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Teenage Girls' attitudes and Satisfactions

WITH 
CLOTHING



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Summary

Teenage attitudes, satisfactions and practices regarding clothing were studied by interviewing 471 girls from junior and senior high schools in Bryan, College Station, Dallas and Fort Worth. Similar interviews were given to their mothers to compare the two groups in certain instances.

These girls considered being well dressed important. Most of their reasons were social and related to social achievement rather than social contribution. Social achievement reasons were given more frequently by girls in low income groups.

Although quantity of clothing was important, these girls showed more interest in clothing suitable to their activities and becoming to them individually. They wanted to dress similarly to their peers, but they also wanted their clothing to express their own individuality.

Generally, mothers and daughters were in agreement about clothing. Mother-daughter planning contributed to agreement in suitability and amount of clothing.

Nearly two-thirds of the girls indicated they had, on some occasions, felt ill-at-ease because they were inappropriately dressed. Their explanations related more to unsuitable clothing rather than inadequate numbers.

General appearance and becomingness each were named 55 percent of the time when respondents were asked what characteristic of clothing was their greatest concern. It was determined that "proper," "snug" and "becoming" fit were terms used interchangeably by the girls. Color was also cited as an important factor.

Nearly one-half of the sample interviewed indicated they would have fewer garments if they had less money to spend on clothing. Twenty-five percent would have more basic and thus more wearable designs, while the same percentage would not have as many ready-made garments. With liberal money to spend on clothing, 15 percent would not alter their clothing expenditures.

When asked what kind of clothing information they would like, the older, employed girls indicated an interest in style and color, while younger, unemployed girls were concerned about what to wear and how to wear it.

Twenty-five percent of the teenage respondents thought that clothing made a difference in the way they were treated by other people. Of these, one-third felt their clothing made a favorable impression. Most of the girls who perceived clothing making an impression were older or employed.

Borrowing clothing was not a common practice, although it was done under certain circumstances. More girls in the lower income groups were opposed to borrowing while more girls in higher income groups made a practice of it. Those who considered clothing important generally did not like to borrow.

Usually, the qualities that the teenage sample noticed in others' clothing were those which they noticed in their own. General appearance and fit were mentioned by 53 and 52 percent of the group, respectively.

The average number of dresses acquired in the year preceding interviewing was 14. The average for girls acquiring 20 or fewer dresses was 11, while those who acquired more than 20 averaged 30 dresses.

These teenagers participated in numerous activities. Eighty percent were termed "high participants" and engaged in 11 or more activities. All socio-economic variables and most clothing and buying practices were related significantly to the number of activities in which girls participated. Particularly significant to high participation were family income and education of mothers.

Participation in vocational and subject-matter clubs surpassed participation in all other organizations. The latter were equally popular at all income levels, whereas girls from low income groups belonged to vocational clubs more often than did those from high income classes.

Teenage Girls' Attitudes and Satisfactions with Clothing

Phyllis Drake and Joe Ann Standlee*

IT IS KNOWN THAT INDIVIDUAL CLOTHING SUPPLIES vary according to socio-economic factors such as age, income, education, residence, employment and social participation. Relatively little is known, however, about the attitudes which affect clothing practices and satisfactions. The general purpose of this paper is to investigate the attitudes of teenage girls which in part control their clothing practices.

Teenage girls were selected for the study sample for three reasons (1) they traditionally have high clothing needs and desires, (2) the proportion of teenagers and young adults in our population is high and (3) an increasing number of young women are entering the labor force which results in changing clothing needs.

Objectives

Because relatively little research has been done concerning the attitudes governing clothing behavior and the satisfaction derived from specific clothing practices, this research takes the form of an inquiry rather than an experiment with hypothesis to be tested. Only scattered and generally unrelated knowledge is available in this area of study, making a research frame of reference incomplete at best. As knowledge is accumulated, it is hoped that a frame of reference based on the social-psychological theory of social interactionism¹ can be formulated.

Social and cultural activities were divided into those which required a minimum monetary expenditure for clothing or the activity and those which required considerable expenditures for participation. The minimal expenditure activities were engaged in equally by girls of all income groups. Participation in activities requiring expenditures increased in direct proportion to income. Nearly one-fourth of the families represented had incomes of \$4,000 or less, although incomes of the entire sample were above average. Low income girls had fewer dresses

and engaged in fewer activities than did girls from high income families.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine teenage girls' attitudes and satisfactions with their clothing.
2. To relate teenage girls' clothing behavior and buying practice to their clothing attitudes and satisfactions.
3. To relate socio-economic factors to attitudes, satisfaction and practices.

