

EFFECTS OF CLOTHING CONFORMITY ON
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

by

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Child development specialists have emphasized the importance of clothing to the physical, social, and psychological development of the young child. For example, it has been stated that in order to allow maximum freedom in movement, clothing must not be constrictive (Breckenridge & Murphy, 1969, p. 285). Garments that fit properly and are not too loose or too tight allow proper physical development. Independence in dressing is a task that young children desire to achieve; therefore, it is necessary that preschool children have clothing they are able to manipulate by themselves (Hildebrand, 1975, p. 189). Clothing serves many needs of young children in addition to fostering a sense of autonomy when the child is able to dress himself (Hurlock, 1972, p. 406). With autonomy comes a feeling of being grown up, causing the child to desire apparel like that of older siblings or playmates. While such statements have been made by recognized authorities in child development, not all are founded on research.

It has been stated that the young child's interest in wearing apparel develops because he comes to realize that clothing satisfies important needs in his life (Hurlock, 1972, p. 406). Preschool children like new clothes because they elicit favorable attention from adults and peers (p. 407). "Adults make favorable comments about [the child's] clothes, and his playmates often admire them or even envy him because of them" (Hurlock, 1975, p. 109). Children eventually learn that their

culture places high value on clothing (Hurlock, 1972, p. 408). Garments must be right for the occasion, must improve the child's appearance, and must be clean and neat by parental standards. Because the young child sees how important clothes are to the prominent people in his life, clothing takes on significance to him also. Thus, clothing influences the child's feelings of self-confidence which in turn affect his overall personality development and, consequently, his behavior among peers. Again, such statements appear in recognized child development textbooks; however, these conclusions are not necessarily based on research evidence.

The influence of a group on an individual is often referred to in terms of a reference group concept. Reference groups were defined as "those groups to which the individual relates himself as a member or aspires to relate himself psychologically" (Sherif & Sherif, 1956, p. 418). Research dealing with the group behavior of adults has long overshadowed the study of children's group formation (Hartup, 1970, p. 369). However, some research evidence has shown that group norms are salient aspects of peer group functioning during the middle childhood years (Costanzo & Shaw, 1966; Crane, 1952; Polansky, Lippitt, & Redl, 1950). It appears reasonable, then, to question whether pressures to conform to group norms such as clothing standards might begin at an even younger age level, perhaps during the preschool years.

Clothing researchers (Jaffe, 1972; Ryan, 1966; Tate, 1961) have reiterated statements by child development specialists regarding the important influences of dress on the developmental needs of young children. Ryan (p. 217) indicated that "sweeping statements have been

made about the effect of clothing on the mood and behavior of the child." She emphasized, however, that such declarations often have been based on casual observations of children and not upon research evidence. Jaffe (p. 11) noted that while it is widely believed that clothing affects the social behavior of young children, there has been very little scientific research to confirm this belief.

A thorough review of literature of the past ten years revealed only one study of the effect of the preschool child's clothing on his social behavior. The results of this study, conducted in 1967 by Stiles, indicated that wearing experimental garments (obviously worn, torn, faded) different from peers led to fewer social interactions by 4-year-old children in a nursery school situation (p. 56). She suggested a need to repeat this type of research using different types of clothing and with children of varying socio-economic backgrounds.

Justification

Although child development specialists theorize about the influence of clothing on the development of preschool children, evidence to support hypotheses relating to the effect of clothing on social interaction is nearly nonexistent. While research indicates that group norms are salient aspects of peer group functioning during the middle childhood years, group pressures such as clothing norms might very well be evident at a younger age level.

Because the effect of wearing apparel on preschool children's social behavior has not been well researched, there is a need for such an investigation. The effect of clothing on the young child's social

interactions and, hence, social development, would appear to be an important concern to parents, teachers, and students of preschool children in their efforts to cope effectively with individual and group socialization processes. Teachers and students of clothing and textiles might also benefit from additional research regarding the effect of clothing on the formation of young children's social and psychological development.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to explore the effects of clothing conformity on the social interaction of preschool children. Another purpose was to examine any lasting effects of trends toward social interaction. A third purpose was to explore the influence or lack of influence of clothing conformity at the preschool level when socio-economic class was considered.

The researcher is well aware that certain aspects of the study of young children can be extremely difficult and limiting. Therefore, it must be stressed that this study was exploratory research of the influence of clothing on the social behavior of preschool children.

Objectives

In this study, the following objectives were considered:

1. To explore the effects of clothing conformity on social interaction of selected preschool children dressed in experimental clothing.
2. To examine any lasting effects of trends toward social interaction by selected children previously dressed in experimental clothing when again dressed in their own play clothes.

3. To explore the effects of experimental clothing on preschool children's social interaction when socio-economic class is considered.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for the purpose of this study:

Social interaction - Social interaction was represented by verbalizations initiated by a subject to another child.

Verbalization - A verbalization was defined as a verbal utterance initiated by the subject to another child. The verbal utterance was considered measurable when it was directed to a child, meaning either that 1) the subject would turn his body toward the child to whom he was speaking or 2) the subject would make contact with the child by raising his eyes and looking directly at him. Each verbalization followed by a discernible pause was counted as one verbalization. A verbal utterance could take the form of a statement, question, exclamation or animal sound, and could consist of several connected words or of one or more individual words, even if of a nonsense variety (Deutsch, 1965, p. 84; Eisenson, Auer, & Irwin, 1963, p. 208). It was anticipated that these definitions would provide an effective means of measuring preschool children's verbalizations and, therefore, social interaction.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature includes topics which are considered relevant to the study of effects of clothing conformity on preschool children's social interactions. Following are discussions of reference group theory, peer group functioning, social development and behavior of the preschool child, and children's clothing research.

Reference Group Theory

The discussion of reference group theory involves reference and membership groups, conformity, and group cohesiveness. An understanding of these concepts is an important basis for a study of children's social interaction.

Reference and Membership Groups

According to Newcomb (1950, p. 232), individual frames of reference are socially influenced by people's motivations to belong to groups with which they can communicate and share attitudes. If an individual's attitudes are influenced by norms which he shares with others, those other individuals constitute a reference group for him (p. 225). When certain frames of reference are shared by only two individuals, this twosome can, for each individual, be a reference group. It is possible that an individual's reference group may or may not be recognized by individuals other than himself.

A positive reference group is one in which a person is motivated to be accepted and treated as a member (overtly or symbolically), whereas a negative reference group is

one which he is motivated to oppose or in which he does not want to be treated as a member (Newcomb, p. 226).

Thus, it appears that an individual could possibly have experience with two types of reference groups, positive and negative, either of which may influence his socialization.

A membership group, according to Newcomb (p. 224), is one in which a person is recognized by others as belonging. An individual shares the norms of his membership group not only because he is recognized by the group members, but also because he has to satisfy his motives through these shared norms (p. 225). All membership groups serve in some way as reference groups for members, but not all reference groups are membership groups (p. 226). Most individuals are influenced by norms of some groups which do not recognize them as being members.

