RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BODY CONCEPT AND CLOTHING ATTITUDES
OF BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED ADOLESCENTS

by
Jane Hall Settle

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APPROVED:

Oris G. Glisson, Chairman
Lois M. Gurel, Thesis Director

Dennis E. Hinkle
Virgil A. Cook
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is a little known fact that in the United States alone over 10,000,000 people have some degree of visual impairment. Approximately 1,306,000 people have such severe visual impairment that they are unable to read ordinary newsprint, even with the aid of glasses. In 1972, over 500,000 persons in the United States were reported to be legally blind (National Association for the Prevention of Blindness, 1972). The above figures are all considered low estimates, as many cases of visual impairment are never reported. Little research has been done to provide a better understanding of this portion of the population.

According to reports from blind persons, their blindness overwhelms all other attributes they possess and dominates the responses they receive from sighted persons (Lukoff & Cohen, 1972). "Society believes the blind man cannot escape the melancholy imposed by his condition. When denied, he is not believed and is considered to be extremely courageous and brave about the situation (Chevigny & Bravermen, 1950, p. 123)." Helen Keller felt that "... not blindness, but the attitude of the seeing to the blind is the hardest burden to bear (Gowan, 1957, p. 9)." It has been further specified that "... blindness is little more than a 25% obstacle and that most
of the difficulties derive from dealing with sighted people who believe that blindness is a terrible affliction (Lukoff & Whiteman, 1970, p. 24)." In describing the onset of blindness, Chevigny (1946) wrote:

Toward the blind the world presents a face it turns to no other group on earth. Everyone else must struggle for his existence, must fight for his survival. The blind, however, need not want. Society, profoundly convinced of the utter helplessness of a man who has lost his sight, stands ever ready to help him, whether his need be so small a thing as crossing the street or the larger one of food and shelter for the rest of his days (p. 77).

"An attitude is an enduring, acquired predisposition to react in a characteristic way, favorable or unfavorable, toward a given type of person, social group, or ideal (Steingisser, 1954, p. 10)." The blind frequently encounter negative stereotypes and attitudes whenever they attempt to participate in the sighted community. Consequently,

... they internalize these negative orientations and tend to develop self-conceptions that correspond to these negative and hostile attitudes. They may maneuver themselves into positions where they are recipients of pity and, therefore, see themselves as helpless (Lukoff & Whiteman, 1970, p. 5).

The kinds of standards and attitudes directed toward blind people are often influenced by their age, social class, ethnicity, and education. Although this is true in regard to sighted people, it is particularly true as related to the blind. "Thus, if a blind person is female, an older person, and less well educated, sighted people are much more likely to expect that the blind individual will be dependent (Lukoff & Cohen, 1970, p. 8)."
The attitudes, self-concepts, and goals of blind persons are likely to be influenced by those who are 'significant others'. It is the individuals who play a significant role in their lives—their families, friends, employers—whose perspectives have the most impact on the way blind people behave (Lukoff & Cohen, 1972, p. 11).

"Social and economic stereotyping plays a crucial role in the development of attitudes toward the blind (Himes, 1958, p. 5)."

Because they are considered socially inferior, they are often pitied and degraded. The ideas that blindness is a fate worse than death and that blind people are incapable of living independently are quite demoralizing to the blind person and most damaging to his self-concept (Braverman, 1951). The expectations that blind persons encounter greatly influence their role performance.

According to Oscar Cohen (1972), attitudes toward the blind may have been

... significantly frozen into rigid behavior as a result of patterns of belief developed with some continuity over several thousand years. People today hold many of the same attitudes toward the blind as those developed in the Biblical era. This syndrome of beliefs about the blind considers blindness as the ultimate catastrophe, and blind persons with some exceptions as helpless, unhappy, bitter, and doomed (Lukoff & Cohen, 1972, p. 18).

The blind, themselves, have been influenced by these attitudes and often tend to act as they are expected to act. Even agencies organized to help the blind are frequently accused of perpetuating the belief that blind people are helpless and dependent. "Competition with the blind is 'off limits' in our society (Lukoff & Cohen, 1972, p. 19)."
The facts known about the dependence of the blind seem to suggest that blind persons are not prepared to live in a sighted world and to utilize their talents to their best advantage. A study of the history of the blind by Schauer (1951) found that, with decreasing fears and superstitions concerning blindness on the part of the seeing, the blind person’s usefulness to himself and to others rose in multiple proportions.

The blind man who is given the opportunity to become rehabilitated physically and economically is the kind of man who is a member of a minority group which exists as a distinct unit off in a corner of that society (Braverman, 1951, p. 32).

Blindness is only a deficit to the blind person. It is not a complete cutting off of contact with events of the seeing society (Klein, 1970). Because of this, clothing for the blind and visually handicapped is as important as it is for sighted people. The clothing of a blind person is very similar to that of his seeing friends, yet special needs must be met and problems overcome before his clothing can be chosen (Welch, 1950). Although research evidence indicates the relative importance of clothing and gives situations under which clothing affects the body image and self-concept, there is little research defining the clothing attitudes and problems of the blind and visually handicapped.

This study attempted to determine the relationships between the body image and clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.
For a better understanding of this research, it is necessary to define the following relevant terms:

Blindness: a condition of little or no vision.

Congenital Blindness: a condition of little or no vision since birth.

Medical or Legal Blindness:

1. A central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses.

2. A central visual acuity of 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.

Visually Handicapped or Partially Sighted: a person possessing the degree of vision as defined under "legal blindness."

Self-Concept: an individual's perception of his own characteristics, his abilities or his failings, his appearance, and all the characteristics he perceives as distinguishing him as an individual (Ryan, 1966).

Body Concept or Body Image: one's perceptions of one's total physical being (Hamachek, 1971).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Attitudes and Adjustment

Sight is the human sense which overcomes distance and, at the same time, gives details and relationships of form, size, and position. This 'object quality' of vision permits more effective contact with and control of the environment than are achieved by the other senses. This lack of sight (blindness), causes a detachment from the physical and social world (Lowenfeld, 1963, p. 285).

Prevailing attitudes toward blindness, often influenced by notions of helplessness, unhappiness, and impoverishment, frequently serve as a deterrent to successful adjustment (Rusalem, 1972). According to Cutsforth (1951), "The seeing members of society and the self-regarding attitudes they induce in the blind are entirely responsible for the emotional disturbances found in the blind as a group (pp.124-125)."

A list of historically based attitudes toward the blind which exists today is summarized as follows:

1. The blind deserve pity and sympathy and this must be based on our religious ideals of charity.
2. The blind are a miserable group.
3. People who are blind live in a world of darkness.
4. People who are blind are a helpless group, groping, stumbling, and unable to find their way.
5. People who are blind are useless and unproductive.
6. The blind are compensated for their lack of sight by the sharpening of their senses.
7. The blind are being punished for past sins.
8. The blind are maladjusted.
9. The blind are immoral and evil.
10. The blind are superior to sighted people.
11. The blind are associated with magic and with supernatural powers (Lukoff & Cohen, 1972, p. 21).

People form opinions and maintain attitudes about the blind based on the fact of blindness when no other information about the individual is available. Psychologists feel that the blind person reacts to these attitudes in ways that affect his psychological adjustment (Cowen, Underberg, Verillo, & Benham, 1961).

Normal reactions to the blind are defined as relations with an inferior. This results in pity, sympathy, and generosity (Himes, 1950). Blind persons frequently resent these reactions as "patronizing." Such behavior exercises a powerful influence in the blind person's conception of self and social roles. "It is this fact, perhaps more than any other element of the social situation, that is damaging to his morale. It means he enters the struggle of life with both a physical and social strike against him (Himes, 1950, pp. 414-415)."

