

RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES' USE AND KNOWLEDGE
OF SELECTED CLOTHING AND TEXTILE CONCEPTS
AND TECHNIQUES TAUGHT IN SECONDARY
HOME ECONOMICS

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today the challenge for the home economics curriculum planner is to provide programs that relate to the present needs for the dual role of homemaker and wage earner. Meeting the needs and interests of individuals and families had historically been the focus of home economics but new and unusual circumstances call for different approaches (New York State Education Guide, 1965). Women today are pursuing many roles; many are traditional homemakers and others are among the thirty million gainfully employed women. With the growing number of working women, Simpson (1971) stated that a woman wants an education for her homemaking role as well as her work role. Therefore, it should be the concern of all educators to provide relevant and realistic subject matter in the present day classroom to meet the expectant roles of the student.

Determining the use of the clothing and textile subject matter and how it will affect the present and future needs of the student, can be a difficult task when planning for classroom instruction. It is through the selection of appropriate objectives and learning experiences and considering the learning ability of the student, that the teacher can prepare useful units of instruction. Emphasis in the instructional units, allotment of time, depth of knowledge and the skills needed to fulfill unit objectives are decisions that must be made by each individual teacher. It is through these decisions that many researchers feel

emphasis is placed more on the needs of the teacher rather than the needs of the student.

Information related to home economics is presented to the public through the use of mass media. Pamphlets and magazines, television and radio provide information in written or visual form to help consumers become aware of products, services and general knowledge basically related to the area of home economics. It is through these media that the educational classroom is in partial competition with the relaying of knowledgeable principles and practices used in the home today. If we as teachers are to pursue and fulfill justifiable goals of providing current and relevant information to students enrolled in our classes, we must consciously recognize the needs of the students and the possible life styles they may pursue.

Therefore, it is the purpose of this study to examine what the recent high school graduate feels is relevant and useful to her present life style concerning clothing and textiles, and to survey what she had learned in her high school clothing classes.

Statement of the Problem

There appears to be a wide variety of subject matter taught in high school clothing classes. This study will examine the use, by the recent high school graduates, of selected clothing and textile concepts and techniques and identify which of these concepts were taught in high school clothing classes.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

1) identify the concepts and techniques which are currently proposed in the curriculum guides for high school students enrolled in clothing classes,

2) identify the clothing concepts and techniques used by the recent high school graduates of home economics classes

3) identify the subject matter that was learned at the high school level in home economics clothing classes,

4) analyze and evaluate the data received from the questionnaires and determine which of the concepts were used by the graduates and which concepts were learned in the clothing classes,

5) make recommendations, on the basis of the data collected, which could benefit the home economics teacher in preparing classroom clothing instruction in meeting the present and future needs of the students.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were placed upon this study:

1) The selected group of female high school graduates had not been out of high school longer than five years.

2) The participants were limited to active members of selected chapters of the Young Homemakers of Oklahoma.

3) The participants had completed at least one semester of home economics on the secondary level.

4) The items to be used in the questionnaire were limited to selected concepts and techniques which relate to clothing instruction at the secondary level.

Description of the Sample

The sample for this study was chosen from active members of the Young Homemakers of Oklahoma. The women who graduated between the years of 1969 and 1973 were asked to participate through correspondence with their adviser.

The Young Homemakers of Oklahoma, known as YHO, is a state association of young women who are not enrolled in high school. The ages range from eighteen to forty and is open for membership to either single or married women. The purpose of this organization is to improve knowledge and skills that relate to homemaking.

Definition of Terms

Clothing Instruction: related to the selection, purchasing and maintenance of clothing and fabrics as well as the techniques of clothing construction and alteration. (Good, 1973)

Instructional Unit: subdivision of the curriculum guide which includes behavioral objectives, learning experiences and activities for both student and teacher which provides information and learning for one area of home economics.

Curriculum Guide: basic core of instruction which includes knowledge and skills for assisting teachers in improving instruction in consumer and homemaking education.

High School Graduate: a person who had completed a course of study at a secondary school and had received a diploma attesting to this fact. (Good, 1973).

Life Style: a term used to describe the present pattern of life an individual is following.

Homemakers: single or married women who carry the responsibility of establishing and maintaining a home.

Procedure of the Study

To fulfill the first objective of this study literature was reviewed to form a theoretical background and to identify the concepts and techniques that are available for classroom instruction on the secondary level. Objectives two and three were fulfilled by developing a questionnaire using the concepts and techniques stated in the various curriculum guides for clothing and textile instruction at the secondary level. Since no instrument was available for such information, the researcher undertook the development of such an instrument. To obtain the items for the instrument the following procedure was followed:

- 1) concepts and techniques were identified from the curriculum guides of various state educational agencies,
- 2) a list of these concepts and techniques were compiled from the curriculum guides,
- 3) the list was grouped into four main categories as identified by the curriculum guides: Consumerism, Clothing Selection, Textile Properties and Clothing Construction and Alterations, and
- 4) a trial questionnaire was developed including the selected concepts and techniques cited in the curriculum guides. Duplications and synonymous concepts and techniques were eliminated, therefore shortening the questionnaire to useable and reasonable length.

To further develop the questionnaire and to test for its validity selected faculty of the Clothing, Textile and Merchandising department and the Home Economics Education department at Oklahoma State University were asked to review the questionnaire. Seven young homemakers also

pre-tested the questionnaire. After these revisions were made the questionnaire was administered to the selected larger sample.

The fourth objective was fulfilled by analyzing and evaluating the data of the questionnaire by the use of percentages. These data were used to determine which of the concepts and techniques of clothing instructions were used by the recent high school graduate and which of these concepts were learned in the actual clothing instruction classes. Objective five was fulfilled by making recommendations for preparing clothing instruction classes to further benefit the home economics teachers at the secondary level.

Organization of the Study

This report of research has been organized into five chapters. Chapter I includes the statement and objectives of the study, the procedure used to fulfill the objectives, the limitations, description of the sample and the definition of terms. Chapter II presents a review of current literature. Chapter III includes the procedure used to collect the data of the questionnaire and Chapter IV presents the presentation and analysis of the data. Summary, conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

To better understand the many factors that affect curriculum development of clothing and textiles, it was necessary for the researcher to review current literature to form a background for this study. Emphasis was specifically placed on curriculum development at the state and national levels and the teaching methods used today in our classrooms.

Consumer and Homemaking Education

In 1968 the Vocational Education Amendments defined Consumer and Homemaking Education as "an education to help individuals and families improve home environments and the quality of personal and family life" (Hurt, 1971). Opportunities were to be offered to both boys and girls in acquiring knowledge, attitudes and skills essential for participating concurrently and preparing for roles as family members (Nebraska Vocational Guide, 1972).

The Vocational Educational Amendments defined subject matter areas for classroom instruction, emphasized the re-evaluation of present day programs and provided an opportunity to develop new curriculums. All Home Economists were specifically challenged to develop programs which would include: consumer education as an important part of each subject

matter area; prepare students to meet the dual role of homemaker and wage earner; and to provide relevant learning experiences and objectives to meet the present and future needs of the student (Vocational Education Amendments, 1968).

With the new emphasis on consumerism, clothing and textile instruction at the secondary level was to undergo a transition from the traditional curriculum. People began to focus attention on consumption and on the problems of resource management rather than production (Rice, 1973). The programs were developed with emphasis on sound consumer practices, discriminating judgement, and understanding the influences of responsible consumer action upon personal, family and national economy (New York State Education Guide, 1965).

The emerging emphasis of employment upon our society expanded the traditional objectives of home economics. The traditional preparation of women for the vocation of home and family life and the preparation for employment served as a basis for the development of new home economics curriculums. Programs were challenged to meet the needs of the dual role homemaker and wage earner and to prepare them for adjusting to real life situations.

Women today are managing multiple roles in the home and in the community. Simpson (1971) believes that working women have not abandoned the home--they are simply pursuing two jobs and need realistic preparation for their roles. This trend in the family unit has led to important changes in the clothing and textile curriculums.

The importance and amount of clothing construction in the schools in particular, has become a concern of many educators. Many have felt that clothing construction in our society is passe and greater impor-

tance needs to be placed upon the study of purchasing, selection and care of clothing. With the shift from a production to a consumption society, educators felt that new programs were essential.

With the growing concern about curriculum development, educators both on the state and national level began to evaluate their programs and guidelines in home economics. With the wide variety of students differing in abilities, socio-economic levels and ages, it became clear that the subject matter needed to be organized to meet the needs of these various groups. Objectives and learning experiences had to be selected and planned to provide depth as well as a scope of understanding, thereby leading pupils to understand meaningful ideas based on general truths and to recognize the interrelationships of knowledge (New York State Education Guide, 1965).