Research Method and Sample Description

This research is one of a series of studies seeking information concerning clothing behavior, practices and problems of selected Texas women and girls. No other studies providing this information have been done in Texas. Studies done elsewhere are not applicable because of regional differences.

Data were collected during the fall of 1960 by the interview method. The survey consisted of 471 white girls of junior and senior high school age selected at random. For purposes of comparison, 448 of their mothers were asked similar questions. Information concerning their socio-economic status was also gathered. Much of this information was cross-tabulated with the clothing behavior and practice responses.

A breakdown of the source and number of schedules administered is given below:

City	Teenagers	Mothers
Bryan	313	293
College Station	81	79
Dallas	42	41
Fort Worth	35	35
TOTAL	471	448

To determine the significance of relationship among the socio-economic factors (independent variables) and clothing practices and behavior (dependent variables), the chi-square test² was used. A

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¹For further reference see Arnold M. Rose "A Systematic Summary of Symbolic Interaction Theory" and Georgy P. Stone, "Appearance and Self" in Rose, Arnold M., *Human Behavior and Social Processes*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1962.

²Hagood, Margaret Jarman and Daniel O. Price, *Statistics for Sociologists*, New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1952.

Fisher, Ronald A. and Frank Yates, *Statistical Tables for Biological Agricultural and Medical Research*, Habner Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1957.

probability of less than .05 is regarded as statistically significant, .10 as a strong trend and .20 as a broad trend.

Attitudes Toward Clothing

Importance of Being Well Dressed

Teenage girls from both sample areas were asked to rate on a 5 point Hedonic scale how important they considered being well dressed. Nearly two-thirds of these girls gave reasons social in character. Of these, 39 percent gave reasons related to social achievement. They said that the impression made and consequent acceptance by others is affected by clothing and appearance. Social achievement reasons were given more often by girls in the lower income groups.

Being well dressed gave one-fourth of the girls in the sample a feeling of confidence and security in social situations. Girls in the higher income groups gave these reasons most often.

Reasons of personality and personal qualities were given by 15 percent. They said personality and character were reflected in clothing and appearance but were more important than clothing itself. Another 15 percent gave reasons relating to "general appearance."³ They believed it important to be neat, clean, dressed appropriately for the occasion or to conform to the way others dressed.

The concept of importance of being well dressed was a dependent variable in the analysis of importance girls attach to clothing. It was positively and statistically related to the age of the girl and the frequency of which she planned clothing acquisitions with her mother. The number of sources of information about clothing used by teenagers was highly significant and in direct proportion to their opinions of the importance of clothing.

Suitability and Number of Garments

Suitability had two important aspects—becomingness to the girls' physical and psychological characteristics and appropriateness for activities. When asked if teenage clothing was considered "mostly suitable" for their activities, 87 percent of the girls said yes. Some of the individual analyses indicated that teenagers believed clothing satisfaction could be attained through the number of garments owned. However, from the overall analysis, suitability for personal needs was the feature most of the girls desired.

The sample was equally divided between those girls who thought they had enough clothing and

those who thought they needed more. When number of garments was related to suitability, it was evident that the girls generally did not distinguish between the ideas of suitable wardrobes and large wardrobes.

In a study of minimum college wardrobes by Thompson and Edmonds (6) it was reported that freshman girls often had large and varied wardrobes which resulted in items which were seldom, if ever worn. A problem for many of these college girls was selection of appropriate clothing, particularly for social or other "dress-up" occasions. The high school sample from Texas showed that teenage girls are also confronted with problems of suitability.

Mother-daughter planning contributed to satisfaction related to both suitability and amount of clothing. Teenagers reported less satisfaction with the number of garments owned when several garments were planned concurrently. They did not relate number of coordinated garments planned to suitability, but mothers said frequent planning together resulted in more suitable clothing. Teenagers were generally better satisfied with the suitability and amount of their clothing if there was agreement with their mothers about it. There was a trend for teenagers to more often feel unsuitably dressed when three or four garments were discussed with their mothers. Much discussion before buying could be related to disagreement between mother and daughter.

Teenagers were about equally satisfied with suitability of their clothing if decisions were made by their mothers, by themselves or jointly. Their satisfaction dropped abruptly if other people made clothing decisions for them. In their study of teenage girls' practices and preferences in the selection of blouses, skirts, dresses and sweaters, Dickins and Ferguson (7) found girls better satisfied if they made clothing decisions themselves.

