

Clothing Preference and Selection Criteria of African-American  
Female College Students Enrolled at the University of  
Arkansas at Pine Bluff

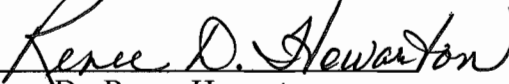
by

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A Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the  
Master of Science Degree  
in

Home Economics

Approved: 2 Semester Credits

  
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August, 2009

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**Title:** *Clothing Preference and Selection Criteria of African-American Female College Students Attending the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*

**Graduate Degree/ Major:** MS Home Economics

**Research Adviser:** Renee Howarton, Ph.D.

**Month/Year:** August, 2009

**Number of Pages:** 47

**Style Manual Used:** American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> edition

ABSTRACT

This study identified major factors that influence clothing preference and selection in female African-American college students enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. It examines clothing preferences, apparel buying habits, and shopping behaviors.

A self developed questionnaire, which included four sections and 49 questions, was used to collect data. The questionnaire was administered during the spring semester of 2009. Twenty-three African-American female college students participated and the survey findings were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results confirmed that the respondents cared about their appearance. They indicated that they love to purchase quality fashionable clothing and accessories, but were neutral about spending a large percentage of their monthly budget on clothing. Over half shopped for clothing

within the city they live in, preferred patronizing department stores, or purchased clothing on-line or through mail order catalogs.

In contrast to past research suggesting that African-Americans embrace their heritage and respond to ethnic marketing, these respondents were neutral about selecting clothing that expressed their ethnicity; shopping retailers with ethnically diverse sales people; and responding to ethnic advertisements. Various forms of media were used by this group to help create their fashion style and further define their ideas about personal attractiveness.

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Acknowledgments

Several people were helpful in the completion of this project. I would like to thank Dr. Renee Howarton for her guidance, dedication, patience, and kindness throughout this process. Her encouraging and understanding nature is a blessing. Thanks go out to Susan Greene for her data analysis assistance. Thanks also go out to Sandra Dupree and Mary Heady of UAM for their assistance. Finally I would like to give a special thank you to my family and friends for all of their encouragement and support.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

Ever since the mid 1800s, accepted standards of beauty have been apparent and clear in U.S. culture. White American women have been seen as the archetype of womanhood and ultimately as the desired standard of beauty (Sekayi, 2003). Western women are constantly bombarded with literature and images that reinforce the established American standard.

While females of all racial groups are being influenced by American culture and media to spend billions of dollars each year on self-improving products and services with the hopes of enhancing their overall physical beauty and becoming more like the accepted standard, media's portrayal and direct targeting of African-American women has significantly increased. According to Sekayi (2003) the media is paying more attention to women of African descent and spotlighting them as being beautiful and desirable. Features outside of the Eurocentric standard are currently appearing in a variety of media and are more accepted by mainstream culture. Sekayi (2003) states that African-American women with features such as dark-skin, large lips, and naturally coarse hair are classified as exotic when presented in media.

The lucrative buying power and growing hunger for products and services exhibited by African-Americans makes them a desirable and actively sought after market. In 2007, this particular market segment possessed a buying power of \$845 billion and it is projected to increase to more than \$1 trillion by 2010 ("Drawing on Diversity," 2008). In fact, African-Americans make up the second largest racial ethnic group in America and their numbers are growing rapidly ("The Office of," 2009). As their population grows so will their buying power. According to Rickard (1994) they are at the top of the list of consumers. In fact their spending on clothing is significantly higher than that of the general population and that of all other ethnic groups.

Reaching consumers from various ethnic backgrounds requires research and understanding of various aspects of their culture and beliefs. “To understand the complex dynamics of African-American buying behavior, marketers must understand their values, lifestyles, and aspirations of this significant group...” (Miller & Miller, 1992, p. 9). Buying for this group is emotional and has many ties to their history.

African-American women invest a great deal of time and money on their physical appearance. Though a large portion of their disposable income is used to purchase apparel, major factors that influence their purchase decisions are relatively unknown (Smith, Burlew & Lundgren, 1991). This is especially true for younger African-Americans. This thesis explores various factors that influence clothing preference and selection in African-American female college students.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Cultural and ethnic affiliations greatly influence behaviors related to appearance and dress. The population of the United States is a combination of people from various cultures who identify themselves with racial ethnicities. Although African-American college students make up a segment of the larger American population, limited research is available that documents their specific consumer behavior and apparel preferences.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to identify major factors that influence clothing preference and selection in female African-American college students enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. This study examines media influences,

consumer behavior, shopping patterns and disposable income applicable for this particular student population.

### *Assumptions of the Study*

Due to the size of the sample population it is assumed that the results are relevant and applicable to the sample population only. The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluffs campus is located in a rural, primarily agrarian, economically challenged part of the country, so the views of the students may not represent the views of African-American female college students in metropolitan areas. Honesty is also assumed.

### *Definition of Terms*

*Eurocentric beauty.* Attractiveness influenced by or based on traditional European features.

*Afrocentric beauty.* Attractiveness influenced by or based on traditional African features.

*Hip-hop culture.* Movement created by African-Americans in New York that was influenced by various forms of self expression such as rap music, poetry, and graffiti.

### *Limitations of the Study*

The population for this study is made up of female African-American college students enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. This university is a historically black university that is located in an economically challenged agrarian city. Responses given by this particular group may not represent the views of a similar population on a diverse campus in a metropolitan area. Some students may choose not to participate in this

study because of personal reasons or because of the study's optional participation clause.

### *Methodology*

A self-developed survey consisting of 49 questions will be used to assess actual shopping behaviors, attitudinal responses and demographic data. Participants' attitudes will be measured using a Likert-scale while shopping perceptions and behaviors will be studied using close-ended questions. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the findings.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

In this chapter the following topics: standards of beauty and dress; media influences; and consumption habits will be discussed as they relate to identifying major factors that influence clothing preference and selection criteria in female African-American college students.