The degree to which a person's membership group serves also as a reference group depends upon the degree to which his membership in it brings him satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Newcomb, p. 226).

Conformity and Group Cohesiveness

Studies of conformity have involved the influence of a group on an individual. In 1951, Asch, as reported by Newcomb, Turner, and Converse (1965, p. 239), attempted to investigate the effects of confronting an individual with what was made to appear like a perceptual norm held by other subjects. Several groups of eight male college students were instructed to match the length of a given line with one of three unequal lines. Each member announced his judgments aloud; all but one member (critical subject) had received instructions to respond unanimously at specific times with the same incorrect judgment. Among

50 critical subjects, there was a marked trend toward majority responses with approximately one-third of their judgments identical with or in the direction of planned errors. Asch suggested that subjects yielding to an incorrect judgment did so because they did not want to appear different in the eyes of the group members (Newcomb et al., p. 240). Even though fully aware of what they were doing, these subjects suppressed their own observations and voiced the majority position.

In a variation of this same experiment, one individual was instructed to make correct responses at all times (Newcomb et al., p. 239). When the critical subject was joined by another individual who agreed with him, his independence was increased. Thus, the presence of even one other individual who responded correctly was sufficient to diminish and sometimes destroy the power of the majority. As the size of the group increased, conformity increased.

Results of later experiments conducted by Milgram, Bickman, and Berkowitz (1969) showed similar results in that increased group size elicited conforming behavior in outsiders. This study involved 1,424 pedestrians on a busy New York City street (p. 80). At a signal, a group of confederates (stimulus crowd varying in size from 1 to 15) entered the observed area and gazed up at a sixth-floor window. Results showed that while 4 percent of the passersby joined a single individual, 40 percent were attracted to a stimulus crowd of 15. These results were interpreted to mean that the number of people who will react to and join in with the observable behavior of a stimulus crowd is related to the size of the crowd (p. 82).

Norms will more effectively influence the behavior of group members when group cohesion is strong (Newcomb, 1950, p. 634).

Festinger, Schacter, and Back's definition of a cohesive group was:

One in whose members' behavior is determined by shared understandings of their own and one another's roles, and whose members are motivated to take their roles as commonly understood (Newcomb, 1950, p. 634).

The measurement of the group's cohesiveness is its power to influence members; therefore, a group becomes more cohesive as individual belongingness of members increases (p. 635).

In summary, an individual could have experience with either positive or negative reference groups, either of which may effect his socialization. The degree to which an individual's membership group serves also as a reference group is dependent on his satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the group situation. Two studies showed that as the majority in a group increased, conformity increased. As individual belongingness of members increased, the group became more cohesive. Existing research regarding reference group theory is based on adult behavior. Little research has been conducted to investigate the effects of a reference or membership group upon preschool children; however, it is conceivable that preschool children could be affected by the same types of normative pressures as adults. Reference group theory, therefore, would seem to have implications for the exploration of preschool children's social interaction.

Children's Peer Groups

The study of adult group behavior has long overshadowed that of children's group behavior. However, some research has been concerned

with individual and group decision-making processes in children's peer groups.

Early researchers (Crane, 1952; Polansky, Lippitt, & Redl, 1950) reported that group norms are salient aspects of peer group functioning during middle childhood years. Costanzo and Shaw (1966, p. 969) studied 24 children in each of four age groupings (7-9, 11-13, 15-17, and 19-21) in order to investigate the relationship between age level and conformity. Subjects were asked to make judgments of lengths of lines with groups of individuals giving oral judgments. Findings indicated that "with the onset of pubescence, the child becomes acutely aware of social peers and relies upon them for many of his external behavior patterns" (p. 973). They concluded that by post-adolescence and young adulthood, the individual learns there are situations calling for conformity as well as those which call for individual action.

Smith (1960, p. 38) studied 20 groups of four individuals each, ranging in age from 4 years, 2 months, to 37 years, 3 months. These small groups were drawn from pre-existing groups of nursery school children, Brownies and Cub Scouts, Girl and Boy Scouts, and college students. Groups were given the task of working together to solve a problem in order to determine patterns of interrelationships among members (p. 29). Results confirmed that "with increasing age, group members became more capable of working cooperatively, which involved the surrendering of some autonomy through compromise" (Smith, p. 36). Groups of increasing age confined their comments more to the task at hand while the youngest age groups (4 years) devoted major portions of time to matters other than those involved in the task set by the instructors (p. 35).

Hunt and Synnerdahl (1959) explored the operation of social influence processes among a group of 10 kindergarten boys and girls, 5 and 6 years of age. Subjects judged length of lines as in the Asch (1951) study reported by Newcomb et al. (1965). Results indicated that the "children exhibited very little tendency to go along with the group judgments and, ...seemed hardly aware of any social pressure" (p. 173).

Although not based on research, Stone and Church (1968, pp. 370-371) made the statement that while the preschool child takes his identity from his parents, the middle-years child begins to search for an independent identity. The school child is less egocentric and able to view himself with detachment and objectivity. He begins to see himself in terms of labels bestowed on him by society. While the school-aged child learns to function independently from adults, he actually becomes subservient to a peer group, depending on it for support and reassurance.

Hartup (1970, pp. 374-375) suggested that cohesiveness of informal peer groups appears to increase from at least the preschool period to middle childhood, but there is need for research to provide additional support to more specific conclusions regarding group function during the preschool years.

Research of decision-making processes in children's peer groups indicated that very young children seemed unaware of social pressures. With the onset of pubescence, children became aware of social peers and the need to conform to normative pressures. These studies dealt with only one type of peer pressure and by no means precluded the investigation of other types of conformity at the preschool level.

Perhaps preschool children are affected by other forms of peer pressure; for example, clothing norms might have an effect on their social interaction. Research was suggested in order to provide further conclusions.

Social Development and Behavior of the Preschool Child

To explore group functioning at the preschool level, basic knowledge of the social development and behavior of the young child is necessary. Two important aspects are socialization and the development of language.

Socialization

In a discussion of social development of the preschool child, Mussen, Conger, and Kagan (1974) have defined socialization as:

The process by which the individual acquires those behavior patterns, beliefs, standards, and motives that are valued by, and appropriate in, his own cultural group and family (p. 365).

As a young child grows and develops physically and mentally, his social behavior changes also. Stone and Church (1968, p. 280), in a widely used textbook, stated that preschool children possess a reciprocal curiosity about each other. For example, once children have inspected and identified each other and learned each others' names, they exchange affection and play together.

In a classic study of children's play, Parten (1932) observed a group of 34 2-to-5 year old children during free play periods in nursery school. She distinguished six types of play engaged in by the preschool-aged child. In the unoccupied behavior stage, the child watched anything in his environment that was of interest to him (p. 249).

Next came the onlooker stage when the child observed groups of children, often talking to them but not entering into play.

Solitary independent play occurred when the child played alone and independently with toys, but made no effort to get close to other children (Parten p. 250). When a child played independently but his activities brought him near other children, he was involved in parallel activity or play.