Appropriateness of Clothing for Occasion

Most girls have had the unpleasant experience of feeling ill-at-ease on some occasion because of their dress. Nearly two-thirds of the girls studied had felt inappropriately dressed, but only 28 percent of the mothers interviewed said their teenage daughters had felt this way.

In explaining how this experience might have been prevented, half the teenagers said "if I had known what others were wearing," and over a third said "if I had worn a different type of clothing and accessories," they would not have felt ill-at-ease. These statements indicate their quest for the knowledge necessary for choosing clothing suitable to their activities and for peer approval. Mothers made similar comments such as "they didn't have the right clothes," "if their clothing had been more appropriate

³General appearance refers to neatness and cleanliness of person and clothing; to careful selection of accessories and congruity in design yielding harmony in costume and idea.

for the occasion (the season)" or "more becoming to my daughter." Some simply said "she needs more clothing."

When the girls who were employed part-time were compared to those who were not employed, it was found that one-third more of the part-time employees had felt inappropriately dressed at some time. Many of the employed girls were distributive education students and in their work experiences were put into new, unfamiliar situations and consequently were not confident of being appropriately dressed. It was not known if the employed girls were from lower income families and if they anticipated further vocational, business or college training. Socio-economic factors other than their employment were not significantly associated with teenagers' responses. Even with clothing that was considered suitable for occasions, nearly two-thirds of all teenage girls studied reported feeling incorrectly dressed.

Clothing Factors of Most Concern to Teenagers

Responses to the question "what clothing factors are of most concern," could be assigned to four meaningful categories. "General appearance" and "becomingness"⁴ were each named by about 55 percent of the girls. To these girls, becoming fit was synonymous with "proper" or "snug" fit. The location of hemline was important. Similarly Dickins and Ferguson (7) found that fit, becomingness and color were rated the most important clothing features.

Nineteen percent of the teenage girls responded with "acceptable" as the quality most desired. This meant selecting a suitable design for the occasion and current fashion trend and dressing in a manner acceptable to peers. Although the teenage girls wanted to dress similarly to their contemporaries, they still desired clothing which expressed their individuality. Clothing must "conform," but at the same time it must be "just right" for the individual girl.

Color was named by 21 percent as the most desired quality of clothing. Their answers emphasized the ideas of "harmonizing or matching," "becoming" and a "variety" of colors. Even though a particular color might be becoming, the sample still liked to wear a variety of colors.

Management of Varying Clothing Allowances

The teenage girls were asked to consider how they would manage if they had more money or less money to spend on clothing.⁵ Their responses appeared thoughtful and were grouped into four or five categories. More than one answer could be given to this question.

⁴"Becomingness" refers to the fit of garments and to flattering styles to their personal characteristics.

With less money, nearly one-half would simply have fewer clothes. Twenty-five percent would have dresses which were basic in style and could be adapted to many occasions. Nearly one-fourth would make their own clothing or have garments made rather than buying all ready-made items. Eleven percent would take better care of existing clothes, thus maintaining a good appearance and increasing longevity of garments.

It is interesting to note that with liberal money to spend, 15 percent would not alter their clothing expenditures. Forty-one percent would buy more clothing and 39 percent a greater variety. More expensive ready-made clothing and more expensive fabrics for home sewing would be purchased by 26 percent of the sample. Others mentioned choosing basic colors and designs, having more accessories and being less concerned about purchase price.

Desired Clothing Information

The question was asked, "What would you like to learn about clothing if you had an opportunity to attend a modeling or charm school?" More than one answer could be given. Fifty-five percent said they wanted to learn more about styles and designs becoming to the individual. Responses concerning color selection were given by 20 percent. One-fourth wanted to learn about coordinating colors, articles of clothing and accessories, thus achieving interest and variety in small wardrobes. One-fourth wanted to learn what was appropriate apparel for different occasions. How to "wear" clothes was sought by 18 percent. Most girls were conscious that there is a "knack" to wearing clothes smartly. Other factors mentioned were personal grooming and posture, care of clothing and looking smart on a budget.

All responses to this question were related significantly to both age and employment. Both older and employed girls were more interested in style and color while younger and unemployed girls were more interested in what to wear, how to wear clothes and in wardrobe coordination.