Clothing and textile programs were re-organized to provide more meaningful objectives and learning experiences for each individual student. Curriculum guides were developed to base each instructional unit on behavioral objectives. Objectives of the proposed lessons or units were designed to help guide and direct the student in achieving specific goals (Oklahoma Home Economics Education Guide, 1973). It is through this type of instruction that the student is able to evaluate growth and achievement of the subject matter content.

The Concept Approach to Home Economics

In the past the approach to home economics as well as other school subjects has emphasized subject matter content and the development of skills (Massey, 1968). Today the trend in school subjects is toward conceptual organization of content (Massey, 1968). This trend has grown

out of the concern of many educators and the result of their actions.

In 1961 a national curriculum development project was undertaken by the Home Economics Education branch of the Office of Education. Its purpose was to examine the secondary school programs and establish unification of the subject matter areas of home economics. The concept approach to home economics gained extended support and was accepted as the teaching approach by the American Home Economics Association. Educators agreed that the identification of basic concepts and generalizations would provide a structure to the various subject matter areas. Development of a curriculum through unifying concepts would give the curriculum flexibility, permit adjustments to the changing local conditions, provide a basis for sequential learning and facilitate evaluation of the teaching-learning process (American Home Economics Association, 1967).

Tinsley (1967) stated that the identification of basic concepts in home economics and the understanding of the process makes it possible to teach intellectual aspects of the field in a systematic and logical manner. Jerome Bruner (1962) claims that the students are able to see how one idea flows from another and that this concept approach to education will permit individuals to understand, to predict and even change the world in which they live.

The American Home Economics Association (1967) has defined the terms concept and generalization for further clarification for educators. Concepts are abstractions representing the world of objects and events and is a means of organizing them into categories. Concepts reoccur throughout the curriculum in a cumulative and overlapping way (American Home Economics Association, 1967). Tinsley (1967) defined a concept as:

an idea which a person forms in his mind in order to understand and cope with something in his experience. It is composed of meaning and feeling, which may or may not be expressed by words. The concept is a mental image the individual has and it gains meaning as further experiences and learnings occur.

Generalizations express an underlying truth, have an element of universality and usually indicate relationships. Generalizations help give meaning to concepts (American Home Economics Association, 1967). Through the process of thinking and problem solving students are able to arrive at generalizations for himself and then apply them to realistic experiences.

Cognitive learning within the home economics curriculum involves the use of concepts and generalizations. Concepts serve as systems for organizing subject matter, sources for thinking and are pre-determiners of behavior (Tinsley, 1967). Bruner (1963) stated that knowledge organized around concepts makes it easier to recall than a vast array of facts. Thus, through the process of using concepts and generalizations, the student is able to revise his thinking, add additional information and knowledge and possibly change behaviors.

Concluding three years of work, the national curriculum committee identified basic concepts and generalizations for each subject matter area in home economics. The following concepts were identified for the specific area of textiles and clothing by the American Home Economics Association (1967):

- I. Significance of textiles and clothing to the individual in society
 - A. Interrelationship of clothing and culture
 - B. Social and psychological aspects of clothing
 - C. Clothing as a medium for artistic perception, expression and experience

- II. Nature of textiles and clothing
 - A. Textiles
 - B. Garments
- III. Acquisition and use of textiles and clothing
 - A. Selection
 - B. Use and care
 - C. Responsibilities of consumers

Behavioral Objective Approach to Home Economics

In addition to the concept approach in teaching subject matter, educators and curriculum planners have been faced with the difficulty of developing programs in which goals of the students could be satisfactorily evaluated. Educators have turned to the development of more specific objectives known as behavioral or performance objectives, in order to be more specific in stating course goals (McAshan, 1970).

Behavioral objectives have become more important as the student is exposed to an increasing amount of information within the allotted class period. As this information accumulates he needs guidelines set by the teacher to help him select and discriminate among the broad course content possibilities and to know what behavior is expected of him.

Deterline (1968) stated:

If the students were told what the course or class objectives were, in the form of descriptions of at least minimum performance requirements, and were given criterion questions, the entire learning task would suddenly break through so that defineable goals and directions for student activity would clearly be visible . . . This means that studying will become more relevant, time will be more fruitfully spent on appropriate content as each student will have a basis for discriminating his own progress, obstacles and any needs for assistance.

The purpose of an instructional objective is to make clear to both

teacher and student what it is that needs to be taught--and what it is that has been taught (Esbensen, 1967). Popham (1970) states that the teacher who specified his objective in terms of student behavior is able to select appropriate evaluation procedures, for there is little ambiguity with respect to the meaning of the objective. A well written objective identifies three components: 1) an action or what the student can do when evaluated, 2) a content or condition under which the student will be evaluated, and 3) a criterion or level of performance, quantitatively or qualitatively; expected of the student (Mager, 1962).

In Oklahoma, the Division of Vocational Home Economics Education has developed within its curriculum guides a sequence of units based upon behavioral objectives. The behavioral objectives state the goals of the course which provides a sense of direction and accomplishment for the student (Oklahoma Home Economics Education Guide, 1973). These objectives are stated in two forms: Terminal Objectives which state the subject matter to be covered in the unit of instruction and Specific Objectives which state the students performance necessary to reach the Terminal Objectives (Oklahoma Home Economics Education Guide, 1973). Both of these objectives are designed to help the teacher and student better understand the implications and the outcomes of the objectives.

Competency Based Education--Approach to Home Economics

A third approach to classroom instruction has emerged in recent years known as performance-based education (PBE) or competency-based education (CBE). Although during the past five years, most of the experimentations with PBE strategy has been in the pre-service education

of classroom teachers, a widespread interest and awareness has been undertaken by many educators at all levels of education (Massanari, 1973). To better understand this new movement, Elam (1971) states:

In performance-based programs goals are specified, and agreed to, in rigorous detail in advance of instruction. The student must either be able to demonstrate his ability to promote desirable learning or exhibit behaviors known to promote it. He is held accountable, not for passing grades, but for attaining a given level of competency. Emphasis is placed on demonstrated products or output.

It is through the use of this process of instruction that programs are more individualized and personalized. There is a continuous emphasis on feedback and the student is allowed to progress at his own rate with the ability to choose alternatives and options.

In the planning of this program, there is an increasing focus on the formation of behavioral objectives for learning (Elam, 1971). Competencies and performance objectives are highly related in this process. The competency is general and program related and the performance objectives are specific and course related. The mastery of several performance objectives would enable the student to demonstrate a competency referred to as terminal objectives and enabling objectives (Vocational and Applied Arts Education, 1971).

Since this is a new approach to instruction, limited research has been found concerning clothing and textile competencies. However, a study is now in progress by Miller (1974) at Oklahoma State University concerning clothing construction competencies at the college level. It is hoped that once these competencies are identified at the college level, they will serve as a basis in developing programs for the secondary school.

Teaching Clothing and Textiles

The emphasis on skills within the area of clothing and textiles has been a controversial issue in recent years. However, opinions and research findings is as varied as the authors.

In 1959 Beulah Coon revealed from a national study of home economics programs that major emphasis was being placed upon the area of clothing and specifically clothing construction. Educators began to question this particular emphasis by wondering if the proportion of time within an area was well balanced, if too high a priority was being placed on skills in this consumption society and what aspects within an area were relevant and realistic to the needs of today's family. From these concerns many educators took stands concerning the teaching of clothing and textiles and in particular the skills of construction.

Massman (1964) studied the value of clothing instruction of women who had been former students and were now married. She found that clothing and foods rated the highest of the instructional units and that suggestions were made that the time of each of these laboratories needed to be longer in length. Massman (1964) also found in her survey that 70 percent of the students recalled skills more than principles in regard to clothing instruction.

Lockett (1965) found that the young homemakers she surveyed were in high agreement on the following concepts to be included in a clothing and textiles curriculum:

1. Understanding family clothing needs and costs related to family income
2. To learn to construct attractive and appropriate clothing
3. Consumer buying experiences

4. Identify basic fabrics, fabric construction and finishes in relation to use and care
5. Dressing for the occasion.

Maxey (1967) investigated the usefulness of high school clothing classes by surveying young homemakers. She found the participants expressed the benefits of being able to save money, the ability to dress better and being able to judge garments either constructed or ready-made more wisely, as a result of enrolling in clothing courses in high school. Additional training expressed by the subjects included: skills in matching plaids, working with stretch fabrics, selecting durable clothing, caring for clothing and interpreting labels.