Parten described associative play as occurring when the child interacted with other children and the conversation concerned the common activity; however, there was no organization to the group (p. 251). Associative play involved activities of short duration, with the child becoming involved with whatever momentarily happened to draw his attention. Finally, the child played in a group that was organized for the purpose of a common effort; in cooperative play there was a sense of belonging or not belonging to the group which was organized to the extent that one or two children directed the activity of the others (Parten, p. 251). Findings indicated that 40 percent of preschoolers' play was associative or cooperative in nature.

In a more recent study, Rubin, Maioni, and Hornung (1976) observed 24 middle economic class and 16 lower economic class preschool children during free play periods. Behavior was classified according to Parten's (1932) social play categories and cognitive play definitions by another researcher. Statistically significant results indicated that the middle-class preschool children engaged in associative and cooperative play 40 percent of the time in comparison to 27 percent by the lower-class children (p. 418). These findings may or may not have

implications for a study of children's social interaction involving two socio-economic levels; a difference in the type of play engaged in by middle- and lower-class children may represent a limitation in measuring social interaction.

Development of Language

In addition to play, language may indicate progress in social development. As the preschool child matures, his speech patterns develop also. Egocentric speech occurs first, according to Piaget (1959, p. 35) and is composed of three categories, repetition, monologue, and collective monologue. These three classifications consist of remarks that are not addressed to anyone in particular and evoke no reaction on the part of anyone to whom they may happen to be addressed. Egocentric speech is considered noncommunicative (Hurlock, 1975, p. 98). At this stage, the child talks mainly about himself, his interests, family, and possessions. Eventually, preschool speech becomes communicative and involves a true exchange of information between speaker and listener, although there may not be true understanding on the part of either participant (Piaget, p. 120). Thus, verbalization could be assumed to be an efficient measure of social interaction of preschool children.

The period of verbal utterances made by a child can be divided into stages according to the degree to which the child's vocalizations resemble an adult level of grammatical structure (Eisenson et al., reported by Vetter, 1971, p. 257). The first stage, lasting for several months after the child first begins to speak, was that of the word

sentence. The child uttered single words which expressed a complete thought. The second stage was referred to as that of the multiword sentence; the child used simple noun and verb combinations to express his thoughts at approximately 2 years of age. Finally, the child became able to make grammatically correct verbalizations around 3 years of age, the implication being that preschool speech is developed to the extent that it could serve as a measure of social interaction.

Differences in language proficiency have often been noted between social classes and races. Deutsch (1965) studied 292 children of various racial and social class groupings over a four-year period of time. Results of several intelligence tests showed that, in general, lower-class children, both Negro and white, when compared to middle-class children are subject to a 'cumulative deficit phenomenon' which takes place between the first and fifth grade (p. 80). It was thought to be associated with inadequate early preparation due to environmental deficiencies. Deutsch stated that

Language becomes an effective tool...when it has adequate feedback properties in communicating with peers or others who share the particular subculture. In other words, it becomes intra-class contained (p. 85).

Bloom (1975, p. 293) noted that the language development of black and disadvantaged children has not been the object of much study. The speech proficiency of these children has been described and compared with other children of comparable age while considering such variables as sex, race, and socio-economic level. Bloom stated that "there are virtually no published studies that have described the speech of

preschool black children, and no studies have looked at developmental changes in the speech of preschool black children" (p. 293).

Two important aspects of the development of the preschool child are socialization and the development of language. Studies indicated that preschool children involved themselves in associative and cooperative play although the percentages of time spent seemed to vary between children of middle- and lower-economic class backgrounds. Preschool speech represents a true exchange of information between speaker and listener, according to recognized authorities in child development; and, preschool children are capable of grammatically correct verbalizations. While differences in language proficiency have been noted between social classes and races, it was noted that the language of preschool black and disadvantaged children has not been thoroughly researched. If language is indeed an effective communication tool with peers of the same subculture or economic class, it seems reasonable to assume that it might serve as a means of measuring social interaction within socio-economic classes.

Children's Clothing Research

Research pertaining to the preschool child's clothing has generally been concerned with budgets (Britton, 1973; Smoake, 1967), acquisition methods and buying practices (Frankenbach, 1970; Joyce, 1966; McEwen, 1969; Sweeney, 1965), the use of consumer information in selection and maintenance (Stauffer, 1972), self-help features (Boettke, 1956; McDonald, 1970), color preference (Easterling, 1974; Rice, 1974;

Springer, 1970; Streight, 1974), and the need for standardization in sizes (Yim, 1974). Investigations of the effects of clothing on preschool children's social interactions are nearly nonexistent.

Clothing Awareness

Several studies have attempted to explore the area of clothing awareness in young children. Lynn (1970) conducted an exploratory study designed to relate the measurement of various clothing attitudes of preschoolers to those of their parents. An instrument was developed to measure clothing attitudes of the children while an existing instrument was adapted to obtain quantified scores of clothing awareness of their parents. Results indicated that preschool children in this study were very aware of clothing (Lynn, p. 53). Because those exhibiting high clothing awareness were not necessarily children of parents possessing high clothing awareness, she assumed that young children may receive stimulation for awareness of clothing from someone or something other than parents.

Smith in 1968, investigated differences in awareness of the choice of dress for specific occasions. Subjects were 123 4- and 5-year old children from advantaged and disadvantaged homes. The children responded verbally while engaged in doll play. Results indicated that girls were more aware of appropriate dress for specific occasions for their sex at both age levels than were boys (pp. 70-71). Children from advantaged homes were found to be more cognizant of appropriate costumes for specific occasions than were those from disadvantaged homes (p. 72).

In a similar study, Delp (1970) confirmed Smith's findings. Her sample included 80 4-year old children from advantaged and disadvantaged homes; the method of investigation involved paper doll play. Children made choices of appropriate apparel for specific occasions for adult, teenage, and young age levels as well as for their own age level. Findings showed that these 4-year olds were more aware of appropriate dress for a party occasion for female young figures than for male young figures (Delp, p. 76). For adult and teenage levels, the children scored significantly higher for male than female figures (p. 78).

Another study involving children's clothing awareness and feelings of deprivation and satisfaction among the lower class was conducted by Turner (1968). Data were obtained from 33 first grade children, ranging in age from 6 to 8 years. In addition to family background information obtained from school files, each child was given an appearance rating in a pre-interview session. Tape recordings were made during interviews in which children manipulated well and poorly dressed dolls on a flannel board; each child chose dolls to represent himself and his classmates while the interviewer elicited clothing awareness and satisfaction/deprivation information through questioning. Findings indicated a definite clothing awareness in children of this age (p. 77). The children showed high clothing satisfaction with any deprivation feelings appearing relative only to the children's own modal dress pattern. No significant relationships appeared between clothing or appearance awareness and social class, sex, educational level of parents, age and peer acceptance (pp. 76-77). These studies

indicated that children are quite aware of clothing, whatever the reasons, and, therefore, could be expected to be responsive to it in social interactions.