### *Standards of Beauty*

Throughout the U.S. women are bombarded with various forms of advertisements that emphasize Eurocentric beauty standards as the American norm. “Popular literature, media, and informal discussions in the United States, make the standard of beauty very clear” (Sekayi, 2003 p.467). Images of tall, thin, white women grace pages of magazines, billboards, television programs and movies reinforcing the perceived Eurocentric standards of beauty. Consequently, “young women are inundated with commercial messages regarding ideal feminine beauty” (Sekayi, 2003 p.470).

“Historically among African-Americans, features such as skin color, hair length and texture, lip size, and nose width significantly affected how attractiveness was evaluated” (Smith, Burlew, Lundgren, 1991 p.270). In the eyes of many, a combination of Afrocentric and Eurocentric beauty standards became the norm for this group. For example, lighter black skin tones were and continue to be perceived by many African-Americans as more beautiful and desirable than darker shades of black skin. According to Bond and Cash (1992) in the past some affluent African-American organizations, sometimes referred to as blue vein societies, required that its member’s skin be lighter than a paper bag, or at least light enough for blue veins to show through. Good hair is a term used among African-Americans that refers to a specific hair texture. Natural hair that curls loosely or waves would fit into this category. Good hair is more

desirable than hair that is naturally coarse. Longer hair is also deemed more beautiful and desirable than shorter hair with this group. An expert in the field (Sekayi, 2003, p. 467) stated that “beauty has vastly varied definitions and certainly one’s sense of personal beauty is greatly impacted by one’s definition of beauty.”

In recent years, standards of beauty related to dress in America have expanded and are becoming somewhat of a multicultural juxtaposition. Unlike earlier generation Americans who chose to blend their ethnic looks into a melting-pot mind-set and cultural appearance, the new generation is embracing their ethnic identities (Halter, 2000). Both multiculturalism and diversity are being celebrated and embraced by many college students who are taking full advantage of the informality of ethnic dress present on most college campuses (Bruce, 2002). Collegians from all over the United States are incorporating elements from various cultures into their dress and creating a new unconventional standard of beauty. It would not be farfetched for a person walking across an average college campus in the U.S. to wonder if the text book pages of Anthropology 101 had been juggled (Cyr, 1994). Students are experiencing an ethnocentric movement and are expressing themselves by integrating culture and dress (Wilson, 1994).

“Hordes of African-American collegians all over the country are reaching back to embrace their heritage” (Wilson, 1994, p. 23) by incorporating Afrocentric fashion elements like dashikis and head-wraps into their wardrobes. Afrocentric fashions that were once shunned and considered militant have transitioned from being mere fads to having quite an influence on the mainstream fashion industry (Wilson, 1994). African inspired patterns, shapes, and fabrics appear in fashionable garments across America.

A college campus culture can easily be communicated by what its students are wearing (Bruce, 2002). Several factors can influence a desired look. According to Kenzie (2007) the

school type and location have a huge bearing on the way its students dress. Students attending art schools naturally dress differently from students who attend business and technology schools. The dress on campuses in the north is often different from students' appearance on southern campuses. Hughes (2004) reported that students attending Tougaloo college in Tougaloo, Mississippi combine elements of old-school southern charm and individuality in their dress while students attending college at Howard University in Washington, DC combine top designer clothing, sales rack items and original items that they design into their wardrobes. At most universities during the first week of school it is easy to identify new students on campus by their clothing. According to Kinzie (2007) by the second week new students are not as recognizable because they have adopted a look that reflects campus culture.

Many Historically Black Colleges and Universities have a heavy hip-hop culture that the students have actively accepted and been influenced by. Do-rags, midriff-revealing tank tops, stiletto heels, halter tops, navel piercings and baggy pants that reveal undergarments are some of the prevalent hip-hop fashions that have been embraced and are being worn by collegians (Stewart, 2004). Rap videos and music are used as a frame of reference for what hip-hop culture should look like.

Campuses are full of students that desire to fit in and make friends. Countless students are using clothing as their medium for assimilation. For many, college is their first experience of being able to freely express themselves through dress without direct influence or approval from parents (Kinzie, 2007). Students are exploring their freedom of expression by embracing various forms of dress.

### *Marketing to Minorities*

Over the last three decades American cultural identity has been going through a process of demassification (Halter, 2000). Multiculturalism and diversity are significantly impacting American industry and consumer spending.

“The ethnic diversity of the United States makes it critical to develop advertising strategies for specific target segments, which entails investigating how ethnic consumers differ in their various purchase decision-making patterns” (Kim & Kang, 2001, p. 39). In order to be successful it is important for advertisers to intimately understand the overall lifestyle of the consumer that they are targeting.

When advertising to African-American consumers it is imperative for marketers to understand their lifestyles, values and aspirations (Miller & Miller, 1992). When compared to other groups, African-Americans are considered to be easily persuaded and more responsive to advertising (Miller & Miller, 1992). Past research has proven that messages targeting African-Americans, specifically, generate a greater response within this group in comparison to their response levels from messages that target the general public (Miller & Miller, 1992). For example, successful retailers like Citi Trends effectively target African-American consumers by merging cool, trendy urban fashions and extreme value prices (Howell, 2006). JC Penny is another retailer that has found success in attracting African-Americans by adjusting merchandise selection in stores located in minority neighborhoods (“African-American Market,” 1996). In 1994, as an effort to attract more African-American customers, JC Penny revamped approximately 170 of their stores by updating their merchandise selection and incorporating black models into their advertisements (Rickard, 1994). They were optimistic that this group would be receptive to the change.



### *African-American Consumption*

The African-American story is an evolution from slave to president. Throughout history, successful and unsuccessful strides have been made towards equality. This advancement of equality has and continues to encompass issues ranging from personal liberties and civil rights to freedom of consumption. In the past, many African-Americans viewed consumption as a symbol of privilege and progression (Mullins, 1999). During the time of segregation, product and service variety and availability was limited for African-Americans.