According to Chevigny (1946), "Salvation for one who loses sight consists of avoidance of a vicious circle in which the world's fixed notion of the helplessness of the blind creates that helplessness, and their consequent exhibition of helplessness confirms the world in its fixed notion (p. 88)." Functioning in a society that responds emotionally to his condition, the blind person cannot avoid having profound feelings about his disability. So much anxiety, fear, repugnance, and self-deprecation are involved in these feelings that working through the emotional impact often preoccupies the blind person excluding many
other constructive activities (Rusalem, 1972). A blind person is forced to function in an environment in which his capacities and potentialities are almost invariably underestimated. Claiming that the attitudes toward blindness root in six major phenomena of American life, Rusalem (1972) listed them as follows:

1. The cultural heritage
2. Unfamiliarity with blindness
3. Family insecurity
4. Unconscious mechanisms
5. The independence ideal

"Cultural mechanisms . . . result in the routine subordination of blind persons and restriction of their behavior potentials with attendant injuries to morale, conception of self, and effectiveness of social roles (Himes, 1950, p. 416)." Society often determines what constitutes a successful person and each individual feels the impact of this concept (Anderson, 1950). The blind as a group are mentally competent, psychologically stable, and socially adaptable. Their needs are therefore those of normal people, of ordinary men and women, caught at a physical and social disadvantage (tenBroek & Matson, 1959). This implies that the blind have a need for adjustment and acceptance, but not a need for toleration or patronage.

According to tenBroek and Matson (1959), "The foremost handicap of blindness is the invisible barrier it erects against the possibility of self-reliance and the opportunity of self-support in the form of polite rejection from the main channels of social and economic activity (p. 13)." In social situations, the blind person cannot become informed
about the required behavior as seeing people can by watching others. The isolating effect of this lack of vision restricts the blind individual in his control of the environment and results in increased feelings of insecurity and in a state of higher nervous tension (Lowenfeld, 1946). Blindness causes, by itself, no emotional disturbance. In fact, the major portion of the reorganization is achieved unnoticed. Only when the blind person is involved in social situations, real or imaginary, does he experience any emotional disturbance (Cutsforth, 1951).

Himes (1950) claimed that social stereotyping was the cause of many of the misconceptions relating to the blind. He felt that often social behavior became a response to the total person who was identified and classified by reference to the readily observed physical disability.

It is a general assumption of society that the blind person is also deaf. Often people shout at a blind person or talk about him as though he were not present. A lack of intelligence is also associated with blindness. According to Chevigny (1946), "People choose their words with great care, as if addressing a child or an idiot (p. 201)."

"The blind person, trained, ready, and able to be useful is often constantly presented with charity, rather than the opportunity for self support (Chevigny & Braverman, 1950, p. 292)."

Adjustment to blindness is not the same for all people. Severson (1953), however, stated that there were only three adjustments necessitated solely by the loss of vision. They were, as follows:
1. The problem of accepting loss of sight in as matter-of-fact a way as possible and so freeing himself from the bitterness, the resentment, the self-pity, and the feeling of isolation which so easily can make life a burden.

2. The task of acquiring the specialized skills available to blind people.

3. The problem of knowing how to deal with the attitudes and actions of sighted people toward blind people (p. 81).

Many problems of adjustment facing blind people are common to all human beings. Loss of sight, however, is such a severe handicap that these problems of adjustment tend too often to appear to the person as a result of blindness. "The whole range of difficulties, faced by the person seem to cluster about blindness and find in blindness their false explanation (Severson, 1953, p. 81)."

A variety of research has shown that blind persons were often under more nervous strain and harbored greater feelings of insecurity and frustration than sighted persons (Lowenfeld, 1963). Meyerson (1953) found that economic, physical, and emotional security in early life tended to determine the personal and social adjustment of the subjects. A study using the California Test of Personality, with a group of sighted and a group of blind adolescents, showed that the personal and social adjustment of blind adolescents, as a group, was below that of the seeing. The study also indicated that emotional disturbances and maladjustments resulted more frequently from the conditions and social attitudes of the person's environment than from the sensory handicap itself. Blind children worried three times more often than did seeing
A study by Morgan (1944) found that maladjustment correlated inversely with intelligence and directly with the number of years during which the visual handicap had been recognized.

Lowenfeld (1959) felt that, "Because blindness is a sensory handicap, it may contribute to any difference between blind and seeing adolescents, their attitudes, and their interrelationships (p. 310)." He believed that since adolescence was a time of radical changes for the individual in the physical, emotional, and social aspects of his life, it seemed only logical that adjustment would be especially difficult for the visually impaired youth. Several special preoccupations make acceptance of blindness particularly difficult for adolescents:

1. The importance of bodily attractiveness in the female and masculine strength and independence in the male. This is related to the sexual fears which are accentuated in the blind adolescent.

2. The problems of developing independence in an adolescent who must accept certain dependencies which are characteristic for blindness.

3. The exhibitionism accompanied with the desire for anonymity of the adolescent (Lowenfeld, 1963, p. 278).

In separate studies by Griffis (1935) and Cowen et al. (1961), in which adolescents were the subjects, little difference was found between adolescents with defective vision and adolescents with normal vision on measures of neurotic tendencies. Griffis (1935) did find, however, that the blind students showed a tendency to be more submissive and less self-sufficient than the sighted students. Abel (1961) noted...
that, "Perhaps adolescence is an excellent period for the professional person to assess the blind person’s awareness of good skills, and his evaluation of his own functioning in terms of his self-concept, and his role in his environment (p. 310)."

The term 'blindness' in common usage includes not only total absence of vision but all degree of visual impairment so severe as to prevent one from carrying on the daily activities for which sight is essential (Lowenfeld, 1946). Some studies of the blind have found that society tends to lump all forms of blindness together (Lowenfeld, 1963). Under the definition of legal blindness:

... individuals who are totally blind, who have light perception (ability to distinguish darkness and light) or light projection (ability to indicate the source of light), who can distinguish hand movements in front of their eyes, who have form or object perception, who have 'travel vision,' and whose vision can be measured with the Snellen Chart up to and including 20/200 are all considered as blind (Lowenfeld, 1963, pp. 228-229).

This oversimplification of blindness is a problem since those who are blind from birth would have a different means of conceptualizing, a different orientation, and a different perception of reality than would those blinded later in life or with partial vision. The full extent of the restrictions resulting from the visual handicap may be felt only by individuals who have been totally blind since birth or who became blind at such an early age that they have no visual imagery (Lowenfeld, 1946). The congenitally blind have great cultural pressure to adapt to their environment "like everybody else," yet they have no accurate manner in which to even communicate their feelings, since the language they are forced to use is the language of the seeing.
The attitudes of blind persons, themselves, toward blindness are not homogeneous. Determining factors of these attitudes include age, intelligence, social level, employment status, occupation, and sex (Rusalem, 1972). Voorhees (1949) made a study of the attitudes of the blind toward blindness and found that out of 340 subjects (both men and women) 87% felt there were disabilities worse than blindness, such as deafness, paralysis, double amputation, and mental disorders. Only 20% expressed the desire for special help by being given a seat on a bus, or of receiving discounts on needed purchases. Almost all (91%) felt that if employed in a private competitive job, their work should be as good as that of a sighted person. Over one-third (38%) of the group surveyed believed that sighted people avoided them.

"More research is needed . . . not only to solidify the scientific base for our knowledge about visual disability, but ultimately to contribute to a more effective way of life for the visually disabled person himself (Cowen et al., 1961, p. 259)." As the educational campaign gains direction and momentum in persuading the public that blind persons are actually human beings, the national attitude toward the loss of sight will probably improve (Voorhees, 1949).

Self-Concept and Body Image

Perceptions of the body relate intimately to perceptions of larger aspects of the self (Hamachek, 1971). Feelings about the body are related both to feelings about the self and to feelings of psychological security and insecurity (Weinberg, 1960). "Anything that implies
a man's inferiority can be an insult and the kind of pity shown the blind does, for the most part just that (Chevigny, 1946, p. 127)."

According to Cole and Taboroff (1955), the reaction of pity is the usual defense used to cover the horror people feel when confronted with the blind. "Pity is the luxury of the giver and the destroyer of the recipient (Chevigny, 1946, p. 141)." Influencing an individual's self-concept and subsequent life adjustments are these degrading communications, as well as the label blind (Rusalem, 1972).