Clothing Preference

If children are aware of clothing, it is logical to assume that they may have preferences regarding suitable or desired apparel. Collins (1973) investigated factors influencing the attitudes of children and their mothers toward the child's clothing. She was interested in the influential factors that contribute to the garment selection of kindergarten, second, and fourth graders. Data were collected from 232 children, ranging in age from 5 to 10 years and 200 mothers with the use of personal data sheets and clothing survey questionnaires (p. 67). In reporting findings, Collins stated that "responses of the children and their mothers in this study were contrary to the belief that children desire to dress as other children" (pp. 70-71). The desire to wear clothing like one's friend decreased with each older group.

In early research, Hunt (1959) performed a developmental study of factors related to the clothing preference of children 3 to 10 years of age. She stated that color preference varied significantly with age but not sex with red being most popular for 5- and 6-year olds (p. 34). Orange and violet were least preferred with yellow, green, and blue sharing equal preference. It is important to note that Hunt found the 3- to 4-year old children's color preferences unreliable in that they tended to rank colors in sequential order (by the color wheel) rather

than by making a meaningful choice (p. 19). Findings also revealed that girls preferred light brightness while boys preferred dark brightness in color; however, when only the age variable was considered, saturated colors were preferred over unsaturated colors by 5- and 6-year old children (Hunt, p. 22). Solid colors were most preferred with stripes, designs, and checks following.

Clothing and Social Interaction

As stated earlier, research of the effect of clothing on preschool children's social interactions is nearly nonexistent. Stiles (1967) studied 12 4-year old nursery school children in an effort to investigate whether wearing garments unlike that of their peers would affect interactions with members of the group. The boys and girls were observed in play clothes and then in experimental garments which showed obvious signs of wear (torn, faded, buttons missing, spotted), the change accomplished as the result of a "wet accident" while the children were engaged in water play (p. 53). Statistical analysis indicated that significantly less social interaction occurred when subjects were wearing the experimental clothing than when wearing play clothes (p. 55). The need to conform to clothing norms of peers appeared evident at this early age (p. 56). Stiles recommended further research regarding clothing and children's social interaction and suggested the use of different types of experimental garments with investigations involving more than one socio-economic class.

The review of literature included information relevant to the study of effects of clothing conformity on preschool children's social

interaction. Individuals are socially influenced by motivations to belong to reference groups with which they can communicate and share attitudes. Studies indicated that as the majority in a group increased, conformity increased. While adult group behavior has been researched, not much investigation has involved children's group behavior; however, some studies showed that very young children seemed unaware of social pressures in decision-making processes. Because these studies dealt with only one type of peer pressure, research is needed to determine whether preschool children are affected by other norms, for example clothing standards, which may affect social interaction.

Socialization and language development of preschool children was revealed to be sufficiently developed that verbalization might serve as an efficient means of measuring social interaction. If language is contained within a certain economic class, it should not be necessary to consider it as a limitation in the study of two socio-economic classes. It may, however, become a limitation when comparisons are made across different classes.

Research confirmed that young children possess an awareness of clothing for specific occasions and that they have preferences regarding their wearing apparel. They preferred saturated, solid colors with red, yellow, green, and blue taking priority over other colors. It seems logical to assume that preschool children may very well be affected by clothing in ways that could influence their socialization processes. With research in this area being so sparse, a need exists for exploratory research of clothing conformity and its effects on the social interaction of preschool children.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of clothing conformity on the social interaction of preschool children. Data were collected in the University Laboratory School, Wallace Hall, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, in April, 1976. A group of nursery school and a group of Head Start children participated in the study which involved three separate series of observations during periods of free play. Data collection involved recording the number of verbalizations initiated by subjects to other children within their group.

The Sample

The morning nursery school session, designated as program N, included eight girls and seven boys who ranged in chronological age from 51 months to 64 months, with a mean age of 59 months, with the exception of one Downs Syndrome child (105 months). Children enrolled in an afternoon Head Start session designated as program HS, ranged in age from 53 months to 63 months, with a mean age of 58 months; this group included six girls and seven boys.

Nursery school and Head Start records provided information for determining the socio-economic levels of the subjects. The United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Child Development (Family Income Guidelines, 1976) established a poverty line index for determining eligibility of children for Head Start classes. The index correlates the number of family members with levels of gross

income. Of the total children enrolled in each Head Start class, 90 percent must be from families which fall below the poverty line. No more than 10 percent of the children in any one Head Start class can be from families with incomes above the poverty line. Head Start records revealed that all except one child fell within the established income standards; this group of children was designated as lower economic class. Level of family income of the nursery school children exceeded the 1976 poverty line index; these children were designated as middle economic class.

Six children were randomly selected as experimental subjects from each program, N and HS; the Downs Syndrome child was excluded from the random selection but was included in the data collection process. The six selected nursery school subjects were designated as group Na and the remainder of the group as Nb. HSa consisted of the six selected Head Start subjects with the remainder of the children being referred to as HSb.

Instrument

Development of the instrument for this study involved the selection and preparation of the experimental clothing as well as the creation of data collection forms.

Experimental Clothing

Experimental clothing consisted of a garment similar in style to the typical dress of nursery school children (see Appendix A for photograph of the experimental garment). This was in contrast to Stiles' study which utilized clothing showing obvious signs of wear.

Identical, plain-knit shirts with short sleeves and high, rounded neck, medium green in color, were used in this study. Green was a color sharing equal preference with yellow and blue in Hunt's (1959) study of clothing preference. Also preferred by the 5- and 6-year olds in the study was solid colors. A clown face applique was adhered to the center front of the shirt to create a further distinguishing feature from the children's own play clothes. The style of the shirt was appropriate for both girls and boys, and the shirts were appropriate in size for the physical comfort of the subjects. Two extra shirts were prepared in case of accidents or other unforeseen problems during data collection periods.

Data Collection Forms

Two forms were developed for the purpose of collecting data. The Data Collection Sheet, 8 1/2 x 11 inches in size, was used in a horizontal position (Appendix B). Spaces for necessary identification information appeared at the top of the sheet. Names of all children in program N were placed, alphabetically, across the top of the form which was marked off vertically into 15 spaces. The Sheet used for HS was identical except that it was sectioned into 13 vertical spaces (Appendix C). Each verbalization initiated by a subject to any child in the room was recorded by placing a tally mark (/) below the name of the child to whom spoken.

A second form, 8 1/2 x 11 inches in size, was utilized in a vertical position. This form consisted only of a title, Anecdotal Record, and spaces for necessary identification information (Appendix D). The rest

of the sheet provided space for data collectors to record written comments at the end of each data collection period. It was anticipated that this technique could provide valuable insight which might not be evident in the numerical data.

Data Collectors

Six individuals were trained in the method of observation and data collection for this study. Three of the collectors were child development majors (juniors); one was a food and nutrition major with young children in her family. The remaining two were parents of young children. These individuals were thought to be well qualified to serve in the capacity required as they were familiar with the social behavior and development of young children.

