

ACCEPTANCE OF EASY-CARE DRESSES
AND CLEANING METHODS USED
BY ELDERLY WOMEN

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant accomplishments in this century has been the achievement of long life for most Americans. The number of people classified as elderly has increased at phenomenal rates. Bengston (1975) reported that in 1900 there were 3.1 million elderly people in the U.S. The 1970 census figures showed this age group had increased to 22 million; one out of every 10 in the population was elderly. While the total U.S. population increased 12 percent between 1960 and 1970, the elderly population increased 24 percent. The number of the elderly above age 85 increased by almost 50 percent, and these are the people that need the most services, assistance, and care. Based on present death rates, the elderly population is expected to increase to 29 million by the year 2000 (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973).

Medical advances, technological advances that have relieved people of hard labor, and improved environmental conditions have all contributed to the reduction in an early death rate. Consequently, the increasing elderly population has found society unprepared to meet its needs and deal effectively with its problems (Martin, 1972).

Since the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, the nation has focused much attention on the problems of the elderly. Research to date has focused on housing, nutrition, health, and on psychological,

economic and social problems. Most of the research relating to clothing was conducted during the 1960's and focused on surveys to determine fitting problems, style preferences, purchasing habits, attitudes and market offerings. Very few studies dealt with care practices for clothing. Ryan (1966) indicated that this is an area where information is needed. There is almost no reliable information on differences between elderly women and younger individuals in the care of garments.

An informal survey made by the researcher in Stillwater indicated a very large percentage of ready made clothing for elderly women is made of easy-care fabrics. Do the women purchase easy-care apparel? If so, do they use the cleaning practices recommended for easy-care fabrics, or do they continue to use cleaning practices formed in earlier years? Answers to these questions may have implication for those in teaching or extension especially if the study indicates that these women lack fundamental knowledge of characteristics of easy-care apparel and the care practices associated with it. A study in this area is needed to update existing research.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree of acceptance of easy-care dresses by elderly women and the cleaning methods used. Specific objectives were to:

1. determine the proportion of easy-care dresses owned by elderly women
2. determine dissatisfactions with easy-care dresses of these women

3. determine the method of cleaning dresses used by the elderly women
4. examine the hypothesis that the method of cleaning (hand wash, machine wash, or dry clean) easy-care dresses will be independent of:
 - (a) clothing interest
 - (b) social participation
 - (c) health
 - (d) socio-economic level
 - (e) age
 - (f) education
 - (g) living arrangement
5. examine the hypothesis that the proportion of easy-care dresses owned will be independent of:
 - (a) clothing interest
 - (b) social participation
 - (c) health
 - (d) socio-economic level
 - (e) age
 - (f) education
 - (g) living arrangement

Definition of Terms

The following are definitions of terms as used in this study:

Easy-care: A term used for garments "made of fabrics, which because of their fiber content and/or finish retain their freshness during wear, and with proper home laundry require no starching and little

or no ironing" (Dixon, 1968, p. 4).

Wash-and-wear: A finish applied to a fabric so that it resists wrinkles and mussiness during wearing, retains ironed-in formations, and, after washing, shows a minimum of evidence of wash-wrinkling to the extent that it can almost be worn immediately after drying without pressing (Labarthe, 1975, p. 317).

Permanent press: The treatment of a shaped garment with a finish so that after wearing and washing, it will return to the pre-set shape (Abrahams, 1971, p. 17).

Elderly: People who are 60 years of age and older.

Procedure

A questionnaire was developed to obtain information on acceptance of easy-care dresses, cleaning methods used, and background of the participants. Data were obtained through personal interviews with 90 women 60 years of age and older living in Stillwater, July-August, 1975. Data were tabulated and analyzed using percentages and comparisons were made using the chi-square and the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance.

Limitations

Participants in the study were limited to women 60 years of age and over living in their own homes in Stillwater. Those residing in nursing or retirement homes were not included in the collection of data. The only garment from the wardrobe included in the study was dresses.

Organization of the Study

The report of this study is organized into five chapters.

Chapter I has presented the problem, purpose and objectives, definition of terms, procedure, limitations of the study, and organization of the study.

In Chapter II a review of the literature relevant to the study is presented.

Chapter III includes the procedure used in developing and conducting the study.

Chapter IV includes the findings and an analysis of the data obtained through interviews with the 90 elderly women.

The summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Clothing is an important part in the lives of all people. Unfortunately, even though many of the elderly have an interest in clothing, not enough attention has been focused on their clothing problems (Baker, 1969). As increasing numbers look forward to many more years of productive life, they may need help with their clothing problems.

Problems of the Elderly

Three areas in which the elderly encounter problems that may affect clothing decisions in various ways are economic, social-psychological, and health. Suggestions have been proposed as possible solutions for clothing decisions affected by these problems.

Economic Problems

As a group the elderly compose 16 percent of the nation's 26 million poor (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973). Inadequate economic arrangements frequently occur with the onset of retirement and a decrease in income.

One study (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973) served to illustrate the economic position of couples and individuals living alone or with nonrelatives in 1971. Of the couples,

17 percent averaged incomes of \$10,000 or more, 32 percent had incomes between \$5,000-10,000, and almost one couple in five received under \$3,000 a year, an average of \$58 weekly. Of the individuals living alone or with nonrelatives, 87 percent received under \$5,000. Of these, almost 22 percent had incomes below the poverty threshold for 1971.

The four primary sources of income for the elderly in the U.S. are Social Security benefits, pensions, public welfare programs, and wages. Of these the most common source is Social Security (Rich and Gilmore, 1969, p. 113). Unfortunately these retirement benefits in many cases are not sufficient.

Maddox (1971) stated:

Since retirement benefits are determined primarily or exclusively by income during the working years, the relative economic position of the retired inevitably declines in an economy characterized by expansion and inflation. Consequently, on the average, the income of retired individuals and couples is less than half that of younger persons (Preface).

Economists do not predict much of an improvement in the situation. It is estimated that the gap between the incomes of the young and the old will widen rather than narrow in the upcoming years and the elderly will be confronted with even more serious problems because of their low incomes (Rich and Gilmore, 1969, p. 118).

Itzin (1970, p. 151) cited low incomes, less education than that of younger individuals, and the scarcity of assets as factors contributing to the low socio-economic status of the elderly.

The percentage of the elderly in the labor force has declined steadily since 1900, as the U.S. economy has shifted from agricultural to industrial. Sixty-eight percent of elderly men had jobs in 1900

(Rich and Gilmore, 1969, p. 114). By 1972, only one elderly man in four was regularly employed, whereas for older women the rate increased from one in twelve to one in ten. This is only 16 percent of all elderly people, or 3.4 percent of the total U.S. labor force. Still, large proportions of these people are in low-paying jobs (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973). Rich and Gilmore (1969, p. 115) gave several reasons for the decline in the number of employed elderly. Few today are self-employed as was previously possible. Many companies have compulsory retirement policies. Those people who have Social Security feel it will supply an adequate income so they can retire earlier.

The following factors may cause special problems for the elderly.

(1) Marketing today is focused on serving younger age groups in such consumer goods as clothing, for example; (2) Price levels continue to spiral due to inflation; (3) Continual changes in goods and services offer new and bewildering choices; (4) Many of the old rules and customs do not apply today in the help that may be expected from relatives and neighbors, in changes for participation in community social life, and in reliance on security patterns. Consumer education programs need to be designed to meet the needs of the elderly (Wolgamot, 1971, p. 657).

Limited incomes also result in the elderly spending proportionately more for essentials such as food, housing and medical expenses, and less for other items and services (Rich and Gilmore, 1969, p. 120). Both the actual and the relative amounts spent on clothing decline for the elderly. "For those under sixty-five, 10.9 to 12.3 percent of the total budget is spent on clothing, but this drops to 8.8 percent for those sixty-five and to 7.8 percent for those over seventy-five" (Ryan, 1966, p. 311).

The elderly are seldom able to afford nor do they need large quantities of garments; yet, they do not want the garments they have to

make them appear stale and out-of-date (Douty, 1972). Several suggestions have been made to assist those elderly on limited incomes in adjusting to the problems in clothing purchases and selection. First, in order to make wise decisions, the elderly need to be made aware of their individual limitations and to have adequate information concerning the clothing to be chosen. For example, those with physical limitations need to know features of ready-mades that will increase the garment's comfort and utility (Hoffman, 1973). Since the price of clothing is often a deterrent for the elderly, Douty (1972) has suggested that the market needs pleasing garments available at both low and high prices. Free clothing may be a source some can utilize (Hoffman, 1973). The elderly may also be experiencing changes in their life styles and personal needs. Many move into smaller residences and do not want to bother as much with clothes. Therefore, Galbraith (1972) has recommended clothes that are easy-care and that require little expense for care as being the most desirable.

Social-Psychological Problems

Perhaps the biggest obstacle the elderly encounter is the stereotyped notion society has about them as a group.

That we commonly stereotype the aged . . . needs little documentation. It is customary to retire persons at age 65, to discard their knowledge and skills often acquired over a period of 40 to 50 years, to deny that they have anything to contribute and any capacities to nurture and develop. We tell them in many ways that they should desert the battlefield of action and withdraw from the ranks of younger human beings . . . they should be satisfied with inadequate economic resources and with wornout clothes, houses and cars; . . . their opinions are worthless; and that they should accept without a whimper the final descent into the end of life (Montgomery, 1973, p. 7).

