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**Parents' perception of children's evaluative criteria in clothing purchases: The consumer socialization process**

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**The University of Arizona, 1992**

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**PARENTS' PERCEPTION OF CHILDREN'S EVALUATIVE CRITERIA  
IN CLOTHING PURCHASES: THE CONSUMER  
SOCIALIZATION PROCESS**

by

**Lisa Snyder**

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**A thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the  
SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER RESOURCES  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE  
In the Graduate College  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**

1992


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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study were to examine the effects of socialization processes and antecedent variables on children's evaluative criteria for clothing purchases and to examine antecedent variables on the socialization process. A total of 500 parents of children from the first through sixth grade were systematically selected from the Directory of Catalina Foothills School District and mailed a questionnaire. Using principal components factor analysis on parental socialization variables and on evaluative criteria items, nine factors were developed. Based on stepwise multiple regression analysis for each hypothesis, it was concluded that antecedent variables have direct influence on socialization process variables which, in turn, impacts the outcome variables. Antecedent variables, however, tended to have limited direct influence on outcome variables but has an indirect effect on outcome variables only through socialization variables.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Recognition of children as consumers is a relatively new phenomenon in the retail community (McNeal, 1987). Factors that influence the increasing size of the children consumer market have been: (1) the dual-career family; (2) baby boomers; (3) affluent families with only one child or two children and consequently more money than larger families to lavish on each child; (4) a high rate of childbirth (more than 4 million in 1989); and (5) more discretionary income among 4 to 12-year-olds--who influence purchases--than in past generations (Newcomb, 1990). The gradually increasing role of children in a consumption economy means that they are in training to be "conscious" consumers (Ozgen & Gonen, 1989).

Despite the sharp increase in the children's consumer market, little scholarly research has been conducted on children and their decision-making for clothing purchases. Although much research has been done about children by the business community, investigation has focused on products development, guidelines for effective advertising, and determination of specific regulations action and its impact (McNeal,

1987). In addition, limited academic research is available to lend understanding to children's behavior and improve the general welfare of business and children consumers (McNeal, 1987).

Children as clothing consumers are becoming of increasing interest to marketers because children today are more involved in purchasing clothes than were children of past generations. Children between the ages of 4 and 12 years old were reported to have spent at least \$75 billion during 1989, up 25% over the past year, while the rest of the economy was growing at only 2% (Newcomb, 1990). This great amount of buying power has motivated marketers and merchandisers to attract children and win their loyalty at an early age (Gill, 1989).

According to Esprit de Corp, children's wear for ages 3 to 15 is its best selling segment, accounting for 20% of the company's estimated \$780 million in annual sales. Other retail stores such as the GapKids, Kids "R" Us, and Children's Footlocker also opened children's stores in order to reach this growing market segment. Designers such as Laura Ashley, Christian Dior, and Ralph Lauren have also launched kids' lines (Newcomb, 1990).

GapKids stores are producing comfortable and

casual clothes for children in sizes 2 to 12 and are appealing to their loyal Gap shoppers who have children (Adams, 1990; Newcomb, 1990). In 1990, Kids "R" Us was the largest specialty children's retailer with 164 stores. Its estimated sales volume was \$550 million in 1990, and is expected to increase to \$660 million in 1991. Kids "R" Us is targeting price-conscious consumers who are looking for style as well as major brands. Key vendors are Osh Kosh B'Gosh, Carter, Ocean Pacific, Nike, LA Gear, and Lee (Adams, 1990; Gill, 1991).

Three national retail chains are also expanding their children's departments in order to compete for their segment of the children's market. Montgomery Ward's The Kids store is its new freestanding specialty store; it was conceived to appeal to price-conscious consumers who are looking for activewear and school clothes for infants through size 14. In addition, Sears McKids stores are designed with the child in mind. It has been reported (Gill, 1989) that children assisted in planning the store, considering the heights of the features, shelf, and mirrors. Each store has a central play area and holds organized activities on a regular basis like singalongs, storytelling, arts and crafts, and special events. The pricing policies of

McKids stores follow Sears' slogan: "everyday low pricing policy." Furthermore, JC Penneys is expanding by trading up and increasing the amount of branded lines. It is appealing to the moderate consumer (Adams, 1990; Gill, 1989).

The role of clothing in children's development, then, is of interest in this study. Another perspective to be explored is children's socialization process. Children are unique consumers because they are consumers-in-training and need special assistance with their purchases. The right treatment by retail salespeople can help to develop a lifetime customer for the store (Gill, 1989). A socialization perspective--a process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to be a consumer--can be useful in understanding the process by which children learn to become consumers (McNeal, 1987). This study on parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase will add to the current research on the importance of children as consumers. Also, this study will examine and provide an insight into what children first look for in a new outfit, and major influences on their decision-making processes. Results of the study will provide a better understanding of children's usage of evaluative

criteria for clothing purchases and how children acquire some of their consumer skills.

Research into the role of clothing in children's developmental cycle contributes to this body of knowledge. Children learn self-expression through their clothes and other modes of adornment. Kaiser (1985) believes that social change and fashion change, as well as changes in an individual's lifestyle and clothes, are linked to the self-concept because of their impact on social interactions. As they mature, children typically display increasing independence in adorning themselves and thus defining their own self-concept. Individuals develop self-concept through the pre-play stage, play stage, and game stage.

Piaget also believed that children pass through certain stages as they develop over time. The stages help to define the developmental process the child is going through at different stages of the child's life (Lefrancois, 1983). The four stages are: (1) Sensorimotor- 0-2 years; (2) Preoperational- 2-7 years; (3) Concrete operations- 7-11 or 12 years; and (4) Formal operations- 11 or 12-14 or 15 years. The second, third and fourth stages are the stages this study will be concerned with. These stages helped guide the researcher by identifying where each child is



in his or her development in life.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purposes of this study were: (1) to examine the effects of socialization processes and antecedent variables on parents' perceptions of children's evaluative criteria for clothing purchase and (2) to examine effects of antecedent variables on the socialization process. The socialization processes included money education, shopping participation, and television, and parents' emphasis on brand name, price, color, peer, and style. Antecedent variables consisted of social-structural factors (social class, race, gender, and family type), and developmental variables (biological age and birth order). The parents' perceptions of children's evaluative criteria for clothing purchase included price, brand name, color, and style. Examining the influences of the socialization process and antecedent variables was expected to increase understanding of how children make clothing purchase decisions.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were identified to guide this research project.

1. How will the socialization process influence the evaluative criteria children use for the selection of clothing?
2. Are the children's social-structural variables a major influence in the children's criteria of brand name, price, color, peers, and style in purchasing clothing?
3. Do the children's developmental variables affect the evaluating criteria for clothing purchases?
4. How will social class, race, gender, family type, biological age and birth order influence the children's socialization processes?

#### **Assumptions**

1. It was assumed that Piaget's stages of cognitive development were still valid today.
2. Parents were assumed to have knowledge about their children's consumption behavior.
3. Parents will provide valid information on the children.