Before the study began, the data collectors became familiar with all nursery school and Head Start children in the two programs and were able to successfully match names to faces. This was essential for accurate observation and data collection and was verified by the researcher before beginning the observation series. Name tags on all children in both programs, N and HS, facilitated the name learning and, later, data collection processes. Each collector was assigned randomly to a different subject from N and from HS for each individual 45-minute observation and data collection period by means of drawing names of selected subjects and matching them to names of the collectors. In all, eight random assignments were made for N and likewise for HS. The researcher made anecdotal notes during collection periods as well as being available to solve problems which might arise.

Data Collection PeriodsNursery School Program

The study consisted of three series of observations, for the purpose of data collection, of program N, a series consisting of separate 45-minute observations occurring on consecutive days during free play periods of the regularly scheduled nursery school program. Series I observations occurred on three consecutive days. During this time, all children in N were dressed in their own play clothes.

Series II observations occurred on three consecutive days during which the six selected Na subjects were dressed in experimental garments while Nb children wore their own play clothes. Series III immediately followed Series II, with observations occurring on two consecutive days. During this time, all children (Na and Nb) wore the play clothes they had worn to school.

Each observation period was conducted in the following manner. Children arrived at the nursery school approximately one half hour before the observation period began. While the children arrived, the six data collectors positioned themselves in the observation booth and adjusted their earphone sets. They sat in six seats in an alternating manner, with each person moving one seat to the right each observation time. As children were observed through a one-way glass window, this allowed each collector to view the room from each possible position in the booth at least one time.

The researcher provided Data Collection Sheets to the collectors, identification information having been written in the proper spaces. At a specified time, the researcher gave the signal to start observing

and recording data. Time was noted on a clock on the nursery room wall, visible through the observation window. At the end of the 45-minute period, the researcher gave the signal to stop. Data Sheets were collected and Anecdotal Record forms were given to the collectors who spent a short time describing the children's social behavior as well as verbal utterances they thought of interest to the study. This information included notations about physical contacts, gestures, and other overt signs of social interaction.

During Series II, the six Na subjects were dressed in experimental shirts according to the following daily procedure. After the children were checked into the nursery school, the researcher took the subjects together to a small dressing room. They were asked to wear the experimental shirts to help the researcher with a project for the University. The children were aided in removing their own shirts and putting on the experimental shirts; they returned to their classroom as a group. Again, as soon as the children entered the room, the signal was given for the data collectors to begin observation and recording of data.

Nursery school teachers were asked to cooperate by interacting as little as possible with all children during the observation periods. In addition, teachers were asked to insure that no children were removed from the room except in case of emergency. This enabled data collectors to obtain a maximum of data on the subjects as they interacted with other children.

The experimental shirts remained on the subjects for about 45 minutes after the close of the data collection period. At this convenient transition point in the program, the researcher took the subjects

together to the dressing room and aided in the clothing change back to their own apparel. The experimental shirts were left in the dressing room, and the children returned together to the classroom.

Head Start Program

Three series of observations were also conducted for program HS during 45-minute free play periods during the regularly scheduled Head Start program. These observations followed the same format as those of program N with minor adjustments. The Head Start free play period began after lunch, the initial activity of the program. The observation period started at the beginning of this free play period. During Series II, the clothing change was accomplished after the lunch period, with the children leaving and returning to the room as a group.

Head Start teachers also agreed to interact as little as possible with all children during the observation periods. In addition, it was agreed that no children would be removed from the room except in case of emergency.

Administration of the Instrument

Letters

Letters were sent to parents of the randomly selected subjects in N and HS to ask whether their children could participate in a clothing study (Appendix E and Appendix F). Because of the nature of the study and its particular design, it was imperative that all subjects were in attendance on all data collection days; therefore, parents were asked to have their children at school on eight specific days. Permission was asked to remove the children's shirts or blouses in order to switch to

experimental shirts; they were also requested to dress their children in such a way that shirts or blouses could be removed with ease when necessary. If indications were made on an attached permission slip (Appendix G), that children could not attend on certain days, parents of other children were then contacted. Because of the small sample size and essential need for attendance, this procedure was considered permissible, as long as all children had been numbered randomly before any selection of subjects was accomplished.

Training of Data Collectors

A few days before observations were started, an explanatory session was held on two consecutive days with the data collectors to familiarize them with details of the study necessary to their recording of data. (See Appendix H for outline of training session.) On the first day, each individual was instructed to read the two-page Data Collection Information and Instructions prepared by the researcher (Appendix I); a group discussion followed. At this time, the purpose of the study was explained as being the exploration of the effects of clothing on the social interaction of preschool children. The social behavior and language of preschool children were discussed.

Social interaction was defined, for the purpose of this study, as the number of verbalizations initiated by the subject (the child assigned to the data collector) to any other child in the group. The criteria for recording verbalizations were explained as the following:

1. The subject will raise his eyes and look at the child to whom he is speaking.

2. The subject will turn his body toward the child to whom he is speaking.

Data collectors were instructed to record each verbalization on the Data Collection Sheet by placing a tally mark (/) below the name of the child spoken to by the subject.

Instructions were given to record each verbal utterance followed by a discernible pause as one verbalization. The collectors were informed that a verbal utterance could take the form of a statement, question, exclamation, animal sound or nonsense sound. One-word utterances were to be counted as one verbalization as were sentences or groups of words said together. These qualifications were in agreement with the speech capabilities of preschool children (Deutsch, 1965; Eisenson, Auer, and Irwin, 1963).

The Anecdotal Record form was introduced and instructions given to record written comments about behavior observed during data collection periods. This information was to include anything the data collectors thought pertinent to the study of children's clothing and social interaction. Verbal comments pertaining to clothing, reactions of children seeing others in experimental garments and attempts of children to dress like others in the group or to remove items of clothing were suggested as possible notations to record. Overt actions such as pointing to clothing or parts of clothing were considered as valuable information. Data collectors were also encouraged to note any observable interactional patterns among children.

After discussion of the afore-mentioned details, data collectors were shown the physical layout of the nursery school room and the

observation booth in which they would work. The booth contained seven stools and six earphone sets; proper use of earphones was demonstrated. A question and answer period followed this phase of the training session.

During a 20-minute period of free play, all six data collectors recorded the number of verbalizations initiated by the same child to any other child in the room. The session was timed by the researcher, and the exact process that occurred during observation periods was followed. Collectors used the Data Collection Sheets and recorded verbalizations by the instructed method. The purpose of this pre-test was to assess the consistency in the number of verbalizations recorded. It was assumed that the definition of verbalization and the recording criteria, as outlined for this study, were understood because the number of verbalizations recorded was very consistent.

On the second day of the training session, a question and answer period was held to clarify any concerns expressed by the data collectors. Another 20-minute pre-observation and data collection session took place at this time in order to double check the consistency in the number of verbalizations recorded. Again, consistency was very good. Collectors gained further experience by following the exact process of data collection they used in the three observation series.