In order to better understand the needs of the student, Sands (1967) surveyed a group of recent high school graduates to find out what they valued and what they wanted additional help with concerning the clothing and textile area now that they were out of high school. The study revealed the graduates need for additional help in altering and fitting clothes, selecting clothing for others and being able to recognize and select fabrics wisely. The experiences most highly valued by the graduates was the ability to sew well enough to make their own clothing and to be able to dress attractively.

East (1967) states that clothing construction should not be a part of the required home economics curriculum in the junior high school and should only selectively and occasionally be offered as an elective course in high school. Instead of teaching the old concept of clothing construction, teachers need to emphasize the concept of resources and the process of intelligent utilization (East, 1967). East (1967) believes women today do not have the time to sew and will not waste the time, money and energy to appear in homemade garments. If construction

is to be a part of the secondary program, it should be taught to those who are sincerely interested and want to express their creativeness and individuality and for those who are enrolled in an occupational training program.

Werden (1967) agrees with East (1967), that required clothing construction should be eliminated and also believes that everyone does not want or need to learn to sew. When students are forced to sew too many leave our classrooms hating sewing. Werden's (1967) conclusions are that the emphasis needs rather to be placed upon the:

- a) selection, use and care of clothing--for the family and self,
- b) social and psychological aspects clothing plays for her children and the individual,
- c) aesthetic and health aspects of clothing

The content of home economics must be ready to change in order to meet the coping and transitional needs of the student. If home economics is to be a part of the dynamic school curriculum of the future, teachers need to recognize and identify relevant knowledge and skills in home economics (Massey, 1968). The teacher needs to interpret to her students the continuing emphasis away from construction and toward the selection of clothing and its aesthetic, economic, psychological and social implications (Massey, 1968).

McIlquaham (1969) revealed in her study of high school graduates that the area of clothing and textiles ranked the lowest in comparison to the other areas of instruction in regard to its value at the present time. Within the areas of clothing and textiles, laundering and purchasing were rated the highest in terms of usefulness and social attitudes toward clothing worn on the job ranked considerably lower.

Due to the increasing emphasis on consumerism in our society, Rice

(1973) stated that traditional clothing and textile classes have proceeded with new approaches:

In clothing, the one-day discussion of what kind of fabric to buy for the garment to be made in class grew into a study of how much time it takes to care for various fabrics and how much it costs to dry-clean a garment during its service-life, and to judge when it's worth it . . . Teachers and students analyze the typical expenditures for clothing over the life cycle, and why young people spend more for clothing than they do in later years. We are teaching students not only to read labels but have got them involved in legislation for permanent care labeling. We have got them excited over ecology and the relationship between the kind of detergents they choose and the pollution of our waters (Rice, 1973).

Summary

In summary, this chapter has included a background of current literature related to the factors which affect the development of the high school curriculum. Secondly, studies were reviewed concerning the teaching of clothing and textiles at the secondary level. Chapter III will provide a description of the procedure used for this study.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

The major purpose of this study was to examine what the recent high school graduate feels is relevant and useful to her present life style concerning clothing and textiles, and to survey what she has learned in her high school clothing classes. The objectives of the study were to: 1) identify the concepts and techniques which are currently proposed in the curriculum guides for high school students enrolled in clothing classes; 2) identify the clothing concepts and techniques used by the high school graduate; 3) identify the subject matter that was learned by these individuals; 4) analyze and evaluate the data received from the questionnaire and determine which concepts and techniques were used by the graduate and which concepts were learned in a clothing class; and 5) to make recommendations, on the basis of the data collected, which might help the home economics teacher prepare classroom clothing instruction to meet the present and future needs of the students.

Development of the Instrument

The writer developed a questionnaire to discover which of the clothing concepts and techniques the high school graduate used in her life style today and which of these she learned while enrolled in clothing classes in high school. To obtain the items for the instrument

the following procedure was followed:

1) concepts and techniques were identified from the curriculum guides which were available for the researcher from the following state educational agencies: New York (1965), Nebraska (1972), New Mexico (1961), Oklahoma (1973) and Illinois (1966),

2) a list of the concepts and techniques were compiled from these curriculum guides,

3) the list was sorted and grouped into four main categories as identified by the curriculum guides: Consumerism, Clothing Selection, Textile Properties and Clothing Construction and Alterations,

4) a trial questionnaire was formed including selected concepts and techniques cited in the curriculum guides. Duplications and synonymous concepts and techniques were eliminated therefore shortening the questionnaire to useable and reasonable length.

When the questionnaire was completed, selected faculty of the Clothing, Textile and Merchandising department and the Home Economics Education department at Oklahoma State University were asked to review the questionnaire to test for its validity and clarity. As a result of this evaluation, the researcher made minor adjustments in the phraseology of the questions and also added three attitude questions at the end of the questionnaire in order to allow the subjects an opportunity to add additional comments if they so desired.

Before the researcher administered the questionnaire to the subjects of the study, a pre-test was conducted with five young homemakers who met the stated criteria and two who had graduated prior to the stated years of graduation. A letter and questionnaire was mailed to each with a self addressed and stamped envelope for their reply. After

two weeks all seven questionnaires had been returned. They were reviewed for any modifications or changes before being administered to the larger sample. There were no changes made to the questionnaire after the pre-test.

Selection of the Participants

The population for this study consisted of selected women who had graduated from high school between the years of 1969 thru 1973 and who were active members of the Young Homemakers of Oklahoma. In order to obtain information in selecting the sample, a letter (Appendix A, page 60) was sent to Mrs. Lenorah Polk, State Advisor of YHO, to acquire the number of active chapters, identify their main advisors and to determine the number of active members of each chapter. Mrs. Polk supplied the requested information.

To acquire further information regarding the age of the members, a letter (Appendix A, page 61) and self addressed post card was mailed to 59 YHO advisors and two were personally contacted by telephone. A total of 61 YHO advisors were contacted. The purpose of these contacts was to ask the advisor if any or all of their active members had graduated in the specified five year period, if it was felt these women would be willing to participate in the study and also if she, as the advisor, would be willing to administer the questionnaire to these selected women and return the completed questionnaires. Twenty-three post cards were received after three weeks which indicated 49 willing participants for the study. The researcher therefore decided to contact the remainder of the advisors by a follow-up telephone call to hasten the responses rather than sending a follow-up letter. After the completion of the

telephone contacts an additional 41 participants were made available which brought the total to 90 possible participants for the study.

During the week of March 4, 1974, a letter (Appendix A, page 62) of acknowledgement was sent to each of the participating advisors along with the specified number of questionnaires requested and a self addressed and stamped envelope. After five weeks 38.8 percent (35) of the questionnaires had been returned. During the second week of April the researcher decided to contact the participating advisors by a follow-up telephone call. The purpose of the call was to inquire if the advisors and their groups were still interested in participating in the study or if the questionnaires had been recently sent. During the following two weeks an additional 12 questionnaires were returned bringing the total response to 52 percent.

A final telephone call was made to four YHO advisors during the week of April 22, 1974, to once again inquire of their intentions in participating in the study. Eleven more questionnaires were received the following week which brought the total response to 54 (60 percent) participants.

Analysis of Data

Upon the return of the 54 questionnaires the responses were hand tabulated and recorded in two separate groups. Group A were those graduates who indicated in the questionnaire they had learned the identified concepts and techniques while enrolled in high school clothing classes. In contrast, Group B were those who indicated they had not learned these identical concepts and techniques related to clothing and textiles while enrolled in high school clothing classes. The data were

analyzed by comparing the two groups of respondents. By comparing the two groups, the writer attempted to identify whether there was a difference in the use of the clothing concepts and techniques related to what was taught in the clothing classes.

The percentages used in this analysis were found by dividing the number of responses to each statement by the number of women responding to each question. Tables were also developed for some of the structured questions. The data was presented under the following divisions: description of the subjects, the four main areas of the questionnaire: Methods of Consumer Information, Clothing Selection, Fabric Properties and Clothing Construction and Alterations; and Responses Concerning Clothing Instruction in High School.

Summary

Chapter III has described the procedure of this research study. Information has been included concerning the development of the instrument, selection of the participants and the analysis of the data. Chapter IV will include a non-statistical analysis of the data.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter includes the presentation and analysis of the data gathered through the use of a questionnaire. The questionnaire which was developed and used is presented in Appendix B, page 63.