Clothing As Related to Teenage Girls' Social Interactions

Clothing Related to Social Acceptance

Teenagers were asked if they thought their clothing affected the way they were treated by other people. One-fourth reported their clothing made a difference in this respect. Of these, one-third believed their clothing made a favorable impression. The remainder felt that an unfavorable impression was made. The three most frequently mentioned factors contributing to this unfavorable impression were girls feeling that other people had nicer, more expensive clothes, their own general appearance was

Felt clothes made a difference

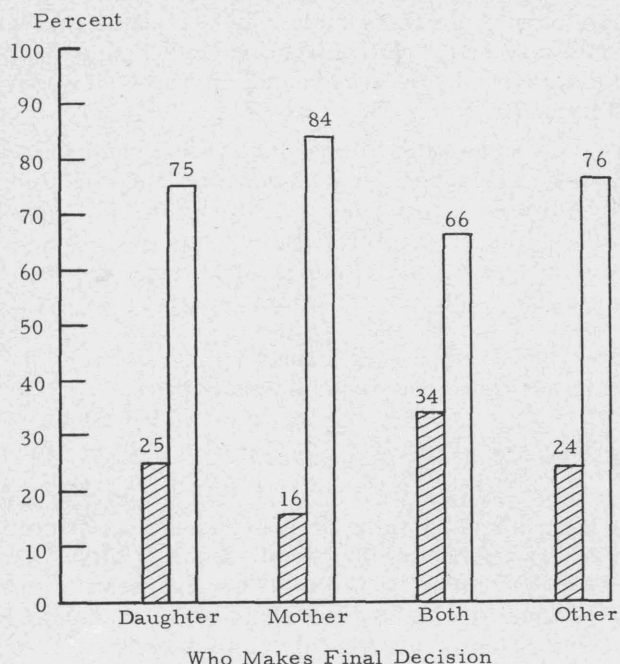


Figure 1.

not as good as the other person's and not liking the specific dress they were wearing. Other factors also mentioned which made a difference were conspicuous or unbecoming colors, clothing which was not as attractive as the other person's and improper fit.

Older and employed girls were more likely to feel that clothes made a difference in the way they were treated by others. Generally, these girls had a greater opportunity to be away from home and school, and, consequently, were judged more often by strangers on the basis of appearance.

Similarly, girls whose mothers were employed reported a difference in manner of treatment more often than did daughters of unemployed mothers. It may be that these girls acquired this attitude from their mothers without having experienced it themselves. Girls who thought their clothing suitable and adequate in number seldom thought their clothing made a difference in the way they were treated by others.

It was hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between mothers making the final clothing decisions and daughters feeling that clothing made a difference in the way they were treated by other people. In cross-tabulating, no distinction was found in the favorable or unfavorable effects of the daughters' clothing. Since two-thirds of the girls felt that the effect was unfavorable, regardless

of the clothing decision-maker, the data can be interpreted that teenagers felt their clothing made little difference in the treatment received from others when their mothers made the final decision, Figure 1. They may have had more confidence in their mothers' decisions than they were willing to admit.

Attitudes and Practices Related to Borrowing

It was expected that the practice of borrowing clothing would be prevalent. Borrowing could be a means of adding to a wardrobe that a girl might consider inadequate in number or unsuitable in some respect. It was believed borrowing would also be related to feeling inappropriately dressed, to income class and total number of activities.

Over one-half of the teenagers said they did not like to borrow clothing or accessories. One-third said they did not mind borrowing under certain circumstances such as from other family members "if really necessary." Thirteen percent said they did not mind borrowing and made it a practice. A few never had borrowed clothing.

Dickins and Ferguson (7) reported 11 percent of white urban girls shared dresses, blouses, skirts and sweaters with other girls, their mothers or both. The authors reported that the pattern was to share certain garments but not all.

Over one-half of the sample, regardless of their satisfaction with the amount of clothing owned, did not like to borrow clothing. Whether their clothes were suitable or unsuitable, they were divided about equally for and against borrowing. Their feelings of being inappropriately dressed were not associated with their attitudes toward borrowing.

"Don't like to borrow" was positively related to lower income groups while, "make a practice of it" and "don't mind borrowing if necessary" were positively related to higher income groups. Girls from lower income families appeared reluctant to borrow under most circumstances. One explanation is that the girls from lower income groups participated in fewer activities. They may have avoided activities for which they did not have proper clothing. Also, the higher income groups may not have been confronted with borrowing, whereas the lower income groups had been and they did not like the idea. This may be related to pride of personal possessions. The fewer things a person owns, the more important they are.

Teenagers from higher income families were more in favor of borrowing items to complete or supplement outfits they already had. Because they could afford the necessary and frequently used garments or accessories, they apparently were less reluctant to borrow seldom-used garments or accessories, such as formal gowns. Their willingness to borrow clothing items may also be related to their

ability to replace damaged, borrowed items with those of similar quality. When comparing attitudes toward borrowing and participation in activities it was found that 62 percent of those participating in 10 or less activities did not like to borrow. Girls participating in 11 or more activities were equally divided in their attitudes toward borrowing.