#### **Research Model**

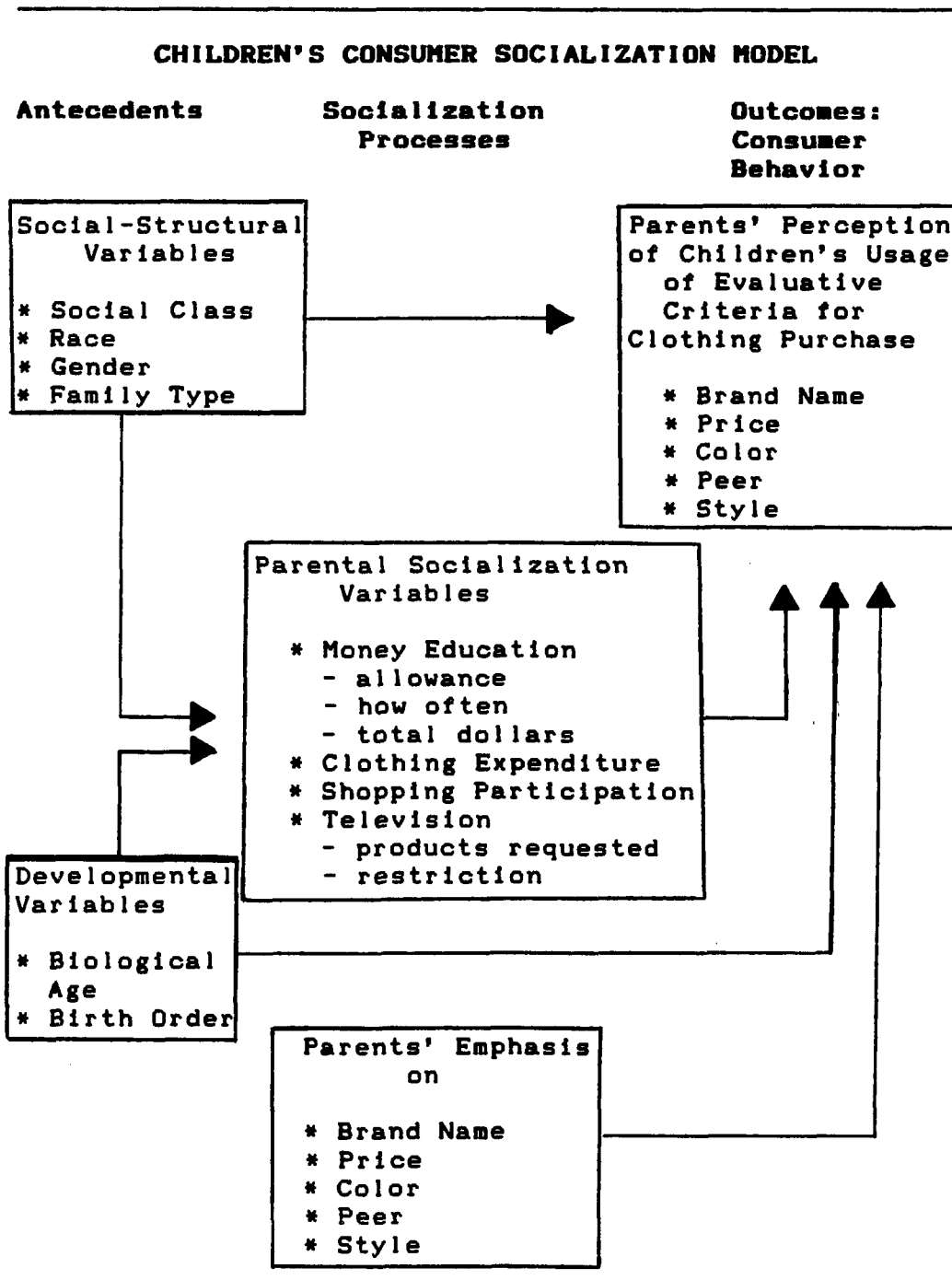
The conceptual model for this research was adapted

from the Moschis Consumer Socialization Model (1987), which consists of three main concepts: antecedent variables, socialization processes, and outcomes. Antecedent variables, including social structural variables and developmental variables, are proposed to affect socialization outcomes as well as the socialization processes via socialization agent. Antecedent variables and socialization processes subsequently influence consumer learning properties, which are socialization outcome.

Figure 1 outlines the research model which was based on the consumer socialization model. The main elements of this model are classified into antecedent variables (social-structural variables consists of social class, race, gender, family type and developmental variables consists of biological age and birth order); socialization processes (parental socialization variables influencing on money education, shopping participation, television and parents' emphasis on brand name, price, color, peer, and style); and outcomes (parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase).

Also, it was assumed that the parents' own emphasis on clothing criteria was an important influence on children's usage of evaluative criteria

Figure 1: Adopted From "Moschis Conceptual Model of Consumer Socialization" by Moschis, G.P. (1987)



for clothing purchases.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were developed in relation to the research questions of the study and are stated in alternative forms:

1. Parental socialization variables and parents' emphasis on clothing criteria influence parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
2. Social-structural and developmental variables influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
  - 2A. Social class influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
  - 2B. Race influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
  - 2C. Gender influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
  - 2D. Family type influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for

clothing purchase.

- 2E. Biological age influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 2F. Birth order influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 3. Social-structural and developmental variables influence parental socialization variables.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of relevant literature on children's socialization processes in becoming a consumer.

#### Consumer Socialization

Overview. Ward (1974) looked at the development of interest in consumer socialization and defined the term as "processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace" (p. 2). The consumer process is learned through observation and participation (that is, incidental learning) and intentional instruction by socialization agents (which are family, peers, teachers, and business) (McNeal, 1987). Children's socialization process is minor compared with adults' but plays a significant part in learning to be consumers. The general conceptual model of consumer socialization, which has five types of variables: socialization agents, learning processes, social structural variables, age or life cycle, and content learning.

A socialization agent is a person or organization

(e.g., family members, school, peers) which has a great influence over a person's life. Learning processes refers to the type of structure which the agent used to influence the learner. They can be classified as modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction. Social structural variables are factors, such as social class, race, gender, and family type, which help to identify the social environment of the person. Age or life cycle position is used to identify a person's cognitive developmental or life cycle stage(s). Learning properties refers to the diversity of awareness and behavior that is used by a consumer in his or her decision-making process (Moschis & Moore, 1979).

While children differ in all aspects of life, they learn by trial and error. This observation is true even with children learning to use money to purchase clothes. Early work on children's knowledge and use of money followed Piagetian tradition in trying to determine how children acquire an understanding of economics (Furnham, 1986). Schug and Birkey (1985) concluded that "economic understanding develops in a manner supportive of aspects of cognitive development theory" (p. 41). The developmental stages may follow a different theory. Danziger (cited Furnham, 1986, p.



220) suggested that the development of general social and economic concepts may follow different paths or stages which may not fall into line with the theoretical model elaborated in connection with physical concepts. The more experiences the children have with money, the more skilled they will become in spending or saving their money. In a study done by Marshall and Margruder (1960), a significant correlation between experience with money and the children's knowledge and use of money was reported. Children's experience with money is one of the influential aspects of the children's learning process in becoming consumers.

Children also learn consumer behavior through observation and participation (McNeal, 1987). Parents play a significant part in children's learning about being a consumer. Children gain experience by watching or participating in purchasing decisions. As the children's ages increase, so do the purchasing decisions the children become involved in. The purchases that are made by the children do not have to be solely for them but can be for the family too. The family environment gives the children insights into good and bad experiences with purchase decisions.

When children enter school, their peers become

influential in their purchase decisions. Peer influence is not one-way, passive behavior but an acceptance of the influence of other children in order to satisfy a variety of needs (McNeal, 1987). The need sought to be satisfied can be acceptance, independence, or rebellion.

Children learn to make purchase decisions from their surrounding world. Each child's world is made up of different influences and different experiences that make each child unique in his or her purchase decision-making process. The child's experiences with money, family, peers, and surrounding environment can enhance the child's perception of clothing.

#### Antecedents.

**Family Type.** The distinction between parenting styles needed to be examined because social status can vary from one parent to the other (Lino, 1991; Family Economics Review, 1991). According to Moschis (1987) children of working mothers are socialized better or faster because they take on more consumer responsibilities.

Dual-earner families are generally younger, are better educated, have fewer children, and have higher family incomes (Bird, Day, and Cavell, 1990). Their

children also have an opportunity to watch their parents communicate about household decision-making (Moschis, 1987). Expenditures on a child by husband-wife families increased as the total family income increased. The findings revealed that child-rearing expenses ranged from \$4,330 to \$5,490 for the lower-income group and from \$6,140 to \$10,270 for the high dual-income group. On an average, the dual-income households spent 6 to 10 percent of their income on clothing for their children (Family Economics Review, 1991).

On the other hand, single parent households are generally headed by females and have lower family incomes. Lino (1991) examined the estimated expenditures on a child in a single-parent household. The findings revealed that child-rearing expenses ranged from \$3,800 to \$5,650 in the lower-income group and from \$7,830 to \$10,030 for single-parent households in the higher-income group. On an average, the single-parent households spent 5 to 7 percent of their income on clothing for their children. Expenditures here did not include children's clothing received in the form of gifts or clothing purchased by the child. Also, these estimates did not include expenditures made by parents who are not primary care-givers (Lino, 1991).

**Age, Gender, and Birth Order.** Moschis (1987) indicated that gender differences in children's consumer behavior begin at approximately age seven. One of the sex differences that emerges is in the consumption of clothing. Girls become more aware of and interested in clothing than boys. Changes in body shape and a greater involvement with others may contribute to the youth's concern with decisions such as what clothes to buy. Male children, however, seem to develop other consumer skills more fully than female children. For instance, male children possess a greater ability to price products and have a better conception of what a socially desirable consumer role consists of than do female children. Kwon and Drayton (1987) also investigated selection of clothes on a daily basis as it relates to adult male and adult female differences. Their findings support previous studies in that females are more sensitive to their clothing needs and are more aware of clothing than males.

Just as gender is a influential factor in children's acquisition of consumer skills, so too is birth order. The birth order of a child plays a significant role in how a child acquires consumer skills (Moschis, 1987). First-born children develop

better consumer skills than later-born children as a result of having greater aspirations for better occupations and can better evaluate commercial stimuli. Later-borns are more likely to have stronger attitudes towards products and brands, advertising messages, stores, salespeople, and promotional stimuli.