In today's society, African-Americans are considered to be heavy consumers. Their spending on apparel significantly exceeds that of the general population and all other ethnic groups (Rickard, 1994). African-Americans make up the second largest ethnic minority group in America. By 2015, the African-American population is expected to increase to 23 percent (Kim & Kang, 2001). As their population increases their purchasing power will increase as well.

Past research has shown that African-American women spend a significantly higher dollar amount on goods and services per month than the general market. The spending patterns of young African-Americans are proving to be similar. In 2008 it was reported that African-American youth were spending an average of \$96 dollars per month which is 20% higher than the spending of the average teen in the U.S. (Drawing on Diversity, 2008). Marketers for many apparel companies have recognized the spending habits of young African-American consumers and are researching ways to further tap into this market.

African-American youth have been found to have a major impact on fashion in mainstream culture (Drawing on Diversity, 2008). They have recently been reported to spend an average of \$258 dollars over a 12 month period on clothing (Drawing on Diversity, 2008). Research has

proven this group to be brand loyal. Their brand loyalty usually extends to a variety of goods, including clothing, footwear, and personal care products (“Drawing on Diversity,” 2008). Many young African-American females consider shopping to be a social occasion, so they shop for goods and services as a group. In the past department stores and discount stores have been the preferred shopping destinations for this group, but the current technology movement is making internet shopping more popular among them.

Internet marketing has made online shopping popular among many consumers. In 2005 consumer spending on various apparel websites was nearly 4.7 billion dollars; topping catalogue sales, which in the past generated the largest amount of non- store retail profits (Coward & Goldsmith, 2007). Heavy Internet users are more likely to gather online information about clothing and apparel than people who sparingly use the Internet and are 90% more likely to make online apparel purchases (Coward & Goldsmith, 2007). College students are a group that spends a great deal of time on the Internet and can be classified as heavy Internet users. On-line apparel consumption is popular among this group because the Internet provides a mix of merchandise that can accommodate a wide range of personal styles and budgets. Researchers have reported that “when college students participate in e-commerce, fashion is a primary purchase” (Coward & Goldsmith, 2007, p 640).

Typically African-Americans have lagged behind whites and other racial groups in their use of the Internet (Swisher, 1999). Several variables such as education, income and accessibility contribute to that lag. In 1999 it was projected that over the next several years, the African-American on-line market would become the fastest growing market on the web (Swisher, 1999). In 2003 African-Americans made up 12 percent of the nation’s population and just over 10

percent of the Internet population (Tedeschi, 2003). As their web presence grows the dollar amount they spend each year shopping online is projected to increase.

### Chapter III: Methodology

This study's purpose is to examine factors that influence clothing selection and preference in female African-American college students. The methods to be used in this study will be discussed in this chapter. The methodology will include subject selection and description, instrumentation, and pilot testing, data collection procedures, data analysis, and assumptions and limitations.

#### *Subject Selection and Description*

The sample for this study is a group of female African-American college students who were enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff during the spring semester of 2009. In order to maintain confidentiality participants were not asked for personal identifying information. Each participant had the option to opt out of the study at any time.

#### *Instrumentation*

The survey instrument used for this study consisted of 49 questions divided into the following four sections: Clothing preferences, apparel buying habits, shopping information, and general information. It is a self developed instrument created specifically for this study. The survey was designed to identify major factors that influence clothing preference and selection criteria of this group of students. The survey consisted of a Likert scale that was intended to measure clothing preferences and apparel buying habits. The survey also consisted of closed-ended questions that were used to reveal general information and personal shopping information about the students. The survey was pilot tested on a group of 15 students at Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock, AR. Minimal changes were made to wording and the number of questions was reduced. The estimated completion time for each survey was 10 minutes.

### *Data Collection Procedures*

A 49 question survey was administered at the beginning of fashion courses during the week of May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The survey was collected from a total of 23 African-American female students. The desired level of participation was between 40 and 50. Surveys were distributed to all students present at the start of class. Dr. Lina Godfrey distributed and collected each survey. Attached to each survey was a cover letter providing instructions as well as the study's purpose. The cover letter also included a statement of confidentiality that explained voluntary consent and it advised students of their option to not participate without coercion or prejudice.

### *Data Analysis*

The data was analyzed shortly after it was collected. Descriptive statistics were run on all returned data. The Statistical Program for Social Sciences, version 10.0, (SPSS, 2002) was used to analyze data from this study.

### *Limitations*

The survey was administered by a third party not directly associated with the study, but directly associated with the students, so some students may have chosen not to participate because of personal feelings about the survey proctor. Data collected from the study may have been flawed because of the size of the sample. Also, the survey questions may not have accurately reflected the students' personal views on clothing preference. Perhaps additional questions or statements worded in other ways would have more accurately captured their opinions.

## Chapter IV: Results

### *Item Analysis*

Information regarding clothing preference and selection criteria of female African-American college students was gathered using a 49 item questionnaire. The sample population included students enrolled in various fashion merchandising courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in Pine Bluff, AR during the spring semester of 2009. Using descriptive statistics, results from the collected data are presented under the following headings: demographic information, clothing preferences, apparel buying habits, and shopping information.

### *Demographic information*

Of the 50 questionnaires administered, 23 (46%) were returned completed. Of the 23 respondents, 23 (100%) were African-American females. The demographic information section gathered data regarding age, classification in college, student status, employment status, monthly income, monthly budget, and method of payment when purchasing clothing.

Table 1

### *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Age*

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
18-20	9	39.1
21-23	8	34.8
24-26	1	4.3
27-29	1	4.3
30 or older	4	17.4
Total	23	100.0

A review of frequency and percentage distribution of age included in Table 1 indicates that the majority of the respondents, 73.9%, were between 18 and 23. The remaining 26% of participants were 24 years of age or older.

Table 2

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Classification in School*

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Freshman	2	8.7
Sophomore	7	30.4
Junior	8	34.8
Senior	1	4.3
Graduating Senior	5	21.7
Total	23	100.0

Over half of the female African-American college students (65.2%) were sophomores and juniors. Twenty-six percent were seniors of which nearly 22% were graduating seniors. The remainder of the population (8.7%) was classified as freshmen.