Those who considered clothing important did not like to borrow but, under limiting circumstances were more likely to than were the girls who considered clothing unimportant. The former group had a negative attitude toward borrowing while the latter group did not mind it and, consequently, were more likely to practice borrowing. The girls who did not consider clothing was important may have felt less responsibility for the care of others' clothing.

Teenagers who had problems in buying clothing practiced borrowing more than those with few problems. The latter were found to be better satisfied with their own clothing which probably decreased their desire or need to borrow.

Awareness of Others' Clothing

The factors the teenage sample noticed about others' clothing were often similar to those they were most particular about regarding their own clothing. The general appearance of others' clothing was mentioned by 53 percent of the teenage girls. Selection and combination of fabrics, and congruity of designs and accessories were also noticed in others' clothing.

Forty-three percent named color aspects such as becomingness to the wearer and coordination. These color aspects were similar to those the respondents were particular about in their own clothing. Forty-two percent noticed the fit of others' clothing.

Other factors the teenage girls noticed were fashionableness and design of garment (about 20 percent), skirt length (16 percent) and suitability to occasion (12 percent). Newness, number of garments and quality of fabrics and designs were the economic aspects of clothing 5 percent of the sample said they noticed about others' clothing.

Number and Cost of Dresses Acquired

Generally, it is assumed that teenage girls require and have many dresses. When asked how many were acquired the previous year, the average number reported was 14. The average was high because a few girls had acquired a large number; 78 girls or 16.6 percent had added over 20 dresses. The number acquired for each girl ranged from one to "about a hundred." Thirty-two girls had purchased 8 or 10 dresses. The average number purchased by girls acquiring 20 or fewer dresses was 11, while for those with over 20 new acquisitions, the average was nearly three times as many—30 dresses. Only occasionally

did a girl report acquiring more than 40 dresses. An appreciable number (57.1 percent) of the acquired dresses were made at home rather than ready-made.

The age of the girls' mothers and the composition of the household were related significantly to the number of dresses the teenager acquired only to the extent that a broad trend was identified. The family's income was highly significantly related to the number of dresses purchased, while the price paid for these dresses was highly related to income, education of the mother and age of the teenage girl.

How often a mother and daughter planned together for clothing and the number of sources of clothing information used were highly significant to an analysis of total number and cost of dresses acquired. The price of casual dresses was most important to the number of garments purchased, whereas the number of dresses purchased and number of activities in which the girls participated were significantly related to the purchase price. The importance the girl attached to being well dressed was only related slightly to the total number of dresses she acquired.

More socio-economic factors were associated with the cost of dresses than with either the total number or the number purchased. As in other questions, the relationship of education to cost of dresses was similar to that of income. The influence of size and composition of household, which were moderately significant, could also be caused by income rather than these factors themselves. As expected, the older girls usually paid \$10 or more for dresses.

In other responses, teenagers sometimes seemed to ignore economic considerations. However, when considering number of dresses purchased and cost of dresses, their responses were extremely significant. Most girls in the two lowest income classes purchased only a minimum number of dresses. Most teenagers with parents in the \$6,000 to \$9,999 income level reported purchasing 6 to 12 dresses, considerably more than minimal. When mothers and girls considered being well dressed important, they agreed that the girls had more dresses in their wardrobes. Mothers, but not their daughters, said more dresses were purchased when clothing was considered important.

Frequent cooperative planning was statistically related to purchase price and the number and kinds of information sources used were more likely associated with number and cost of dresses than other buying factors. There was a trend for income to be associated with mothers' opinions of frequency of planning. About three-fourths reported frequent planning when income was \$4,000 and over but only half at the under \$4,000 income level.

The total number of dresses acquired, but not the number purchased, was higher when many in-

formation sources were used. The number of sources used, as reported by teenage girls, was positively associated to family income.

When two to four information sources were used, teenagers reported a substantial increase in the number of dresses costing \$10 or more. The kinds of information used were associated with number and cost of purchased dresses but not to the total number acquired.

Clothing Related to Teenage Girls' Participation in Activities

Frequency of Participation

The total sample of teenage girls listed frequent participation in extracurricular activities (Table 1). Almost all indicated participation in some kind of church or religious activity. Although 97 percent designated church attendance, this may not be a realistic figure. All participated in more than one of the social and cultural activities listed. Participation in other activity groups varied with interest and income. The kinds of activities were similar to those cited in the Stone and Ryan studies (1), (8).