Analysis

The experimental design involved a 2 x 2 x 3 analysis of variance with the following factors:

- (P) Program (two levels: N and HS)
- (S) Series (three levels: before--Series I, during--Series II, and after--Series III)
- (G) Group (two levels: number of verbalizations to own group, Na or HSA; number of verbalizations to other group, Nb or HSb, respectively)

Program was a between-subjects factor with series and group defined within subjects.

The data consisted of the number of verbalizations initiated by the subjects, either Na or HSA, to 1) themselves as a group (to Na or HSA) and 2) to the rest of the children in the program, Nb or HSb, respectively.

Statistical analysis involved a three-way multivariate analysis of variance with repeated measurements. Each effect was tested using the appropriate tests. Because there were only twelve independent observations, some dependencies existed within these various tests of effects.

A test of the triple interaction (program x series x group) was performed to see if the program by group pattern was the same for each series. The program by series interaction was tested to examine relationships between programs for different time periods. The program by group interaction compared group differences for the two programs, N and HS, while the group by series effect investigated group differences for the three time periods. The main effect for groups compared verbalizations to own group versus to other group, averaged for both programs (N and HS), and all three series. Similarly, the test of the program main effect contrasted average program N verbalizations with

average HS verbalizations; the test of the series main effect explored average time effects before, during, and after wearing the experimental garment.

The Statistical Analysis System (Service, 1972) was utilized for the analysis of data which was accomplished at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Computation Center, Blacksburg, Virginia.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to explore the effects of clothing conformity on the social interaction of selected preschool children. Another objective was to examine any lasting effects of trends toward social interaction by children previously dressed in experimental garments when again dressed in their own play clothes. Finally, the effects of experimental clothing on preschool children's social interaction were explored in relation to socio-economic class. Statistical analysis of numerical data and review of Anecdotal Records provided means for investigating these objectives.

Statistical Analysis

In this study, number of verbalizations served as the measure of social interaction. The statistical analysis involved tests of a triple interaction (program x series x group); three pairwise interactions (series x program), (series x group), and (program x group); and three main effects, (program), (group), and (series).

The design of the study involved repeated measurements with the analysis being the usual multivariate technique appropriate for repeated measurement data. However, because of the small sample size, separate error terms were employed for each test. Thus, the results of the tests were somewhat dependent; still the pattern was clear.

The results of the statistical analysis indicated no significant differences at the .05 level for all interactions and effects as can be seen from p-levels > .05 in the Table (see Table, page 35). In other

TABLE
 Three-Way Multivariate Analysis of Variance

Effect	<u>F</u> -value	<u>df</u>	p-level ¹
Program x Series x Group	1.637	2;9	.247
Series x Program	.078	2;9	.925
Series x Group	.106	2;10	.899
Program x Group	1.726	1;10	.218
Program	.513	1;10	.490
Group	.460	1;11	.512
Series	.748	2;10	.502

¹_p > .05

words, based on the results of this exploratory study which used number of verbalizations as the measurement of social interaction, preschool children's social interactions did not appear to be affected by clothing conformity in either the nursery school or Head Start program.

The second objective of the study was to examine any lasting effects of trends toward social interaction by children previously dressed in experimental clothing when again dressed in their own play clothes. Since the main effect for series was not significant, all three time periods (series) showed essentially the same pattern of verbalizations. Thus, there were no lasting effects of experimental garments on children in either program.

The final objective was to explore the effects of experimental clothing on children's social interactions when socio-economic class was considered. In Chapter III, it was stated that in this study nursery school children represented the middle economic class while Head Start children were of the lower socio-economic class. Results indicated no statistically significant effects of experimental clothing on either program, nursery or Head Start. Therefore, experimental clothing had no effect on middle- or lower-class children in this exploratory study.

These results were in contrast to those of Stiles (1967) who found that subjects interacted less when dressed in experimental clothing than when wearing play clothing. However, it must be noted that experimental clothing showing obvious signs of wear (torn, faded, buttons missing) was used in Stiles' study in contrast to the appealing, colorful

experimental garment used in this study. This might be an important consideration in interpreting the variability in the results of the two studies.

Research indicated that middle- and lower- economic class preschool children involved themselves in associative and cooperative play in varying percentages (Parten, 1932; Rubin et al., 1976). Because children in each program, N and HS, may not have engaged in the same percentages of types of play, this may be a limitation of the present study.

Piaget (1959) stated that preschool speech represents a true exchange of information between speaker and listener. In addition, other researchers (Eisenson et al., reported by Vetter, 1971) reported that preschool children are capable of grammatically correct verbalizations. Even though differences in language proficiency have been noted to exist between social classes and races, language was said to be an effective method of communication when contained among peers of the same socio-economic class (Deutsch, 1965). Again, use of the number of verbalizations seemed to be an effective means of measuring social interaction within programs rather than a limitation.

Anecdotal Records

Anecdotal records provided valuable insight into the relationship of preschool children and clothing. It had been anticipated that these anecdotes might yield information which would not necessarily be reflected in the numerical data collected. To facilitate the discussion

of the Records, nursery school and Head Start programs are presented separately.

Nursery School Program

Anecdotal records of Series I observations revealed that no comments about or reactions to clothing were made by children in this program. A review of the anecdotal notes seemed to suggest that any one child interacted with other individuals whenever he wanted; no interactional pattern was noted. Children tended to switch their attention to another individual or group of children that interested them, evidence of play patterns also observed by Parten (1932) and more recently by Rubin et al. (1976).

It had been anticipated by the researcher that on the initial day of Series II, when subjects were dressed in experimental shirts, there would be considerable interest and reactions by all children when the subjects entered the room in identical shirts. Nursery program subjects put on the shirts with a rather dutiful air and appeared unconcerned that six of them were dressed alike. The reaction of the rest of the group, in their own play clothes, was one of very limited interest when the subjects entered the room. Two children asked the subjects where they had obtained their shirts but quickly turned away before receiving answers. The interactional trend established in Series I continued through Series II and was still in evidence during Series III observations.

Head Start Program

Anecdotal records of Series I observation revealed that Head Start children interacted much the same as nursery school children, directing their attention to individuals or groups of children in which they became interested. During Series II, in contrast to the nursery school situation, the experimental shirts created much interest among the entire Head Start program.

When the experimental shirts were presented to the selected subjects, they all expressed spontaneous interest, wanting to wear the shirts immediately. They conversed about the shirts while the clothing change was accomplished. The children inquired how long they could wear the shirts and whether they could keep them to show their parents. This was extremely significant; these children in their desires to possess the new attractive shirts expressed a considerable interest in clothing.

When the subjects wearing experimental shirts entered the room together on the first day of Series II, the remainder of the Head Start children took immediate, spontaneous notice, asking for shirts for themselves. Conversation about the shirts lasted for about five minutes, with different children making reference to them at different times. After the initial reaction, four of the subjects disappeared into the bathroom where they admired themselves in a mirror. One male child later bragged to another that his shirt was "special." A female child responded "Well, I've got a tee shirt!" to a child who had indicated that she had a new pocketbook. One boy playing dress-up in a

clown suit, expressed his desire to wear an experimental shirt. He quickly removed his clown suit in anticipation; however, he put the ruffled collar of the suit back on when he realized he was not going to be wearing a special shirt. Again, not only the subjects wearing shirts showed clothing awareness, but the rest of the Head Start children exhibited the same strong interest.