The socialization processes are also different between the first-born and later-born children. First-borns are more likely to interact with their parents and model themselves after them, whereas later-borns are more likely to interact with peers and model themselves after peers. The combination of birth order and the influences of parents, peers, and other siblings is very complex (Moschis, 1987).

#### **Consumer Socialization Processes.**

Families are the main and most important social agent in a child's life because parents introduce the child to the marketplace and the process necessary to purchase an item. Family communications are an important influence on consumer learning according to Moschis (1987), who identifies four types of common processes:

1. parental influence on child
2. child's influence on parents

3. spouse's influence on spouse

4. siblings' influence on sibling

Each type of communication process is different but has an effect on the child's decision-making process.

Moschis (1987) states that "family influence on the development of the youth's consumer decision-making patterns appears to be based on certain parent and child characteristics such as age, social class, and sex" (p. 78). Ward and Wackman (1972) found that "mothers of younger children (5 to 7 years old) indicated frequent influence attempts for game and toy purchases, while mothers of older children (11 to 12 years old) indicated frequent purchase influence attempts for clothing and record albums" (p. 318). Children's purchase influence attempts appear to decrease with age, depending on the type of product, but mothers' yielding to requests increases with a child's age. This response can be reflecting a perceived increase in the competence of older children in their decision-making process.

Another important issue in understanding children and family influence is the impact of the home environment. Ward and Wackman (1972) found that the more restrictions parents place on a child's television viewing, the less they yield to the child's purchase

influence attempts.

Peers, like parents, influence children's consumer behavior; this behavior can be placed into two categories, conformity and satisfaction of needs. Children conform to their peers so that they feel accepted into a particular group, and this acceptance satisfies the child's needs. "In general, the consumer socialization effects of peers on children are probably not intentional but incidental. Children usually learn consumer behavior from friends as a result of observing them--seeing and hearing them--and by participating in the consumption process with them" (McNeal, 1987, p. 18). Peers over time become more important as a socialization agent, whereas parents become less important. According to Warden and Colquett (1982), adolescent boys considered their friends the best source of clothing ideas and information, showing a need to conform and to be accepted by their peers. Even with the transition to peer influence, most of the boys were still dependent upon their parents for money or credit cards to make their purchases. Smucker and Creekmore (1972) found that a significant relationship existed between awareness of and conformity to the clothing mode and peer acceptance, which upholds the idea that awareness of a clothing mode may be an

important part of the group interaction and may even promote attraction between members of the group.

School teachers are another important socialization agent for children. As early as elementary school, children start to learn the basic concept of money, and by the time they are in high school they have been offered a series of classes in consumer education. It is true that this is a formal way of teaching children in addition to what they have already learned from their parents and peers, but classes can still be very effective in teaching them a new way of looking at consumer decision-making processes.

Jensen (1985) found that consumer education can be effectively implemented into different types of school systems, with the curriculum being both cross-curricular and multi-disciplinary. The curriculum should primarily be activity-based, skill-oriented, and problem and decision-based as well as giving the students an understanding of their own situation as consumers.

Business is a different kind of socialization agent from the types discussed above. While families, peers, and school teachers may model or teach consumer decision-making processes, business explicitly aims to



induce children to purchase products. Manufacturers use advertisements to induce children to make certain purchases of products or to have children induce their parents to make the purchases for them. This is a controversial issue because children do not understand that advertisements are designed to persuade them to purchase products. Ozgen and Gonoen (1989) concluded that "television commercials are highly effective in having an influence on shopping in all the age, socio-economic level, and gender groups. Almost all of the children surveyed provided answers indicating that they took television commercials into consideration when they bought something" (p. 185). Schug and Birkey (1985) investigated the development of children's economic reasoning. A random sample of 70 children were selected from classes in an urban preschool and two nearby elementary schools. Schug and Birkey's findings showed that one-third of the preschool and kindergarten children were aware of the purpose of advertising but few challenged the truthfulness of television advertising. Awareness of the truthfulness of advertising increased with the age of the children (pp. 31-42). Stores also become involved by placing products at a child's eye level. The sale of a product is the ultimate goal of these companies, even at the

expense of the child, but it is hoped that the child will learn and grow from these buying experiences.

Children's socialization process grows as the child's age increases and his or her world expands. Not all children learn at the same pace or from the same information, and that is why it is important to look beyond just their surrounding world.

**Outcome: Consumer Behavior.**

**Evaluative Criteria.** According to Engel, Blackwell, and Minard (1990), evaluative criteria are particular dimensions or attributes that are used in judging the choice alternative. Previous studies have reported that female adult consumers utilize up to four or five evaluative criteria in purchasing clothes. For instance, female consumers identified three evaluative criteria for selecting social apparel (appropriateness, economic, and other-people directed) as most frequently used evaluative criteria (Cassill & Drake, 1987).

In purchasing clothes, children consumers were also assumed to consider more concrete and basic factors such as price, brand name, peers, color, and style. More detailed evaluative criteria will be utilized when children acquire the appropriate decision-making skills. Price is one of the most

important evaluative criteria but can vary in its importances across both the consumer and product.

The second evaluative criterion is brand name. Brand name can be the decision-making criterion because consumers may have difficulty judging quality and may rely on a well-known brand name as an effective way of making that decision.

The third evaluative criteria that children may use are peers, a factor which they may use as the decision-making criterion because children influence each other.

The fourth and fifth evaluative criteria that children may use are color and style, factors which in general will give an insight into the child's self-perception. This self-image can be the decision-making criterion in determining what kinds of clothes and accessories are appropriate for the consumer (Kaiser, 1985).

**Children as Consumers.** Research has shown that children do play an active role in consumption: the children who assume the role of consumer at the ages of 4-5 years begin to become conscious consumers at the ages of 9-10 years and take their place in society as full consumers at approximately 12 years of age (Ozgen & Gonen, 1989). Participation in the consumption

process is directly related to the child's income, which includes allowance, gifts, and outside earnings (Moschis, 1987).

Children begin to grasp the understanding of money and its limits about the same time as they learn to count. Furth (1980) emphasizes that children must master the numerical system in order to understand the buying and selling system. Children also increase their understanding of money when they receive an allowance because this is an ongoing system of spending, saving, and allocating their money for the items that they would like to purchase.

Today, children are consumers at an early age in our society. From a marketer's standpoint, children fulfill all the requirements needed to be a market. The four requirements are need for a product, authority to buy, availability of money, and willingness to spend it. Recognizing that children meet the requirements, marketers have reacted to children as not one market but three: current, future, and influential (McNeal, 1987). Any particular marketer at a particular time may perceive children as one or more of these markets.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Chapter III is divided into three sections. In the first section the sample population and data collection methods are discussed. The second section focuses on questionnaire development. Hypothesis and statistical analyses used are addressed in the third section.

#### **Sampling and Data Collection**

A total of 500 parents of children from the first through sixth grade were systematically selected from the Directory of Catalina Foothills School District, which included approximately 900 parents' names, addresses, and children's grades. While the city of Tucson has a number of different school districts, the Catalina Foothills School District was chosen because it is the only school district that provides a directory.

The families who had children in the seven or eighth grade were automatically eliminated from the list of names prior to the selection of names. The selected names were chosen by skipping every other name on the list.

A questionnaires was sent out to 500 subjects in October. A second mailing did not take place in this survey. Thirty-two questionnaires were not deliverable because of address changes. A total of 173 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 37% response rate. Seven of the questionnaires were deemed unusable, resulting in 166 usable questionnaires.

#### **Instrument Development and Measures**

**Questionnaire Development.** The questionnaire was developed to measure parents' perceptions of children's evaluative criteria, the influences of the parental socialization variables, parent's own emphasis on clothing evaluative criteria, and antecedent variables.

**Pilot Test.** Four children from the first and second grade were brought together for half-hour to discuss what influences their decision-making process when purchasing clothing, what they look for in the clothes they buy, and what their general clothing behavior is. This information helped to determine whether or not the young children use criteria for clothing purchases.

**Pretest.** Prior to mailing the final questionnaire, a pretest was conducted. A total of 20 parents from the local area were involved in the

pretest. Based on the pretest, revisions were made in regard to the number of the questions. The questionnaire was then approved by the Human Subjects Committee, University of Arizona. The questionnaire used to survey parents is included in Appendix A.

### Measures.

**Social Structural Variables.** Social class was adapted from Colemans' Computerized Status Index (CSI) (Colemans, 1985). The parents were asked questions regarding their marital status, occupation, highest level of education received, and total yearly income for the household. As part of the respondents demographic background, race, gender, and family type of the child was also asked.