Montgomery further added that because of this attitude, the elderly constitute the largest deprived group in America in terms of income, health care, nutrition, sex, housing, transportation, acceptance, dignity and spiritual well-being. They are regarded as having no further need for self-actualization and no capacity to contribute to the rest of the world.

Stereotyping affects the way people act. Neugarten (1971) stated:

Stereotypes about the . . . old influence our behavior in subtle ways. They affect our perception of appropriate and inappropriate behavior in ourselves and in other persons. They constrain our attitudes and our actions. They make it difficult to improve relationships among persons of various ages. While the stereotyping of any age group is full of pitfalls, we are just now beginning to realize that stereotypes about aging and the aged create a particularly complex set of problems (p. 46).

Stereotyping is difficult to dispel and leads to hostile attitudes between age groups.

Kalish (1971) suggested that the elderly are devalued because society stresses the values of productivity, independence, meaningfulness and futurity. These four values may have a detrimental effect because the elderly can only satisfy them in part. Productivity cannot be satisfied because the elderly are forced to retire and then thought of as being useless. Independence is hard to attain because it may be necessary to depend on others for health reasons, emotional support, or decision making. Then the elderly are degraded and embarrassed when they ask for help. Many people feel meaningfulness can only be found by serving or producing for others, and not being meaningful to themselves and developing their own capacities. It is difficult for the elderly to be meaningful to others because of forced retirement, children no longer needing them, declining health, or outmoded ideas. The value

futurity is difficult to satisfy because the elderly have a limited number of years of good health left. Kalish stated that society does not want to invest time, money, effort and emotional involvement in people who lack futurity and will not "payoff" or be as productive, independent and meaningful as society wants them to be. He said rather than focus on people with a potentially high payoff, we should judge people "by such criteria as integrity, compassion, and humanity" (p. 54).

As a group the elderly are at the end of the life cycle. They still have the basic needs of emotional and economic security, notice, consideration, social recognition and a role to play in society, which are common to everyone (How Well Do You Understand Elderly People?, 1970). The resources for satisfying these basic needs often tend to be diminished later in life since this is a time when one retires, loses a spouse, and the children leave home (Wolff, 1959). Society should help the elderly participate in continuing their growth and self-actualization.

Clothing assists one in satisfying psychological and social needs. In new social situations clothes help by increasing self-confidence and maintaining dignity and high morale (Baker, 1969). Ryan (1966, pp. 316-317) stated that those who are dressed and groomed neatly and attractively are less likely to feel self-pity and more likely to be sociable, thus creating a more positive self-concept. Easy-care clothing helps the elderly look their best and increases their feeling of independence if they are able to care for the clothing themselves (Baker, 1969, p. 4).

Stereotyping can be observed in clothing. "To make social

relationships, older people need to have clothing which is similar to that worn by others in the group as well as clothing which is best for them as individuals" (Bader, 1970, p. 20). Many elderly people are unable to find clothes in stores that will help them appear stylish and individual. They should not be viewed as a homogeneous group. Just as in any other age group, consideration should be given to each elderly person's unique characteristics. This should result in variety both in type and design of clothing (Douty, 1972).

Health

Health is a crucial problem for the elderly. Older people have more health problems than any other age group (Rich and Gilmore, 1969, p. 86). Even so, Havighurst (1974, p. 17) reported that most elderly are in reasonably good health, can move about freely, feel quite well, and do useful work.

Although they may be slight, physical impairments increase rapidly after age 65 (Havighurst, 1974). Of the elderly not in institutions, about 85 percent ". . . have one or more chronic conditions but only 20% have an interference with their mobility, 8% have some trouble getting around alone, 6% need a mechanical aid to get around, and about 5% are homebound" (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973, p. 1).

The elderly have physical reactions different from those of younger people due to body structure and physiological changes, trauma, disease and mental stress throughout their lifetime. Even when he appears in good health, the elderly person is slowed down in many ways physiologically (1971 White House Conference on Aging, 1971, p. 18).

Rich and Gilmore (1969, p. 83) listed the major directions of change in growing old as a slowing of the biological functions, a breakdown in the functioning of the body systems, a reduction in the physiological reserve, and altered structure of cells, tissues, and organs. Muscles, bones and cartilage all deteriorate with age. Diminished breathing capacity results from elastic and muscular tissue being replaced by fibrous elements (Henderson, 1972, p. 565). Muscles may become weaker from changes in the blood supply and sugar use causing decreased muscle tone. Cardiovascular changes that interfere with cell nutrition and oxygen supply are often damaging and are a leading cause of death for the elderly (Rich and Gilmore, 1969, pp. 87-88).

There are six illnesses common to the elderly which result from changes in the organs. Eckstein (1973, pp. 440-443) reported them as follows: (1) visual and auditory impairment; (2) skeletal pain which may be caused by gout, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and traumatic arthritides; (3) osteoporosis which causes a loss of spinal mobility and freedom of rotation and gradually results in a bowing of the spine; (4) skin disorders of which the two major complaints are pruritis and altered appearance; (5) urinary tract disorders; and (6) disorders of the heart, brain and digestive system of which many are caused by organic changes. Ailments that have a non-organic basis but which also lead to functional disorders are fatigue, drug dependency and insomnia.

Health is also a major economic problem when one considers one fourth of the elderly have a major medical expense each year (Tibbitts, 1962, p. 698). These expenditures for the elderly are three and one-half times those for people under 65. Many cannot find adequate funds

for proper care; all public programs only cover two thirds of the bill (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1972, p. 8). One study indicated there is an inverse relationship between family income and limitation of activity due to chronic conditions (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1972, p. 14). The lower the income the higher the activity limitation. Two possible explanations were given for these results. Since the low income people cannot afford regular checkups at the doctor, they may not be aware anything is wrong with them until it affects their daily lives. For those in high income groups who can afford medical care, an early diagnosis and treatment may retard activity limitation.

Many elderly people have activity limitations due to physical changes. Both muscular strength and muscular endurance decrease as muscles, bones and cartilage deteriorate. Increasing interference with cell nutrition and oxygen supply also help make even lightened activity more physically strenuous. The AHEA Workshop on Aging recommendation allows for the progressive health problems of the elderly. Clothing and textiles that require the least amount of care and energy are the most desirable. Wash-and-wear clothing or at least clothing that can be machine washed aid the elderly in the care of their clothing (Textiles for Older People, 1962, p. 852).

Summary

Three age-related problems, income, social-psychological needs and health, may affect the clothing decisions of the elderly. Easy-care clothing has been recommended as a solution to each of these problems for several reasons. First, easy-care clothing requires little expense

for care and would aid the elderly on limited incomes. Second, easy-care clothing assists in creating a more positive self-concept. It helps the elderly look their best by maintaining a neat appearance. Easy-care clothing increases the feeling of independence if the elderly can care for their own clothing. Finally, easy-care clothing requires the least amount of care and energy and would be beneficial for the elderly with declining health that restricts physical activity.

Easy-Care Textiles

Textiles have come to play an important part in everyday life. As people's wants and needs have changed, the textile industry has adapted its products to fit those needs. Changing lifestyles have influenced the textile industry. No longer do people want to spend long periods at the ironing board or in the laundry room. Clothing today must provide both shape and appearance retention in service and cleaning (Fortess, 1966). Most people want easy-to-care-for garments that also keep them neat and clean looking throughout the day. In the past 25 years, manufacturers have responded to the changing wants, needs and lifestyles by introducing the easy-care clothing which is most prevalent in the stores today.

History of Easy-Care Textiles

Labarthe (1975, p. 318) listed three ways that a fabric may be given easy-care characteristics: (1) a quality or property of the fiber itself, as in the case of most thermoplastic synthetic fibers; (2) a property added to the fabric by blending a thermoplastic with cotton; or (3) by chemically treating an all-cotton or rayon fabric.

The first easy-care fabrics were made of 100 percent synthetic fibers. It was the synthetic fiber producers who coined, promoted, and proved the term wash-wear with their water-resistant fibers that had wrinkle resistant and wash-wear qualities (Borghetty, 1958). Even though the fabrics had these qualities, they were unacceptable to the consumer. The material was tightly woven, permitted no air to pass through, and was very uncomfortable to wear in warm and humid weather (Stout, 1970, p. 196). The only exception to this was the tricot (Shippee, 1967).

While the synthetic fibers were on the market, chemical researchers reported a major development. Fortess (1970, p. 69) reported that researchers were modifying cotton fabric so it could be "stabilized to washing shrinkage and . . . resistant to wrinkles in wearing and in washing." A chemical wash-wear finish was developed for cotton fabrics which made them competitive with synthetic fibers. Abrahams (1971, p. 17) said the finish gave the cotton a "memory," a property synthetics had naturally. This helped the cotton fabrics to resist wrinkles, retain creases, and have a minimum of wrinkling after washing so they could be worn almost immediately without pressing. Cotton wash-wear competed favorably with the synthetics in the 1950's and surpassed them in volume. Even so, the finish was not entirely satisfactory because it tended to disappear upon washing and it required some ironing before wearing.