The self-concept of an individual is a result of interaction with the environment and other people. Since visually handicapped people interact daily with normally sighted people in a normally sighted world, they rate themselves in terms of normal individuals. Because of this manner of self-evaluation, anxiety is created when a blind person feels that he lacks certain qualities required by society. Often visually handicapped people feel a discrepancy between what they think ought to be and what actually is. This results in feelings of inadequacy and poor self-concepts (Zurich & Ledwith, 1965).

Attitudes toward the blind are usually motivated by one's attitudes toward self and toward one's own vision. Cowan et al. (1961) found an evident relationship between adjustment reflected by one's self-concept measure and socioeconomic status. Steingisser (1954) found a substantial correlation between attitudes of acceptance of and respect for self, and attitudes of acceptance of and respect for others.
According to Blank (1957), a common character disorder of blind persons was chronic dependency. The individual expected to be taken care of as a helpless person because he was blind. He was encouraged by family and friends, as well as by the common belief that blindness was an acceptable reason for dependence. This dependency directly related to the low respect for self of many blind people. Chordorkoff (1954) compared the perceived self with the ideal self. He found one type of individual with adequate adjustment. This kind of person showed a high correspondence between the perceived and ideal self, but he was not motivated to change in a direction which would be more satisfying to him. Chordorkoff described the poorly adjusted person as dissatisfied with himself and as having a self ideal which was discrepant with his perceived self. He was, however, not as motivated for change as was the better adjusted person. Deemer (1967) found that great disparities existed between the self and the ideal self in selected characteristic traits as measured by the Index of Adjustments and Values Measure (IAV) and the Clothing and Appearance Image Measure (CAIM). Often in order to avoid any more social segregation and to keep from accentuating already existing differences, some blind people will accept and interject the attitudes and misconceptions about blindness held by the seeing (Stelngisser, 1954). This reaction is due to the poor adjustments and conceptions of self held by many blind people. Brownfain (1952) studied the stability of the self-concept and found that an individual with a stable self-concept is one who accepts himself, values himself highly, and who feels secure about himself.
Congenital blindness does not always cause ego defects or personality disorder, but blindness occurring when ego functions are already developed is inevitably traumatic because it disrupts established patterns of communication, motility, work, recreation, and feeling about oneself, such as body image and other aspects of awareness (Blank, 1957, p. 11).

The visually handicapped individual does not consider his body image to be normal (Zurich & Ledwith, 1965). Research by Rosen and Ross (1958) showed that satisfaction with body image and satisfaction with self-concept were positively related. When the appearance of the trainees in McArthur's (1969) study improved, so did their self-concept, their ideal self-concept, and their ratings of others. A study by Robinson (1967) found that the subjects' self-concepts correlated significantly with feelings about their bodies. Negative feelings about the body were associated with feelings of insecurity involving the self (Secord & Jourard, 1953).

Since our bodies are constantly changing, there is often a time lag in bringing our body concepts up-to-date. A middle-aged man, who had lost his sight at the age of ten, maintained in his memory a visual image of a ten-year-old. Such reports about both sighted and blind people indicated that an individual may not know his body as well as he could because he was holding on to a more out-of-date version (Fisher, 1973).

Body image is another factor which plays an important role in the individual's self-concept. The individual's attitudes towards his body are of extreme importance to any comprehensive theory of personality.
Feelings about the body are believed to be integrally related to the
self-concept, although it is identified as a separate aspect (Secord &
Jourard, 1953). The body is often experienced as the outer boundary for
the self (Hamachek, 1971).

The body image is a sensitive indicator registering many of the
individual’s basic social relationships, especially those involved in
his development of a sense of identity (Fisher & Cleveland, 1968).
"The feelings one has toward his body are significant personality
variables with mental health implications (Jourard & Secord, 1955,
p. 243)." Few studies have been done with the blind and visually
handicapped in this area. Most research on normal populations, however,
have shown that women usually desire to be smaller than they actually
are, while men want to be larger and more muscular than they really are.
The satisfactions with aspects of the body varies with the magnitude of
the deviation between measured size and ideal size. These limited ideal
dimensions are often sources of insecurity and anxiety (Jourard & Secord,
1955). The closer the proportions of the self to the ideal self, the
better one thinks of both his physical and non-physical self. The
greater the deviation from the body ideal, the lower is the self-esteem
(Horn, 1968).

Another source of anxiety for the visually handicapped that is
seldom mentioned is special eye conditions. Eye problems and
disfigurements may make the individual quite self-conscious and ill at
ease. Some studies of the more common eye defects reveal that they
cause fears, anxieties, self-centeredness, or extroverted behavior. The
prolonged treatment of eye diseases by medication often has emotional effects on the child and his environment (Lowenfeld, 1963).

**Clothing Attitudes**

Much time and effort is spent in altering the body’s appearance by means of clothes, bleaches, skin preparations, cosmetics, tattooing, and plastic surgery with the primary goal of looking more like the ideal image. Psychologists have found an intimate relationship between clothes and other body decorations and the psychological variables of a body image order. A variety of research showed that clothing played an important role in the development of the self and that values and clothing attitudes were found to be related in varying degrees (Fisher & Cleveland, 1968).

Appearance is largely related to the formulation of the conception of self (Stone, 1965). "The self-concept is believed by many social psychologists to be an important factor behind the behavioral patterns of individuals and is developed and maintained by interaction among people (Klaasen, 1967, p. 81)." The way a person dresses has a close connection with the unconscious perception of himself which he wishes to convey (Bergler, 1953). According to Flügel (1940), clothing was used to express feelings and wishes and in identifying and protecting oneself psychologically. Throughout life, the individual’s self-concept is greatly influenced by the image one has of his body. Clothing may be viewed as an extension of the physical body, or as an extension of the total personality, and may be included in the body image (Richards &
Hawthorne, 1971). "Our body image changes continually and we triumph over the limitations of the body by adding masks and clothes to the body image. . . . Clothes are thus only a method of transforming the body image (Schilder, 1950, p. 204)." By the use of clothing to expand and contract the body image, it becomes a part of the body image.

Fisher (1973) stated that one may get a feeling of increased size by identifying with a tool or mechanical object, such as by carrying a cane. In an experiment, each subject was asked to estimate the length of his arm when he was holding and when he was not holding a pointer in his hand. The attachment of the pointer made the hand feel longer. Often people who tend to have feelings of depression and unworthiness are likely to portray themselves as small (Fisher, 1973).

Clothing is often used to influence the impressions made during social interaction with other people (Klaasen, 1967). People identify themselves with others by means of clothes (Schilder, 1950). The less favorable the overall self-concept, the greater is the interest and need for clothes (Ryan, 1966). Research by Calvin and Holtzman (1953) found that the tendency to enhance the self was inversely related to maladjustment. The more poorly adjusted the individual, the more self-depreciative he appeared. Women who were insecure may wear clothes which emphasize certain colors and designs as a way of reinforcing their boundaries and reassuring themselves that a clear line of demarcation existed between their own body and others (Fisher, 1970).
Psychologists feel that the greatest needs during adolescence seem to be conformity to the peer group and to escape its ridicule (Klaasen, 1967). It is a person's perception of others' reactions to his appearance, rather than one's actual appearance, which is more influential in shaping the self (Humphrey, 1968). Fisher (1970) found that the need to secure approval from others was an important factor in the enjoyment of clothing. Most studies have shown that during adolescence, girls were more conscious of and interested in clothing than were boys (Fisher, 1973). Wax (1965) theorized that the teenage girl followed fads and fashion to the extent that she did because she was experimenting with herself and had not developed a self-image with which she could be comfortable.

As early as 1891, concern was expressed about dress and its relation to the success of the blind. Hosmer (1891) stated that, "The blind are subjected to the most minute and consistent inspection, wherever duty or pleasure leads them (p. 53)." This may either strengthen or weaken the confidence of sighted people in blind people, just in the measure that neatness or untidiness was displayed in their personal appearance (Hosmer, 1891). He also felt that, "There is a popular belief that blindness is always and necessarily accompanied by marks of misery, poverty, and disorder of very pronounced types (p. 56)."