In an attempt to identify the concepts and techniques of clothing instruction used by recent high school graduates and those concepts that were learned in clothing classes an analysis of the responses were made. The total responses (54) of the study were recorded and analyzed in two separate groups (Group A and Group B). Group A were those graduates who indicated they had learned the identified concepts and techniques while in high school clothing classes and Group B were those who indicated they had not learned these same concepts and techniques while enrolled in clothing classes in high school. By showing the relationship between these two groups of respondents, this researcher was attempting to identify whether there was a difference in the use of clothing concepts and techniques and what was taught in the clothing classes. This information may be used in the future planning of the clothing and textile curriculum for the secondary level.

The analysis of the data in this chapter is not statistical by nature, but is presented in a manner to show relationships and general tendencies of selected clothing concepts and techniques taught at the high school level. The percentages used in this analysis were found

by dividing the number of responses to each statement by the number of women responding to each question.

The first section of this chapter provides a brief description of the subjects, followed by an analysis of the four sections of the questionnaire. The final section presents suggestions by the subjects for assistance in planning for effective and efficient clothing and textile programs for the high school level.

Description of Subjects

The subjects for the study included 54 active members of the Young Homemakers of Oklahoma. These women were all high school graduates between the years of 1969 and 1973. The largest number of subjects (21) graduated in 1969. Seven graduated each in the years 1970, 1972 and 1973, while 12 received their high school diplomas in 1971.

When asked about their marital status, 44 (81.4 percent) indicated they were presently married. Two (3.7 percent) stated they were presently divorced and eight (14.8 percent) were single. Thirty (56 percent) of the 44 women who stated they were married reported a total of 37 children between the ages of two weeks and five years.

From those who responded to question four of the Personal Data Sheet (Appendix B, page 69), 23 women stated that they were employed part time or full time. Table I, page 26, provides information on the positions presently held by the subjects.

Of the 54 women asked to complete the sheet on personal information 32 (59.2 percent) of the subjects stated that they presently were living in a rural or farm situation. The remainder of the respondents are presently making their homes in a city or urban area.

TABLE I
PRESENT TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTED
BY THE RESPONDENTS

Types of Employment	Number of Respondents
Teacher	4
Bookkeeper	2
Salesclerk	2
Teacher's Aide	2
Office Clerk	2
Secretary	2
Lithographer	1
Babysitter	1
Loader and Scaler	1
Custodian	1
Dental Assistant	1
Data Processer	1
Food Service Worker	1
Sewing Machine Operator	1
Nurse's Aide	1
Total Number Employed	23

To meet the criteria for this study, the subjects had to have completed at least one semester of home economics at the secondary level. Question six of the Personal Data Sheet (Appendix B, page 69) of the questionnaire requested the subjects to indicate at the grades in high school they completed clothing instruction classes. Table II provides this information.

TABLE II
GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL IN WHICH THE RESPONDENTS
COMPLETED CLOTHING INSTRUCTION CLASSES

Grades in High School	Number of Respondents
Freshman	46
Sophomore	45
Junior	37
Senior	37

Table II indicates that more of the respondents in this study had enrolled in home economics classes during their freshman and sophomore years rather than their last two years of high school.

Concepts and Methods of Consumer Information
In Relation to Clothing

The emphasis on consumer information is becoming an ever increasing

part of the home economics curriculum. The home economics teacher, with the help of curriculum guides, is helping the student develop wise buying habits and to become more aware of consumer rights and responsibilities. The first ten questions used in this study were related to specific consumer information concepts regarding the buying of clothing items. Table III, page 29, indicates the questions asked in the study and the breakdown of percentages concerning the use of consumer information by Group A, who stated they had learned this information while enrolled in high school clothing classes and Group B, who stated they had not learned this information while enrolled in high school clothing classes. Table III points out the differences of consumer information concepts used by the two groups of respondents.

The responses to question one concerning the reading of hangtags and labels indicated that over 80 percent of the respondents in Group A and Group B either "always" or "sometimes" read labels for information concerning the fiber content (Group A - 90 percent, Group B - 81 percent); care (Group A - 100 percent, Group B - 100 percent) and shrinkage (Group A - 90 percent, Group B-93 percent). The use of care information on the hangtags ranked the highest of the information sought on the labels by both groups of respondents while the manufacturers' name and address ranked the lowest by Group A (nine percent) and Group B (three percent). When seeking information on clothing labels it is apparent from the results that care and upkeep of the garments was the first priority of the respondents and the name of the manufacturer and address was the last concern identified by the respondents. The high concern for care instructions on the label also related directly to question six. The terms dry clean (Group A - 100 percent, Group B - 94

TABLE III
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF GROUPS A AND B TO
SELECTED CONSUMER INFORMATION CONCEPTS
IN RELATION TO CLOTHING

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A				Total No. Responses	Group B			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
When seeking information do you read:										
1. Hangtags/labels for:										
1.1 fiber content	43	49	42	9	0	11	36	45	9	9
1.2 care	42	83	17	0	0	12	83	17	0	0
1.3 manufacturer	23	9	26	48	17	31	3	25	39	32
1.4 brand name	26	31	50	15	4	28	25	39	21	14
1.5 special finishes	35	26	49	17	8	19	11	21	53	16
1.6 guarantees	40	55	25	17	2	14	29	14	43	14
1.7 shrinkage	41	75	15	10	0	13	62	31	8	0
2. Extension bulletins	23	4	57	26	13	31	6	35	29	29
3. Magazines/ads	24	33	63	4	0	30	20	57	13	10
4. Ask sales personnel for help	29	14	62	24	0	25	8	56	28	8
5. Flammability labels on:										
1.1 childrens wear	26	62	15	15	8	28	46	32	11	11
1.2 sleepwear	24	63	21	13	4	30	47	20	20	13
1.3 linens	22	55	27	14	5	32	16	19	28	38

TABLE III (Continued)

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A				Total No. Responses	Group B			
		Percent Responding					Percent Responding			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
6. Labels to see if the garment is:										
1.1 permanent press	40	88	12	0	0	14	93	7	0	0
1.2 colorfast	45	71	22	7	0	9	89	11	0	0
1.3 water repellent	35	29	43	29	0	19	21	37	32	11
1.4 pre-shrunk	43	67	26	7	0	11	73	27	0	0
1.5 dry cleanable	38	89	11	0	0	16	81	13	6	0
1.6 washable	44	98	2	0	0	10	100	0	0	0
7. Use a family clothing budget	33	9	24	33	33	21	0	14	19	67
8. Read Ads	26	38	42	19	0	28	7	39	25	29
9. Use Credit	21	0	38	24	38	33	9	48	18	24
10. Look into the Aspects of Credit	24	29	38	21	13	30	10	30	37	23

* Due to rounding all percentages may not equal 100%.

** Group A - graduates who indicated they had learned the identified clothing concepts.
Group B - graduates who indicated they had not learned the identified clothing concepts.

percent) and washable (Group A - 93 percent, Group B - 100 percent) were strongly agreed to by both groups as terms they looked for either "always" or "sometimes" when reading labels.

When answering the first question concerning the reading of labels 25 percent of Group A and 69 percent of Group B "seldom" or "never" read labels concerning "special finishes". However, when comparing this to question six, special finishes such as permanent press (Group A - 100 percent, Group B - 100 percent), colorfast (Group A - 93 percent, Group B - 100 percent) and pre-shrunk (Group A - 93 percent, Group B - 100 percent) were terms looked for either "always" or "sometimes" by over 90 percent of the respondents of both groups. The differences in responses may be due to the fact that the phrase "special finishes" was misleading to this sample. It appears that whether the women did or did not learn these terms in high school they can recognize and use these specific terms when reading labels and hangtags.

Today the consumer is confronted with numerous types of media. Before buying a product or service it is the consumer's responsibility to examine the product or service and obtain as much information as necessary to make a wise decision. Questions two, three and four were related to methods used when seeking information about a product and its expectations. The sources of information used by Groups A and B were ranked in the following order. Magazines and advertisements, which were used "always" or "sometimes" by Group A (96 percent) and Group B (77 percent) ranked the highest of the sources of information used. The use of salespersonnel and the use of extension bulletins and pamphlets ranked second and third respectively by both groups in terms of sources of information used when buying products and services.

The data revealed in question five that the respondents in both Group A (77 percent) and Group B (78 percent) looked either "always" or "sometimes" for labels concerned with the flammability on children's clothing. This may be related to the fact that 30 (56 percent) of the women had children between the ages of two weeks and five years and the remaining women were of child bearing age. In regard to the flammability of linens, Table III indicated a difference between the two groups. Of the respondents who had learned about flammability of linens in high school, 82 percent look for this either "always" or "sometimes" whereas only 35 percent of the respondents in Group B either "always" or "sometimes" look for these same labels on linens. The respondents of Group A appear to "carry over" this knowledge when shopping for linens, whereas the respondents of Group B first may need to be made aware of this feature.