Most girls (80 percent) were termed "high participants" and engaged in 11 or more activities. Only one-fifth were "low participants" taking part in 10 or fewer activities. Age was positively related to high participation.

Socio-economic Factors Related to Participation

All socio-economic variables and most clothing and buying practices were significantly related to

the number of activities in which the girls participated. Among these, mothers' education, family income, age of teenager and her employment were extremely significant.

More employed girls than unemployed engaged in 11 or more activities. The total sample was in junior or senior high school; yet 30 percent (143) were employed part-time and four were employed full-time. These teenage girls probably possessed unusual initiative and energy to work, attend school and participate in more activities than non workers. As previously mentioned, some were distributive education students who worked part-time in local businesses, allowing them to receive school credit while working for pay.

Girls from large families engaged in fewer activities than those from smaller families. Teenage girls from families with children of varied ages participated in fewer activities. Income may be positively related to low participation in both types of family structure. Large families were generally in the low income group and were more likely to be heterogeneous in composition and age. Many teenage activities require money, and in large families with limited incomes, participation was limited. Although there was greater participation when mothers were employed, this did not appear to be because of increased income as there was not a significant association between these two factors.

Income Related to Kinds of Activities

Girls in all income groups were equal church participants. Although half as many of the low income girls attended Sunday School as compared to the three higher income groups, youth fellowship

TABLE 1. ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION OF 471 GIRLS

Activity	Percent participating	Activity	Percent participating
Church and Religious Organizations		Social and Cultural	
Church attendance	97	Plays, concerts, lectures	66
Sunday school	54	Movies	97
Youth organizations	77	Dances	78
Musical	18	Dates	66
		Visit friends	99
Other Organizations		Have guest at home	97
Performing arts	28	Dine out	78
Drill team, pep squad, etc.	15	Parties and other	3
Vocational clubs — FHA, FTA, FN	28		
Subject-matter clubs	23	Sports—Participate	
Scouts	8	Camping, bicycling, horseback riding	19
Student government	5	Water sports	62
Other	2	Bowling	29
		Tennis, badminton	28
Private Instruction in Performing Arts		Ballgames	33
Music — instrument and voice	15	Skating	9
Dancing	5	Golf and other	10
Speech and dramatics	1		
Modeling	3	Sports—Attend	
Other	3	Football	92
		Basketball, volleyball	51
		Baseball	34
		Rodeos, horse shows	36
		Other	4

was attended more often by the girls in the \$10,000 and over group. Except for higher participation in church musical activities by girls in the \$4,000 to \$5,999 group, there was little difference in participation in other church youth activities and organizations by girls of varying incomes.

Vocational clubs was listed second to church organizations. Girls in the under \$4,000 income group belonged to vocational clubs more often than did those in the higher groups. Subject-matter clubs were equally popular at all income levels. Participation in subject-matter and vocational clubs greatly surpassed participation in other organizations. Girls in the \$4,000 to \$5,999 income group were most active in girls' service groups.

Social and cultural activities were divided into two classifications; those which required a minimum expenditure of money for the activity or necessary clothing and those which required considerable expenditures. Movies, visiting friends and having guests at home required minimum expenditures. Girls in all income groups engaged in these activities equally. Activities requiring considerable expenditures were plays, concerts, lectures, dances, dating and dining out. "High expenditure activities" were participated in more often by girls in the higher income groups.

Of 115 girls who received private instructions in the performing arts, only eight were from families with incomes of \$4,000 or less. Girls from the low income families participated in musical, vocational and subject-matter organizations at school.

The sample participated in and attended a variety of sport activities. Nearly two-thirds of the teenage girls frequently engaged in water sports. Participation in water sports increased with income. Low income girls were likely to participate in ball-games more often than were higher income girls. Participation in all other sport activities was not related to income.

The majority in each income group attended football games. Basketball games were attended more often and baseball games less often as income increased. Low income girls attended rodeos more often than did girls in income groups of \$4,000 or more.

Low income girls were high participants in activities but were financially limited in the kinds of activities in which they could participate. Generally, these activities could not require special clothing such as swimming or gymnasium costumes and dancing dresses. Further study is required to identify specific clothing needs of lower income girls.