**Developmental Variables.** Birth order was measured by asking the parents to rank the child's birth (e.g., first, second, third) in the family. The parents was also asked the biological age of the child.

### **Parental Socialization Variables.**

**Money Education:** In order for the researcher to gain insight into parents' influence on children, the parents were asked about their money education practices at home. A total of seven questions were measured using a Likert-type scale ranging from

Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 5. The parents were asked whether they (1) teach about money; (2) allow their child to take part in family buying; (3) emphasize to their child the wise usage of money; (4) believe in teaching their child about saving money; and (5) explain to their child the relationship between quality and price of the product.

In order to obtain further information on money-related education, respondents were asked five different types of categorical questions. For example, questions asking whether the child receives an allowance and has bank account were measured by "yes" or "no" response. What the allowance was meant for was measured by a "saving", "spending," "both," or "other" response. How often and how much allowance was received were measured by asking the parents to circle "daily," "weekly," "bimonthly," "monthly," "whenever needed," and "other" and then fill in the amount given.

**Shopping Participation:** In order to obtain information on their child's shopping practices, five questions were asked of parents about their involvement of the child in retail shopping behavior. The questions were measured using a Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 5. The parents were asked about (1) whether they shop



with or without the children and (2) is shopping an effective way of teaching children on how to be consumers. In addition, the parents were asked to indicate total annual expenditure on child's apparel.

**Television:** The parents were asked six questions about parents' control on: (1) children's television viewing; (2) restrictions on television viewing; (3) number of hours the child is allowed to watch television; and (4) the types of programs the child may watch, adopting from previous studies (e.g., Ward, Wackman, & Wartella, 1977). The questions were measured using a Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 5. Factor analyzed television restriction and request, shopping participation and money education. A total of 15 items were analyzed, retaining 10 items.

**Parents' emphasis on:** Price, color, brand name, and style was measured by asking the parents a question about their preferences among the criteria. The question was measured using a Likert-type scale from Never = 1 to Always = 5

**Children's Evaluative Criteria for Clothing Purchase.** Price, color, brand name, and style were measured by asking the parents a total of 21 questions about the child's usage of each evaluative criteria.

The questions were measured using a Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 5. These questions were then factor analyzed.

### **Statistical Analyses**

Before testing hypotheses, principal component factor analyses with varimax rotation was first performed to reduce 15 questions on parental socialization variables and 21 questions on evaluative criteria items, respectively. Two methods were employed for deciding items to be retained. Those items loading more than .40 on a single factor, using the minimum eigenvalue of one as the criterion to control the number of factors extracted. Cronbach alpha coefficient was then examined for each factor to determine reliability of scale. To test hypothesis, a series of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analyses was conducted to determine influence of predictor variables on criterion variables.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Chapter IV is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on demographic characteristics of the sample and results of factor analysis. The second section focuses on factor analysis performed on certain variables. Section three includes the analyses of Hypothesis I, Hypothesis II, and Hypothesis III.

#### Demographic Profile

A summary of demographic information is shown in Table 4.1. Frequency analysis was conducted for each demographic variable. Demographic variables analyzed included parent, marital status, race, total household yearly income, occupation, education, and social class.

Parental relation to the child in the study was analyzed. Eighty-three percent (n=137) of the respondents were mothers, while 16.4% (n=27) were fathers. Ninety-one percent (n=151) of the sample were married, while 8.5% (n=15) were single, divorced/separated or widowed.

Two twelve occupation categories were analyzed. The first occupation category was answered by the respondents to the questionnaire. Thirty-one percent

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Total Sample (N=166)	Percent %
<b>Parent</b>		
Father	27	16.4%
Mother	137	83.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	151	91.5
Single	15	8.5
<b>Race</b>		
Caucasian	155	93.9
Other	11	6.0
<b>Income</b>		
Below \$29,999	7	4.4
\$30,000-\$49,999	22	13.9
\$50,000-\$69,999	36	22.8
\$70,000 and above	93	58.9
<b>Occupation (Respondent)</b>		
Lawyer/Physician/Dentist	3	1.8
Professional/Educator	52	31.9
Upper Management/Admin	17	10.4
Sales/Service/Middle Management	26	16.0
Medical Technician/Nurse	14	8.6
Student	9	5.5
Retired	1	.6
Unemployed	41	25.2
<b>Occupation (Spouse)</b>		
Lawyer/Physician/Dentist	24	16.0
Professional/Educator	41	27.3
Technician	3	2.0
Upper Management/Admin	39	26.0
Sales/Service/Middle Management	28	18.7
Medical Technician/Nurse	7	4.7
Student	1	.7
Retired	3	2.0
Unemployed	4	2.7

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents  
(continued)

Variables	Total Sample (N=166)	Percent %
<b>Education (Respondent)</b>		
High School	5	3.0%
Some College	43	26.1
Bachelor's Degree	63	38.2
Master's Degree	39	23.6
Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., M.D.	15	9.1
<b>Education (Spouse)</b>		
Some High School	1	.7
High School	3	2.0
Some College	26	17.1
Bachelor's Degree	56	36.8
Master's Degree	26	17.1
Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., M.D.	40	26.3
<b>Social Class</b>		
Working Class	3	1.9
Middle Class	92	58.1
Upper Americans	63	39.7

Note. Totals may not add to 100% or (N=166) because of missing information.

(n=52) of the respondents indicated that they were professionals or educators. The category of unemployed was held by 25.2 percent (n=41) of the respondents, which is very high, this may be because the majority of the sample were mothers. The second occupation category was for the spouse of the respondent. Twenty-seven percent (n=41) of the spouses were professionals or educators. The category of upper management or administration was held by 26 percent (n=39) of the respondents, making this the second largest category. The third largest occupation category was that of sales, service, or middle management (18.7%, (n=28)). The majority of the total sample (93.9%) were Caucasian.

Two education categories were analyzed. The first education category was answered by the respondents to the questionnaire. Thirty-eight point two percent (n=63) of the respondents held a bachelor's degree. With 26.1% (n=43) indicating having some college education, this was the second largest category. Twenty-three point six percent (n=39) of the total sample held a master's degree. The second education category was for the spouse of the respondent. Thirty-six point eight percent (n=56) of the respondents held a bachelor's degree. With 26.3% (n=40) indicating

having a Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., or M.D., this was the second largest category. Seventeen point one percent (n=26) of the sample held either a master's degree or had some college education.

Income was based on the total yearly income of the household, ranging from below \$10,000 to \$70,000 and above. Fifty-eight point nine percent (n=93) of the respondents earned \$70,000 and above. Another 36.7% (n=58) earned between \$30,000 and \$69,999.

**Data Manipulation.** Frequency analysis revealed small cell sizes in the demographic characteristics of marital status, race, and income. As a result, these categories within these characteristics were collapsed. Marital status categories were collapsed to include those of 1) married and 2) single. The race categories were collapsed to include those of 1) Caucasian and 2) other. Income categories were collapsed to include: 1) below \$29,999; 2) \$30,000-\$49,999; 3) \$50,000-\$69,999; and 4) \$70,000 and above.

Education, occupation, and income were recoded in order to determine the respondents' social class according to Coleman's (CSI). Education was recoded with the following code numbers: grammar school (1); some high school (2); high school (3); some college

(5); bachelor's degree (7); master's degree (8); and Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., M.D. (9). Occupation was recoded with the following code numbers:

Lawyer/Physician/Dentist (9); Professional/Educator (8); Technician (4); Upper Management/Admin. (7); Sales/Service/Middle Management (6); Medical Technician/Nurse (5); and Student/Retired/Unemployed (3). Income was also recoded with the following code numbers: below \$10,000 (2); \$10,000-\$14,999 (3); \$15,000-\$19,999 (4); \$20,000-\$29,999 (5.5); \$30,000-\$49,999 (6.5); \$50,000-\$69,999 (8); and \$70,000 and above (8).

If the respondents were married, the following were added together: education of the respondent and spouse, occupation of the respondent and spouse, and income. If the respondent was single, the following were added together: education of the respondent x 2, occupation of the respondent x 2, and income. Score ranges are as follows: Upper American, 37 to 53; Middle Class, 24 to 36; and Working Class, 13 to 23. Fifty-eight point one percent (n=92) of the sample were Middle Class, while 39.7% (n=63) were Upper Americans. One point nine percent (n=3) of the respondents were of the Working Class.

In order to determine how many children received a



certain dollar amount for an allowance, the following were multiplied together: 1) how often the allowance was given, and 2) how much on the average each time.