Shippee (1967, p. 3) found that the performance was seldom consistent. Nevertheless, this first wash-wear finish did make some important contributions: it helped to condition the apparel manufacturer and the consumer to the introduction of permanent press; it led to the

development of new sewing techniques and approaches for the concept and problems of permanent press; and, it conditioned the consumer to becoming more technically or performance oriented.

Performance orientation of housewives was indicated in a study by Hull (1963, pp. 774-775) of 722 housewives in seven cities. Hull found the following.

1. Easy-care and wash-wear were synonymous terms to over half his sample.
2. The housewives were concerned mainly with properties relating to performance and maintenance when they bought easy-care clothing.
3. Easy-care clothing was washed differently from regular clothing by over half of the housewives.
4. Easy-care clothing was reported as being too hot and uncomfortable, harsh and stiff when it was compared to regular clothing.
5. Cotton easy-care clothing and synthetic easy-care clothing were compared for comfort. The cotton easy-care was cooler, non-irritating, resistant to static electricity, and felt better.

The next phase in easy-care clothes was the development of a permanent press finish to apply to cottons. Labarthe (1975, p. 320) stated it was "more perfect and more durable than wash-and-wear" Abrahams (1971, p. 17) defined permanent press as simply shaping a garment and then treating it so that after wearing and washing it will return to the pre-set shape.

Basically there are two types of treatments, the pre-cure and post-cure. With pre-curing, resins are applied in the finishing plant and the wrinkle resistance is built into the fabric. Post-curing is the preferred process, whereby the garment is treated after it is made.

Crease and pleat retention are more permanent since the entire garment, and not just the fabric, is given the permanent press characteristics (Consumers' Research, Inc., 1972, p. 18).

One problem encountered when applying the permanent press finish to 100 percent cottons was that it reduced the tensile strength and abrasion properties (Fortess, 1970). Suchecki (1966) stated the 100 percent cottons had about a 40 to 50 percent strength loss from the chemical reactions and curing conditions; the fabrics were practically useless.

Fiber blending, the next step, helped to alleviate the problem. By blending cotton with polyester, the tough and abrasive resistant qualities of the polyester provided for crease retention (Fortess, 1970). In blending, the same chemical and curing treatments had only about a 10 percent effect on "fabric strength loss." Fabrics with at least 50 percent polyester had the "maximum fabric strength retention level" (Suchecki, 1966, p. 127). Blending also added other properties to the fabric. Since the synthetics tended to be uncomfortably warm, blending them with the celluloseics made them feel cooler (What You Should Know About No-Iron Fabrics and Finishes, 1970). Suchecki (1966) stated the polyester contributed resiliency, lightness in weight, and shape retention in humid weather. The cotton contributed moisture absorption, reduction in static electricity, and improved hand. Acrylics and nylon, other easy-care fibers, were also blended with the celluloseics and provided minimum shrinkage in washing (What You Should Know About No-Iron Fabrics and Finishes, 1970). Since further research on 100 percent cotton did not overcome previous problems, consumers saw the advantages of blends and turned to them instead of treated cottons.

Trends in Easy-Care Fabrics

In the past, the trend was to put up to 70 to 80 percent polyester in a fabric to give it permanent press characteristics. The polyester contributed many easy-care characteristics; therefore, the cotton or other fibers in the blend did not need to be treated (Abrahams, 1971). Recently the fiber amounts in blends has begun to change and blended permanent press fabrics are appearing with cotton as the predominant fiber. Springs Mills is producing a 60/40 cotton polyester fabric that is more absorbent than 65/35 polyester cotton, and looks and feels like Pima cotton. A high tenacity polyester gives the fabric high tensile strength and permanent press characteristics (Will New Fabrics Push Cotton Usage?, 1975, p. 25).

Knit fabrics have also been treated successfully with a permanent press finish (Abrahams, 1971). Fortess (1970) reported that other major developments in knits have given them unique easy-care properties. The developments have been largely based on textured or bulked polyester, nylon, acetate, and triacetate. Texturized polyesters provide the same level of permanent press performance achieved by the post-cured polyester/cotton garments.

Problems With Easy-Care Fabrics

To obtain a satisfactory finish with the permanent press, it was necessary to apply higher levels of resin solids than with wash-wear. This resulted in many problems. As previously mentioned, the cotton or acetate fibers were weakened and damaged by the chemical reactions and the curing conditions. Blending these fibers with polyester was a

partial solution, but this presented additional problems. Abrahams (1971) reported that there was differential abrasion of the two fibers, a migration of colors during the curing process, and a stain removal problem. He stated that apparently all of these problems have been partially solved because users of permanent press shirts indicated an overwhelming satisfaction with them.

Suchecky (1966) stated that some permanent press fabrics retain chlorine if not properly finished and develop an odor. It was also reported that the preferential wearing of cotton in blends caused a change in the dyed appearance of the garment.

According to Consumers' Research, Inc. (1972, p. 18) retention of chlorine in the fabric is from the treatment with a chlorine retaining resin. This poses difficulty for the consumer because the fabric cannot be bleached except with hydrogen peroxide or with another peroxygen bleach. Other problems listed were: the garments could not be altered easily because the original creases remained, tensile strength may have been somewhat reduced from the finish, and stains were difficult to remove.

Consumers' Research, Inc. (1972, p. 32) reported the following problems.

1. Fabrics were limited to dull colors because the permanent press process had a deteriorating effect on some colors.

2. Shading occurred at points of wear, especially with polyester/cotton blends.

3. Fiber loss at the edge of creases resulted from wear and tumble drying. A partial remedy to the problem has been proper laundering and drying the garment inside-out.

In Hull's (1963) study, a small percent of the housewives reported that the easy-care fabrics were stiff and harsh and too hot and uncomfortable. The synthetics had static electricity and were also irritating to the skin. The fabrics attracted and held lint, and stains were difficult to remove.

Wham (1966, p. 52) also mentioned that the synthetic easy-care fabric was irritating to the skin. Several more problems were listed.

1. There was a discoloration of whites.
2. Garment pieces and seams did not shrink evenly in the wash.
3. Alterations were difficult to make.
4. Seams would rupture.
5. The finish would wear off and result in increased wrinkling.
6. Sometimes there would be frosting or whitening of creases.

Proper dye selection and dyeing techniques have helped to remedy the situation.

Laundering and Care

Laundering procedures changed with the advent of the easy-care fabrics.

During the transition . . . to wash-and-wear to durable press, home washing machine design, operational procedures, and conditions have been adjusted to produce the best results at the least expenditure of effort by the operator (Schlesinger, 1968, p. 120).

The way an easy-care garment is treated will affect the success of the characteristics. According to Consumers' Research, Inc. (1972) these garments are most effectively washed at home, preferably in an automatic washing machine which has a cool-down cycle. The dryer should have a cooling period near the end of the drying cycle for best results.

Wham (1966) stated:

Optimum washing conditions for laundering durable press without ironing call for just enough agitation (time and speed) to remove soil, followed by thorough, but gentle, water extraction to avoid wrinkling the fabric (p. 53).

He also stated that the water temperature as well as the cooling-down period in the dryer are important for fabrics containing synthetic fibers. Wham (1966) cited a study which emphasized the need for proper equipment when laundering permanent press. The study, carried out in the Good Housekeeping laboratories on 50/50 polyester cotton shirts, showed that after 20 washings, irrespective of the washing method, dryer drying gave a much smoother appearance than when the same garments were line dried.

Following a study on easy-care shirts, Consumers' Research, Inc. (1966) reported that drip drying was not a satisfactory method after washing either in a tumble-action washer or an agitator washer. However, the wrinkles which appeared after drip drying were less noticeable after three days. Still, pressing was needed for a presentable appearance. It was also recommended that crowding be avoided in the washer and dryer, as this also produces wrinkles. Clothes in the dryer should be removed as soon as possible and hung up (Consumers' Research, Inc., 1971).

Schlesinger (1968) stated that fabric maintenance habits have changed, and one result is the reduced percentage of apparel and household items going to hand or commercial laundries. There is no point in buying a permanent press garment if it is to be sent to a commercial laundry (Consumers' Research, Inc., 1971, p. 24). The same holds for other easy-care fabrics. The care these fabrics require is minimal, and to send them to the cleaners would be a waste of money. However,

some people do not have either the time or energy to do their laundry at home. In this situation dry cleaning is of real importance (May, Waggoner and Hotte, 1974, p. 88).

Purchasing Guidelines

A quick glance in any store would indicate that many offerings are of the easy-care type.

. . . it's becoming increasingly difficult to find clothes that don't fall into the easy-care category. There is, however, a big difference in the way various no-iron fabrics and garments perform. Unfortunately, not all live up to their claims, and finding the ones that do is not possible by merely looking at or feeling a fabric (What You Should Know About No-Iron Fabrics and Finishes, 1970, p. 158).

Consumers' Research, Inc. (1971) emphasized the importance of this statement by adding that as experience with these new fibers and finishes has developed, guidelines by various companies have been set up to aid the consumer in selecting and getting the most satisfaction from the easy-care garments.

Ease of clothing care can be determined before buying a garment. The consumer should use the following as guides in selecting a proper garment.