Attitudes Toward Clothing and Participation

Most clothing and buying practices were significantly related to the number of activities in which the girls participated. High participants believed

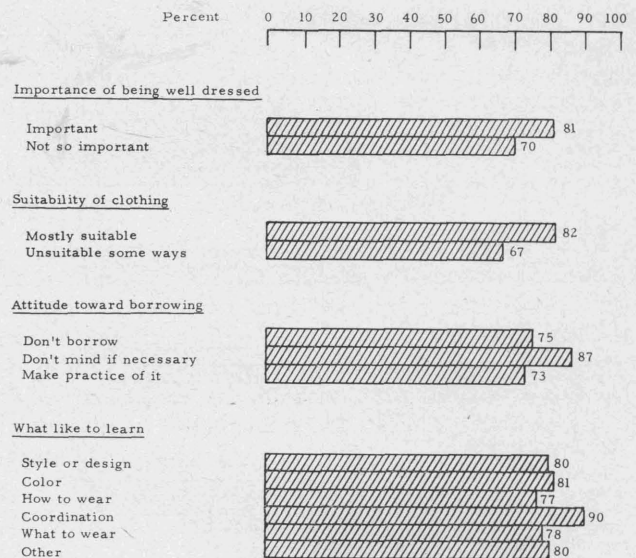


Figure 2.

clothing important and felt satisfaction with the suitability of their clothing, Figure 2. The girls did not indicate that the number of garments owned was related to their frequency of participation in activities. Results in indirect questioning techniques such as open-end questions and story completion items showed that the amount of clothing was significantly related to participation in activities. However, because attitudes are difficult to measure reliably by direct questions, these indirect techniques may be more accurate. The sample indicated their real concern was with clothing appropriate for their activities, becoming to them individually and acceptable to their contemporaries.

It has been stated that 55 percent of the teenage girls wanted to learn how to choose clothing suited to themselves. Frequency distribution of number of activities participated in and an interest in appropriate clothing further emphasized this desire. They were concerned with achieving a "finished" effect in a costume. They also related participation in activities to "mixing and matching" clothing, thus increasing garment versatility. Low activity-participants wanted help in learning what to wear for different occasions and how to wear clothes effectively.

Mother-Daughter Planning Related to Participation

The number of garments, frequency and harmony of mother-daughter planning were directly related to the girls' high participation in activities, Figure 3. Only small differences in participation were found when clothing decisions were made by teenagers, mothers or jointly. An understanding mother-daughter relationship seemed to be an advantage. High participants used a greater number of information sources about clothing. Number of information sources used by the daughters was not related to the mothers' education and family income.

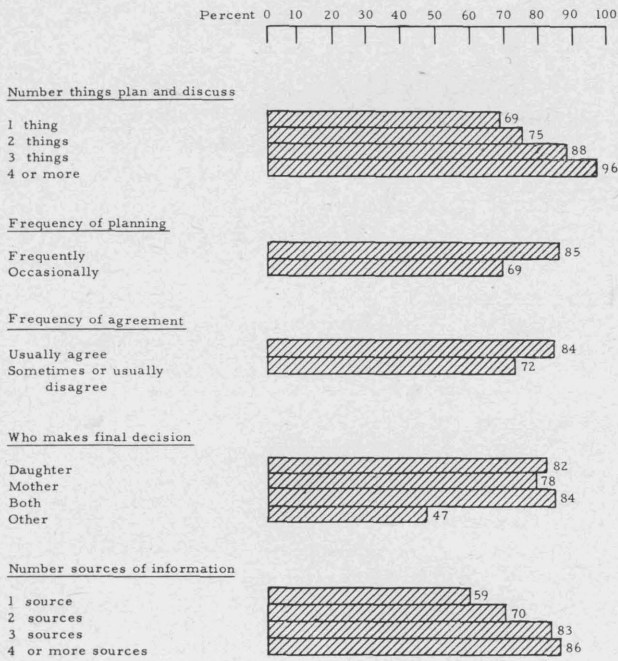


Figure 3.

Number and Cost of Dresses Related to Frequency of Participation

Number of dresses was used as an indicator of the approximate number of garments owned. When girls owned a minimum number of dresses, they tended to participate in fewer activities.

It was expected that cost of dresses would be positively related to high participation, since participation was dependent upon income. Although there was a trend for number of dresses purchased to be related to participation, it was probably because a low percentage of all acquired dresses were home-sewn.

Implications

The results of this survey reveal some important implications for educators and manufacturers of teenage girls' clothing.

For educators:

1. The greatest need indicated by all girls studied was in the selection and use of clothing. This is particularly true for girls from low income (below \$4,000) families who require assistance in selecting becoming clothing which allows them appropriate dress for participation in a variety of social activities.
2. Training in teenage clothing needs is desirable for mothers as well as daughters. Survey results showed that daughters derived greater satisfaction from clothing when there was frequent agreement with their mothers.