The use of a clothing budget apparently is not felt to be very useful to either group of respondents. Sixty-six percent of the respondents in Group A and 86 percent in Group B "seldom" or "never" plan a clothing budget for themselves or their family.

Using credit is an easy method of obtaining purchases if ready cash is not available. Understanding the many aspects of credit and the actual use of credit are considered in questions nine and ten. The data implies that for those who had learned about credit in high school (Group A) 67 percent now either "always" or "sometimes" look into the aspects of credit. Also there appears to be a direct relationship to the use of credit in which case 38 percent of Group A "always" or "sometimes" actually use credit. From this information, there appears to be a trend that suggests that the more the respondents in Group A

looked into the aspects of credit the less they used it. In regard to the responses of Group B, 40 percent indicated they "always" or "sometimes" looked into the aspects of credit and 57 percent "always" or "sometimes" used credit.

Becoming more aware of consumer aids and using manufacturers' labels and hangtags can be most beneficial when purchasing products and services. Over 60 percent of both groups of respondents have indicated that they "always" or "sometimes" use consumer aids such as magazines and sales personnel. Hangtags and labels supplied by the manufacturer also appeared to be used as sources of information by many of the respondents. When reading these labels over 80 percent of both groups indicated that they "always" or "sometimes" look for care, fiber content and shrinkage information on the garment hangtag or label. Credit which is available to many today was used by a larger percentage of respondents who had not learned about it in high school than those who had.

Clothing Selection Concepts

Section two of the questionnaire related to various clothing selection concepts that may be considered by the individual in wardrobe planning and selection. In regard to this section, Table IV, page 34, provides the responses, in percentages, of the two groups of high school graduates surveyed in this study.

Questions 11, 12 and 13 all are related to the outward appearance of the garment which involves one's figure type, applied designs and the basic art elements. Data presented in Table IV, page 34, reveals that in all three questions over 89 percent of the total group of respondents (54) in the study, indicated that they had learned these three concepts

TABLE IV
 COMPARISON OF THE RESPONSES OF GROUPS A AND B TO
 SELECTED CLOTHING SELECTION CONCEPTS
 RELATED TO CLOTHING

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A Percent Responding				Total No. Responses	Group B Percent Responding			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
When selecting clothing do you:										
11. consider figure type	51	63	31	6	0	3	33	67	0	0
12. consider appropriate style and design	48	77	19	4	0	6	50	50	0	0
13. consider basic art guidelines	50	54	36	8	2	4	25	50	25	0
14. follow current fads	23	9	35	43	13	31	6	65	23	6
15. follow current fashions	30	33	60	6	0	24	21	67	8	4
16. plan for more than one season	44	59	34	7	0	10	50	40	10	0
17. plan useage of available accessories	46	48	43	7	2	8	13	50	38	0

* All percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding off of numbers.

** Group A - graduates who indicated they had learned the identified clothing concepts.
 Group B - graduates who indicated they had not learned the identified clothing concepts.

while enrolled in high school clothing classes. More than 90 percent of these respondents also indicated they "always" or "sometimes" consider and use this knowledge when selecting garments. On the other hand, 100 percent of those graduates in Group B who stated they had not learned this information in high school indicated they "always" or "sometimes" considered one's figure type (question 11) and the design and style (question 12) of garments when making selections. It appears from the data that whether or not the respondents learned this information in high school they frequently consider these concepts when making selections. It should be pointed out that those respondents who did learn these concepts in high school appear to retain and use their knowledge.

Today the style of clothes change rapidly. The consumer must make decisions; oftentimes in the light of her resources, regarding the "life" of a garment in terms of style. Questions 14 and 15 of the study are related to the acceptance of fads and fashions. In regard to fads, 56 percent of the respondents in Group A "seldom" or "never" follow current fads while 29 percent of the respondents in Group B "seldom" or "never" follow current fads. In relation to current fashions, 93 percent of the respondents in Group A and 88 percent in Group B both follow current fashions either "always" or "sometimes". Although there was a small number of women who had learned about fads in high school, they appear to follow them less than those who did not study about fads in high school.

Questions 16 and 17 refer to the planning of garment selection and the versatility of clothing and accessories. Over 80 percent of the total respondents surveyed (54) indicated that they had learned in

high school how to plan garments to be used for more than one season (question 16) and how to plan in using available accessories (question 17). Of the respondents in Group A, over 90 percent use this knowledge when planning for garment selection. Due to this high relationship between questions 16 and 17, it appears that the graduates of Group A put into practice those concepts related to clothing selection that were taught during high school by the home economics teacher.

Clothing selection concepts taught in high school appear to be useful as well as practical for the respondents in this study. Over 80 percent of the total respondents in this study indicated that they were taught five of the seven listed concepts while enrolled in high school clothing classes. The responses to question 14 of Table IV, page 34, which concerns fads, appears to have received less emphasis in instruction during high school. Fifty-seven percent of the total group surveyed stated they had not learned how to select and follow fads while enrolled in high school clothing classes. Since the styles of clothing change so rapidly, this may be some indication of the need to place more emphasis in the curriculum on the selection and practicality in following fads.

Fabric Selection and Preparation Concepts in Relation to Clothing

The choice of fabric and its preparation before construction are important factors to consider for achieving success in a clothing project. In the third section of the study, the researcher attempted to seek information about the practices the consumer uses when selecting fabrics for construction. Table V, page 38, presents the findings for

this section of the questionnaire.

Questions 18 and 19 refer to sources of information the respondents may use when buying fabrics. When reading labels for information about fabrics, care was designated as the highest concern by both groups of respondents. Eighty-seven percent of Group A and 100 percent of Group B indicated that they "always" read labels for care information. Both groups appeared to agree that their first three concerns when reading labels was to "always" or "sometimes" seek information about care (Group A - 100 percent, Group B - 100 percent), fiber content (Group A - 98 percent, Group B - 72 percent) and shrinkage (Group A - 95 percent, Group B - 60 percent). Reading labels for the manufacturer's name and address was "seldom" or "never" looked for by Groups A (46 percent) and B (87 percent).

It should be noted that the above four concerns regarding fabric properties and those stated concerning consumer information concepts (Table III, page 29) of the study are identical. In both instances, whether the respondents buy their clothing ready-made or shop for fabrics for construction, they read labels for care, fiber content and shrinkage and "seldom" or "never" look at the manufacturers' name and address.

Today due to technology, we have a wide variety of fabrics available for purchase. Examining the fabric for construction, workmanship and outward appearance are referred to in question 20, 21 and 22. Over 80 percent of the respondents in both Groups A and B implied that they "always" or "sometimes" examine fabric's for construction and weave, flaws, the weight of the fabric, raveling and the appropriateness of fabrics to the pattern style. It appears that whether the women did or

TABLE V
 COMPARISON OF GROUPS A AND B TO SELECTED
 CONCEPTS CONCERNING FABRIC
 SELECTION AND PREPARATION

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A Percent Responding				Total No. Responses	Group B Percent Responding			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
When selecting fabrics do you:										
18. Read hangtags/labels for:										
1.1 fiber content	46	63	35	2	0	7	29	43	29	0
1.2 care	47	87	13	0	0	6	100	0	0	0
1.3 manufacturer name	28	18	36	32	14	24	0	13	29	58
1.4 brand name	36	25	58	11	6	17	6	29	29	35
1.5 special finishes	38	34	45	18	3	13	8	46	23	23
1.6 guarantees	34	56	32	9	3	17	18	24	24	35
1.7 shrinkage	42	71	24	3	3	10	50	10	10	30
19. Ask sales personnel for help	40	20	58	18	5	13	0	54	38	8
20. Examine the fabric construction	43	70	28	2	0	5	60	20	20	0
21. Examine the appearance of the applied design	42	74	14	12	0	8	0	50	25	25

TABLE V (Continued)

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A				Total No. Responses	Group B			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
22. Examine:										
1.1 grainline	45	33	40	22	4	4	25	25	25	25
1.2 bias	44	27	39	30	5	5	0	40	40	20
1.3 selvage	44	36	34	27	2	5	0	20	40	40
1.4 flaws	43	77	19	5	0	6	67	33	0	0
1.5 weight of fabric	41	63	27	10	0	7	71	14	14	0
1.6 hand/draping	35	37	37	23	3	14	29	29	21	21
1.7 raveling	44	66	23	11	0	5	40	40	20	0
1.8 pattern style	40	88	8	5	0	6	50	50	0	0
23. Straighten fabric before cutting	47	55	32	11	2	2	50	0	0	50
24. Pre-shrink fabric before cutting	43	33	37	21	9	4	0	50	25	25

* All percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding off of numbers.