Bissell (1969) found that blind girls did not obtain as great a sense of satisfaction through their clothing as did a sighted group of girls, and that they did not believe clothing to be as important as a contributing factor to their personality as did the sighted group.
Both the blind and sighted teenage girls placed importance on their clothing and were concerned about dressing like their friends. They viewed clothing as a means of gaining the acceptance of others, thus creating a sense of belonging. She found, however, that the blind teenage girl felt that her clothing did not affect her feelings and actions to the degree that clothing did for the sighted teenage girls.

Studies done by the American Foundation for the Blind (1970) emphasized the importance of fabric texture and weight. A looseleaf sample book of fabrics was made available as a tactual aid. To explain design, teachers used tactual aids along with a discussion of the different types of printed and woven patterns. Another aspect considered was the pattern design on figure proportions. It is important that the blind be kept aware of different fashion trends. Extremes in fashion, however, should usually be avoided (American Foundation for the Blind, 1970).

**Summary**

Much research has been done with blind and visually handicapped individuals, but little recent research was found when this literature search was being conducted. Up to this time, few studies have investigated the clothing attitudes and needs of blind and visually handicapped adolescents. This researcher found no evidence that clothing attitudes and needs had ever been compared to body concepts of this special population.

This literature review summarizes many of the important studies and research relevant to the purpose of this thesis. It is evident that
there is a great deal of research still remaining to be done in this area of the psychological manifestations of attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents toward clothing and its effect on self-concept and body image.
CHAPTER III

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between clothing attitudes and the body concept of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypotheses

The following statistical hypothesis, stated in the null form was postulated for this study:

There is no relationship between body concept and selected attitudes toward clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Under the major hypothesis stated above, three sub-hypotheses were formulated:

a. There is no relationship between body concept and special attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

b. There is no relationship between body concept and attitudes toward clothing management of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

c. There is no relationship between body concept and the social approval provided by clothing of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.
Limitations

Due to the nature of this study, certain limitations were inherent. The size of the population was small (29), even though this represented approximately one-half of the blind and visually handicapped adolescents enrolled in state schools for the blind and visually handicapped in the state of Virginia. It must also be considered that the sample was taken from a residential school.

This group of 29 adolescents was understood to be an intact group. The extent of statistical inference, even though inferential statistics were used, may be a limitation to this study in that inference to other populations may not be made.

Reliability and validity of the instruments must also be considered. Several reliability studies have been carried out on the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire (Brady, 1963; Creekmore, 1966; Dickey, 1967), as well as one study on its construct validity (Gurel, 1974). No formal studies on validity and reliability, however, were made on the Body Concept Questionnaire. There was an informal assessment of the content or face validity. As a result of this informal assessment the questions were revised.
CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURE

This study attempted to compare the relationships between the body image and the clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Selection of the Instruments

Importance of Clothing Questionnaire

A review of a large number of instruments purporting to measure clothing attitudes and interests indicated that one measure which had been frequently used in its original form and in revisions and refinements was one developed by Dr. Anna M. Creekmore and five graduate students at Michigan State University.1 The "Importance of Clothing Questionnaire" was developed and revised under the direction of Dr. Creekmore in 1966-67. The revision was completed in 1968. Work on this instrument began with Creekmore's scale (1963) and the revisions and refinements of Brady (1963) and Sharpe (1963). The measure initially contained 170 statements. It was pretested and revised three times. The final questionnaire consisted of 88 statements divided into eight subscales of 11 items each. Three of these subscales were specifically selected for this study of clothing

1Karen Engel, Carolyn Andree Humphrey, Winfred Sue Hundley, Mary Green Klaassen, and Mary Jane Young.
attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents. They were:
1) Special Attention, 2) Management, 3) Social Approval.

This questionnaire and these subscales were chosen for this study for several reasons. The instrument was originally developed for teenaged males and females (Creekmore, 1963) and could easily be machine scored. Some reliability had been shown for this instrument (Brady, 1963; Creekmore, 1966; Dickey, 1967), as well as some construct validity (Gurel, 1974). The three subscales of Special Attention, Management, and Social Approval, were chosen because they seemed particularly applicable to teenagers.

The instruments were completed by each subject, either in Braille or typed print. They answered in a space next to each question; the questions were read orally.

A four choice response scale was used, forcing either a positive or negative response. The four choices and their measured weights were:

4. Almost Always—very few exceptions
3. Usually—majority of the time
2. Seldom—not very often
1. Almost Never—very few exceptions

High scores on each subscale represented a favorable attitude toward that particular aspect of clothing behavior. The three subscales used are included in the Appendix.

**Body Concept Questionnaire**

The instrument developed by the researcher attempted to determine the attitudes of each subject toward his body. The questionnaire
consisted of five statements relating to self-consciousness and body satisfaction. The response scale was the same as for the Clothing Interest Questionnaire. This questionnaire is also found in the Appendix.

**Demographic Data**

Background biographical data was obtained from each subject participating in the study. The items requested included name, sex, age, grade in school, and degree of blindness. The "degree of blindness" category was divided into four sections: totally, light perception, travel vision, and reading vision.

The following data were collected from each subject:

1. Information from three subscales: Special Attention, Management, and Social Approval. These subscales were a part of the "Importance of Clothing Questionnaire" developed by Dr. Anna M. Creekmore and her associates in 1968.

2. Information from a body concept questionnaire developed by the researcher.

3. Demographic data concerning name, sex, age, grade in school, and degree of blindness.

The subjects were divided into two groups. One group was totally blind and were given Braille questionnaires. The other group had reading vision of either large print or regular print. They were given typed copies of the questionnaire. Each question was answered by indicating a number (representing the four possible answers) beside it. The questions were read to each group.
Data Analysis

In testing the hypotheses stated in Chapter III, a principal components factor analysis with orthogonal rotation was performed on each of the two questionnaires. The purpose of this factor analysis was to determine the number and nature of the underlying constructs within a large number of variables (Kerlinger, 1964).

Two factors resulted from the factor analysis of the Body Concept Questionnaire; after a review by the researcher they were named: 1) self-consciousness and 2) body satisfaction. This resulted in a further refining of the hypotheses, stated in the null form, as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There is no relationship between self-consciousness and special attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between self-consciousness and attitudes toward clothing management of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between self-consciousness and social approval provided by clothing of the blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypothesis 4: There is no relationship between body satisfaction and special attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypothesis 5: There is no relationship between body satisfaction and
attitudes toward clothing management of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypothesis 6: There is no relationship between body satisfaction and the social approval provided by clothing of the blind and visually handicapped adolescent.

Based on the assumption that the Creekmore subscales were in fact measuring one attitude per subscale, the items of each subscale were summed. These three sums were then correlated with the factor scores obtained from the factor analysis of the Body Concept Questionnaire. The resulting correlations were then tested for significance at the $\alpha = .05$ level. The statistically significant correlations are discussed in Chapter V.

Due to the small size of the sample, a factor analysis of the 33 items in the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire was deemed inappropriate. The individual subscales were, however, factor analyzed to determine if all items in each subscale were measuring the same construct as assumed from the literature. For each subscale, the principal component was extracted and the items which loaded significantly on this factor were examined. The results of this analysis are also discussed in Chapter V.

A third factor analysis was then performed on those items that had loaded significantly on the principal component in the previous analysis, in hopes that factor scores from the analysis could be correlated with factor scores obtained when the Body Concept
Questionnaire was factor analyzed. Factor analysis of these items did not, however, produce the original three factors which were generated by the principal component extraction. As a result, factor scores of the Body Concept Questionnaire were not correlated with the factor scores of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire that resulted from the above analysis.

Because of the inability to successfully correlate the factor scores of the two questionnaires, correlation coefficients were computed between the two factors from the Body Concept Questionnaire and the responses to the 33 items of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire. These significant correlations are discussed in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The relationships between the body concept and clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents were analyzed by this study.

Description of the Sample

The sample was made up of 29 blind and visually handicapped adolescents, ranging from 14 to 19 years of age, from the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Staunton, Virginia. Twenty of the students were male and 9 were female. Of the 29 students in the study, seven were totally blind, four had light perception, six had travel vision, and 12 had reading vision. Questionnaires were given each subject, in either Braille or typed form. The questions were read orally to the subjects as a group, and answers were marked on the questionnaires by the students.