### **Factor Analysis**

**Evaluative Criteria.** As a result of the factor analysis on 21 evaluative criteria items, five factors were developed, retaining 19 statements. Table 4.2 presents the statements in each factor, including the factor loading, eigenvalue, cumulative percent of variance, and alpha coefficients. Factor loadings ranged from .59 to .89 , while standardized alpha coefficients ranged from .66 to .88, indicating reliability of the scale. Factor 1, labeled Brand Conscious, included four statements. Brand Conscious children were identified as being aware of many different brand names and asking for certain brand name clothes. Factor 2, Price Conscious, included five statements, was recognized as children who pay attention to clothing prices, consider clothes to be expensive, and regard price as an important factor when purchasing clothes. Factor 3, Color Conscious, included four statements, indicated children who considered color an important factor when purchasing clothes. Factor 4, labeled Peer Conscious, included

Table 4.2 Factor Analysis of Children's Usage of Evaluative Criteria

Factor	Item	Factor Loading	Eigen-Value	Cumulative Percent of Variance	Alpha Coeff
<b>Factor 1: BRAND CONSCIOUS</b>					
	.Brand names are the most important factor to my child.	.83	4.6	22.1	.88
	.Brand names clothes are not important to my child....	-.81			
	.My child is aware of many different brand names.....	.65			
	.My child often asks me for certain brand names.....	.89			
<b>Factor 2: PRICE CONSCIOUS</b>					
	.My child does pay attention to clothing prices.....	.69	2.8	35.5	.73
	.My child considers most clothes to be inexpensive....	-.60			
	.Price is not a concern to my child.....	-.70			
	.My child thinks that most clothes are expensive.....	.59			
	.My child considers price an important factor when purchasing clothing.....	.80			
<b>Factor 3: COLOR CONSCIOUS</b>					
	.Color is the most important factor to my child when purchasing clothes.....	.72	2.2	46.1	.69
	.My child will only purchase certain colors.....	.69			
	.My child is not concerned with the color of his/her clothes.....	-.66			
	.My child buys clothes because of the color.....	.75			
<b>Factor 4: PEER CONSCIOUS</b>					
	.My child often asks me to buy a certain outfit that...	.72	1.6	54.1	.73
	.My child's friends don't influence his/her clothing purchase decisions.....	-.76			
	.My child makes his/her own clothing purchase decisions, independent of his/her friends.....	-.79			
<b>Factor 5: STYLE CONSCIOUS</b>					
	.Style is the most important factor to my child when purchasing clothes.....	.76	1.2	60.2	.66
	.My child buys strictly for the style of the outfit....	.78			
	.The style of the outfit is not a concern to my child when purchasing clothes.....	-.63			

Note. Negative factors were recoded for regression analysis.

three statements. The children considered their peers an important influence on the clothes they were wearing or purchasing. Factor 5, Style Conscious, children represented who are concerned with the style of the outfit purchased or worn. There were three items included in this factor. The average raw mean scores were used for subsequent analyses.

**Parental Socialization Variables.** As a result of the factor analysis, four factors were developed, retaining 10 items. Table 4.3 presents the statements in each factor, including factor loadings, eigenvalue, cumulative percent of variance, and alpha coefficients for the four evaluative criteria factors. Factor loadings ranged from .58 to .87, and standardized alpha coefficients ranged from .64 to .76, indicating reliability of the scale. Factor 1, Money Education included four statements. Parents who were high on this factor emphasized to their children the wise usage of money, and believed in teaching their children about saving and budgeting their money. Factor 2, labeled Shopping Participation, included three statements. Parents who were related to the factor believed in taking their children shopping because it is an effective way to teaching him/her on how to be a

Table 4.3 Factor Analysis of Parental Socialization Variables

Factor	Item	Factor Loading	Eigen-Value	Cumulative Percent of Variance	Alpha Coeff
<b>Factor 1: MONEY EDUCATION</b>					
	.I emphasis to my child the wise usage of money.....	.72	3.54	23.7	.76
	.The habit of saving should be learned from early on...	.73			
	.I make a concerted effort to teach my child how to budget money.....	.73			
	.It's important to teach my child about money.....	.73			
<b>Factor 2: SHOPPING PARTICIPATION</b>					
	.Whenever possible, I try to take my child shopping....	.80	1.7	35.4	.64
	.I never shop for my child's clothes without him/her...	.58			
	.I take my child shopping because I believe it is an effective way of teaching him/her on how to be a consumer.....	.68			
<b>Factor 3: TV RESTRICTIONS</b>					
	.I often place restrictions on my child's television viewing.....	.87	1.4	45.2	.75
	.Children should be restricted on the number of hours of TV watching.....	.87			
<b>Factor 4: TV PRODUCTS REQUESTED</b>					
	.My child often asks me for products that he/she sees on T.V.....	.83	1.18	53.0	--

consumer. Also, the parents tried to involve the children in their clothes shopping. Factor 3, Television Restriction, revealed parents who believed that children should be restricted in the number of hours in which they watch television and on what they are viewing. This factor included two statements. Factor 4, labeled Television Products Requested, included one item. The children often requested products they saw on television.

#### Hypotheses Testing.

**Hypothesis 1:** Parental socialization variables and parents' emphasis on clothing criteria influence parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.

Results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis are presented in Tables 4.4. Parents' perception of their children's Brand Consciousness was predicted by four predictors ( $R^2 = .25$ ,  $F = 9.26$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Included were parents' own emphasis on brand ( $B = .32$ ), television products requested ( $B = .21$ ), television restriction ( $B = -.23$ ), and shopping

**Table 4.4 Regression Analysis of Parental Socialization Variables and Parents' Emphasis on Clothing Criteria on Parents' Perceptions of Children's Evaluative Criteria**

Beta weights of variables predicting children's evaluative criteria					
Predictor Variables	Brand Conscious	Price Conscious	Color Conscious	Peer Conscious	Style Conscious
<b>Parents' own emphasis on</b>					
.Brand Name	.32***	---	---	.23***	---
.Price	---	---	---	---	---
.Color	---	---	.21**	---	---
.Peer	---	---	---	---	---
.Style	---	---	---	---	.27**
<b>Parents' Socialization Variables</b>					
.Television					
- Products Requested	.21**	-.17*	.20*	.40***	---
- Restriction	-.23**	---	---	---	-.19*
.Shopping Participation	.34***	.27**	.29**	.26**	---
.Money Education	---	---	---	---	---
.Bank Account	---	---	---	---	---
.Allowance	---	---	---	---	---
- Total Dollars	---	.21**	---	---	---
- Meant for	---	---	---	---	---
- How often	---	---	---	---	---
.Apparel Expenditure	---	---	---	---	---
Multiple R	.50	.45	.40	.46	.30
R Square	.25	.21	.16	.21	.09
F	9.26**	9.89***	7.51***	10.54***	5.97**
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.					

participation ( $B = .34$ ).

Three predictors were entered in explaining children's consciousness of Price ( $R^2 = .21$ ,  $F = 9.89$ ,  $p < .001$ ): television products requested ( $B = -.17$ ), shopping participation ( $B = .27$ ), and total allowance ( $\beta = .21$ ).

Predictors of children's Color criteria had an  $R^2$  value of .16 ( $F = 7.51$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and included three predictors: parents own emphasis on color ( $B = .21$ ), shopping participation ( $B = .29$ ), and television products requested ( $B = .20$ ).

Children's Peer Conscious criteria had an  $R^2$  value of .21 ( $F = 10.54$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and was influenced by the parents own emphasis on brand ( $B = .23$ ), children request for products seen on television ( $B = .40$ ), and shopping participation ( $B = .26$ ).

Finally, children's Style of clothes had an  $R^2$  value of .09 ( $F = 5.97$ ,  $p < .01$ ) included parents own emphasis on style of clothing ( $B = .27$ ) and television restrictions ( $B = -.19$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis I was mostly accepted.

**Hypothesis II: Social-structural and developmental variables influence the parents' perception of**

children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.

- 2A. Social class influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 2B. Race influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 2C. Gender influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 2D. Family type influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 2E. Biological age influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchase.
- 2F. Birth order influence the parents' perception of children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing



purchase.

The results of the multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 4.5. Parent's perception of their children's Brand Consciousness was predicted by two variables, and had an  $R^2$  value of .21 ( $F = 20.35$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Included were age of the child ( $B = .43$ ), and parent's gender ( $B = -.16$ ).

One predictor was entered in explaining children's evaluative criteria with price ( $R^2 = .16$ ,  $F = 28.78$ ): age ( $B = .40$ ). Color, Peer, and Style were not predicted by any of the variables. Therefore, Hypothesis II D and E was accepted.