** Group A - graduates who indicated they had learned the identified clothing concepts.
 Group B - graduates who indicated they had not learned the identified clothing concepts.

did not learn these concepts in high school they are practiced by over 80 percent of the total group.

In regard to examining the bias of fabrics, 66 percent of Group A and only 40 percent of Group B "always" or "sometimes" examine the bias when selecting fabrics for construction. There was a similar difference between the two groups when asked about the examination of the selvage of the fabric. Seventy percent of Group A revealed they "always" or "sometimes" examine the selvage of the fabric. In contrast, 20 percent of Group B "always" or "sometimes" look at the selvage of the fabric when selections of fabric are made.

In summary, the concepts related to fabric selection and preparation appear to be very useful to those respondents to Group A. Their responses indicated that 18 of the 20 listed concepts and practices in Table V, page 38, are "always" or "sometimes" used by over 70 percent of the group. For those respondents in Group B, 15 of the 20 listed concepts and practices are "always" or "sometimes" used by at least 50 percent of the respondents.

Clothing Construction and Alteration Concepts

The fourth section of the questionnaire refers to the subject matter areas of clothing construction and alterations. Table VI, page 41, provides the responses, in percentages, of the two groups of respondents surveyed.

The respondents were asked to indicate in the first question of this section (question 25) the number of clothes they make and the types of garments they construct. From the 51 respondents who answered the

TABLE VI
 COMPARISON OF GROUPS A AND B TO SELECTED
 CLOTHING CONSTRUCTION AND
 ALTERATION CONCEPTS

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A Percent Responding				Total No. Responses	Group B Percent Responding			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
When constructing garments do you:										
26. Select appropriate pattern for you ability	44	70	30	0	0	8	63	25	0	12
27. Examine pattern for:										
1.1 yardage	53	94	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	100
1.2 notions	49	90	10	0	0	3	33	33	0	33
1.3 layout techniques	50	56	32	8	4	2	0	50	0	50
1.4 suggested fabrics	50	64	26	10	0	1	0	0	0	100
28. Recognize alterations and adjust patterns for proper fit	45	56	33	9	2	7	43	0	29	29
29. Cut with the grain	49	82	18	0	0	3	67	0	0	33
30. Mark fabric to prevent visibility on right side	48	77	21	0	2	3	100	0	0	0
31. Recognize sewing machine problems	35	49	40	9	3	16	13	50	31	6

TABLE VI (Continued)

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A Percent Responding				Total No. Responses	Group B Percent Responding			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
32. Press garments as you sew	47	57	32	6	4	4	25	50	25	0
33. Follow pattern guide	47	77	23	0	0	4	50	25	25	0
34. Use interfacing	45	16	62	18	4	6	17	50	33	0
35. Use seam finishes:										
1.1 plain seam	46	63	35	2	0	5	0	60	20	20
1.2 pinked seam	41	7	44	37	12	10	0	20	40	40
1.3 overcast seam	33	3	30	48	18	13	0	15	23	62
1.4 lapped seam	31	3	29	52	16	17	0	12	24	65
1.5 French seam	32	3	34	38	25	17	0	6	29	65
36. Use closures:										
1.1 bound buttonholes	39	8	26	33	33	11	0	9	27	64
1.2 machine buttonholes	43	37	44	14	5	8	38	50	13	0
1.3 snaps/fasteners	45	22	71	7	0	6	17	83	0	0
1.4 zippers	47	62	36	2	0	4	50	50	0	0
37. Apply hemming finishes:										
1.1 catch stitch	36	11	69	11	8	14	7	7	7	79

TABLE VI (Continued)

Concepts	Total No. Responses	Group A Percent Responding				Total No. Responses	Group B Percent Responding			
		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never		Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1.2 slip stitch	43	37	60	2	0	7	0	14	14	71
1.3 running/invisible stitch	37	19	51	19	11	13	0	15	23	62
1.4 machine stitched	20	5	40	30	25	28	0	7	18	75
1.5 fuseable materials	11	9	36	36	18	12	0	17	33	50

* All percentages may not equal 100% due to the rounding off of numbers.

** Group A - graduates who indicated they had learned the identified clothing concepts.
Group B - graduates who indicated they had not learned the identified clothing concepts.

question, 1125 garments were recorded. The types of garments constructed and the number of responses by the subjects are presented in Table VII, page 45.

Questions 26, 27, and 28 of the questionnaire referred to the pattern selection and its use. Of all the women who responded to these three questions over 85 percent indicated that they had learned how to select and use a pattern for clothing construction while enrolled in high school clothing classes. Also those who were recorded and identified in Group A, over 87 percent implied that they "always" or "sometimes" used these concepts and techniques.

Accuracy in cutting and marking the garment is a necessity if the finished garment is to duplicate the design of the pattern. Questions 29 and 30 specifically refer to these two processes. Ninety-four percent of those who responded to these two questions indicated that they had learned these two processes while enrolled in high school clothing classes. In particular, for those respondents of Group A, more than 98 percent "always" or "sometimes" cut the fabric with the grain and mark it with proper methods. From the proceeding results of questions 26 through 30, it appears that at least 87 percent of the respondents who had indicated they had learned these concepts and practices in high school "always" or "sometimes" use them when constructing garments.

Unit construction techniques are referred to in questions 32 through 37. Questions 32, 33 and 34 are specifically related to the basic sewing steps used in construction. The responses in Table VI, page 42, indicate that over 65 percent of the respondents in both Groups A and B "always" or "sometimes" press their garments as they sew, follow the

pattern guide sheet and use interfacing.

TABLE VII
TYPES OF GARMENTS CONSTRUCTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Types of Garments	Number of Responses
Dresses	46
Blouses	36
Skirts	31
Play Clothes	30
Outerwear	23
Loungewear	12
Men's Wear	8
Lingerie	6
Slacks/Pants	6
Children's Wear	1
Drapes/Curtains	1

In regard to using the various seam finishes (question 35) more than 62 percent of the respondents in Groups A and B indicated they "seldom" or "never" use the overcast, lapped or French seam finishes when constructing clothing. Although more than 65 percent of the women who responded to the use of these three seam finishes learned about

them in high school they frequently do not use them. It is difficult to conclude why these seam finishes are not frequently used.

Finishing the garment with a neat and inconspicuous hem can make the difference in the over all appearance of the finished garment. The ability to use various hemming stitches or materials to suit the fabrics weight and design are referred to in question 37. At least 80 percent of Group A indicated that they "always" or "sometimes" use the catch or slip stitch in hemming garments. In contrast, 14 percent or less of the respondents in Group B indicated they "always" or "sometimes" use the catch, machine or slip stitches when hemming garments.

In regard to the use of fuseable hemming materials, Table VI, page 43, implies that 52 percent of the women who responded to this question indicated they had not learned about this method while in clothing classes in high school. However, of those 11 women who responded in Group A, 54 percent indicated they "seldom" or "never" use fuseable hemming materials when constructing clothes.

In summary, it appears that the women surveyed in this study sew frequently. Their responses have indicated that 18 of the 26 listed concepts and techniques of this section of the questionnaire were learned in high school clothing classes by over 75 percent of the respondents. The basic steps in selecting and using a pattern, cutting, marking and pressing the fabric pieces are used "always" or "sometimes" by over 85 percent of the women who learned about these in high school. Seam finishes such as the overcast, lapped and French are used less frequently by both groups as are the running and hemming stiches.

Opinions and Suggestions by Respondents
Concerning Clothing Instruction Classes

It was the attempt of the researcher to allow the respondents of the study to acknowledge what they considered the most and least beneficial areas of clothing and textiles to have learned while enrolled in high school clothing classes. Question 38 (Appendix B, page 68) of the study, which contained three open-ended questions was designed to allow for such opinions. Also the respondents were given the opportunity to express their own suggestions for assisting home economics teachers in planning relevant and beneficial clothing programs for the high school level. Tables VIII, IX and X (Appendix C, page 70) provide the results of their responses.

The first part of question 38 concerns the subject matter considered the most beneficial by the respondents. "Learning how to sew", "purchasing and selecting fabrics", "ability to read and use patterns" and "practicing good sewing habits" were four of the areas considered most beneficial. In contrast, "learning about various seam finishes", "making bound buttonholes" and "hand basting" were considered least beneficial practices to have learned in high school.