Table 3

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Student Status*

<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Full-Time Student	20	87.0
Part-Time Student	3	13.0
Total	23	100.0

According to the data a large number of respondents (87%) were full-time students, enrolled in 12 or more credit hours, while a total of 13% were part-time students, enrolled in less than 12 credit hours, during the spring semester of 2009.

Table 4

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Employment*

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Intern	2	8.7
Employed	13	56.5
Unemployed	8	34.8
Total	23	100.0

Nearly 57% of the respondents were employed. Approximately 35% of the respondents were unemployed while the remaining 8.7% were classified as interns.

Table 5

*Frequency and Percent Distribution of Respondents by Employment Status*

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Full Time	5	33.3
Full Time on Campus	1	6.7
Part Time	6	40.0
Part Time on Campus	2	13.3
Seasonally	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0



Of the 23 respondents, 15 reported that they worked in some capacity of full or part-time employment. Slightly over half were employed part-time (53.3%). The total number of respondents employed full-time was 6, which accounted for 40% of the population. Only one respondent reported being employed seasonally (6.7%).

Table 6

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Monthly Income*

<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
\$0-500	13	56.5
\$501-1000	4	17.4
\$1001-1500	1	4.3
\$1501-2000	1	4.3
\$2001 or more	3	13.0
No Response	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

A review of table six indicates that almost 57% of the students in the sample population have a monthly income that falls between \$0 and \$500 dollars. Four students (17.4%) had monthly incomes between \$501 and \$1000 dollars, while three (13.0%) reported having monthly incomes that exceeded \$2001 dollars.

Table 7

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Monthly Clothing Budget*

<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
\$0-50	6	26.1
\$51-100	9	39.1
\$101-150	2	8.7
\$151-200	2	8.7
\$201-300	1	4.3
\$301-400	1	4.3
\$401 or above	2	8.7
Total	23	100.0

Of the 23 students surveyed 39.1% reported having a monthly clothing budget that fell between \$51 and \$100 dollars. Six students (26.1%) however, indicated that their monthly clothing budget was only between \$0 and \$50 dollars. A few students indicated having monthly budgets that exceeded \$200.

Table 8

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Purchase Method of Payment*

<b>Payment Method</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Cash/Check Card	6	26.1
Debit card	9	39.1
Credit Card	8	34.8
Total	23	100.0

According to the data the primary method of payment when purchasing clothing and fashion accessories was by debit card (39.1%). The use of credit cards was the second most popular method of payment (34.8%). The remaining 26.1% of students used cash or checks as their primary method of payment for clothing and accessory purchases.

### *Clothing Preferences*

To identify female African-American college students' clothing preferences a five point Likert scale was used. Options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree were used to express feelings towards wardrobe expression and planning, fashion taste, peer fashion influences, fashion trends, apparel cost, and personal perception and dress. The mean scores and standard deviations of these feelings are presented in Tables 9 through 14. Values presented are associated with the follow possible answers: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). Mean scores that were .5 or higher were labeled as being within a category of "somewhat" agree, neutral or disagree depending on their numerical outcome.

Table 9

### *Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Wardrobe Expression and Planning*

<b>Feelings Towards Wardrobe Expression and Planning</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
I carefully plan what I wear each day	4.09	.949	23
I enjoy wearing feminine-looking clothing	4.22	1.242	23
I choose clothing that expresses my personality	4.30	.876	23
I choose clothing that expresses my ethnicity	3.22	.902	23

Figures from Table 9 indicated that the female African-American college student respondents carefully plan what they wear each day (M=4.09). They choose feminine-looking clothing (M=4.22) that expresses their personality (M=4.30). Respondents were neutral about selecting clothing that expresses their ethnicity (M=3.22).

Table 10

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Fashion Tastes*

<b>Feelings Towards Fashion Tastes</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
My fashion tastes are so unique that I do not follow the advice of fashion experts	3.39	1.118	23
I prefer to design my own clothing	2.70	1.146	23

Respondents had neutral feelings (M=3.39) about not following the advice of fashion experts. They also did not prefer to design their own clothing (M=2.70).

Table 11

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Peer Fashion Influences*

<b>Feelings Towards Peer Fashion Influences</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
My friends and I have similar personal style	3.48	.898	23
My friends turn to me for fashion advice	3.91	.733	23

According to the data presented in Table 11 the participants somewhat agreed (M=3.91) that their friends turn to them for fashion advice. Their overall response to having a personal style that is similar to their friends was neutral (M=3.48).

Table 12

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Fashion Trends*

<b>Feelings Towards Fashion Trends</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
Current fashion designs suit my tastes	4.09	.793	23
I only wear clothing that is trendy & fashionable	3.70	1.146	23
I only try new fashion looks when they are well accepted by the mass public	2.78	1.565	23

Data showed that current designs suit the personal tastes of these students (M=4.09). They considered the clothing they wear to be trendy and fashionable (M=3.70), however, they disagreed or leaned toward being neutral about desiring to wait for mass public acceptance of new looks before adopting desired fashions (M=2.78).

Table 13

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Apparel Cost*

<b>Feelings Towards Apparel Cost</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
In today's economy, spending excessively on apparel is wasteful and ridiculous	3.74	1.096	23
The price of a garment is more important to me than how fashionable or trendy it is	2.61	1.270	23

A review of Table 13 shows that respondents somewhat agreed (M=3.74) that excessive spending on apparel in today's economy is wasteful and ridiculous. Their feelings about a garment's price being more important than how fashionable or trendy it is ranged between disagreement and being neutral (M=2.61).