**Hypothesis III: Social-structural and developmental variables influence parental socialization variables.**

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test hypothesis III. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.6. Parental influence on children's Money Education was predicted by two variables, and had an  $R^2$  value of .05 ( $F = 4.61$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Included were the number of other children in

Table 4.5 Regression Analysis of Parents' Perceptions of Children's Evaluative Criteria

Predictor Variables	Beta weights of variables predicting children's evaluative criteria				
	Brand Conscious	Price Conscious	Color Conscious	Peer Conscious	Style Conscious
<b>Social Structural Variables</b>					
.Parent <sup>a</sup>	-.16*	---	---	---	---
.Gender	---	---	---	---	---
.Social Class	---	---	---	---	---
.Marital Status	---	---	---	---	---
.Number of other siblings	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Developmental Variables</b>					
.Age	.43***	.40***	---	---	---
.Birth Order	---	---	---	---	---
Multiple R	.46	.40			
R Square	.21	.16			
F	20.35***	28.78***			

\*p<.05. \*\*p<.01. \*\*\*p<.001.

Note. (a) coded 1=father 2=mother

Table 4.6 Regression Analysis of Parental Socialization Variables

Beta weights of variables predicting parental socialization variables								
Predictor Variables	Money Education	Shopping Participation	Television Restriction	TV Products Requests	Allowance Allowance	How Often	Total Dollars	Apparel Expenditure
<b>Social Structural Variables</b>								
.Parent	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
.Gender	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
.Social Class	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
.Race <sup>b</sup>	---	---	---	---	---	-.20**	---	---
.Marital Status <sup>a</sup>	---	---	-.20**	---	---	---	---	---
.Number of other siblings	-.19**	-.17**	---	---	---	---	---	-.25**
<b>Developmental Variables</b>								
.Age	---	.17**	-.24***	-.33***	-.23**	---	.25**	.27***
.Birth Order	.29**	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Multiple R	.24	.24	.31	.33	.23	.20	.25	.37
R Square	.05	.06	.09	.11	.05	.04	.06	.13
F	4.61**	4.81***	8.44***	19.29***	8.91**	5.67**	8.22***	11.98***

\*p<.05. \*\*p<.01. \*\*\*p<.001.

Note. (a) coded 1=married, 2=single (b) coded 1=Caucasian, 2=other.

the family ( $B = -.19$ ), and the birth of the child ( $B = .29$ ).

Shopping participation had an  $R^2$  value of .06 ( $F = 4.81$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and was influenced by age of the child ( $\beta = .17$ ) and the number children who were in the family ( $\beta = -.17$ ).

Television restrictions had an  $R^2$  value of .09 ( $F = 8.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and was influenced by the marital status of the parents ( $B = -.20$ ), and age of the child ( $B = -.24$ ).

One predictor age ( $B = -.33$ ) was entered in explaining Television Products Requested made by children ( $R^2 = .11$ ,  $F = 19.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Allowance had an  $R^2$  value of .05 ( $F = 8.91$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and was influenced by the age of the child ( $B = -.23$ ).

Frequency of the Allowance was given to the child had an  $R^2$  value of .04 ( $F = 5.67$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and was influenced by the ethnic background of the family ( $B = -.20$ ). The Total Amount of Money the child received for an allowance had an  $R^2$  value of .06 ( $F = 6.22$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and was influenced by the age of the child ( $B = .25$ ).

Two predictors were entered in explaining the Apparel Expenditure on child's apparel ( $R^2 = .13$ ,  $F =$

11.98,  $p < .001$ ): the number of other children in the family ( $B = -.25$ ) and age ( $B = .27$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis III was partially accepted.

## CHAPTER V

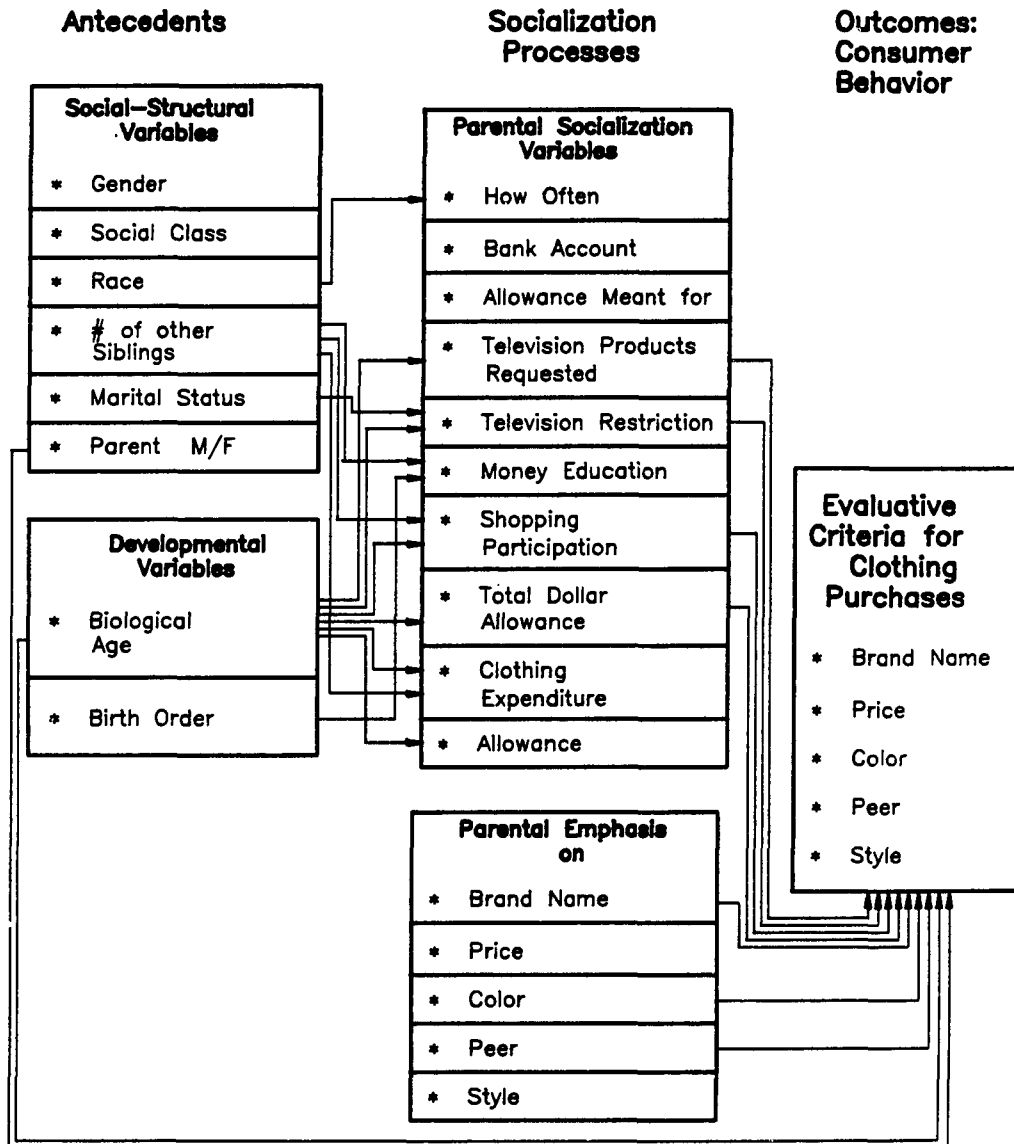
### DISCUSSION

The purposes of this study were: (1) to examine the effects of socialization processes and antecedent variables on children's evaluative criteria for clothing purchase and (2) to examine effects of antecedent variables on the socialization process. The first purpose was achieved through the testing of Hypotheses I and II, while the second objective was achieved through the testing of Hypothesis III. Based on the results of the analyses, interpretation and implications of the findings are discussed in this chapter.

Figure 5 summarizes the overall results of this study. It appears that antecedent variables have a direct influence on socialization process variables, which, in turn, impacts the outcome variables. This relationship is consistent with the research framework for this study, thus supporting the Moschis Consumer Socialization Model (1987). Antecedent variables, however, tended to have limited direct influence on outcome variables but has an indirect effect on outcome variables only through socialization variables. This does not support Moschis' hypothesis that antecedent

Figure 5: Overall Results

## CHILDREN'S CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION MODEL



variables have a direct influence on outcome variables. Therefore, further research is warranted to test the Consumer Socialization Model.

The findings of this study indicates that social-structural variables and developmental variables are important in determining the process by which children may be socialized. The types of socialization children receive then are directly linked to children's consumer behavior. This study assumed that parents' own consumer behavior--evaluative criteria for clothing--would be an important socialization variables in determining children's consumer behavior regarding the usage of evaluative criteria. Indeed, the findings of the study supported this hypothesis in that, parents' own evaluative criteria does have a direct influence on children's consumer behavior regarding the usage of evaluative criteria. The following factors influenced children's consumer behavior.