1. Check the label for the fiber content and care instructions. The best results are obtained with at least 50 percent polyester in the blend (Choose Easy-Care Clothes for Vacationing, 1974). The more polyester, the greater the strength and abrasion resistance. Cotton and rayon in blends make the fabric more absorbent, and therefore more comfortable (Latour, 1971). Acrylic and nylon fibers give the optimum performance when used alone in knits. For optimum comfort with 100 percent synthetic fabric, it should be in the form of a knit or a loosely

woven fabric (What You Should Know About No-Iron Fabrics and Finishes, 1970). Permanent care labels have been required on almost all garments since July 3, 1972. The consumer must follow the instructions for satisfactory results.

2. Check to see what finishes have been used. A permanent press finish works best with blends. The finish weakens 100 percent cotton. Look for soil release or stain repellent finishes (What You Should Know About No-Iron Fabrics and Finishes, 1970). Since 1969 about 40 different materials or methods have been developed to prevent damage from staining or soiling (Labarthe, 1975). Finishes are most satisfactory if they guarantee shrinkage control, wrinkle resistance, permanent press, stain and spot resistance, perspiration resistance, and soil release (May, Waggoner and Hotte, 1974, p. 86).

3. Check the fabric type. The consumer should not expect slacks made of flannel to wear the same as slacks made of gabardine, even if they are made of the same fibers in identical percentages (What You Should Know About No-Iron Fabrics and Finishes, 1970).

4. There are additional features to check. Make sure the garment has no puckers or packaging wrinkles when purchased, because if they are there before the garment is worn or laundered, they will be as permanent as the press. Streaking is a bad sign that the garment has not been dyed properly. The colors should be even (Consumers' Research, Inc., 1971). Fabrics should not have any chemical odor (Latour, 1971).

Summary

Consumers want garments which have shape and appearance retention in wearing and laundering. This has been accomplished in recent years

by applying wash-wear and permanent press finishes to fabrics, by blending synthetics with cellulose, and by texturizing and knitting fabrics. Problems developed in fabric strength, appearance and serviceability, especially from applying the finishes and by blending. Some of the problems have been remedied, but it is still necessary that the consumers follow certain guidelines to obtain a garment that provides the serviceability they want. Easy-care fabrics necessitated a change in laundering procedures. All of them reduced steps the consumer has to follow and minimized care required for the fabric or garment. Easy-care garments have contributed to the consumer's changing lifestyle.

Studies of Easy-Care Clothing and Care Practices

Although many studies have been conducted on various aspects of clothing for the elderly, very few have dealt with easy-care clothing or any of their clothing care practices.

A study (Ryan, Ayres, Carpenter, Densmore, Swanson and Whitlock, 1963) was made on the levels and components of satisfaction with women's street dresses. Components of satisfaction in order of importance were appearance, comfort, becomingness, ease-of-care, fit and durability. Ease-of-care tended to decrease in importance as the wearers' age increased. In rating ease-of-care in dresses, the amount of ironing required and whether the garment required special handling were important. Hand washed dresses received higher ease-of-care ratings than machine washed dresses. More older people washed by hand, while the younger individuals preferred machine washing. No significant relationship was

found between wash-and-wear and traditional type dresses and the length of time the dresses had been owned, frequency worn, washing method, and shrinkage or stretching. However, proportionately fewer wash-and-wear dresses were ironed, most required a touch-up, and more were worn for one occasion.

A sample of 58 women in two retirement homes in North Carolina was studied by Massey (1964). The women considered color, style and fit far more important than ease-of-care when selecting a new dress. Thirty three of the women did not care whether a dress was washable or needed to be dry-cleaned. Fourteen desired one that was washable, and the rest preferred dresses that were dry-cleanable. Laundering clothes had become a habit with the women. Private rooms had a lavatory for laundering and one home provided a laundry room, but it was not reported which facilities were actually used and preferred.

In Richard's (1971) study to determine the needs and preferences of older women, 81 percent of the women owned a permanent press dress. Only two of the 81 percent who owned such a dress would not buy another because they had to touch them up with an iron, and one felt they were too warm to wear. Care preferred in the order of importance was dry cleaning, machine washing, and then hand washing. The facilities used seemed to depend on what was available to each woman.

One researcher (Shipley, 1961) found age seemed to have little influence on the number of washable dresses the women had in their wardrobes. Women with high incomes tended to have more washable dresses in their wardrobes.

Snyder (1966) investigated some of the clothing practices of women in various stages of the life cycle. Age, clothing interest and marital

status were found significant when related to preferred care of dresses, whereas social activity and employment were not found significant. As age increased, fewer used the washing machine and more depended on hand washing and dry cleaning. Hand washing was no more important to the older women than dry cleaning, but very few selected machine washing. Those with mild clothing interest preferred machine washing, and those with strong clothing interest preferred dry cleaning. Widows used hand washing more; married women preferred machine washing. Single women had a slight preference for dry cleaning over hand washing.

In Dixon's (1968) study, the knowledge of clothing practices of elderly women was refined. The sample defined an easy-care dress as not showing soil, could be hand washed or dry cleaned, and could be worn several times without pressing. Only one fifth of the women said all of their dresses were easy-to-care-for. Satisfaction with the dresses was high. Ease of care was the least important of six factors in dress selection. Preference for hand washing and dry cleaning was clearly indicated. Less than one-fifth preferred machine washing for dress care. The women ranked the dry cleaners, sink or lavatory, automatic washer and dryer, in that order, as receiving the most use for their dresses. There was a tendency for a significant direct relationship between easy-care clothing and clothing interest and social participation. Women with high clothing interest scores considered some of their dresses to be easy-to-care-for. Women with high social participation scores preferred hand washing or dry cleaning; women with low scores tended to prefer dry cleaning. Those with medium scores preferred hand washing. Health and socio-economic level were not found to be significant when related to the use of easy-care clothing. Place of

residence was significant. Women who lived with others considered more of their dresses to be easy-to-care-for.

Summary

Very little study has been reported on easy-care clothing for elderly women. There is some consistency among the studies as to method of care used for the dresses and also the importance of ease-of-care in dress selection. Elderly women preferred hand washing and dry cleaning to machine washing. When rated against other factors in dress selection, ease-of-care was not very important.

Most of the studies were conducted in the 1960's. More research needs to be conducted in this area to update existing research.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The study was conducted to determine the acceptance of easy-care dresses by elderly women and the cleaning methods used. A review of literature revealed that very few studies have been conducted in this area, and that what has been done needs to be updated.

Description of the Sample

Participants in the study were 90 women 60 years of age and above who were living in their own homes in Stillwater during July and August, 1975. Those residing in nursing or retirement homes were not included. An attempt was made to obtain a sample of approximately 30 from each of the low, middle, and high socio-economic levels.

Selection of Sample

Researchers have identified problems in gathering a representative sample of elderly women. Some researchers have used women's groups, retirement clubs, nursing and retirement homes, and senior citizen centers to collect their data. A sample that is representative of low, middle, and high socio-economic levels within the population is impossible to obtain through groups such as these. For this reason, the sample for this study was selected from the 1970 block census data of Stillwater. The census data provided an average value of housing units

for each block. The total population of the block and the percent of the total population in that block 62 years of age and over were also given. The researcher could then determine on which blocks the elderly lived and an estimated socio-economic level based on the average value of the housing units for the block. Using this information, an attempt was made to include elderly women from every area in Stillwater and women in various socio-economic levels.

Instrument

An interview schedule, based on a questionnaire developed and pre-tested twice by Dixon (1968), was designed to simplify the collection of information from the women. (See Appendix A, p. 64.) The first two questions were designed to determine how the women acquired the majority of their dresses and to compare the importance of easy-care apparel to other factors when shopping for a dress. A clothing interest scale, questions 3-7, consisting of a modified form of a clothing interest scale used by Dixon was included. Dixon checked for validity and computed an item analysis for the clothing interest scale used in her study. An r value significant at the .001 level was obtained. The clothing interest scale used in this study was scored in the following way. The category "Several times each season" was given three points. "Often," "Very much" and "Once each season" were given two points. "Sometimes," "Moderately interested" and "Once a year" were given one point. The "Never" or "Not at all" categories were given zero points. The highest number of points possible for the entire scale was 11 points.

The second section included questions on clothing care, questions

8-11, 17-18, and the acceptance of easy-care clothing, questions 12-16. Question 17 was designed to indicate whether easy-care fabrics have changed the preferred method of cleaning dresses during the past twenty years.

The third section was designed to collect background information from the respondents, including age, health, marital status, living arrangements, educational level, and occupation. Socio-economic level of respondents was determined by the Socio-economic Index for Occupations in the Detailed Classification of the Bureau of Census: 1951. Validity of the index rests on its correlation with the NORC (National Opinion Research Center) study of occupational prestige, and the suitability of education and income as indicators of socio-economic status (Duncan, 1961, p. 125). Assignment to a socio-economic level number was made by the higher occupation on the scale if both husband and wife were employed. For those respondents who were single or in those families where only one member worked, the occupation was used to make this assignment. A summary of the participants' socio-economic level numbers is presented in Appendix B, p. 69.