The Anecdotal Records revealed that on the second and third days of Series II, the subjects' interest in the shirts continued as did their desires to possess them and show them to their parents. These children even placed their shirts in special locations in the dressing room where they expected them to be the next day. Children not wearing the experimental garment continued to ask their teachers if they could also wear the special shirts.

During Series III, children continued to ask about the shirts. However, after a weekend interval at the end of this series, no further comments were made. Even though these children exhibited much interest in the experimental garment, the Anecdotal Records did not reveal any interactional trends different from that noted for Series I.

It is obvious that the Anecdotal Records did indeed yield some valuable insight into the clothing interest of the two groups of children. These observations seemed to indicate that the children of the lower economic class took interest in the experimental shirts as being special -- something new and attractive -- perhaps a novelty to children who were not as accustomed to having new garments to wear as were the children of middle socio-economic class backgrounds. In contrast to the nursery school children who wore many different changes

of clothing, it was evident that the Head Start children wore fewer changes of apparel from day to day.

Although all statistical results were non-significant, the anecdotal records clearly revealed some effects of the experimental shirts among the Head Start children. This seemed to indicate that measuring only the number of verbalizations might have been inadequate, further suggesting that a measure of the content of verbal utterances might have yielded different results.

In summary, research of decision-making processes in children's peer groups (Costanzo & Shaw, 1966; Smith, 1960; Hunt & Synnerdahl, 1959) indicated that very young children seemed unaware of social pressures. Stiles' study was concerned with another type of social influence, the pressure to adhere to clothing norms determined by peers. She suggested that her results revealed a need in preschool children to conform to clothing standards established by peers.

While the statistical analysis of the present study indicated that neither middle- nor lower-class children were affected by clothing conformity, anecdotal records revealed that the lower-class children exhibited a very definite interest in and awareness of clothing, a conclusion drawn by other researchers (Delp, 1970; Turner, 1968; Smith, 1968). This interest was, however, spontaneous on the part of each child; it did not resemble the result of peer pressure to conform to clothing norms.

This study was exploratory in that research regarding the effects of clothing on young children's social interaction and preschool children's group formation in general is extremely limited. A

modification of one or many aspects of this study, for example, the type of experimental clothing, age of the children, or size of the sample might have yielded very different results. Utilization of a different technique for measuring social interaction, for example, Parten's (1932) play definitions, might have provided similar or contrasting results. In addition, a measurement of what was said might have revealed findings different from a measure of how much the children verbalized. Until further research of children's group functioning and the possible effect of clothing conformity on social interactions is conducted, results must remain inconclusive. Further investigation is necessary to provide more conclusive support to the effect of reference groups on preschool children.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

The present study was conducted to explore the effects of clothing conformity on the social interaction of two groups of preschool children from two different socio-economic backgrounds. A morning nursery school session included eight girls and seven boys who ranged in chronological age from 51 months to 64 months, with a mean age of 59 months. Children enrolled in an afternoon Head Start program ranged in age from 53 months to 63 months, with a mean age of 58 months; this group included six girls and seven boys.

Six randomly selected subjects from each program were observed for 45-minutes while engaged in free play periods. Three separate series of observations were conducted while the subjects were wearing their own play clothes, experimental clothing (identical plain-knit shirts with short sleeves and high, rounded neck, medium green in color), and again in their own play clothing.

The objectives of the study were 1) to explore the effects of clothing conformity on social interaction of selected preschool children dressed in experimental clothing, 2) to examine any lasting effects of trends toward social interaction by selected children previously dressed in experimental clothing when again dressed in their own play clothes, and 3) to explore the effects of experimental clothing on preschool children's social interaction when socio-economic class was considered.

A three-way multivariate analysis of variance was conducted on numerical data which consisted of the number of verbalizations initiated by subjects to children dressed like them and to others dressed in their own play clothes. Results of the statistical analysis indicated that no tests were significant for any interactions and effects considered in the study. Hence, based on the results of this exploratory study, using number of verbalizations as the measurement of social interaction, clothing conformity did not appear to affect preschool children's social interactions in either the nursery school or Head Start program. Because of this, there could be no lasting effects of interactional trends when considering socio-economic class. Statistical findings indicated that neither lower- nor middle-class children's social interactions were affected by the experimental clothing.

Anecdotal Records of comments and actions made by the children revealed that the lower-class children appeared to have considerable interest in the experimental shirts in that they were anxious to wear them and wanted to show them to their parents. This was in contrast to the extreme lack of interest exhibited by the middle-class children. While statistical findings indicated that neither group of children was affected by clothing conformity, the Head Start children exhibited a definite interest in and awareness of clothing.

Research of decision-making processes in children's peer groups showed that very young children seemed unaware of social pressures. The findings of this study, though, by no means preclude further investigation of the relationship between preschool children's clothing and social interaction. On the contrary, contrasting findings of this

study and that of Stiles (1967) suggest a definite need for future explorations into the area of preschool children's clothing and peer group influence. Because of the small sample size and other aspects (specific age, method of measuring verbalizations, number of observations conducted) of this study, it must remain inconclusive until further research is conducted whether other types of social influence such as pressure to adhere to clothing norms are in operation at the preschool level.

Recommendations

Child development specialists have emphasized the importance of clothing on the physical and psychological development of the young child. As indicated by clothing researchers, further research needs to be conducted regarding the relationship between children's social interaction and wearing apparel. While statistical results of the present study indicated that preschool children were not affected by clothing norms, it might be favorable to determine at what particular age group pressures actually begin to become evident.

Parents, teachers, and students of preschool children might benefit from additional research regarding the effects of clothing on the young child's social interactions and, hence, social development, in being able to cope more effectively with individual and group socialization processes. Further knowledge of the effects of clothing on the formation of young children's social and psychological development could also be of special value to teachers and students of clothing and textiles. Therefore, it is suggested that child development and clothing and

textiles specialists need to collaborate in future academic and experimental research regarding this important area of the development of young children.

The following recommendations are suggested for future research:

1. The present study could be repeated using a larger sample size.
2. Older age groups might be studied in an attempt to discover the age at which pressures of clothing norms become evident.
3. Other types of experimental garments might be used in the replication of this study. For example, it would be of interest to look at what might happen if a child was dressed in party clothes on his arrival at nursery school while other children were dressed in play clothes.
4. The periods of observation and data collection could be extended to longer time spans. Also, the number of days in each series of observations could be increased.
5. Another means of measuring social interaction might be devised rather than the use of number of verbalizations initiated by subjects, for example, the types of play in which children engage (definitions by Parten, 1932). Also, a measure of the content of children's verbalizations might provide an effective method of assessing social interaction. Utilization of a tape recorder or videotape might further increase the effectiveness of a different type of measurement of social interaction.
6. This study could be replicated at different times during the school year, for example, fall and spring, to explore possible

differences in clothing effects when children were acquainted with each other to differing degrees.