#### **Factors influencing Evaluative Criteria.**

Figure 6 summarizes the individual results the for the following evaluative criteria.

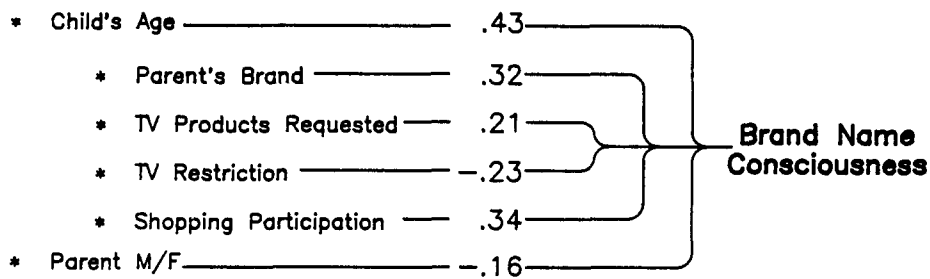
**Brand Consciousness.** Parents who considered their children to be brand conscious believed their children were more likely to consider brand name important, be



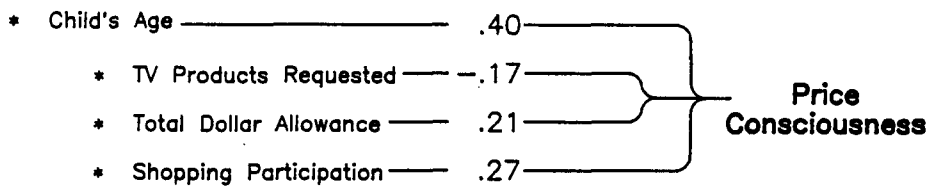
Figure 6: Individual Results

VARIABLES DIRECTLY EFFECTING EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

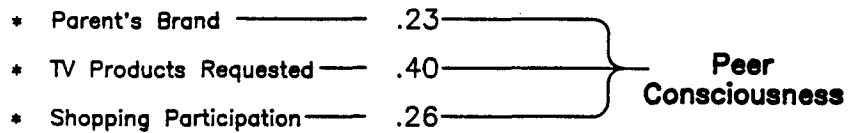
6a.



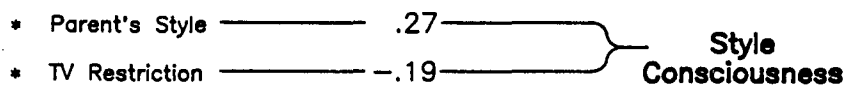
6b.



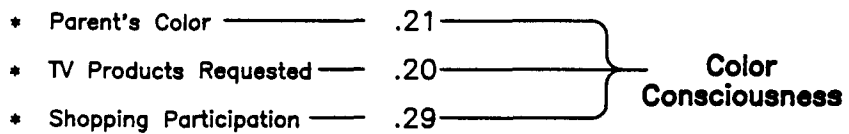
6c.



6d.



6e.



aware of many different brand names, and often ask for certain brand names. As shown in Figure 6a as the age of children increased, so did their brand consciousness. Brand conscious children were also more likely to participate in shopping activities, tended to have parents who emphasize brand, and tended to request products that they had seen on television. However, brand conscious children were less likely to be restricted by their parents on television viewing. It seems that children who are aware exposed to an environment--shopping, television, parents' emphasis on brand--which might promote children's awareness of brand names clothes.

The fathers were less likely to consider their child to be brand conscious, than were mothers. One reason may be that father usually do not take their children clothes shopping, so their awareness of what their children like in clothes would be minimal.

**Price Consciousness.** Price-conscious children used color as an evaluative criterion. As shown in figure 6b as the age of children decreased so did their awareness of price. Price conscious children were also more likely to participate in shopping activities, have greater total dollar allowance, and request less items seen on television. The greater awareness of price

does indicate that when children are using part of their allowance to pay for clothing items, they consider the price of an item an important factor.

**Peer Consciousness.** Peer conscious children were influenced by their immediate peers. As shown in Figure 6c peer-conscious children were also more likely to participate in shopping activities, tended to have parent's who emphasize brand, and tended to request items from television and consider the television program or commercial an influence on what they should have or need. It seems that children who are peer conscious are children who are influenced by their surrounding environment.

**Style Consciousness.** Parents who considered their children to be style-conscious children believed their children were more likely to consider style important and be aware of different styles. Figure 6d shows that style conscious children were also less restricted on their television viewing. The results may indicate that when children see clothing styles on a frequent basis their desire to have them increases. Another, indication may be that these children were aware of the different style clothing that were available to them and know which one they preferred to have.

**Color Consciousness.** Color-conscious children

used color as an evaluative criterion. Figure 6e shows that color conscious children were more likely to participate in shopping activities, tended to have parents who emphasize the color of clothes and tended to request items from television. These children are exposed to an environment which encourages a child to explore the vast amount of colors that are available.

Two of the antecedent variables (e.g., social class, gender) did not have any influence on the socialization process or on the children's consumer behavior. The findings may indicate that the study was too limited in the number of children to show any difference between the genders. Also, this study was limited to upper class people, which, limited the findings to indicate no influence. Therefore, further research is warranted to test the antecedent variables in the Children's Consumer Socialization Model.

In summary, shopping participation, TV influence, and parents' emphasis on certain criteria are important factors in determining children's usage of evaluative criteria for clothing purchases.

#### **Factors influencing Parental Socialization Variables.**

**Money Education.** Teaching children about money depended on two important variables: the number of

children in the family and the birth order of the child. The greater the number of siblings in a family, the less time the parents spent teaching children about money. Older children did receive more education than their younger sibling. This outcome relates to the birth order results in that the first-born children do receive more money education than the later-born.

The results indicated that parents with one child or few children do spend more time teaching their children about money. On the other hand, parents with many children do not spend a lot of time teaching their children about money education. Perhaps parents with many children need to spend more time on other family issues. A previous study conducted by Moschis, (1987) found that first-born children acquire better consumer skills than later-born children.

**Shopping Participation.** Shopping participation depended on two social-structural variables. The first variable was the child's age. As the child's age increased, so did his/her participation in shopping activities. The parents of older children were more likely to allow their child to participate in shopping than were parents of younger children. This outcome is consistent with findings that the more opportunities children have with money, the more skills they acquire

in spending or saving their money. In addition, McNeal (1987) found that as children's ages increase, so do the purchasing decisions the children become involved in.

The second social-structural variable was the number of children in the family. The greater the number of children in the family, the less involvement the child had in shopping activities. This is consistent with findings about the money education and the number of children in the family. When children come from large families, the parent's time becomes very limited. The parents may find it easier to shop by themselves because it is less of a hassle and they get in and out in of a store in virtually no time. Time becomes the limiting factor.

**Television Restrictions and Child's Requests for Television Products.** Single parents and parents with young children believed that their children should be restricted in the number of hours and the types of programs their children watch. Younger children, however, requested more items seen on television, compared to older children. One reason that may contribute to this finding is that the younger children have not outgrown the "I want" stage of their lives; therefore, they request more of the products seen on

television. Also, the younger child may not be able to distinguish between actually needing the product and wanting the product. In addition, Ward and Wackman (1972) found parents will purchase more of the items requested by an older child than a younger children. One reason that may contribute to this finding is that older children understand the concept of television commercial and know the types of products they want.

#### IMPLICATIONS

Based on the results of this study, education in the home environment is very important in determining children's consciousness of clothing evaluative criteria. Parents can teach their children to be conscious consumers by allowing their children to save and spend money, take part in shopping activities, and by paying attention to what your children watch on television. Also, parents need to be made aware of their own clothing habits because children learn from watching their parents. For instance, children are learning about brand names, price, color, style, and peer influence from their parents.

Schools can also, use this information to teach children about consumerism. The teachers can build upon this research by implementing a plan to enhance

children's understanding of consumer behavior. Most of the children don't even know they are learning an important life long skill that can be refined with the proper training.

Retailers may benefit by targeting their children market the same way they do their adult market. For instance, The Gap has a new children store, called Gapkids, specifically for 2 to 12 years old. The store is appealing to the loyal Gap Shopper who have children and enjoy wearing comfortable and casual clothes. Manufacturers may also benefit by focusing on children as loyal consumers. By recognizing this manufacturers can develop lifetime customers.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of socialization processes and antecedent variables on children's evaluative criteria for clothing purchase, and to examine effects of antecedent variables on the socialization process.