Table 14

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Self Perception and Dress*

<b>Feelings Towards Self Perception and Dress</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
I am not as concerned about wearing the latest fashions as I am about choosing comfortable, nice looking apparel	3.83	1.370	23
Wearing fashionable clothing is part of being successful in life	3.57	1.199	23
How you dress is a reflection of how you feel about yourself	4.57	.788	23
It doesn't make sense to not care about your physical appearance	4.35	1.301	23

The data indicated that the female students strongly agreed (M=4.57) that personal dress is a reflection of how a person feels. They also agreed (M=4.35) that it doesn't make sense to not care about your physical appearance. In addition, they somewhat agreed that choosing comfortable, nice looking apparel is more important than wearing the latest fashions (M=3.83) and that wearing fashionable clothing is part of being successful in life (M=3.57).

### *Apparel Buying Habits*

Apparel buying habits of female African-American college students were identified by using a five point Likert scale that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. African-American college student's feelings towards various aspects of apparel buying habits including fit, retail shop staff and service, advertising and displays, and quality and spending are explored in Tables 15 through 18. The following values are associated with their responses: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). Mean scores that were .5 or higher were labeled as being within a category of "somewhat" agree, neutral or disagree depending on their numerical outcome.

Table 15

#### *Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Fit*

<b>Feelings Towards Fit</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
I only purchase garments that compliment my figure	4.22	.902	23
Clothes that I find in stores are designed for the body proportions of African-American females	2.64	1.177	23

In regards to fit, the respondents (M=4.22) agreed that they only purchase garments that compliment their figures. These same students also either disagreed or were somewhat neutral (M=2.64) about feeling that clothing they find in stores today is designed for the body proportions of African-American females.



Table 16

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Retail Shops and Service*

<b>Feelings Towards Retail Shops and Service</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
I prefer stores where salespeople provide one-on-one customer service	3.48	.898	23
I prefer to shop at stores that have salespeople who are ethnically diverse	3.30	1.063	23
I go out of my way to shop at African-American owned retail stores	2.70	.926	23

African-American female respondents indicated that they were neutral about preferring stores where salespeople provide one-on-one service (M=3.48) as well as desiring to shop retailers with ethnically diverse salespeople (M=3.30). The data also showed that they do not go out of their way to shop in African-American owned retail stores (M=2.70).

Table 17

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Advertising and Displays*

<b>Feelings Towards Advertising and Displays</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
I often purchase clothing displayed on mannequins	2.61	.941	23
I prefer to shop in stores that have ads with ethnically diverse fashion models in them	3.09	1.041	23
I love to buy accessories since they complete an outfit	4.43	.662	23

According to Table 17 the surveyed students do love to purchase accessories that complete their outfits (M=4.43). However, they are neutral (M=3.09) about shopping in stores that have ads with ethnically diverse fashion models in them and do not usually purchase clothing displayed on mannequins (M=2.61).

Table 18

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of African-American Female College Students Feelings Towards Quality and Spending*

<b>Feelings Towards Quality and Spending</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
I frequently shop for new clothing	3.78	1.166	23
I spend a large percentage of my budget on clothing	3.39	1.033	23
Purchasing quality garments is very important to me	4.26	1.096	23
I prefer to buy designer & name-brand apparel rather than take a chance on wearing less popular clothing lines	3.35	1.369	23

Purchasing quality garments is important to this group (M=4.26). They somewhat agree (M=3.78) with the statement "I frequently shop for new clothing" but feel neutral (M=3.39) about spending a large percentage of their monthly budget on clothing.

### *Shopping Information*

Closed-ended questions were used to gather additional shopping information from the African-American female college students. Information regarding influences on clothing choices, shopping location, purchase influences, shopping outlet preferences, clothing occasion, and shopping trips is reported in Tables 19 through 24.

Table 19

#### *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Influences on Clothing Choices*

<b>Influences on Clothing Choices</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Friends & peers I admire	2	8.7
Professors & other authority figures I respect	1	4.3
As long as I approve of what I am wearing, that's all that matters	19	82.6
No response	1	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A review of Table 19 reveals that nearly 83% of the African-American students surveyed felt that they influence their own clothing choices. Less than 10 percent (8.7%) felt that they were influenced by friends and peers that they admire.

Table 20

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Shopping Location*

<b>Shopping Location</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Within the city you live in	12	52.2
In another city close to you	4	17.4
On-line or mail order catalogs	5	21.7
When there is a sale	1	4.3
Other	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

Over half of the students (52.2%) who participated in this study answered that they usually shop for clothing within the city that they live in. The second largest group (21.7%) reported that they shop for clothing on-line or through mail order catalogs with 17.4% indicating that they shop for clothing in a city close to where they live.

Table 21

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Purchase Influences*

<b>Purchase Influences</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Sale merchandise	15	65.2
None	3	13.0
Fashion shows	2	8.7
How garment is designed	1	4.3

<b>Purchase Influences</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Other	1	4.3
No response	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

According to the data, over 65% of the students were influenced to shop for apparel when it was on sale. Two respondents (8.7%) were influenced by fashion shows.

Table 22

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Shopping Outlet Preference*

<b>At what type of clothing outlet do you shop most often?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Department store	12	52.2
Specialty store	4	17.4
Discount store	3	13.0
Internet retail sales	2	8.7
Resale shops, thrift stores or garage sales	1	4.3
No answer	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

According to the data presented in Table 22 a majority (52.2%) of the female students preferred to shop in department stores. Specialty stores were preferred by 17.4% of the

population while 13% answered that they preferred to shop for clothing in discount stores. Two respondents, which made up 8.7% of the sample population, participated in e-commerce and preferred to shop for clothing on-line.

Table 23

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Clothing Occasion*

<b>I most often shop for clothing to wear to:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Class	6	26.1
Work	8	34.8
Clubs and/or parties	2	8.7
Art exhibits	1	4.3
Class, work, clubs, parties, events	1	4.3
Class, work, church and clubs	1	4.3
Leisure activities	1	4.3
Myself	1	4.3
Randomly	1	4.3
Other	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

African-American female college students involved in this study primarily shop for clothing to wear to work (34.8%) and to class (26.1%).