Collection of Data

The interview method was selected in order to obtain a higher percentage of returns and to obtain an answer to each question. The interview schedule was pretested with four women who were participating in the Intergenerational Living Project Community, a group consisting of twenty senior citizens whose ages ranged from 60 to 87, during the 1975 summer session at Oklahoma State University. The women interviewed were not Stillwater residents. The interviewer asked the questions and the

replies were recorded on the schedule. For questions 2, 8, and 11 which required the women to rank or choose from multiple answers listed on the interview schedule, choices were printed in large letters in list form on index cards. From the cards the women could read and respond. From the responses and suggestions of the pretest sample, question 8 was reworded and the category Fiber Content was added to question 11. The interview required 10-15 minutes to conduct.

Between July 28 and August 7, 1975, 90 women were interviewed in their own homes. The data were collected by going from door-to-door on blocks from all areas of Stillwater selected from the 1970 census data. If any women age 60 and above resided at the home, the researcher identified herself and the purpose of the study. Most of the time the researcher was received enthusiastically, but 22 women refused to participate for the following reasons: not being interested, too busy, not feeling well, and not feeling qualified to answer questions on clothing. Women in the more affluent sections of Stillwater indicated more of a readiness to participate in the study than those from the lower income areas of the city.

Analysis of Data

An attempt was made to establish the validity and reliability of the clothing interest scale, questions 3-7 on the questionnaire. Clothing interest scale totals for each participant are found in Appendix B, p. 69. The chi-square test was used in an item analysis to determine the validity for those questions which differentiated between persons whose scores were in the upper quartile and those whose scores were in the lower quartile, on the basis of the total score. A score of at

least .001 was obtained for each item in the scale. (See Appendix C, p. 73.) The Spearman split-half reliability coefficient was used to determine reliability of the clothing interest scale. An r value of 0.45 was given, indicating the reliability of the scale was questionable. The scale may be made more reliable by increasing the number of questions in the scale and by increasing the sample size.

Frequency counts and percentages were used in the analysis of background data and questions which required more than one response. Method of cleaning easy-care dresses and the number of easy-care dresses in the wardrobes were analyzed according to living arrangement, social participation, health, education and age. The chi-square test was not used for this analysis due to infrequent response in a number of categories.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to examine the following null hypotheses:

1. Method of cleaning (hand wash, machine wash, or dry clean) easy-care dresses will be independent of:
 - (a) clothing interest
 - (b) socio-economic level
2. The number of easy-care dresses owned will be independent of:
 - (a) clothing interest
 - (b) socio-economic level

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

A questionnaire was developed to obtain information on background of the participants, acceptance of easy-care dresses and cleaning methods used. Data were obtained through personal interviews with 90 women 60 years of age and older living in Stillwater, July and August, 1975. The findings and analysis of the data collected are presented in this chapter.

Characteristics of the Participants

A detailed description of background information for the sample group is presented in Table I. Almost three fourths of the participants were 70 years of age and older, with the greatest proportion falling in the age category 75-79 (28.89%). Slightly more than half (55.56%) were widowed, while almost a third (28.89%) were married. Over half of the participants (60.00%) lived alone. Of the 36 women who lived with others, 25 lived with their husbands, while the rest resided with sisters, children, grandchildren and boarders. Most of the participants reported their health as excellent (42.22%) or good (36.67%). Only one woman indicated she was in poor health.

The educational levels of the participants covered a wide range. Twenty percent reported their educational level as less than high school; another 20 percent were high school graduates, and another 20

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS
(N = 90)

Variable	Classification	N	%
Age	Under 65	11	12.22
	65-69	13	14.44
	70-74	21	23.33
	75-79	26	28.89
	80 and above	19	21.11
Marital Status	Single	13	14.44
	Married	26	28.89
	Widowed	50	55.56
	Divorced	1	1.11
Living Arrangement	Alone	54	60.00
	With others		40.00
	Husband	25	
	Sister	5	
	Husband and sister	1	
	Son	2	
	Daughter and grand- daughter	1	
	Boarders	2	
Health	Excellent	38	42.22
	Good	33	36.67
	Fair	18	20.00
	Poor	1	1.11
Education Completed	Less than high school	20	20.22
	Some high school	4	4.44
	High school graduate	18	20.00
	Some college	18	20.00
	College graduate	5	5.56
	Post-graduate study	25	27.78
Occupation for Major Part of Life	Professional-Managerial	41	45.56
	Clerical-Sales	7	7.78
	Skilled, Semiskilled, and Unskilled	27	30.00
	Farm	15	16.67
	Participation in Clubs, Organizations, or Activity Groups	0-2	43
	3-4	23	25.56
	5 or more	24	26.67

percent had some college education. Approximately 28 percent had some post-graduate study. Most of the participants' occupations fell in either the professional-managerial category (45.56%) or in the skilled, semiskilled and unskilled category (30.00%). Almost half of the women (47.78%) participated in fewer than three clubs, organizations or activity groups. One fourth of the participants (26.67%) were involved in five or more activities.

Acquisition of Clothing

The participants were questioned about the acquisition of their dresses. Methods by which the women acquired their dresses are shown in Table II. Over half (59.0%) of the participants shopped for their dresses themselves. Almost one-fourth (24.0%) made their dresses at home. The rest of the participants either received their dresses as gifts (12.0%) or had others shop for them (5.0%).

TABLE II
METHOD OF ACQUISITION OF DRESSES
FOR THE PARTICIPANTS
(N = 90)

Method	N	%
Shop Yourself	59	59.0
Make at Home	24	24.0
Receive as Gifts	12	12.0
Others Shop for You	5	5.0
Total	100*	100.0

*The 90 participants were allowed to select more than one answer.

The participants were asked to select from a list the three most important factors they considered when buying a dress. The results are presented in Table III. Fit and fiber content were indicated by the largest number of women as the first consideration in their selection. The two factors considered to be of secondary importance were fit and ease-of-care. Since Dixon's (1968) study indicated that ease-of-care was the least important of the six factors she considered in dress selection, this would seem to have increased in importance during the past few years. Price was the factor considered by the largest number as the third most important consideration when buying a dress.

TABLE III
MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN BUYING A DRESS
(N = 90)*

Factor	<u>1st Choice</u>		<u>2nd Choice</u>		<u>3rd Choice</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fit	27	30.00	26	29.21	13	14.77
Fiber Content	22	24.44	7	7.87	10	11.36
Color	17	18.89	4	4.49	17	19.32
Ease of Care	9	10.00	26	29.21	14	15.91
Style	8	8.89	12	13.48	12	13.64
Price	<u>7</u>	<u>7.78</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15.73</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>25.00</u>
Total	90	100.00	89	99.99	88	100.00

* In some cases N did not equal 90 because some participants did not have a second and third choice.

Clothing Interest of Participants

The clothing interest of the participants is presented in Table IV. The largest proportion of women (41.11%) indicated that they never wished they had a new dress to wear to the usual places they go. More than one-third (36.67%) often wished for a new dress, and 22.22 percent sometimes wished they had a new dress.

A majority of the participants (77.78%) sometimes go shopping for clothing, whereas 15.56 percent often go shopping. A small proportion (6.67%) indicated that they never go shopping for clothing.

More than half the participants (57.78%) often look at fashions featured in magazines. Almost one-third (30.00%) sometimes look at the fashions, and 12.22 percent never look at them.

Approximately one-half (52.22%) of the participants indicated a moderate interest in the fashion changes that take place each season. Almost one-third (31.11%) were very interested in the fashion changes, and only 16.67 percent indicated that they were not at all interested.

Fashion shows were not of particular interest to the participants. A majority of the participants (71.11%) never attended fashion shows. Many women commented that there are few fashion shows presented in Stillwater. Those fashion shows that are given are geared toward the younger generation and feature few styles appropriate for the older woman.

Care of Dresses

Information pertaining to care of dresses is presented in Table V. The laundry facilities which participants listed most frequently as

TABLE IV
CLOTHING INTEREST OF PARTICIPANTS
(N = 90)

Description	N	%
<u>New Clothes</u>		
Do you ever wish you had a new dress or item of clothing to wear to the usual places you go, even if you don't need it?		
Often	33	36.67
Sometimes	20	22.22
Never	<u>37</u>	<u>41.11</u>
Total	90	100.00
<u>Shopping</u>		
How often do you go shopping for clothing?		
Often	14	15.56
Sometimes	70	77.78
Never	<u>6</u>	<u>6.66</u>
Total	90	100.00
<u>Fashion</u>		
Do you look at fashions featured in magazines?		
Often	52	57.78
Sometimes	27	30.00
Never	<u>11</u>	<u>12.22</u>
Total	90	100.00
<u>Fashion Changes</u>		
How interested are you in the fashion changes that take place each season?		
Very Much	28	31.11
Moderately Interested	47	52.22
Not At All	<u>15</u>	<u>16.67</u>
Total	90	100.00

TABLE IV (Continued)

Description	N	%
<u>Fashion Shows</u>		
Do you attend fashion shows?		
Several Times Each Season	1	1.11
Once Each Season	9	10.00
Once a Year	16	17.78
Never	<u>64</u>	<u>71.11</u>
Total	90	100.00

TABLE V
CARE OF DRESSES
(N = 90)