The antecedent variables did have a strong influence on the child's socialization process. Data about the family background and members of the family (i.e., age, birth order, marital status, number of other sibling, and race) contributed a great deal towards an understanding of how children acquired the knowledge needed to be a consumer.

It was found, however, that antecedent variables did have little influence on the child's evaluative criteria. Parental socialization variables, which were influenced by antecedent variables were the major influence in the consumer outcome the child exhibited. The results confirm Moschis' theoretical framework by linking the socialization process and children's consumer behavior.

Parents who spent the time teaching their children about money, taking them shopping, and monitoring their

television viewing showed a strong uses of the five evaluative criteria. Also, children who used their own money understood the value of the dollar when purchasing clothes.

The present study seems to support past research that children learn through observation and participation. The parents in this case played the most significant part in the way children learned about being a consumer. In addition, the study shows that the more experience the children have with money, the more skills they have in saving or spending their money. However, there seems to be a difference between the number of persons in the child's family and the amount of home education the child may receive,

The data produced show a benefit towards the retailer of children's apparel. If the parents are comfortable with certain products, most likely their children will be too. If retailers can reach these children at a young age, they can have a devoted customer for life.

**Limitations and Future Study.** The following limitations should be taken into consideration when judging the validity and the generalization of the study. The sample for this study consisted of only one

school district, and the respondents of the questionnaire were parents, not children. Finally, the respondents of this study were from a relatively higher income and social class group.

The findings of this study appear to indicate a need for further research focusing on the number of family members a child has and the influence they have on each other. Also, there is need to examine older children for gender differences. In addition, other socialization agents need to be examined like schools, business, and other age groups (i.e., especially younger).

**APPENDIX A**

**Survey of Parents  
(Questionnaire)**

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A SURVEY OF PARENTS  
WITH CHILDREN IN GRADES 1-6

Dear Parents:

I am currently working on a master's degree in the School of Family and Consumer Resources at the University of Arizona. As you well know, being a consumer today is becoming increasingly difficult. With prices continuing to increase, it can be more difficult to manage your money and get the best value for your dollar. This survey will ask you about how your child acts as a consumer. Please try to focus exclusively on one child in the study when completing this questionnaire.

You are assured of complete confidentiality. No individual names are requested. The questionnaire has an identification number which will be used for data collection purposes only.

We would appreciate your filling out the questionnaire and returning it in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

Lisa Jean Snyder, Graduate Student  
Advisor: Dr. Soyeon Shim, Associate Professor  
School of Family & Consumer Resources

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**ARIZONA**  
TUCSON ARIZONA

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Part I. Information about the child in the study.

ID (1-4)

1. What is the age of the child in this study? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the gender of the child in this study? (circle)    1. Boy    2. Girl
3. What is the birth order of the child in this study? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many children do you have excluding the child in the study? \_\_\_\_\_

(5-6)

Part II. There is no right or wrong answer. We are interested in your opinion. Please circle the appropriate number that best describes your agreement with the statement.

	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>NEUTRAL</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u>			
	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>	↓	↓	↓	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>	
.I emphasize to my child the wise usage of money.	5	4	3	2	1	(10)
.I often place restrictions on my child's television viewing.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Today's children are too concerned with brand names.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child does pay attention to clothing prices.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Whenever possible, I try to take my child shopping.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Color is the most important factor to my child when purchasing clothes.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Style is the most important factor to my child when purchasing clothes.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child often asks me to buy a certain outfit that his/her friends own.	5	4	3	2	1	
.I never shop for my child's clothes without taking him/her.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child is aware of the many different styles available.	5	4	3	2	1	(20)
.My child's friends don't influence his/her clothing purchase decisions.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child will only purchase certain colors.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child considers most clothes to be inexpensive.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Brand names are the most important factor to my child.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child often asks me for products (e.g., clothes, sneakers, cereal, & toys) that he/she sees on TV.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Whenever buying something for the family, I try to involve my child in the decision/making.	5	4	3	2	1	
.The habit of saving should be learned from early on.	5	4	3	2	1	
.I explain the purpose of TV commercials to my child.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Brand name clothes are not important to my child.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Price is not a concern to my child.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child is not concerned with the color of his/her clothes.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child buys strictly for the style of the outfit.	5	4	3	2	1	(31)
.My child makes his/her own clothing purchase decisions, independent of his/her friends.	5	4	3	2	1	
.I make a concerted effort to teach my child how to budget money.	5	4	3	2	1	
.The style of the outfit is not a concern to my child when purchasing clothes.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child saves money whenever possible.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child buys clothes because of the color.	5	4	3	2	1	

	<u>NEUTRAL</u>					
	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u>	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>		
.My child thinks that most clothes are expensive.	5	4	3	2	1	(37)
.My child is aware of many different brand names.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Children should be restricted on the number of hours of TV watching.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Whenever I give an allowance to my child, I expect my child to spend it in a certain way.	5	4	3	2	1	
.Whenever shopping, I explain to my child the relationship between quality and price of the product.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child often asks me for certain brand name clothes.	5	4	3	2	1	
.My child considers price an important factor when purchasing clothing.	5	4	3	2	1	(43)
.It's important to teach my child about money.	5	4	3	2	1	
.I take my child shopping because I believe it is an effective way of teaching him/her on how to be a consumer.	5	4	3	2	1	

Part III. The following section is concerned with allowance and the usage of allowance. Circle your answer.

1. Does the child receive an allowance? 1. yes 2. no (if no, go to question 5) (46)

2. Does the child have a bank account of his/her own? 1. yes 2. no

3. What is the allowance meant for? 1. savings 2. spending 3. both 4. other \_\_\_\_\_

4. How often is the allowance given and how much on the average each time? (49-51)

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. daily \$ _____     | 4. monthly \$ _____         |
| 2. weekly \$ _____    | 5. whenever needed \$ _____ |
| 3. bimonthly \$ _____ | 6. other (specify) \$ _____ |

5. Indicate total annual expenditure on your child's apparel (e.g., cloths, sneakers, accessories).

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Below \$100   | 5. \$401 - \$500     |
| 2. \$100 - \$200 | 6. \$501 - 800       |
| 3. \$201 - \$300 | 7. \$801 - \$1,000   |
| 4. \$301 - \$400 | 8. \$1,000 and above |

6. How does your child acquire most of his/her clothes?

- |                  |                                   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. gift          | 3. brand new                      |
| 2. hand-me-downs | 4. used (garage sale, used store) |

7. When shopping for school clothes, how often does **YOUR CHILD** consider the following criteria? Check ( ) your answer.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometime	Not Often	Never	
Price	___	___	___	___	___	(54)
Color	___	___	___	___	___	
Style	___	___	___	___	___	
Friends	___	___	___	___	___	
Brand Names	___	___	___	___	___	

		<u>IMPORTANT</u>	<u>NEUTRAL</u>	<u>UNIMPORTANT</u>	
	<u>VERY IMPORTANT</u>				<u>VERY UNIMPORTANT</u>
8. How important are the following criteria to you when you are shopping for your clothes?	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Price	5	4	3	2	1
Color	5	4	3	2	1
Style	5	4	3	2	1
Friends/Co-workers	5	4	3	2	1
Brand Names	5	4	3	2	1

(59)

Part IV. This section is for statistical purposes only. Please fill in or circle the appropriate answer.

1. Your relation to the child? 1. Father 2. Mother 3. Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_ (64)
2. Your marital status? 1. Single 2. Married 3. Divorced/Separate 4. Widowed
3. Your ethnic background? 1. Black 2. Caucasian 3. American Indian 4. Asian 5. Hispanic 6. Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
4. Which most accurately describes your total household income?
 

1. Below \$10,000	5. \$30,000 - \$49,999
2. \$10,000 - \$14,999	6. \$50,000 - \$69,999
3. \$15,000 - \$19,999	7. \$70,000 and above
4. \$20,000 - \$29,999	

5. What is the highest level of education you and your spouse (if married) have completed? (68-69)

	<u>You</u>	<u>Your Spouse</u>
1. Grammar School	___	___
2. Some High School	___	___
3. High School	___	___
4. Some College	___	___
5. Bachelor's Degree	___	___
6. Master's Degree	___	___
7. Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., M.D.	___	___

6. What is the occupational status of your household? (70-71)

	<u>You</u>	<u>Your Spouse</u>
1. Lawyer/Physician/Dentist	___	___
2. Professional/Educator	___	___
3. Technician	___	___
4. Upper Management/Admin.	___	___
5. Sales/Service/Middle Management	___	___
6. Medical Technician/Nurse	___	___
7. Student	___	___
8. Retired	___	___
9. Unemployed	___	___
10. Other (specify)	___	___

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Thank you so much for your cooperation in this project.



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