When asked for suggestions about providing relevant programs, the respondents mentioned areas and techniques such as "stressing basic rules of sewing", "letting the student progress at their own rate", "teaching tailoring" and "encouraging new and shorter methods of construction." Table X (Appendix C, page 73) provides further information regarding the responses to this question.

Summary

Chapter IV has provided a detailed presentation and analysis of the data for this study. The summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study will be presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was undertaken in an attempt to identify selected concepts and techniques of clothing instruction used by recent high school graduates. An attempt was also made to survey which of the identified concepts and techniques were learned in a high school clothing class. The objectives of the study were to: 1) identify the concepts and techniques which are currently proposed in the curriculum guides for high school students enrolled in clothing classes; 2) identify the clothing concepts and techniques used by the high school graduate; 3) identify the subject matter that was learned by these individuals; 4) analyze and evaluate the data received from the questionnaire and determine which concepts and techniques are used by the graduate and which concepts were learned in a clothing class; and 5) to make any recommendations, on the basis of the data collected, which might help the home economics teacher prepare classroom clothing instruction to meet the present and future needs of the students.

The sample selected for this study was identified and limited to selected women who had graduated from high school between the years of 1969 thru 1973 and who were active members of the Young Homemakers of Oklahoma. In order to obtain participants, all the YHO advisors of the present 61 active chapters within the state were contacted. The advisors were asked if any or all of their active members had graduated

in the specified five year period, if she felt these women would be willing to participate in the study, and if she the advisor, would be willing to administer the questionnaire to these selected women and return them by mail. A final response of 54 (60 percent) of the possible 90 participants were surveyed in this study.

Upon the return of the 54 questionnaires the responses were hand tabulated and recorded into two separate groups; Group A and Group B. Group A were identified as those who indicated that they had learned the identified concepts and techniques while enrolled in high school clothing classes and Group B were those who indicated they had not learned these identical concepts and techniques while in high school clothing classes.

The data were analyzed and computed into percentages by dividing the number of responses to each statement by the number of women responding to each question. A comparison of the responses of the two groups was made. By showing the relationship between the two groups, it was the attempt of the writer to identify whether there is a difference in the use of the clothing concepts and techniques and what was learned in the clothing classes.

Summary

The women who participated in this study were high school graduates between the years of 1969 thru 1973. Twenty-one stated they had graduated in 1969, seven each in the years 1970, 1972 and 1973, and 12 received their high school diplomas in 1971. Of the 44 women who stated they were presently married, 30 indicated they had children between the ages of two weeks and five years of age. Twenty-three

stated they were employed either part time or full time and over one-half of the respondents stated they presently were living in a rural or farm situation.

The data revealed that when reading hangtags and labels over 80 percent of the respondents in both Groups A and B look for information regarding the care, shrinkage and fiber content of the garments. Looking for the manufacturers' name and address was of least concern indicated by both Groups A and B.

Over 60 percent of both groups indicated they frequently use consumer information aids such as magazines and sales personnel when purchasing ready-to-wear garments. Extension bulletins were not used frequently by either group.

In regard to clothing selection, over 80 percent of the total group of respondents indicated that they were taught to: "consider one's figure type", "consider the appropriateness of style and design of garments", "consider the basic art guidelines", "plan garments for more than one season" and to "plan for the use of available accessories" when making clothing selections.

Basic skills in pattern selection and use, methods of cutting, and marking were used by more than 85 percent of the women in both groups. The use of seam finishes such as the overcast, lapped and French seams, and various methods of hemming finishes as the machine and running stitches were not as widely used by either group. Although many were taught how to use these seam finishes and hemming stitches in clothing classes very few actually followed through in the actual useage.

The final question of the study was an open-ended question designed to allow the participants to give their opinions about the clothing

units they had while in high school and what suggestions they could offer to make the present programs more relevant and beneficial to the high school student.

"Learning how to sew", "learning how to purchase and select fabrics", "the ability to read and use patterns", and "practicing good sewing habits" were identified as areas considered most beneficial to the participants while enrolled in high school. "Learning about various seam finishes", "making bound buttonholes" and "hand basting" were identified as some of the least beneficial practices learned while enrolled in high school clothing classes.

When asked for suggestions for planning future programs, the respondents stated the need for "stressing basic rules of sewing", "letting the student progress at their own rate", "encouraging the students to make clothing they will wear", "teach tailoring", "encouraging new and shorter methods of construction" and "learning about current fashion trends".

Conclusions and Recommendations for Developing Clothing and Textile Units

Because of the infrequent use of extension bulletins by the respondents, it would seem to indicate from the results of the study that more emphasis needs to be placed on the introduction and use of extension materials in the classes and an awareness developed of their availability to the general public.

From the analysis of the data there appears to be a need for instruction in relation to the use of credit. For those graduates who had not learned about credit in high school, a higher percentage did

not look into the aspects of credit but indicated they used credit frequently. With the increasing trend by consumers to "buy now and pay later" more emphasis in the home economics classroom may need to be placed on the pro's and con's of credit buying.

Many of the clothing selection concepts identified in the questionnaire appear to be useful as well as practical for this group of respondents. However, learning how to wisely choose and follow current fads appears to have received less emphasis in the high school clothing classes. Since many of the respondents indicated they usually follow current fads there may be a need in the clothing classes to spend more time in studying and examining how current fads can be wisely chosen to last longer than the initial period of popularity.

Fabric selection and preparation and the basic clothing construction skills appear to be taught by a majority of home economics teachers in the high schools of the respondents. Reading the consumer information on the fabric bolts, examining the fabric for appearance and preparing it for construction by straightening and pre-shrinking are all frequent practices reported by both groups of respondents. The data revealed that whether the women did or did not learn these concepts relating to fabric properties and basic clothing construction in high school, they are practiced by many of them when selecting fabrics for construction.

From the analysis of the data the respondents indicated the infrequent use of specific seam and hemming finishes. The amount of time needed to make these finishes, the type of materials they are using or the actual skill needed in making these may all be reasons for their infrequent use.

In the final open-ended question of the study, a majority of the responses were concerned with the construction of clothing and very little was mentioned about the continuance of knowledge in the areas of consumer information, purchasing ready-to-wear clothing and the care and upkeep of clothing. Experiences may need to be continued or included in the present programs for the mentioned areas and concerns of the respondents, however, understanding fabrics in relation to buying and constructing of clothes and care may need to be stressed in the home economics classroom.

Recommendations for Further Study

After completing the study and analyzing the data, the researcher wishes to make the following suggestions for further studies:

- 1) That a comparative study, using similar clothing and textile concepts and techniques, be made between the high school home economics teachers in what was taught in the classes and the high school graduates in what they considered they had learned.
- 2) Since a part of the questionnaire was limited to the aspects of consumer information, there should be an expansion and survey into other areas of consumer practices by the recent high school graduates.
- 3) Because of the difficulty in recalling information over a number of years, a follow-up study of recent high school graduates of two years or less could be surveyed concerning the knowledge and use of similar concepts and techniques used in this study.
- 4) That the questionnaire be modified to inquire of the reasons why many of the respondents of the study did not frequently use the identified seam and hemming finishes stated in the study.

5) That anyone doing research with many large organized groups of women, should personally administer the questionnaire to the participants used in the study.

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APPENDIX A
LETTERS OF TRANSMITTAL

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**Department of Home Economics Education
372-6211, Ext. 486

74074

February 1, 1974

Mrs. Lenorah Polk, State Advisor
Young Homemakers of Oklahoma
Home Economics Education
4100 Lincoln, Blvd., Maco Bldg.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Mrs. Polk:

I am presently pursuing a masters degree in Home Economics Education under the supervision of Dr. Elaine Jorgenson. The subject of my thesis concerns the usefulness of high school clothing instruction as it pertains to the present life style of the recent high school graduate. Included in this letter is a copy of my problem statement, objectives and procedure for this study for you to examine if you wish.

The sample of respondents I plan to survey are active members of selected Young Homemakers Organizations within the state. It is through your help I hope to obtain current information regarding the present YHO Chapters. Would you be able to send me the current listing of active YHO Chapters, the names of their sponsors and the number of active members of each chapter? If you have access to the age range of the members of each chapter I would also appreciate this information. I plan to survey a selected group of recent high school graduates (graduates of not more than five years), and this information would help me tremendously in selecting the sample for my study.

Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you in the near future.