Description	N	%
<u>Laundry Facilities Used</u> *		
Automatic Washer	65	26.8
Commercial Dry Cleaner	55	22.6
Sink or Lavatory	53	21.8
Dryer	41	16.9
Coin Operated Cleaning Machine	12	4.9
Coin Operated Laundry	11	4.5
Commercial Laundry	3	1.2
Wringer Washer	2	0.8
Other		
Combination of a plunger, Woolite, and a bushel basket	1	0.4
Total	243	100.0
<u>Person Who Cares for the Dresses</u>		
Yourself	89	98.9
Daughter	1	1.1
Maid	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	90	100.0
<u>Obtaining Proper Care Information</u> *		
Labels on Garment	63	60.6
Magazines	6	5.8
Other Relatives or Friends	6	5.8
Sales Clerk	4	3.8
Daughter	1	1.0
Other		
Experience	16	15.4
Television and Radio	3	2.8
Extension Services	3	2.8
Clubs	1	1.0
Booklets From the Washing Machine Company	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

TABLE V (Continued)

Description	N	%
<u>Important Factors in Easy-Care Dress Selection**</u>		
Is Machine Washable	57	21.3
Needs No Ironing	50	18.7
Little or No Pressing	30	11.2
Does Not Show Soil	29	10.8
Is Hand Washable	28	10.4
Fiber Content	28	10.4
May Be Dried in Dryer	23	8.6
Is Dry Cleanable	14	5.2
Needs No Starching	7	2.6
Other		
Does Not Pick Up Lint	1	0.4
Lightweight for Travel	1	0.4
Total	268	100.0

* Participants were allowed to select more than one response.

** Participants were instructed to choose three factors from the list.

those they actually used were the automatic washer (26.8%), commercial dry cleaner (22.6%), sink or lavatory (21.8%), and dryer (16.9%). These four facilities were used four times more frequently than any other laundry facilities. A unique method of cleaning clothes described by one participant was to fill a bushel basket with water, add Woolite and use a plunger for agitation.

All but one of the participants cared for her own dresses. One woman had her daughter do her laundry because she was too ill to manage herself.

Labels on the garments were used by the participants as the major source of information for instruction on how to properly care for the dresses they own. Two thirds (60.6%) of the participants used this source. The next most frequently mentioned source was experience, indicated by 15.4 percent of the participants.

The participants were asked to select the three most important factors which influenced their decision to purchase an easy-to-care-for dress. The two factors listed by the largest number of women were machine washable (21.3%) and needing no ironing (18.7%). Other factors listed by at least 10 percent of the women as important were little or no pressing, does not show soil, is hand washable, and has acceptable fiber content.

Acceptance of Easy-Care Dresses

Acceptance by the participants of easy-care dresses is indicated in Table VI. Almost three-fourths (74.44%) indicated almost all of their dresses in their wardrobes were easy-to-care-for. Five participants (5.6%) indicated some of their dresses were easy-to-care-for, while none

TABLE VI
 PARTICIPANT'S ACCEPTANCE OF EASY-CARE DRESSES
 (N = 90)

Description	N	%
<u>Number of Easy-Care Dresses in Ward- robes</u>		
Almost All (90-100%)	67	74.44
Many (50-89%)	18	20.00
Some (1-49%)	5	5.56
None	0	0.00
Total	90	100.00
<u>Familiarity With Easy-Care Terms</u>		
Do you have any dresses which were labeled "permanent press" or "durable press" or "easy-care?"		
Yes	75	83.33
No	6	6.67
Do Not Know	9	10.00
Total	90	100.00
<u>Perceptions of Ease of Care</u> *		
Have you found these dresses to be easier to care for than most others?		
Yes	68	90.67
No	7	9.33
Total	75	100.00
<u>Dissatisfaction With Easy-Care Dresses</u>		
Have you been dissatisfied with any of the dresses you consider easy-to-care for?		
Yes	16	17.78
No	74	82.22
Total	90	100.00

TABLE VI (Continued)

Description	N	%
<u>Specific Dissatisfactions</u> **		
Hot	2	11.77
Hard to Remove Spots	2	11.77
Fabric Stiff	1	5.88
Cold	0	0.00
Clammy	0	0.00
Other		
Pressing Needed After Laundering	5	29.42
Dress Shrank	1	5.88
Pleats Don't Stay In	1	5.88
Dress Fell Apart	1	5.88
Dress Stretched When Cleaned	1	5.88
Dress Made Too Short	1	5.88
Fabric Design Not Suitable	1	5.88
Doesn't Remember Specific Reason	<u>1</u>	<u>5.88</u>
Total	17	100.00

* Only the 75 participants who responded "Yes" to the previous question were asked this question.

** Only the 16 participants who were dissatisfied with their easy-care dresses responded to this item.

of the women indicated that they had no easy-to-care-for dresses. Some type of easy-care dress had become a part of each participant's wardrobe.

Most of the participants (83.33%) were familiar with some of the terms used for easy-care dresses and recognized some dresses labeled as such in their wardrobes. Six women (6.67%) did not have any dresses labeled "permanent press," "durable press," or "easy-care." Nine women (10.00%) did not know whether they had any dresses labeled with those terms.

Of the 75 participants who said they had a dress labeled "permanent press," "durable press" or "easy-care" in their wardrobes, 68 participants (90.67%) found these dresses to be easier to care for than the dresses that were not similarly labeled.

Satisfaction with the dresses considered to be easy-to-care-for was high. Seventy-four participants (82.22%) were satisfied with the dresses, while 16 participants (17.78%) experienced some type of dissatisfaction. The most frequently indicated dissatisfaction, expressed by five women, was that pressing was needed after the dress was laundered. This may have been due to improper laundering procedures. Two participants mentioned the fabric was too hot and uncomfortable to wear, and two participants indicated that spots were hard to remove.

An attempt was made to determine whether the number of easy-care dresses in the wardrobes of the women was related to any one of five selected variables: age, health, living arrangement, education, and social participation. (See Table VII.) The 70-74 age group had a larger percentage indicating that they had almost all easy-care dresses than any other group. Approximately 85 percent in this age group

TABLE VII
 DIFFERENCES IN THE NUMBER OF EASY-CARE DRESSES
 IN THE PARTICIPANTS' WARDROBES ACCORDING
 TO SELECTED VARIABLES*¹⁰₂₀
 (N = 90)

Variable	Almost All (90-100%)		Many (50-89%)		Some (1-49%)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Age</u>						
Under 65	9	81.8	2	18.2	0	0.0
65-69	10	76.9	3	23.1	0	0.0
70-74	18	85.7	2	9.5	1	4.8
75-79	18	69.2	6	23.1	2	7.7
80 and Above	12	63.2	5	26.3	2	10.5
<u>Health</u>						
Excellent	32	84.2	6	15.8	0	0.0
Good	22	66.7	7	21.2	4	12.2
Fair	13	72.2	4	22.2	1	5.6
Poor	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0
<u>Living Arrangement</u>						
Alone	41	75.9	11	20.4	2	3.7
With Others	26	72.2	7	19.5	3	8.3
<u>Education</u>						
Less than High School and Some High School	17	70.8	5	20.8	2	8.4
High School Graduate	14	77.8	4	22.2	0	0.0
Some College and College Graduate	18	78.3	3	13.0	2	8.7
Post-Graduate Study	18	72.0	6	24.0	1	4.0
<u>Social Participation</u>						
0-2	31	72.1	9	20.9	3	7.0
3-4	17	73.9	5	21.7	1	4.4
5 or More	19	79.2	4	16.7	1	4.1

*"None" category was eliminated because of no response.

indicated that almost all of their dresses were easy-care. The number of women reporting almost all of their dresses were easy-care decreased with age, except for the 70-74 category, and only 63.2 percent of the 80 and above group indicated that almost all of their dresses were easy-care.

More women (84.2%) in excellent health said almost all their dresses were easy-care than either those with good (66.6%) or fair (72.2%) health. The one woman in poor health considered many of her dresses easy-care.

No major differences were noted in the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes according to their living arrangement, education and social participation.

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was utilized in determining if there was a significant difference in the clothing interest scores according to the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes. An H value of 2.53 was obtained, indicating there was no significant difference. (See Table VIII.)

TABLE VIII

A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF EASY-CARE DRESSES IN THE
PARTICIPANTS' WARDROBES ACCORDING TO CLOTHING
INTEREST AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL
(N = 90)

Variable	df	H	Level of Significance
Clothing Interest	2	2.53	n.s.
Socio-Economic Level	2	.43	n.s.

The same test was used in determining if there was a significant difference in the participants' socio-economic level scores according to the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes. An H value of .43 was obtained, indicating there was no significant difference. (See Table VIII.)

Cleaning Methods

The method most preferred by the participants to care for their dresses is presented in Table IX. More than twice as many women (63.33%) indicated they preferred machine washing their dresses than hand washing (28.89%). Very few women (7.78%) preferred dry cleaning their dresses. This finding represents a change in the methods as reported by Snyder (1966), Dixon (1968) and Richards (1971). In each of those studies, the preferred method of care for the dresses was either hand washing or dry cleaning.