Analysis of Data

The first statistical procedure was to determine what, in fact, the Body Concept Questionnaire measured. A principal component factor analysis showed that two attitudes were measured. The rotated factor
loadings for this analysis are presented in Table 1. Statements one, three, and four loaded significantly on the first factor and after reviewing these three statements, the researcher decided that this factor described a construct called "self-consciousness." Statements two and five loaded significantly on factor two. A review of these two items indicated to the researcher that they described a construct called "body satisfaction." These factors indicated that the Body Concept Questionnaire measured two distinct attitudes toward one's body.

The second step in the data analysis was to sum the item weights for each of the three subscales of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire; a higher weight indicated more positive responses and a lower weight indicated more negative responses to the respective Importance of Clothing subscale. These weights or scores were then correlated with the factor scores of the Body Concept Questionnaire and tested for statistical significance (\( \alpha = .05 \)). The results of these correlations are shown in Table 2. Three significant correlations were found, two of which were associated with the hypotheses to be tested; the third was an intercorrelation of two of the subscales, Management and Social Approval. Results of the analysis above were the basis for the rejection of Hypotheses 2 and 3. There were significant relationships between the body concept factor, self-consciousness, and two of the clothing attitudes measured by the Creekmore subscales those of Management and Social Approval. The two rejected null hypotheses were:

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between self-consciousness and attitudes toward clothing management of blind and
TABLE 1

Rotated Factor Matrix of the Body Concept Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel uneasy in public because of my bodily appearance.</td>
<td>.8313*</td>
<td>-.0338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that I am physically attractive to others.</td>
<td>-.1611</td>
<td>.7914*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel that people stare at me because I'm blind.</td>
<td>.6350*</td>
<td>-.1665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My body movements and gestures cause me embarrassment.</td>
<td>.8374*</td>
<td>-.0419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am satisfied with my body.</td>
<td>-.0173</td>
<td>.8634*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * designates significant factor loadings ≥ .4000
TABLE 2

Correlation Matrix for the Two Factors Scores from the Body Concept Questionnaire and the Summed Scores of the Three Subscales of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor I</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Subscale I</th>
<th>Subscale II</th>
<th>Subscale III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor I</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.0285</td>
<td>-0.4755*</td>
<td>-0.3582*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor II</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.0318</td>
<td>0.1076</td>
<td>-0.1182</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale I</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.3821*</td>
<td>0.2875</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. — *p < .05

df = 27
visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between self-consciousness and the social approval provided by clothing of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Hypotheses 1, 4, 5, and 6 were not rejected. The results of this study indicated no significant correlations between the body concept construct of self-consciousness and special attention given clothing, and none between the construct, body satisfaction, and any of the three subscales, Special Attention, Management, and Social Approval, used in the study.

Factor I (self-consciousness) had a significant negative correlation ($r = -.4755$) with the subscale Management, and, therefore this indicated one of two things: either a high degree of self-consciousness was associated with poor management of clothing or little self-consciousness was associated with better management of clothing. Self-consciousness also had a significant correlation ($r = -.3582$) with the subscale Social Approval. This correlation indicated that students who were not self-conscious had a greater desire for social approval from their clothing than did those who were more self-conscious. The third significant correlation was a positive correlation ($r = .3821$) between special attention given clothing and management of clothing. Since neither factors from the Body Concept Questionnaire were involved in this correlation, it had no relation to any of the hypotheses being tested. This correlation indicated that the more special attention was given clothing, the better the management of clothing was, also. The above analysis also showed no relationship between self-consciousness
and the special attention given clothing or between body satisfaction and any of the three subscales. Because non-significant correlations were found between these constructs, Hypotheses 1, 4, 5, and 6 were not rejected.

The three individual subscales were then factor analyzed to determine if all the items within the individual subscales measured the same construct. Tables 3, 4, and 5 show the unrotated factor matrix for each subscale. Factor I for each subscale represents the principal component extraction for that particular set of statements. As can be seen in Table 3, seven of the eleven items loaded significantly on the principal component. The other four items had significant loadings on other unnamed factors. A review of these seven items by the researcher indicated that they tended to describe fashion consciousness rather than special attention (the descriptive name given the original 11 items in the subscale). The factor analysis of the second subscale, Management, showed five statements loading significantly on the principal component (see Table 4). After studying these five statements, the researcher decided that the principal component for this subscale described planning ahead for clothing needs, more specifically than just clothing management. The third subscale had six items which loaded significantly on the principal component. The term conformity was used to describe this subscale rather than Social Approval, which was the original name assigned to these items (see Table 5).

A factor analysis of all 33 items was considered inappropriate because of the small sample size of 29; therefore, the 18 items
TABLE 3

Non-Rotated Factor Matrix of Subscale I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I**</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
<th>Factor IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When new fashions appear on the market, I am one of the first to own them.</td>
<td>.6319*</td>
<td>-.0891</td>
<td>.1461</td>
<td>-.5147*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have clothes that I don't wear because everyone else has them.</td>
<td>.3004</td>
<td>.8423*</td>
<td>.0771</td>
<td>.1504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I like to be considered an outstanding dresser by my friends.</td>
<td>.5694*</td>
<td>.2709</td>
<td>.3833</td>
<td>-.3711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I try to keep my wardrobe in line with the latest styles.</td>
<td>.6452*</td>
<td>-.4813</td>
<td>-.2375</td>
<td>.0354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I go to nearby cities to shop for better fashions.</td>
<td>.4435</td>
<td>.2696</td>
<td>.7038*</td>
<td>.0433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I try to buy clothes which are very unusual.</td>
<td>.4245</td>
<td>.6770*</td>
<td>.1583</td>
<td>.1696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I avoid wearing certain clothes because they do not make me look distinctive.</td>
<td>.4861</td>
<td>-.1095</td>
<td>-.3517</td>
<td>-.5232*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * designates significant factor loadings  
** designates principal component—Fashion Consciousness
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I**</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
<th>Factor IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. I enjoy wearing very different clothing even though I attract attention.</td>
<td>.5799*</td>
<td>.2668</td>
<td>-.6396*</td>
<td>-.0123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I try to buy clothes with the best labels.</td>
<td>.5734*</td>
<td>-.3394</td>
<td>.2254</td>
<td>.2891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I wear different clothes to impress people.</td>
<td>.5877*</td>
<td>-.0397</td>
<td>-.1842</td>
<td>.3101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I am interested in why some people choose to wear such unusual clothes.</td>
<td>.5111*</td>
<td>-.1799</td>
<td>-.0761</td>
<td>.5713*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4

Non-Rotated Factor Matrix of Subscale II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I**</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
<th>Factor IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. I plan for and prepare clothes to wear several days in advance.</td>
<td>.7576*</td>
<td>-.2687</td>
<td>-.0676</td>
<td>-.0245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I see that my out-of-season clothing is cleaned and stored.</td>
<td>.0767</td>
<td>-.3306</td>
<td>.7936*</td>
<td>-.0032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I look over the clothing in my wardrobe before each season so that I know what I have.</td>
<td>.6316*</td>
<td>.1193</td>
<td>.4652</td>
<td>-.2569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I am enticed into buying garments I like without having anything to go with them.</td>
<td>.4252</td>
<td>.6415*</td>
<td>-.0026</td>
<td>-.4282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I enjoy trying to get the most for my money in clothing purchases.</td>
<td>-.6753*</td>
<td>.3432</td>
<td>.0635</td>
<td>.1265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I wear a raincoat or carry an umbrella to protect my clothes in rainy weather.</td>
<td>.4242</td>
<td>.4069</td>
<td>.3452</td>
<td>.0146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I have something to wear for any occasion that occurs.</td>
<td>.7649*</td>
<td>-.0926</td>
<td>-.1109</td>
<td>.2356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.— *designates significant factor loadings  
**designates principal component—Planning Ahead
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I**</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
<th>Factor IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. I have a long-term idea for purchasing more expensive items of clothing such as coats or suits.</td>
<td>.5762*</td>
<td>.0628</td>
<td>-.3711</td>
<td>.6228*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I carefully plan every purchase so that I know what I need when I get to a store.</td>
<td>-.1461</td>
<td>.2618</td>
<td>.4978</td>
<td>.4663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I am more concerned about the care of my clothing than my friends are about theirs.</td>
<td>.0717</td>
<td>.5983*</td>
<td>-.3603</td>
<td>-.1862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I try to find out how I can save as much time, energy and money as possible with my clothes.</td>
<td>-.0455</td>
<td>.6590*</td>
<td>.1919</td>
<td>.3345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 5