7. Selection of subjects on the basis of pre-existing interactional patterns, if in evidence, should also reveal interesting data.

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APPENDIX A
PHOTOGRAPH OF EXPERIMENTAL CLOTHING



APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION SHEET - NURSERY PROGRAM

APPENDIX C

DATA COLLECTION SHEET - HEAD START PROGRAM

APPENDIX D
ANECDOTAL RECORD

ANECDOTAL RECORD

Series _____
Observation _____
Group _____

Subject _____
Collector _____
Date _____

APPENDIX E
LETTER TO NURSERY PARENTS



COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT, HOUSING AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

April 5, 1976

Dear

A study involving children and clothing is going to be conducted in the nursery school this month. _____ has been selected to participate in the study.

I would like to ask your cooperation in having your child arrive at school by 8:45 a.m. on the following days: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, April 12, 13, and 14, and Monday through Friday, April 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30.

Because the study involves a partial change of clothing on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, April 26, 27, and 28, please dress your child in a shirt or blouse which will be easy to remove at school so that we may dress him in a shirt prepared for the study.

It is extremely important that your child be present at school on all eight days of the study. Therefore, if you know now that he will not be able to come to school on any of the above-mentioned days (doctor appointments, vacations, etc.), please let me know now so that I may choose another child to participate in the study.

Please keep this letter for further reference and return the attached form to your child's teacher within the next two days. If you have any questions, please call either myself (552-7105) or Dr. Farrier (951-6148).

Sincerely,

Shirley C. Farrier
Director, University
Laboratory School

Marilyn S. Spencer
Graduate Student

APPENDIX F
LETTER TO HEAD START PARENTS



COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT, HOUSING AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

April 5, 1976

Dear

A study of children and clothing is going to be conducted in the Head Start program this month. _____ has been chosen to participate in the study.

I would like to ask your cooperation in having your child be sure to attend school on the following days: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, April 12, 13, and 14, and Monday through Friday, April 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, April 26, 27, and 28, please dress your child in a shirt or blouse which will be easy to remove at school so that we may dress him in a shirt prepared for the study.

It is very important that your child be present at school on all eight days of the study. Therefore if you know now that he will not be able to come to school on any of the days mentioned above (doctor appointments, vacations, etc.), please let me know now so that I may choose another child to participate in the study.

Please keep this letter so you remember the dates, and return the attached form to your child's teacher within the next two days. If you have any questions, please call Mrs. Inger at 951-6148.

Sincerely,

J. Inger
Head Start Teacher

Marilyn S. Spencer
Graduate Student

APPENDIX G
PERMISSION SLIP

Date _____

Please check (✓) one of the following:

_____ has my permission to participate in the study
and will be present on all eight days.

_____ will not be at school on all eight days.

Signed _____
Parent or Guardian

Date _____

APPENDIX H
OUTLINE OF TRAINING SESSION

TRAINING SESSION

Day 1

- I. Purpose of study - to explore effects of clothing on the social interaction of preschool children.
- II. Social behavior of the preschool child
 - A. Child plays alone
 - B. Children play together
 - C. Associative and cooperative play
- III. Speech behavior of the preschool child
 - A. Child often speaks to himself or to what he is playing with.
 - B. Child uses sentences, but often one word expresses a complete thought.
- IV. Observable and recordable behaviors for this study
 - A. Definition of verbalization (see handout)
 - B. Criteria for recording (see handout)
- V. Explanation of Data Collection Sheet and Anecdotal Record
 - A. What to record
 - B. How to record
- VI. Question and answer session
- VII. Familiarization with physical layout
 - A. Observation booth
 1. Seating
 2. One-way window
 3. Earphones
- VIII. Pre-test
 - A. Observation of the same child for 20 minutes by all data collectors
 - B. Check for consistency in number of verbalizations recorded
 - C. Questions, answers, clarification of any concerns

Day 2

- I. Questions and answers - any clarification needed
- II. Pre-test
 - A. Observation period for 20 minutes, all observing the same child
 - B. Check for consistency in number of verbalizations recorded
 - C. Questions, answers, clarification of any problems

APPENDIX I
DATA COLLECTION INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION SHEET

DATA COLLECTION INFORMATION
AND INSTRUCTIONS

The following information will enable you to observe subjects and record data during the data collection periods.

Data Collection Sheet

Each data collector will record the number of verbalizations initiated by the subject (the child assigned to the collector) to any other child in the room. Each verbalization is to be recorded by placing a tally mark (/) on the Data Collection Sheet, below the name of the child to whom spoken by the subject. The verbalization is to be recorded when it is directed to any child in the room and involves either of the following criteria:

1. The subject will raise his eyes and look at the child to whom he is speaking.
2. The subject will turn his body toward the child to whom he is speaking.

Each verbalization followed by a discernible pause will be counted as one verbalization. A verbal utterance may take the form of a statement, question, exclamation, including animal sounds and nonsense sounds. One-word utterances will be counted as one verbalization; a sentence or group of words said together will count as one verbalization.

The earphones will help you to be able to hear what the subject is saying. If the child you are observing calls out another child's name in an effort to get his attention, please be sure to count it.

Anecdotal Record

After each observation period, each data collector will make written comments regarding anything he noticed about the child he observed and about the group as a whole -- anything that seems important to the study. Examples might be verbal comments pertaining to clothing, reactions of children seeing others in experimental shirts, and attempts of children to dress like others in the group or to remove items of clothing. Also, record overt actions such as pointing to clothing or parts of clothing. Note the way the children seem to be playing -- do you notice any particular interactional patterns?

Remember -- the study involves children's social interactions and clothing.

Dates and Times

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, April 12, 13, and 14

Monday through Friday, April 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30

(9:00 - 9:45 a.m. and 1:00 - 1:45 p.m. each day)

PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY, POSITION YOURSELF IN THE OBSERVATION BOOTH,
AND ADJUST YOUR EARPHONES.

**The vita has been removed from
the scanned document**

EFFECTS OF CLOTHING CONFORMITY ON
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

by

Marilyn S. Spencer

(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of clothing conformity on the social interaction of two groups of preschool children of two socio-economic classes. Subjects were six randomly selected children from a group of fifteen nursery school children, representing the middle economic class and six children from a group of thirteen Head Start children designated as lower economic class.

The subjects were observed for 45 minutes while engaged in free play periods. Three separate observation series were conducted while the subjects were wearing their own play clothes, experimental garments, and when again dressed in their own play clothing.

Statistical analysis of the number of verbalizations initiated by subjects to themselves and to others indicated that clothing conformity did not appear to affect preschool children's social interactions. There were no lasting interactional trends, and experimental clothing did not affect the social interaction of children of middle and lower economic backgrounds.

Anecdotal records revealed that the lower-class children had considerable interest in and awareness of clothing. This was in contrast to an extreme lack of interest exhibited by the middle-class children.