TABLE IX
METHOD MOST PREFERRED BY PARTICIPANTS
TO CARE FOR THEIR DRESSES
(N = 90)

Method	N	%
Hand Wash	26	28.89
Machine Wash	57	63.33
Dry Clean	7	7.78
Total	90	100.00

Almost a third of the participants preferred to hand wash their dresses. Thirteen of those participants did not have a washing machine in their homes, and this may have influenced their choice. Of the 26 women who preferred hand washing, six indicated they had not changed their method of cleaning within the past 20 years. This may tend to indicate that by habit some women use the same cleaning methods on the easy-care dresses that they had used on dresses requiring a different type of care in the past years. Fourteen women said they hand wash dresses now that they previously would have sent to the dry cleaners because of washing products designed for special fabrics. All seven participants who preferred dry cleaning their dresses were from higher socio-economic levels.

Participants were asked whether they had changed their cleaning method during the past 20 years. (See Table X.) A majority of the women (82.22%) indicated that they changed their method of cleaning in some way. An attempt was made to determine what changes were made and which of them could be attributed to the introduction of easy-care clothing. Responses were tabulated and are listed in Appendix D, p. 75. The most noticeable changes mentioned were that fewer clothes were sent to the cleaners because of the new fabrics and laundry products. A change to knits and easy-care fabrics made home care of dresses easier. Twenty-three of the women changed from hand washing to machine washing; five women changed from a wringer washer to an automatic washer.

The women ironed less because less ironing was required for the new fabrics. An indication of the number of dresses in the participants' wardrobes that are ironed is given in Table XI. Almost two thirds of the participants (62.22%) said they ironed some of their

dresses; however, in many cases the women indicated they did not iron the entire dress, but lightly pressed or touched-up the seams and collar. Almost one third (32.22%) of the participants did not iron any dresses in their wardrobes, and only three participants (3.33%) continued to iron all of their dresses.

TABLE X
CHANGES IN CLEANING METHODS BY PARTICIPANTS
(N = 90)

Changes in Cleaning Methods	N	%
Have you changed your method of cleaning (Machine wash, hand wash, or dry clean) within the past 20 years?		
Yes	74	82.22
No	16	17.78

TABLE XI
NUMBER OF DRESSES IRONED
(N = 90)

Do you iron your dresses?	N	%
Almost All (90-100%)	3	3.33
Many (50-89%)	2	2.22
Some (1-49%)	56	62.22
None	29	32.22

The three methods of cleaning were analyzed according to five selected variables: age, health, living arrangement, education, and social participation. Several differences were noted. (See Table XII.) More women in the 80 and above age category (31.6%) preferred to hand wash their dresses than women under 65 (9.1%). The largest proportion preferring hand washing was in the 70-74 age category (38.1%). The opposite trend was noted with machine washing. More women under age 65 (90.9%) preferred to machine wash their dresses than those 80 and above (68.4%). The preference for machine washing decreased with age until the category 80 and above, and then it increased. Still the proportion in this age group who preferred machine washing was far less than the proportion under age 65.

Method of preferred dress care and health of the participants was compared. No major differences were noted in method of cleaning dresses according to health. The woman who indicated her health was poor preferred to hand wash her dresses.

More women who lived alone (33.3%) preferred to hand wash their dresses than those who lived with someone else (22.2%). No difference was noted between living arrangement and machine washing as the preferred cleaning method. More women (13.9%) who lived with others than those who lived alone (3.7%) preferred dry cleaning.

The preference for machine washing was greatest for participants with less than a high school education (70.8%) and for those with postgraduate study (76.0%) than for participants with a high school education (50.0%) or college education (52.2%). For those with a high school education, the number preferring hand washing (44.4%) and machine washing (50.0%) was approximately equal.

TABLE XII
 DIFFERENCES IN THE PREFERRED METHODS OF CLEANING
 DRESSES ACCORDING TO SELECTED VARIABLES
 (N = 90)

Variable	<u>Hand Wash</u>		<u>Machine Wash</u>		<u>Dry Clean</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Age</u>						
Under 65	1	9.1	10	90.9	0	0.0
65-69	3	23.1	9	69.2	1	7.7
70-74	8	38.1	12	57.1	1	4.8
75-79	8	30.8	13	50.0	5	19.2
80 and above	6	31.6	13	68.4	0	0.0
<u>Health</u>						
Excellent	11	29.0	23	60.5	4	10.5
Good	8	24.2	23	69.7	2	6.1
Fair	6	33.3	11	61.1	0	0.0
Poor	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<u>Living Arrangement</u>						
Alone	18	33.3	34	63.0	2	3.7
With Others	8	22.2	23	63.9	5	13.9
<u>Education</u>						
Less than High School and Some High School	7	29.2	17	70.8	0	0.0
High School Graduate	8	44.4	9	50.0	1	5.6
Some College and College Graduate	9	39.1	12	52.2	2	8.7
Post-Graduate Study	2	8.0	19	76.0	4	16.0
<u>Social Participation</u>						
0-2	12	27.9	30	69.8	1	2.3
3-4	8	34.8	15	65.2	0	0.0
5 or More	6	25.0	12	50.0	6	25.0

No large difference was noted between social participation and hand washing as the preferred method of care. The preference for machine washing decreased with increased social participation. Proportionately more women (69.8%) involved in fewer than three social activities preferred to machine wash their dresses than those involved in five or more activities. Dry cleaning as the preferred method of care increased with increased social participation. Only 2.3 percent of the women involved in fewer than three activities preferred dry cleaning, whereas 25 percent involved in five or more activities preferred dry cleaning.

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was utilized in determining if there was a significant difference in the clothing interest scale scores according to the method of cleaning dresses. (See Table XIII.) An H score 8.81 was obtained, indicating that the difference was significant at the .02 level. Women who machine washed had a higher clothing interest score than those women who either hand washed or dry cleaned their dresses. The women who hand washed their dresses had the lowest clothing interest scores.

The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was also used to determine if there was a significant difference in socio-economic level scores according to the method of cleaning dresses. (See Table XIV.) An H score 18.84 was obtained, indicating that the difference was significant at the .001 level. Women of high socio-economic level preferred dry cleaning their dresses, whereas women with low socio-economic level scores used hand washing for their dresses.

The findings and an analysis of the data collected from interviews with 90 elderly women in Stillwater during the summer of 1975 was

presented in this chapter.

TABLE XIII
DIFFERENCES IN CLOTHING INTEREST SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO METHOD OF CLEANING DRESSES
(N = 90)

Method of Cleaning	Average Rank of Clothing Interest Scores	H	Level of Significance
Hand Wash	34.27		
Machine Wash	51.62	8.81	.02
Dry Clean	37.36		

TABLE XIV
DIFFERENCES IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL SCORES
ACCORDING TO METHOD OF CLEANING DRESSES
(N = 90)

Method of Cleaning	Average Rank of Socio-Economic Scores	H	Level of Significance
Hand Wash	27.25		
Machine Wash	51.92	18.84	.001
Dry Clean	61.00		

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to determine the degree of acceptance of easy-care dresses by elderly women and the cleaning methods used. Data were collected through personal interviews with 90 women 60 years of age and older living in Stillwater during July-August, 1975. Data were tabulated and analyzed using percentages and comparisons were made using the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance.

Conclusions

Findings from this investigation indicated some type of easy-care dress had become a part of each participant's wardrobe. Approximately three fourths of the women said almost all the dresses in their wardrobes were easy-to-care-for. The remainder considered many or some of their dresses to have this property. The majority of the participants were familiar with some of the terms used for easy-care dresses, recognized some dresses labeled as such in their wardrobes, and found these dresses easier to care for than most others. The women defined an easy-care dress as one that is machine washable and requires no ironing. However, although all women had easy-care dresses, they considered ease-of-care of secondary importance when buying a dress. Fit and fiber content were of most importance.

Satisfaction with easy-care dresses was high. The most frequently

indicated dissatisfaction was that some pressing was needed after the dress was laundered.

An attempt was made to determine whether the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes was related to any one of five selected variables: age, health, living arrangement, education and social participation. The percentage of women reporting almost all of their dresses were easy-care decreased with age except the 70-74 age category who reported more of their dresses easy-care than any other age group. More women in excellent health said almost all their dresses were easy-care than either those with good or fair health. No major differences were noted in the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes according to their living arrangements, education or social participation. No significant differences were found in either clothing interest scores or socio-economic level scores according to the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes.

All but one of the participants cared for her own dresses. Labels on the garments were the major source of care information. The automatic washer, commercial dry cleaner, sink or lavatory and dryer, in that order, were most frequently mentioned as the laundry facilities actually used by the participants. Almost two thirds of the women preferred machine washing as a method of dress care. Slightly more than one-fourth preferred hand washing and very few preferred dry cleaning. A majority of the women indicated that they had changed their method of cleaning in some way in the past 20 years. Changes mentioned that could be attributed to the introduction of easy-care clothing were that fewer clothes were being sent to the dry cleaners, there was a change from hand washing to machine washing, and less ironing was required.