Non-Rotated Factor Matrix of Subscale III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I**</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
<th>Factor IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. I check with my friends about what they are wearing to a gathering before I decide what to wear.</td>
<td>.7576*</td>
<td>-.2687</td>
<td>-.0676</td>
<td>-.0245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I would rather miss something than to wear clothes which are not really appropriate.</td>
<td>.0768</td>
<td>-.3306</td>
<td>.7936*</td>
<td>-.0032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I feel more a part of the group if I am dressed like my friends.</td>
<td>.6316*</td>
<td>.1193</td>
<td>.4652</td>
<td>-.2569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I wear clothes that everyone is wearing even though they may not look as good on me.</td>
<td>.4251</td>
<td>.6415*</td>
<td>.0026</td>
<td>-.4282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I am uncomfortable when my clothes are different from all others at a party.</td>
<td>-.6753*</td>
<td>.3432</td>
<td>.0635</td>
<td>.1264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I try to dress like others in my group so that people will know we are friends.</td>
<td>.4242</td>
<td>.4069</td>
<td>.3452</td>
<td>.0146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I get new clothes for a special occasion if the clothes I have are not the type my friends will be wearing.</td>
<td>.7649*</td>
<td>-.0926</td>
<td>-.1109</td>
<td>.2356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. — *designates significant factor loadings  
**designates principal component—Conformity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor I**</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
<th>Factor IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30. I have gone places and then wished after I got there that I had not gone because my clothes were not suitable.</td>
<td>.5762*</td>
<td>.0628</td>
<td>-3.711</td>
<td>.6228*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I wear what I like even though some of my friends do not approve.</td>
<td>-1.461</td>
<td>.2618</td>
<td>.4978</td>
<td>.4662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. When I buy new articles of clothing, I try to buy something similar to what my friends are wearing.</td>
<td>.0718</td>
<td>.5983*</td>
<td>-3.603</td>
<td>-1.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. When someone comes to school dressed unsuitably, I try to figure out why he is dressed as he is.</td>
<td>-.0455</td>
<td>.6590*</td>
<td>.1919</td>
<td>.3344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
generated from the above individual factor analyses by significant factor loadings, were factor analyzed to see if, in fact, the three areas defined above were being measured. The rotated factor matrix for these 18 variables is found in Table 6. The three attitudes found by the principal component extraction in the above analysis clearly were not the only clothing attitudes being measured. If the 18 items had only been measuring three items, the first seven items would have had significant loadings on the one factor. The next five items would have loaded significantly on another factor and the final six would have loaded significantly on a third factor. As Table 6 illustrates, this is not what occurred. Because of the results of the above analysis, it was assumed that the three subscales were measuring more than the three factors indicated in an earlier factor analysis of the individual subscales.

In further analyzing the data, Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed between the factor scores of the Body Concept Questionnaire and the items of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire. Only five significant correlations were found between the two factor scores and all 33 items (Table 7). A significant positive correlation \((r = .5434)\) was found between self-consciousness and being economical (i.e. getting the most for the money). This implied that one who was self-conscious usually tried to get the most for the money. A significant negative correlation \((r = -.5188)\) was found between self-consciousness and a long-term purchasing plan for clothing. One of two inferences may be made to these correlations: 1) a person who was self-conscious did not have a long term purchasing plan for his clothing,
# TABLE 6

Rotated Factor Matrix of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire With Deleted Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor I</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When new fashions appear on the market, I am one of the first to own them.</td>
<td>.1419</td>
<td>-.5067*</td>
<td>.1253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I like to be considered an outstanding dresser by my friends.</td>
<td>-.0255</td>
<td>-.5029*</td>
<td>.0214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I try to keep my wardrobe in line with the latest styles.</td>
<td>.1498</td>
<td>.2992</td>
<td>.7423*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I enjoy wearing very different clothing even though I attract attention.</td>
<td>.0880</td>
<td>-.3221</td>
<td>.4547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I try to buy clothes with the best labels.</td>
<td>-.3692</td>
<td>-.1430</td>
<td>.6589*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I wear different clothes to impress people.</td>
<td>-.0034</td>
<td>-.0797</td>
<td>.7388*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I am interested in why some people choose to wear such unusual clothes.</td>
<td>.2787</td>
<td>-.0827</td>
<td>.6605*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I plan for and prepare clothes to wear several days in advance.</td>
<td>.5949*</td>
<td>.5876*</td>
<td>.0332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *designates significant factor loadings
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor I</th>
<th>Factor II</th>
<th>Factor III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. I look over the clothing in my wardrobe before each season so that I know what I have.</td>
<td>0.2968</td>
<td>0.6701*</td>
<td>0.2564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I enjoy trying to get the most for my money in clothing purchases.</td>
<td>-0.6572*</td>
<td>-0.0805</td>
<td>0.0717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I have something to wear for any occasion that occurs.</td>
<td>0.4614</td>
<td>0.4266</td>
<td>-0.1369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I have a long-term idea for purchasing more expensive items of clothing such as coats or suits.</td>
<td>0.5967*</td>
<td>0.0105</td>
<td>-0.0420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I feel more a part of the group if I am dressed like my friends.</td>
<td>0.1685</td>
<td>-0.5468*</td>
<td>0.0872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I wear clothes that everyone is wearing even though they may not look as good on me.</td>
<td>0.4855</td>
<td>-0.0321</td>
<td>0.1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I try to dress like others in my group so that people will know we are friends.</td>
<td>0.4902</td>
<td>-0.4489</td>
<td>0.0795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I get new clothes for a special occasion if the clothes I have are not the type my friends will be wearing.</td>
<td>0.5926*</td>
<td>-0.2572</td>
<td>0.2135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I have gone places and then wished after I got there that I had not gone because my clothes were not suitable.</td>
<td>0.0610</td>
<td>-0.7071*</td>
<td>0.0721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor I</td>
<td>Factor II</td>
<td>Factor III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. When I buy new articles of clothing, I try to buy something similar to what my friends are wearing.</td>
<td>.7893*</td>
<td>-.1551</td>
<td>.1043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 7

Statistically Significant Correlation Coefficients Between Factor Scores on the Body Concept Questionnaire and Individual Items on the Three Subscales of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Concept Factors</th>
<th>Importance of Clothing Questions</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor I (self-consciousness)</td>
<td>Q_{16} (economical-most for money)</td>
<td>.4534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor I (self-consciousness)</td>
<td>Q_{19} (long term purchasing plan)</td>
<td>-.5188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor I (self-consciousness)</td>
<td>Q_{29} (conformity with peer clothing)</td>
<td>-.3603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor II (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>Q_{21} (better care of clothing than friends)</td>
<td>.4535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor II (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>Q_{29} (conformity with peer clothing)</td>
<td>-.3622</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant correlations when $r \geq .355, \alpha = .05$
or 2) a person who was not self-conscious did long term planning for his wardrobe. A positive correlation \(r = 0.4535\) between body satisfaction and the amount of care given clothing indicated that a person with a feeling of body satisfaction took better care of his clothing than a person with little body satisfaction. Conformity with peer clothing correlated negatively \(r = -0.3603\) and \(r = -0.3622\) with both self-consciousness and body satisfaction, respectively. This indicated that the subjects who were self-conscious, yet were satisfied with their bodies, did not conform to the clothing of their peer group. It also indicated that subjects who lacked self-consciousness, but were dissatisfied with their bodies, tended to conform more to the clothing of their peers (Note Table 2).