Cordially,

Karen A. Paulsen
Graduate Student

Dr. Elaine Jorgenson
Thesis Advisor

Enclosure

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**Department of Home Economics Education
372-6211, Ext. 486

74074

February 13, 1974

Dear YHO Advisor:

I am presently pursuing a masters degree in Home Economics Education under the supervision of Dr. Elaine Jorgenson at Oklahoma State University. The subject of my thesis concerns the usefulness of high school clothing instruction as it pertains to the present life style of the high school graduate.

The sample of respondents I plan to survey are active members of selected YHO Chapters within the state. It is through your help I hope to obtain current information regarding your chapter. I need to know approximately the number of members you have who are recent high school graduates since the group I hope to survey should have graduated not more than five years ago (1969-1973).

After I have accumulated the number of persons who meet my criteria, I will randomly select participants for the study. Do you believe the members of your chapter who might meet this criteria would be willing to participate by filling out a short and anonymous questionnaire concerning clothing instruction? Would you be willing to distribute and administer this questionnaire at one of your scheduled YHO meetings and return them to me in a prepared envelope?

Enclosed is a self addressed and self stamped post card for your convenience in designating your reply. Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you in the very near future.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Karen Paulsen

Enclosure

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**Department of Home Economics Education
372-6211, Ext. 486

74074

March 4, 1974

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for your reply and your willingness to participate in my study concerning clothing instruction at the high school level. You have indicated in your reply the number of YHO members who are graduates between the years of 1969-1973. Enclosed are the questionnaires to be given to these selected women and a self-stamped and self-addressed envelope for your convenience in returning it to me. The questionnaire is self explanatory and the women should have no difficulty in responding.

I would appreciate to have these returned within the month of March, if possible, so that they may be tabulated and analyzed by mid-April. If you would like to receive the results of my study, please indicate in the return mail and I will be happy to respond.

Your help and thoughtfulness in this study is deeply appreciated. Thank you and best wishes to you in the remainder of the school year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Karen Paulsen
Graduate Student

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE OF STUDY

WILL I EVER USE THIS AGAIN?

How often during high school did you ask yourself, "Why am I learning this? I won't ever use this again." Through the use of this questionnaire, I hope to determine if the areas you studied in high school relating to clothing are helpful to you now that you have graduated. Your responses will be helpful to home economics teachers in planning effective clothing instruction classes for the high school level.

Consider all the aspects of clothing whether you buy or construct your clothing items. After reading each statement, pertaining to the various aspects of clothing, decide how useful each one is to you. Secondly, state if you learned this information in your high school clothing class.

Each question is divided into two parts. Please read each question carefully and answer as honestly as possible. Your responses will remain anonymous. Thank you for your willingness to participate. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Column I. Check ():

- Always if you use this information all the time when purchasing, selecting or constructing clothes.
- Sometimes if you use this information some of the time when purchasing, selecting or constructing clothes.
- Seldom if you use this information little or rarely when purchasing, selecting or constructing clothes.
- Never if you do not use this information at all when purchasing, selecting or constructing clothes.

Column II. Check ():

- Yes if you did learn this information in your high school clothing class.
- No if you did not learn this information in your high school clothing class.

When constructing garments,

	Column I				Column II	
	I Do This:				I learned to do this in High School:	
	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	Yes	No
Do You:						
30. Mark the fabric in a method to prevent visibility on the right side	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
31. Recognize and solve sewing machine problems	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
32. Press garments as you sew	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
33. Follow the pattern guide sheet	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
34. Use interfacing	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
35. Use seam finishes such as:						
1.1 the plain seam	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.2 the pinked seam	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.3 overcast seam	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.4 lapped seam	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.5 French seam	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.6 Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
36. Use closures such as:						
1.1 bound buttonholes	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.2 machine made buttonholes	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.3 snaps and fasteners	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.4 zippers	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.5 Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
37. Apply hemming finishes to garments such as:						
1.1 catch stitch	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.2 slip stitch	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.3 running/invisible stitch	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.4 machine stitching	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.5 fuseable materials	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1.6 Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
38. Now as you look back on your high school clothing instruction classes,						
a. What do you feel was most beneficial to learn?						
b. What do you feel was the least beneficial for you to learn?						
c. What suggestions can you make to help home economics teachers provide relevant and beneficial programs in clothing instruction at the high school level?						

PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Directions: Read each of the following questions carefully. Place a check mark () in the appropriate blank. Do not state your name for it is the intention of this questionnaire for the respondents to remain anonymous.

1. When did you graduate from High School?

<input type="checkbox"/> 1969	<input type="checkbox"/> 1972
<input type="checkbox"/> 1970	<input type="checkbox"/> 1973
<input type="checkbox"/> 1971	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

2. Are you presently:

<input type="checkbox"/> married	<input type="checkbox"/> divorced
<input type="checkbox"/> single	<input type="checkbox"/> widowed

3. Do you have any children? yes No
If yes, please state the age and sex of each child:

4. What is your present occupational situation?

<input type="checkbox"/> housewife
<input type="checkbox"/> employed (please specify type of work) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> part time
<input type="checkbox"/> full time

5. Where do you presently live?

<input type="checkbox"/> Urban area or city
<input type="checkbox"/> Rural area or farm

6. At what grades in high school did you enroll and complete a home economics clothing class?

<input type="checkbox"/> Freshman	<input type="checkbox"/> Junior
<input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior

APPENDIX C

RESPONSES OF SUBJECTS TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

TABLE VIII
 AREAS OF CLOTHING INSTRUCTION IDENTIFIED
 AS MOST BENEFICIAL TO LEARN IN
 HIGH SCHOOL BY RESPONDENTS

Areas of Clothing and Textiles	Number of Responses
Learning how to sew (basic construction)	19
Purchasing and selecting fabrics	9
Ability to read and use patterns	6
Practicing good sewing habits (neatness)	5
Construction of seams and finishes	4
Correct methods of pressing	3
Care and laundering of clothes	2
Putting in a zipper	2
Learning about fibers	2
Attempting advanced sewing methods	2
Planning a clothing budget	2
Making bound buttonholes	2
Using and repairing the sewing machine	2
Altering clothing for proper fit	1
Selecting fabrics for one's figure type	1
Learning about fashions	1
Planning a sewing scrap book	1

TABLE IX
AREAS OF CLOTHING INSTRUCTION IDENTIFIED
AS LEAST BENEFICIAL TO LEARN IN
HIGH SCHOOL BY RESPONDENTS

Areas of Clothing and Textiles	Number of Responses
Learning about various seam finishes	6
Making bound buttonholes	4
Hand basting	3
Learning about the care of clothing	2
Learning about the weaves of fabrics	1
Use of the principles of design	1
Use of fuseable hem finishes	1
Repairing the sewing machine	1
Attempting advanced sewing techniques	1
Making handmade buttonholes	1
Learning how to judge ready made clothing	1
Doing home projects in sewing	1

TABLE X
 SUGGESTIONS BY THE RESPONDENTS IN DEVELOPING
 RELEVANT AND BENEFICIAL CLOTHING INSTRUCTION
 PROGRAMS IN HIGH SCHOOL

Areas of Clothing and Textiles	Number of Responses
Stress the basic rules of sewing	7
Let students progress at own rate	4
Encouraging students to make clothing they will wear	4
Teach tailoring	3
Learn about current fashion trends	3
Be available and willing to answer questions about sewing	2
Encourage new and short methods of construction	2
Learn about hem finishes and closures	2
Make home accessories (curtains, drapes)	2
Learn about alterations	2
Have field trips or speakers in regard to clothing	2
Hold fashion shows	1
Learn about fibers and their characteristics	1
Make inexpensive clothing for needy children	1
Use color visuals to determine appropriate colors for individuals	1
Make comparisons between ready-made and home sewn garments	1

VITA ^γ

Karen Anne Petricek Paulsen

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES' USE AND KNOWLEDGE OF SELECTED CLOTHING AND TEXTILE CONCEPTS AND TECHNIQUES TAUGHT IN SECONDARY HOME ECONOMICS

Major Field: Home Economics Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Columbus, Nebraska, January 17, 1949, the daughter of the late Albin Petricek and Lillian Petricek Miller; married to Marvin R. Paulsen, 1970.

Education: Graduated from Clarkson Public High School, Clarkson, Nebraska in May, 1967; received the Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska, May, 1972; completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1974.

Professional Experience: Graduate Teaching Assistantship in Home Economics Education, Division of Home Economics, Oklahoma State University, 1972-1974.

Professional Organizations: American Home Economics Association, Oklahoma Home Economics Association, Omicron Nu, and Phi Upsilon Omicron.