Method of cleaning was analyzed according to five selected variables: age, health, living arrangement, education and social participation. Preference for machine washing decreased with age until the age category 80 and above, and then it increased slightly. Nevertheless, the proportion in this age group who preferred machine washing was far less than the proportion of those under 65. This may indicate a carry-over of habit by the older women of hand washing. No major differences were noted in health according to method of cleaning and in living arrangement according to machine washing. Preference for machine washing was greatest for participants with less than a high school education or with post-graduate study than for the participants with a high school education or college education. The preference for machine washing decreased with increased social participation. Proportionately more women involved in fewer than three social activities preferred to machine wash their dresses than those involved in five or more activities. There was a significant difference in the clothing interest scale scores according to the method of cleaning dresses. Women who machine washed had a higher clothing interest score than those women who either hand washed or dry cleaned their dresses. Women who hand washed their dresses had the lowest clothing interest scores. The difference in socio-economic level scores according to the method of cleaning dresses was also found to be significant. Women of high socio-economic level preferred dry cleaning their dresses, whereas women with low socio-economic level used hand washing for their dresses.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

1. The majority of the women indicated that almost all of the dresses in their wardrobes were easy-care.

2. The majority of the women were satisfied with the dresses they considered easy-care. Pressing the dress after laundering was the most frequently expressed complaint by the women who were dissatisfied.

3. Machine washing was the preferred method of cleaning and was used by almost two thirds of the women.

4. Age and health tended to affect the number of easy-care dresses in the participants' wardrobes.

5. The preference for machine washing decreased with age and social participation. Machine washing was preferred by women with either very low or very high educational achievement. Significant differences were found in the clothing interest scale scores and the socio-economic level scores according to the method of cleaning dresses.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further research include the following:

1. Determine care methods used by women of various socio-economic levels in other areas of the country.
2. Determine fabric preferences of elderly women.
3. Investigate the availability of ready-made clothing appropriate in style and construction for elderly women.
4. Investigate clothing care practices of the physically handicapped elderly.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

WOMEN'S CLOTHING

The information from this interview will be used as part of a thesis study at Oklahoma State University, Department of Clothing, Textiles and Merchandising. No names will be used and the information will be held confidential.

I. These questions are about clothing in general.

1. How do you acquire the majority of your dresses?

Shop yourself Others shop for you
 Make at home Receive them as gifts

2. What do you consider the most important factors when buying a dress? Choose three from the following list and rank them as: 1st = Most important, 2nd = Second most important, 3rd = Third most important.

Color	Ease of care
Fiber content	Price
Fit	Style

1st 2nd 3rd

3. Do you ever wish you had a new dress or item of clothing to wear to the usual places you go, even if you don't need it?

Often Sometimes Never

4. How often do you go shopping for clothing?

Often Sometimes Never

5. Do you look at fashions featured in magazines?

Often Sometimes Never

6. How interested are you in the fashion changes that take place each season?

Very much Moderately interested Not at all

7. Do you attend fashion shows? Several times each season
 Once each season Once a year Never

II. The following questions are concerned with clothing care. When answering them, think in terms of Dresses Only.

8. Which laundry facilities do you actually use?

<input type="checkbox"/> Sink or lavatory	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial laundry
<input type="checkbox"/> Wringer washer	<input type="checkbox"/> Coin operated laundry
<input type="checkbox"/> Automatic washer	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial dry cleaner
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Coin operated cleaning machine

9. Who cares for your dresses?

Self Daughter Maid Other
(Specify) _____

10. Where do you usually get information on how to properly care for the dresses you own?

<input type="checkbox"/> Sales clerk	<input type="checkbox"/> Daughter
<input type="checkbox"/> Labels on garment	<input type="checkbox"/> Other relatives or friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____

11. From the following list, which three factors would be most important to you if you were to buy a dress and wanted it to be easy-to-care-for?

<input type="checkbox"/> Does not show soil	<input type="checkbox"/> Is hand washable
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no pressing	<input type="checkbox"/> Is machine washable
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs no ironing	<input type="checkbox"/> May be dried in dryer
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs no starching	<input type="checkbox"/> Is dry cleanable
<input type="checkbox"/> Fiber content	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____

12. Think of all the dresses in your wardrobe. How many do you consider easy-to-care-for?

<input type="checkbox"/> Almost all (90-100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Many (50-89%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Some (1-49%)	<input type="checkbox"/> None

13. Do you have any dresses which were labeled "permanent press" or "durable press" or easy-care?

Yes No Do not know

Have you found these dresses to be easier to care for than most others?

Yes No

14. Have you been dissatisfied with any of the dresses you consider easy-to-care-for?

Yes No

25. In how many clubs, organizations, or activity groups do you participate?

___ 0-2

___ 3-4

___ 5 or more

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF INDIVIDUAL CLOTHING INTEREST SCALE
SCORES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL SCORES

SUMMARY OF INDIVIDUAL CLOTHING INTEREST SCALE
SCORES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL SCORES

Occupation Category	Socio-Economic Number	Clothing Interest Scale Score
Janitor	9	3
Business and repair services	9	3
Laborer, non-durable goods - not specified food industry	14	3
Barber	17	9
Painter, except construction and maintenance	18	4
Operatives and kindred worker, non- durable goods - not specified food industry	19	1
Miller, grain	19	3
Carpenter	19	7
Carpenter	19	7
Derrickman	21	2
Petroleum and coal products	22	7
Dressmaker and seamstress, except factory	23	2
Auto mechanic	25	5
Brickmason	27	7
Messenger and office boy	28	5
Boarding - and lodging - housekeeper	30	2
Boarding - and lodging - housekeeper	30	10
Manager and superintendent, building	32	1
Manager and superintendent, building	32	3
Farm manager	36	1
Farm manager	36	2
Jeweler	36	2
Farm manager	36	3
Farm manager	36	3
Farm manager	36	3
Farm manager	36	5
Farm manager	36	5
Farm manager	36	5
Railroad and express service	36	5
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Farm manager	36	6
Railroad and express service	36	6
Farm manager	36	9
Fireman, fire protection	37	5
Inspector, other industries	38	4
Salesman, retail trade	39	3
Policeman	39	5

(Continued)

Occupation Category	Socio-Economic Number	Clothing Interest Scale Score
Electrician	44	4
Electrician	44	5
Telephone operator	45	6
Telephone operator	45	10
Manager, self-employed - other retail trade	49	3
Pressman and plate printer, printing	49	6
Foreman	49	7
Retail trade - personal services	50	9
Bookkeeper	51	5
Mail-carrier	53	6
Foreman, manufacturing - other nondurable goods	53	10
Religious worker	56	5
Librarian	60	8
Secretary	61	3
Manager, official, and proprietor, salaried, all other industries	62	8
Manager, salaried, hardware, farm implement, and building material, retail	64	4
Social work	64	4
Manager, salaried, general merchand- ise and five- and ten-cent stores	68	7
Teacher	72	3
Teacher	72	6
Teacher	72	6
Teacher	72	8
Teacher	72	8
Chiropractor	75	6
Insurance	76	7
Official, salaried - tele- communications	76	7
Auditor	78	2
Pharmacist	82	4
Farm - and home-management advisor	83	5
Farm - and home-management advisor	83	6
Farm - and home-management advisor	83	7
Farm - and home-management advisor	83	8
College professor	84	1
College professor	84	3
College professor	84	3
College professor	84	3
Manager, salaried - insurance	84	3
College professor	84	4
College professor	84	4
College professor	84	4

(Continued)

Occupation Category	Socio-Economic Number	Clothing Interest Scale Score
College professor	84	5
College professor	84	5
College professor	84	6
College professor	84	6
College professor	84	7
College professor	84	7
College professor	84	8
Lawyer	93	3
Lawyer	93	3

APPENDIX C

ITEM ANALYSIS OF THE CLOTHING INTEREST SCALE

ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF UPPER AND LOWER
QUARTILES OF THE CLOTHING INTEREST SCALE

Item	df	χ^2	Level of Significance
Do you ever wish you had a new dress or item of clothing to wear to the usual places you go, even if you don't need it?	2	28.29	.0001
How often do you go shopping for clothing?	2	14.33	.0010
Do you look at fashions featured in magazines?	2	24.87	.0001
How interested are you in the fashion changes that take place each season?	2	38.43	.0001
Do you attend fashion shows?	3	25.01	.0001

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES REGARDING
CHANGED CLEANING METHODS

CHANGES IN CLEANING METHOD WITHIN THE PAST
20 YEARS BY THE 90 PARTICIPANTS

Response	N	%
Fewer clothes are sent to the cleaners because of the new fabrics and laundry products	39	23.5
A change in fabrics to knits and easy-care makes home care of dresses easier	34	20.5
With the new fabrics less ironing is done	33	19.9
A change from hand washing to machine washing	23	13.9
Use of new laundry products such as Woolite, pre-soaks, and softeners	11	6.6
A change from the wringer washer to the automatic washer	5	3.0
Little or no starching is done because of the new fabrics	5	3.0
A change from lye soaps to detergents	4	2.4
More hand washing is done	3	1.8
A dryer, which the women did not have 20 years ago is used	2	1.2
A change from machine washing to hand washing because of the unavailability of a washing machine	2	1.2
A change to cold water washing	2	1.2
Coin-operated dry cleaners are used more	2	1.2
All washables are sent to the dry cleaners to prevent a sleazy look	1	.6
Total	<u>166</u>	<u>100.0</u>

VITA

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Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: ACCEPTANCE OF EASY-CARE DRESSES AND CLEANING METHODS USED
BY ELDERLY WOMEN

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