One last analysis was performed in order to show the relationships between each of the questions on the Body Concept Questionnaire and each of the questions on the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire (see Table 8). As could be expected because of the results of the analysis between the two factors and the 33 items, items 1, 3, and 4 (Factor One) had frequent significant correlations with the 33 items, while items 2 and 5 (Factor Two) had very few significant correlations with the 33 individual items (See Table 2). Item one of the Body Concept Questionnaire correlated significantly with questions 17, 23, and 29 of the clothing attitudes questionnaire. The correlations were \(r = -0.3921\), \(r = -0.4438\), and \(r = -0.3637\), respectively. These three questions were concerned with: 1) protecting clothing in rainy weather, 2) wearing what friends were wearing, and 3) buying new clothes for a special
TABLE 8

Statistically Significant Correlation Coefficients Between Individual Items on the Body Concept Questionnaire and the Individual Items of the Three Subscales of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Concept Questions</th>
<th>Importance of Clothing Questions</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₁ (people stare because of blindness)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₄ (own latest styles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₁ (people stare because of blindness)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₁₂ (plan clothing outfits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₁ (people stare because of blindness)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₁₄ (seasonal wardrobe planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₅ (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₁₅ (impulsive buying)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₅ (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₁₆ (economical-most for money)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₁ (uneasy in public due to bodily appearance)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₁₇ (protect clothing in bad weather)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₃ (people stare because of blindness)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>ICQ₁₈ (clothing for any occasion)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant correlations when $r \geq .355$, $\alpha = .05$
TABLE 8 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Concept Questions</th>
<th>Importance of Clothing Questions</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₃ (people stare because of blindness)</td>
<td>ICQ₁₉ (long term purchasing plan)</td>
<td>-.4882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₅ (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>ICQ₂₁ (better care of clothing than friends)</td>
<td>.4135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₁ (uneasy in public due to bodily appearance)</td>
<td>ICQ₂₃ (dress like friends)</td>
<td>-.4438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₅ (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>ICQ₂₈ (group identity through clothing)</td>
<td>-.4053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₅ (body satisfaction)</td>
<td>ICQ₂₉ (new clothes for special occasions)</td>
<td>-.4294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₁ (uneasy in public due to bodily appearance)</td>
<td>ICQ₂₉ (new clothes for special occasions)</td>
<td>-.3637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₃ (people stare because of blindness)</td>
<td>ICQ₃₀ (unsuitable clothing)</td>
<td>.4661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCQ₂ (physically attractive)</td>
<td>ICQ₃₃ (unsuitable dress on others)</td>
<td>.4383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
occasion. These coefficients indicated that a person who was at ease in public 1) protected his clothing in rainy weather, 2) wore what friends were wearing, and 3) bought new clothes for special occasions. Of the subjects in this study, those who felt uneasy in public did not do any of these three things.

Item two on the Body Concept Questionnaire correlated positively \((r = 0.4838)\) with the question pertaining to why others dressed unsuitably. This implied that one who felt he was physically attractive to others wondered why others dressed unsuitably.

Item three on the Body Concept Questionnaire correlated positively \((r = 0.4611)\) with the item concerning wearing suitable clothes. This indicated that a person who felt people stared at him because of his blindness was also very worried about whether his clothes were suitable. This item correlated negatively with five other items, indicating that one who felt people stared at him because of his blindness did not: 1) wear the latest styles, 2) plan clothing outfits in advance, 3) plan wardrobe seasonally, 4) have something to wear for any occasion, and 5) have a long-term purchasing plan for clothing. The preceding may be true or the person may not feel that people stare at him because of his blindness, in which case he would do the five things mentioned above.

Item four, concerning body movements and gestures causing embarrassment, had no significant correlations with any of the 33 items on the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire.

Three positive significant correlations were shown for the item concerning body satisfaction. This indicated that a person satisfied
with his body 1) was an impulsive buyer, 2) tried to get the most for the money, and 3) was more concerned about the care of clothing than were his friends. Negative correlations ($r = -0.4053$ and $r = -0.4294$) between body satisfaction and dressing like others in the group and getting new clothes for a special occasion were found. This indicated that people satisfied with their bodies did not dress like others in their group and did not get new clothes for a special occasion. This correlation also indicated that persons not satisfied with their bodies did dress like others in their group and get new clothes for special occasions.

In summary, factor analysis of the Body Concept Questionnaire established two constructs, self-consciousness and body satisfaction. When factor scores of these two constructs were correlated with the total scores of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire subscales it was found that there were negative correlations between the construct self-consciousness and the subscales Management and Social Approval, thereby rejecting the second and third hypotheses. Because of the non-significant correlations found, Hypotheses 1, 4, 5, and 6 were not rejected.

Conclusions

This study analyzed the relationships between body concept and selected clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.
The statistical hypotheses, stated in the null form which were tested in this study are as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no relationship between self-consciousness and special attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no relationship between self-consciousness and management of clothing of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no relationship between self-consciousness and the social approval provided by clothing for blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no relationship between body satisfaction and the special attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

**Hypothesis 5:** There is no relationship between body satisfaction and management of clothing of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

**Hypothesis 6:** There is no relationship between body satisfaction and the social approval provided by clothing for blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

Statistically significant negative correlations were found between the construct, self-consciousness, of the Body Concept Questionnaire and the two subscales, Management and Social Approval, of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire. These correlations were the basis for the rejection of Hypotheses 2 and 3. A significant positive
intercorrelation was found between clothing management and social approval, which indicated that persons with good clothing management also tended to conform in dress.

A further analysis was made to find if there were any relationships between the five individual items on the Body Concept Questionnaire and the 33 individual items on the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire. While additional significant correlations were found, this writer concludes the following to be more important in regard to blind and visually handicapped adolescents in this selected sample:

1. Adolescents who felt that people stared at them because of their blindness tended not to own the latest styles, not to plan their clothing outfits, and not to have clothing for any occasion. This also means that blind and visually handicapped adolescents who tended to own the latest styles planned their clothing outfits, and had clothing for any occasion. A significant negative correlation indicated that this group of adolescents who felt that people stared at them because of their blindness would rather have stayed home than gone somewhere dressed unsuitably.

2. Persons satisfied with their bodies were more inclined to buy impulsively and take better care of their clothing than were their friends. They did not identify with their group through clothing or buy new clothes for special occasions. Those who were dissatisfied with their bodies, however, did use clothing to identify with their group and bought new clothes for special occasions.
3. People who were uneasy in public due to bodily appearance did not dress like their friends or get new clothes for special occasions. This also tends to indicate that people who were at ease in public due to bodily appearance dressed like their friends and got new clothes for special occasions.

These correlations indicate some relationship between blind adolescents' body concepts (including body satisfaction) and their clothing attitudes. The number of significant correlations between the items concerning people staring because of blindness and the individual items concerning clothing attitudes describes a special kind of concern which blind people may have about their bodies and their clothing.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

In the United States alone, it is estimated that over 10,000,000 people have some degree of visual impairment. In 1972, over 500,000 persons were reported to be legally blind in the United States; since many cases of visual impairment are not reported, these figures are considered low. In an attempt to provide a better understanding of this portion of the population, this research studied the relationships, between body concept and the clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

The hypotheses formulated for this study, stated in the null form, were:

1. There is no relationship between self-consciousness and special attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

2. There is no relationship between self-consciousness and attitudes toward clothing management by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

3. There is no relationship between self-consciousness and the social approval provided by clothing for blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

4. There is no relationship between body satisfaction and the special
attention given clothing by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

5. There is no relationship between body satisfaction and attitudes toward clothing management by blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

6. There is no relationship between body satisfaction and the social approval provided by clothing for blind and visually handicapped adolescents.

A review of the literature provided some evidence that the body concepts of most blind and visually handicapped people are influenced by social and cultural attitudes toward blindness. Because of the many misconceptions about blindness, blind people often have poor body concepts. These body concepts are an important part of a better understanding of blind and visually handicapped people in general, and are especially important to those interested in knowing more about their clothing attitudes. Little research has been done in this area of study. A need for information concerning clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped people was indicated by the literature reviewed.

The instruments used in this study were the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire developed by Dr. Anna M. Creekmore and five graduate students¹ at Michigan State University in 1968, and a Body Concept Questionnaire developed by this researcher. Reliability has been demonstrated for the Creekmore instrument (Brady, 1963; Creekmore, 1966; Dickey, 1967), along with some construct validity (Gurel, 1974).