Table 24

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Shopping Trips*

<b>How often do you shop for clothes?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
More than once a week	3	13.0
Once a week	4	17.4
About two to three times a month	5	21.7
A few times per year	9	39.1
For special occasions	2	8.7
Total	23	100.0

A review of Table 24 indicated that 39.1% of respondents shop for clothing a few times a year. A total of five respondents (21.7%) answered that they shop for clothing about two to three times a month. Approximately 17% of participants reported that they shop for clothing at least once a week, while 13% shop for clothing more than once a week.

*Additional Shopping Information*

Tables 25 through 27 report the various preferences that African-American female college students have related to media type, magazines and publications, and shopping motives. For these items respondents had the option of choosing multiple answers for each question.

Table 25

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Media Type*

<b>In an effort to keep up with fashion trends which of the following tactics do you regularly watch, read, or participate it?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Internet sites with clothing & accessories information	18	78.3
Consumer or industry fashion magazines & newsletters	15	65.2
Fashion books	15	65.2
Television shows	14	60.9
BET or other music video stations	12	52.2
Word-of-mouth from friends	4	17.4
News programs like Entertainment Tonight	4	17.4
Movies	3	13.0
Other-Internet	1	4.3



Table 25 shows that in order to keep up with fashion trends over 78% of respondents read Internet sites that contain information on clothing and accessories. Two groups of 15 participants (65.2%) each read fashion books, magazines or newsletters to keep up with trends, while approximately 14 respondents (60.9%) watched television shows for the same information. The total number of participants who reported using BET or other music video stations to keep up with trends was 12 which accounted for 52.2% of the population. Movies had the least influence on the students' fashion selections (13%).

Table 26

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Magazines and Publications*

<b>I read the following magazines/publications on a regular basis</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Essence	18	78.3
Ebony	17	73.9
Lucky	16	69.6
Glamour	16	69.6
Seventeen	16	69.6
Vogue	15	65.2
Jet	15	65.2
Elle	13	56.5
In Style	13	56.5
Vibe	9	39.1
Harpers Bazaar	8	34.8

<b>I read the following magazines/publications on a regular basis</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
WWD	7	30.4
Cosmopolitan	4	17.4
O	3	13.0
Source	2	8.7
Nylon	2	8.7
Hello Beautiful	1	4.3
Self	1	4.3
W	1	4.3
I don't read magazines/publications	1	4.3

According to the data in Table 26 a large majority (78.3%) of respondents reported that they read Essence magazine on a regular basis. Ebony had the second highest percentage of readers, nearly 74% of the population. Luck, Glamour, and Seventeen magazines were the third most popular publications with a regular readership of nearly 70%. A total of 65.2 % of the population read Vogue and Jet magazines on a regular basis, while 56.5% read Elle and Instyle.

Table 27

*Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Shopping Motives*

<b>If you prefer to shop in another city or order clothing on-line or from catalogs, why do you prefer to do that?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Wider selection of clothing to choose from	17	73.9
Lack of available apparel stores in town or on campus	17	73.9
Wider price range of clothing to choose from	13	56.5
More convenient	9	39.1
Better quality of clothing to choose from	5	21.7

As indicated in Table 27 nearly 74% of participants who prefer to shop in another city, on-line or from catalogs chose those options because they offer a wider selection of clothing and because of the lack of available apparel stores in town or on campus. A total of 13 students (56.5%) chose those options because they offer a wider price range of clothing to choose from.

## Chapter V: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify major factors that influence clothing preference and selection in female African-American college students enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. A 49 item survey was distributed to these collegians. The survey used a Likert scale to measure their feelings about clothing preferences and apparel buying habits. Additional closed-ended questions were used to gather data related to their shopping behaviors and general information.

### *Limitations*

The population for this study was made up of 23 female African-American college students enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Several students opted not to participate in the study which limited the statistical testing options. Data collected from the study may have been flawed because of the small size of the sample. Some students may have chosen not to participate in the study because of personal reasons or because of the study's optional participation clause. Also, the survey was administered by a third party not directly associated with the study, but directly associated with the students, so some students may have chosen not to participate because of their personal feelings about the survey proctor. The survey questions may not have given the students an opportunity to express their personal views on clothing preference. For example, using multiple choice questions may not have enabled the participants to accurately and completely describe their feelings about clothing selection and preference.

### *Conclusions*

In reviewing the literature for this study it was found that there is a limited amount of research available on African-American female college students' clothing preferences. Results

from this study increase the available body of knowledge regarding college-age African-American female shoppers.

Findings from this study confirmed that the respondents seriously care about their appearance and felt that appearance is a direct reflection of how a person feels about oneself and that not caring about one's physical appearance did not make sense to them. They (82.6%) also felt that they purchased apparel that expressed their personality, and made clothing choices and purchased items that they (83%) personally approved of, regardless of others' reactions.

Respondents also indicated that they love to purchase fashionable clothing and accessories. While they only somewhat agreed that choosing comfortable, nice looking apparel was more important than wearing the latest fashions, they were neutral about spending a large percentage of their monthly budget on clothing. This result was particularly interesting because it does not support the actual monetary expenditures and consumption behaviors typically associated with African-American females. In fact, in a 2008 article entitled "Drawing on Diversity", it reported that young African-Americans spent 20 percent more than the average young person in the U.S. Findings further showed that within this group 39% reported having a monthly budget that fell between \$51 and \$100 dollars. The second largest group (26%) indicated that their monthly clothing budget was between \$0 and \$50 dollars. Over 65% of respondents indicated that they were influenced to shop for apparel when it was on sale. It is important to note that sales create opportunities for retailers to further tap into this market and capitalize on African-American female college students spending habits. Nearly 40% of respondents only shopped for clothing a few times per year.

Over half of the students answered that they usually shopped for clothing within the city they live in and that 52.2% of them preferred patronizing department stores. Data from this study

reinforces past research indicating that African-American consumers frequent department and discount stores when shopping for apparel. In addition to brick-and-mortar retailers, 21.7% of the respondents purchased clothing on-line or through mail order catalogs. This supports the fact that convenience is an issue for them.