Teenagers had confidence in their mothers' opinions and decisions. Frequent mother-daughter planning contributed much to this confidence and satisfaction.

3. When mothers gave their daughters guidance and responsibility at an early age (pre-teens and early teens), teenage girls were more likely to feel satisfaction and confidence with their clothing. It is not illogical to suppose that if clothing training came early in school the results would be similar.

For manufacturers of teenage girls' clothing:

1. The greatest problems in buying clothing, especially dresses, for teenage girls related to fit, particularly of waistlines and hemlines. Dress designs could better lend themselves to the small waistlines common to teenage girls and to easy alteration. Waistline seams adjustable to long or short waist lengths are needed. Hemlines need to be easily adjustable for short or tall girls and rapid growth.
2. Very small or large sizes in designs suited to teenage girls were also problems. Small sizes are often too child-like and large sizes too mature in design to appeal to teenage tastes. The "teenage look" in these two size extremes would find a ready market.
3. There is demand for low cost, good quality and attractive clothing adaptable to the wide variety of teenage activities. Teenagers want clothing which conforms to the way their group dresses but which also expresses their own individual personalities and is suitable to a variety of occasions.
4. Advertising and other merchandising methods which provide suggestions and information about coordinating colors and articles of clothing is highly acceptable to the teenage buyer. Teenagers want to achieve a well planned, coordinated look and are alert to a variety of sources of information that helps them accomplish this.

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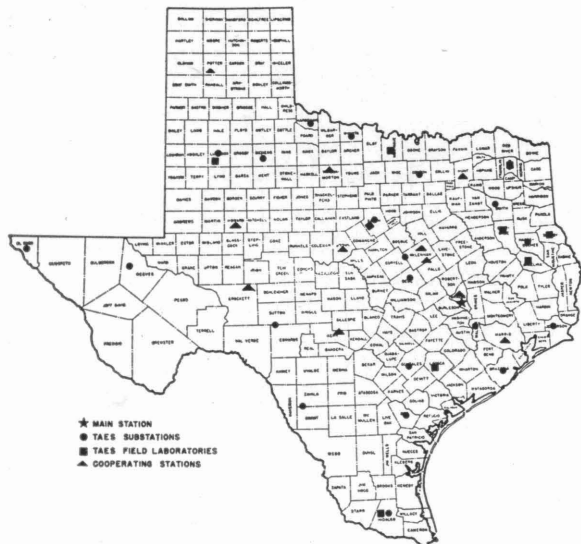
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Location of field research units of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and cooperating agencies

State-wide Research



The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station is the public agricultural research agency of the State of Texas, and is one of the parts of Texas A&M University.

OPERATION

IN THE MAIN STATION, with headquarters at College Station, are 13 subject-matter departments, 3 service departments, 3 regulatory services and the administrative staff. Located out in the major agricultural areas of Texas are 20 substations and 10 field laboratories. In addition, there are 13 cooperating stations owned by other agencies. Cooperating agencies include the Texas Forest Service, Game and Fish Commission of Texas, Texas Prison System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, University of Texas, Texas Technological College, Texas College of Arts and Industries and the King Ranch. Some experiments are conducted on farms and ranches and in rural homes.

ORGANIZATION

THE TEXAS STATION is conducting about 450 active research projects, grouped in 25 programs, which include all phases of agriculture in Texas. Among these are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Conservation and improvement of soil | Beef cattle |
| Conservation and use of water | Dairy cattle |
| Grasses and legumes | Sheep and goats |
| Grain crops | Swine |
| Cotton and other fiber crops | Chickens and turkeys |
| Vegetable crops | Animal diseases and parasites |
| Citrus and other subtropical fruits | Fish and game |
| Fruits and nuts | Farm and ranch engineering |
| Oil seed crops | Farm and ranch business |
| Ornamental plants | Marketing agricultural products |
| Brush and weeds | Rural home economics |
| Insects | Rural agricultural economics |
| | Plant diseases |

Two additional programs are maintenance and upkeep, and central services.

Research results are carried to Texas farmers, ranchmen and homemakers by county agents and specialists of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH seeks the WHATS, the WHYS, the WHENS, the WHEREs and the HOWS of hundreds of problems which confront operators of farms and ranches, and the many industries depending on or serving agriculture. Workers of the Main Station and the field units of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station seek diligently to find solutions to these problems.

Today's Research Is Tomorrow's Progress