. Ninety-three per cent of the mothers indicated no problem in finding color choices for children's clothing.

If these data were representative, the average homemaker paid little attention to brand names when buying

children's clothing. Shoes were the only item in the preschool child's wardrobe purchased according to brand name by over 60 per cent of the mothers. The mothers with more formal education had a greater tendency to buy by brand name or trade mark than did the mothers with less academic training.

Fit and ease of laundering were the most frequently reported factors considered important when buying a preschool child's garment. Wearing quality and price were next in line of importance. The child liking a garment was considered the least important factor. A few tendencies appeared between selected social characteristics of families and prices paid for the preschool girls' dresses; however, price indications could not be related statistically. Over 80 per cent of the mothers never paid over \$10.00 for school dresses while 63.2 per cent indicated a usual price of over \$10.00 for a "Sunday" dress. The largest percentage of mothers stated the popular price for both school and "Sunday" dress to be within the \$5.00 to \$9.99 range. The popular price for play clothes was \$3.00 to \$5.00. Only two mothers indicated paying more than \$10.00 for this item. These findings were in accord with designers' price lines. However, local stores stocked a larger percentage, 59.2 per cent, of dresses less than \$5.00. Prices varied with the type of

store. Dresses under \$5.00 were stocked by the chains, discount, and variety stores. Department and specialty stores concentrated in merchandise ranging from \$5.00 to \$15.00. Garments costing over \$15.00 were found only in specialty shops.

The greatest proportion of mothers bought preschool children's clothing at department stores. Over 80 per cent of the homemakers listed specialty shops as second preferences. Discount and variety stores were least patronized by the mothers. Data reflected some differences between the mothers' preferences and findings on the market. Over 50 per cent of children's ready-to-wear was found in the chain stores. Department stores accounted for only 37 per cent of the total merchandise in the local stores.

While no conclusion can be drawn, a slight association was observed between social status and the type stores patronized by the homemaker. Mothers in the lower status groups tended to use discount and variety stores to a greater extent than did the homemakers with more formal education. Department and specialty stores were patronized irrespective of social status.

In an effort to investigate dissatisfactions with clothing purchases, findings revealed that 52.3 per cent of the

mothers returned unsatisfactory purchases to the stores. Few designers indicated complaints from ease allowance. Approximately 72 per cent of the designers used blocks conforming to the suggestive measurements of the federal government. To determine factors acceptable to the mothers, most designers referred to customer survey, sales analysis, record of complaint, and observation of fashion trends.

In general, the majority of the designers obtained creative ideas from Women's Wear Daily, trade magazines, movies, plays, television, and California Apparel news. Least used resources stated by the designers were croquis sources and the Apparel Mart Museum.

The extent of selection varied with the size and accessibility of the shopping areas. The consumer, therefore, was limited to purchasing goods available in the accessible area.

Suggestions for future study in this field might include geographic comparisons. Greater study in depth of the influence of varied socioeconomic levels may provide useful data.

More explicit questioning of designers would have increased the scope of the study. Personal interviews rather than contacts by mail may have been more effective.

Both educators and retailers could benefit by knowledge of the factors which influence clothing selection for the age group included in this study. Because of the effect that clothing has on the child's social, mental, and psychological growth, greater attention should be directed toward the importance of attractive and suitable clothing for pre-school children.

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