¹Karen Engel, Carolyn Andree Humphrey, Winfred Sue Hundley, Mary Green Klaasen, and Mary Jane Young.
The content validity of the Body Concept Questionnaire was evaluated by a group of professionals experienced with either the blind and/or with clothing attitudes and interests. For the data collection, the two instruments were administered to 29 blind and visually handicapped high school students at the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Staunton, Virginia. The subjects used either Braille or typed copies of the instrument which was read to them orally.

A factor analysis was performed to determine the underlying constructs in the Body Concept Questionnaire. These two constructs, self-consciousness and body satisfaction, were then correlated with the summed scores of the three subscales of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire by Pearson product moment correlations.

Due to the significant negative correlations found between the body concept construct of self-consciousness and two of the Creekmore subscales, Management and Social Approval, Hypothesis 2, stating that there is no relationship between self-consciousness and management given clothing, and Hypothesis 3, stating that there is no relationship between self-consciousness and the social approval provided by clothing, were rejected. This research indicated that there was a strong relationship between these variables. There was also an intercorrelation between the two subscales Management and Social Approval, indicating that a person desiring social approval of clothing had good clothing management.
Because no other significant correlations were found, Hypotheses 1, 4, 5, and 6 were not rejected. This study showed no significant correlations between the construct of self-consciousness and special attention given clothing, and none between the construct, body satisfaction, and any of the three subscales of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire used.

Pearson product moment correlations were then performed on the five items of the Body Concept Questionnaire and the 33 items of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire. This analysis showed that many of the adolescents in the study felt that people stared at them because of their blindness and that this had a great effect on their attitudes toward clothing. The degree of body satisfaction also related negatively to the degree of conformity exhibited by the subjects in this study.

Relationships were shown between body concept and selected clothing attitudes of the blind and visually handicapped adolescents who took part in this study.
CHAPTER VII

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

From the factor analyses that were performed, it appeared that the three subscales from Creekmore’s Importance of Clothing Questionnaire may not have been measuring only the one construct indicated for each subscale. Other (construct validity) studies should be done to determine exactly what each subscale measures.

The sample size in this study was small; it is, therefore, recommended that this study be repeated with larger samples and other populations of the blind. A study done with blind people from another geographical area or of a different age range might result in different conclusions or strengthen the conclusions drawn from this study.

Because the instrument used to measure clothing attitudes was designed and tested for use with sighted populations, many facets were not directly applicable to blind and visually handicapped adolescents. No instruments could be found which were designed to measure attitudes toward clothing of the blind and visually handicapped (in any age bracket or educational range). This is one area which has, to a large degree, been ignored. Instruments need to be developed specifically for use with this special population.
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APPENDIX
BIIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name ________________________________________________________________

Sex: Male _______ Female _______

Age _______

Grade in School _______

Degree of Blindness:

Totally Blind _______
Light Perception _______
Travel Vision _______
Reading Vision _______

BODY CONCEPT QUESTIONNAIRE

Rate the following according to the scale given below:

4. Almost Always—very few exceptions
3. Usually—majority of the time
2. Seldom—not very often
1. Almost Never—very few exceptions

_____ 1. I feel uneasy in public because of my bodily appearance.
_____ 2. I feel that I am physically attractive to others.
_____ 3. I feel that people stare at me because I'm blind.
_____ 4. My body movements and gestures cause me embarrassment.
_____ 5. I am satisfied with my body.
IMPORTANCE OF CLOTHING QUESTIONNAIRE

by

Anna M. Creekmore, et al.

Rate the following statements according to the following scale:

4. Almost Always—very few exceptions
3. Usually—majority of the time
2. Seldom—very few exceptions
1. Almost Never—very few exceptions

SPECIAL ATTENTION

____ 1. When new fashions appear on the market, I am one of the first to own them.
____ 2. I have clothes that I don't wear because everyone else has them.
____ 3. I like to be considered an outstanding dresser by my friends.
____ 4. I try to keep my wardrobe in line with the latest styles.
____ 5. I go to nearby cities to shop for better fashions.
____ 6. I try to buy clothes which are very unusual.
____ 7. I avoid wearing certain clothes because they do not make me look distinctive.
____ 8. I enjoy wearing very different clothing even though I attract attention.
____ 9. I try to buy clothes with the best labels.
____10. I wear different clothes to impress people.
____11. I am interested in why some people choose to wear such unusual clothes.
MANAGEMENT

12. I plan for and prepare clothes to wear several days in advance.

13. I see that my out-of-season clothing is cleaned and stored.

14. I look over the clothing in my wardrobe before each season so that I know what I have.

15. I am enticed into buying garments I like without having anything to go with them.

16. I enjoy trying to get the most for my money in clothing purchases.

17. I wear a raincoat or carry an umbrella to protect my clothes in rainy weather.

18. I have something to wear for any occasion that occurs.

19. I have a long-term idea for purchasing more expensive items of clothing such as coats or suits.

20. I carefully plan every purchase so that I know what I need when I get to a store.

21. I am more concerned about the care of my clothing than my friends are about theirs.

22. I try to find out how I can save as much time, energy and money as possible with my clothes.

SOCIAL APPROVAL

23. I check with my friends about what they are wearing to a gathering before I decide what to wear.

24. I would rather miss something than to wear clothes which are not really appropriate.

25. I feel more a part of the group if I am dressed like my friends.

26. I wear clothes that everyone is wearing even though they may not look as good on me.
27. I am uncomfortable when my clothes are different from all others at a party.

28. I try to dress like others in my group so that people will know we are friends.

29. I get new clothes for a special occasion if the clothes I have are not the type my friends will be wearing.

30. I have gone places and then wished after I got there that I had not gone because my clothes were not suitable.

31. I wear what I like even though some of my friends do not approve.

32. When I buy new articles of clothing, I try to buy something similar to what my friends are wearing.

33. When someone comes to school dressed unsuitably, I try to figure out why he is dressed as he is.

What other clothing problems have you encountered because of your visual handicap?
Do you have any concerns about your physical appearance which were not covered in the questionnaire?
Name: Jane Hall Settle

Permanent address: Box 71, Montross, Virginia 22520

Degree and date to be conferred: Master of Science, 1974

Date of birth: December 28, 1949

Place of birth: Richmond, Virginia


Collegiate Institutions attended: Dates Degree Date of Degree

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
9/68 8/72 B.S. June, 1973

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
9/72 6/74 M.S. June, 1974

Major: Clothing, Textiles and Related Art

Positions held: Sales Clerk, Backstreet (women's specialty shop)
Blacksburg, Virginia 1973-1974

Discussion group leader for freshman clothing class
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia 1973

Cooperative Extension Service - Aide
Montross, Virginia 1970-1971

Guide - Stratford Hall - R. E. Lee's Birthplace
Stratford, Virginia 1966-1970

Jane Hall Settle
The purpose of this research was to compare the relationships between body concept and clothing attitudes of blind and visually handicapped adolescents. The instruments used in this research were three subscales (Special Attention, Management, and Social Approval) of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire developed by Dr. Anna M. Creekmore, et al., and the Body Concept Questionnaire developed by the researcher. Data were collected from 29 blind and visually handicapped adolescents, ranging from 14 to 19 years of age, at the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Staunton, Virginia.

A factor analysis was used to determine the two underlying constructs of the Body Concept Questionnaire. These two constructs, self-consciousness and body satisfaction, were then correlated with the summed scores of the three subscales and then with the 33 individual items of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire, by Pearson product moment correlations.

Two of the six null hypotheses were rejected; relationships were found between self-consciousness and attitudes toward clothing.
management, and between self-consciousness and the social approval provided by clothing of blind and visually handicapped adolescents. A positive intercorrelation was indicated between the two subscales, Management and Social Approval. Significant correlation coefficients were found between the five items of the Body Concept Questionnaire and the 33 items of the Importance of Clothing Questionnaire.

Relationships were shown between body concept and selected clothing attitudes of the blind and visually handicapped adolescents who took part in this study.