In contrast to past research that states that African-American college students are reaching back to embrace their heritage by incorporating Afrocentric fashion elements into their dress (Wilson, 1994), this group showed less ethnic influence impacting their fashion tastes and preferences. Although previous studies found that African-American students are using dress to express culture and ethnicity (Halter, 2000) these participants were neutral about selecting clothing that expressed their ethnicity. They also felt neutral about desiring to shop retailers with ethnically diverse sales people. These two findings may be reflective of the greater multicultural awareness and exposure that Generation Y African-American young adults have grown up with as compared to older generations. Since these results contradict past research, more consumer research by retailers and academicians is certainly necessary.

While previous research has proven that messages targeting African-Americans specifically generate a greater response within the group in comparison to their response levels from messages that target the general public (Miller & Miller, 1992), respondents indicated that they were neutral about shopping in stores that have ads with ethnically diverse fashion models in them. This study also failed to compliment the information that described JC Penny's efforts to successfully attract African-Americans by incorporating black models into their advertisements (Rickard, 1994), and by adjusting merchandise selection in stores located in minority neighborhoods ("African-American Market," 1996).

Results from this study suggest that various forms of media are used by this group to stay knowledgeable about the latest fashion trends. Print media that specifically targets African-American women was most popular among this group with more than 73% of the respondents reading *Essence* and *Ebony* magazines on a regular basis. Both magazines focus on various aspects of African-American beauty, fashion, and culture. In addition, print media that targets the general public was also desired by these fashion students. *Lucky* and *Glamour* magazines, which are primarily filled with images that can be classified as Eurocentric, were both read by nearly 70% of the respondents. Beauty is the primary focus in *Glamour* magazine while *Lucky* focuses on current fashion and trends. It is interesting to note that although black magazines are read more by this group they report to not be influenced by their content. Given these results, more research on this age and ethnic group is certainly warranted in order to determine if these students are actually not influenced by magazine imagery or rather have become so desensitized to it that they are unaware of its impact.

The data found that over 78% of the students viewed Internet sites that contain information on clothing and accessories. This also reinforces previous research that suggested that Internet use related to retail and apparel has significant growth potential among African-Americans consumers (Swisher, 1999). Nearly 74% of respondents found that the Internet offers a wider selection of clothing and prices to choose from.

With regard to additional sources of trend information, two groups of 15 students (65.2%) each read fashion books, magazines or newsletters to keep up with trends, while approximately 14 respondents (60.9%) watched television shows for the same information. The total number of participants who reported using BET or other music video stations to keep up

with trends was 12 which accounted for 52.2% of the population. Movies had the least influence on the students' fashion selections (13%).

### *Recommendations*

As a result of this study the following is recommended:

1. Investigate specific clothing styles that appeal to the African-American consumer group.
2. Investigate fit preferences and identify fit issues with current industry sizing standards.
3. Investigate clothing selection and preference criteria of African-American male college students.



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## Appendix A: Survey

<p>This project has been reviewed by the UW-Stout IRB as required by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46</p>
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*Clothing Preference Survey*

This survey studies major factors that influence clothing preference and selection for female African-American college students enrolled in fashion courses at the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff. It examines media influences, consumer behavior and shopping patterns.

***Benefits of completing this survey:*** Research results from this study will be used to increase the body of knowledge regarding college-age female shoppers. Local retailers may also use them to provide an assortment that is more reflective of the wants and needs of students like you. Results of this study are available upon request by e-mailing [turnerk@uwstout.edu](mailto:turnerk@uwstout.edu).

***Instructions:*** Please be honest in your responses. There are no wrong answers.

**DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE SURVEY.** By filling out this questionnaire, you are giving your consent as a participating volunteer in this study. The information in this study is being sought in a specific manner so that no identifiers are needed and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study or to withdraw from participation at any time during the study. Your decision not to participate will be respected with no coercion or prejudice. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact the Investigator, Kalari Turner. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

<p><b>Investigator: Kalari Turner</b>          1300 Marshall St Apt 315          Little Rock, AR 72202          501-442-1463  <a href="mailto:turnerk@uwstout.edu">turnerk@uwstout.edu</a></p>	<p><b>IRB Administrator: Sue Foxwell, Director Research Services</b>          152 Vocational Rehabilitation Bldg.          UW-Stout          Menomonie, WI 54751          715-232-2477  <a href="mailto:foxwells@uwstout.edu">foxwells@uwstout.edu</a></p>
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### Section I – Clothing Preferences

**Directions:** The following survey questions ask you to identify your clothing preferences. Circle the number that **best corresponds** with your feelings about each statement. Only give **one** answer for each statement.

	1= Strongly Disagree	2= Disagree	3=Neutral	4=Agree	5=Strongly Agree
1. I carefully plan what I wear each day	1	2	3	4	5
2. I enjoy wearing feminine-looking clothing	1	2	3	4	5
3. I choose clothing that expresses my personality	1	2	3	4	5
4. I choose clothing that expresses my ethnicity	1	2	3	4	5
5. My fashion tastes are so unique that I do not follow the advice of fashion experts	1	2	3	4	5
6. I prefer to design my own clothing	1	2	3	4	5
7. My friends and I have similar personal style	1	2	3	4	5
8. My friends turn to me for fashion advice	1	2	3	4	5
9. Current fashion designs suit my tastes	1	2	3	4	5
10. I only wear clothing that is trendy & fashionable	1	2	3	4	5
11. I only try new fashion looks when they are well accepted by the mass public	1	2	3	4	5
12. In today's economy, spending excessively on apparel is wasteful & ridiculous	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am not as concerned about wearing the latest fashions as I am about choosing comfortable, nice looking apparel	1	2	3	4	5
14. The price of a garment is more important to me than how fashionable or trendy it is	1	2	3	4	5
15. Wearing fashionable clothing is part of being successful in life	1	2	3	4	5
16. How you dress is a reflection of how you feel about yourself	1	2	3	4	5
17. It doesn't make sense to not care about your physical appearance	1	2	3	4	5

## Section II – Apparel Buying Habits

**Directions:** These survey questions ask you to identify your actual apparel buying habits. Circle the number that **best corresponds** with your feelings about each statement. Only give **one** answer for each statement.

**1= Strongly Disagree    2= Disagree    3=Neutral    4=Agree    5=Strongly Agree**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18. I only purchase garments that compliment my figure   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. I prefer stores where salespeople provide one-on-one customer service  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Clothes that I find in stores are designed for the body proportions of African-American females                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. I often purchase clothing displayed on mannequins  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. I prefer to shop in stores that have ads with ethnically diverse fashion models in them                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. I prefer to shop at stores that have salespeople who are ethnically diverse                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. I frequently shop for new clothing   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. I love to buy accessories since they complete an outfit  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. I prefer to buy designer & name-brand apparel rather than take a chance on wearing less popular clothing lines | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. Purchasing quality garments is very important to me  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. I go out of my way to shop at African-American owned retail stores   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. I spend a large percentage of my budget on clothing  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### Section III – Shopping Information

**Directions:** These survey questions ask you to identify additional shopping behaviors. Mark the answers that **best** describe your actions.

30. What I choose to wear is most often influenced and approved by: (Choose only one answer.)

- a. Friends & peers I admire  
 b. My parents  
 c. Professors & other authority figures I respect  
 d. As long as I approve of what I am wearing, that's all that matters

31. When selecting a garment, do you **usually** shop: (Choose only one answer.)

- a. Within the city you live in  
 b. In another city close to you  
 c. On-line or mail order catalogs  
 d. Other – Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

32. When shopping for apparel, what types of sales promotion activities influence your purchasing decisions the **most**? (Choose only one answer.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Percentage-off merchandise sales | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Free giveaways (Makeup samples)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Fashion shows                    | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Signs & directories                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Direct mail pieces               | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Other _____                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Contests & games                 | <input type="checkbox"/> i. None of these marketing activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. In-store displays                |  |

33. At what type of clothing outlet do you shop **most often**? (Choose only one answer.)

- a. Department store  
 b. Specialty stores  
 c. Discount stores  
 d. Internet retail sites  
 e. Mail order catalog  
 f. Resale shops, thrift stores or garage sales  
 g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

34. I **most often** shop for clothing to wear to: (Choose only one answer.)

- a. class  
 b. work  
 c. church  
 d. clubs and/or parties  
 e. play sports/exercise  
 f. other – specify: \_\_\_\_\_

35. How often do you shop for clothes? (Choose only one answer.)

- a. More than once a week  
 b. Once a week  
 c. About two to three times a month  
 d. Once a month  
 e. A few times per year  
 f. For special occasions and events only

36. In an effort to keep up with fashion trends, which of the following media and marketing tactics do you **regularly** watch, read or participate in? (Check all answers that apply.)

- a. BET or other music video stations  
 b. Internet sites with clothing & accessories information  
 c. Television shows  
 d. Movies  
 e. Consumer or industry fashion magazines & newsletters  
 f. Fashion books  
 g. Word-of-mouth from friends  
 h. News programs like Entertainment Tonight  
 i. Other \_\_\_\_\_

37. I read the following magazines/publications on a **regular** basis:

(Check all answers that apply.)

- |   |                                     |   |                                       |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Lucky                               | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Vibe    | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Elle            | <input type="checkbox"/> q. Ebony     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Vogue                               | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Essence | <input type="checkbox"/> m. Source          | <input type="checkbox"/> r. Seventeen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. WWD                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Jet     | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Glamour         | <input type="checkbox"/> s. O         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. JC Report                           | <input type="checkbox"/> j. Self    | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Hello Beautiful | <input type="checkbox"/> t. W         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. In Style                            | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Nylon   | <input type="checkbox"/> p. Cosmopolitan    |                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f. Harpers Bazaar                      |                                     |   |                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> u. Other _____                         |                                     |   |                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> v. I don't read magazines/publications |                                     |   |                                       |

38. If you prefer to shop in another city or order clothing on-line or from catalogs, why do you prefer to do that? (Check all answers that apply.)

- a. Wider selection of clothing to choose from  
 b. Wider price range of clothing to choose from  
 c. Better quality of clothing to choose from  
 d. Lack of available apparel stores in town or on campus  
 e. More convenient  
 f. Other – Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section IV – General Information

**Demographic Information:** Please place an “X” next to the answer that best represents your response.

39. What is your racial affiliation?

- a. African American  
 b. Non-African American

40. What is your gender identity?

- a. Female  
 b. Male

41. My age range is:

- a. 18-20  
 b. 21-23  
 c. 24-26  
 d. 27-29  
 e. 30 or older

42. What is your current classification in college?

- a. Freshman  
 b. Sophomore  
 c. Junior  
 d. Senior  
 e. Graduating Senior

43. Please select one of the following.

- a. I am a full time student (12 or more credit hours this semester)  
 b. I am a part time student (less than 12 credit hours this semester)

44. I am currently:

- a. an intern  
 b. employed  
 c. unemployed ( please skip to question 46)

45. I am employed:

- a. full-time  
 b. full-time on campus  
 c. part-time  
 d. part-time on campus  
 e. seasonally

46. My total monthly income is between:

- a. \$0-\$500  
 b. \$501-\$1000  
 c. \$1001-\$1500  
 d. \$1501-\$2000  
 e. \$2001 or more

47. My monthly budget for clothing and accessories is:

- a. \$0-\$50  
 b. \$51-\$100  
 c. \$101-\$150  
 d. \$151-\$200  
 e. \$201-\$300  
 f. \$301-\$400  
 g. \$401 or above

48. My **primary** method of payment when purchasing clothing and or fashion accessory is:

- a. cash/check  
 b. debit card



\_\_\_\_ c. credit card

49. Is there anything else that you would like to say about your clothing preferences, actual buying habits or how you feel about products, promotions or services that you find in the stores where you shop?

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*Thank you for completing this survey.*