

OPINIONS OF TWO GROUPS OF HOMEMAKERS CONCERNING THE VALUES
POSSESSED BY CLOTHING FABRICS MADE FROM VARIOUS FIBERS

by

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INTRODUCTION

The appearance on the market of many new fibers as well as blends of these fibers has imposed a variety of problems on the buyers and consumers of textile fabrics. These new fibers alone or in blends with other fibers have changed the fiber content of fabrics and have definitely affected the values possessed by these fabrics. Cochran and Bell (3) state that:

We characterize our economy as one where choice is relatively free, and one where consumer choice is decisive. It is the choices of consumers which have shaped consumption patterns and led to the development of products and marketing institutions. Consumer choice, channeled back to producers, determines how the resources of an economy are used. Total consumer demand creates a large part of the national income, and the implications of consumer choice reach far into the economy.

The opinions of individuals concerning the performance of the various fibers is varied. Some believe that they are truly "miracle fibers" while others have questioned some of the claims made for man-made fibers since these claims have not always been substantiated in performance.

An interest in learning which fibers were used in the articles of the family's clothing and the reasons for their choice led to this study. The fact that a study of this nature concerning people in the area covered was not found gave further reason for this investigation. This study sought to shed some light on the attitudes of consumers toward natural and man-made fibers and to learn of their experience with these fibers; to determine whether the consumer thought man-made fibers in combination with natural fibers were more desirable than the natural fibers alone; and to ascertain the qualities homemakers wanted most when buying fabrics by the yard as well as in ready-to-wear garments, and the reasons, exclusive of qualities, why they made certain purchases.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The introduction of such new synthetic fibers as nylon, Dacron, and Orlon into the clothing field has presented many problems for the producers and marketers of natural fibers. Because of these new fibers, the natural fiber industry is faced with increasing competition. Studies of the preferences of consumers for the various fibers used in clothing fabrics are of interest; however, no study of this nature was found concerning people in the area covered.

Hochstim (5) in her study of women's attitudes toward wool and other fibers states that Orlon had made inroads on the sweater market and had taken about 40 per cent of the market compared to wool's 30 per cent. The great majority of women considered wool the best fiber for suits and skirts and a plurality considered it best for sweaters. The great majority of women said that performance and warmth were the qualities they found most important in wool suits and skirts. More than half said there was nothing they disliked about wool for suits. Some criticized wool because they were allergic to it or found it irritating, because of difficulty in caring for it, or because it did not wear well. However, young girls gave Orlon more than a two to one lead over wool as the fiber they thought best for sweaters.

The women who had used Orlon or Dacron for suits and skirts, and Orlon or nylon for sweaters gave washability of these fibers as their most appealing characteristic. However, the majority of women did not usually want to wash their suits because of difficulty in pressing them properly. Four out of ten skirt owners said they now washed some of their skirts, particularly those made of cotton, linen, Orlon, and wool-and-Orlon. About six women in ten reported washing all or most of their sweaters.

About eight out of ten said they would prefer to wash all of their sweaters if they could be sure of the results. Their criticisms of Orlon or nylon for sweaters were mainly that they sagged or stretched, or became knotty or knobby when washed. There was a tendency on the part of both women and girls to say that the fiber with which they had had the most experience was the best fiber.

The labeling of wool garments appeared to be important to women. Most of them were able to cite various types of information they had seen on labels and a majority of women said that it was important to them to have wool garments labeled to show percentage or type of wool.

In Bayton and Shepherd's (1) study of men's preferences for wool suits, coats, and jackets, it was found that southerners, men living in rural areas, and those engaged in farming were lowest in ownership, number owned, and frequency of purchase of year round suits. Highest were the men living in other regions, in metropolitan centers, and those engaged in professional or white collar occupations.

Family income was found to be related to suit ownership for, as income increased, so did the number of these suits in their wardrobe. They also tended to pay more for their suits as their available funds increased.

When asked what they wanted their suits to do for them, 71 per cent said they wanted a suit to make them look stylish and well groomed, while 47 per cent said they wanted a suit to make them handsome, attractive, and well-built. Social approval and economy were values thought most important by men who were buyers of a year-round suit. Orderliness and pleasure were next in importance among the values, with comfort receiving a still lower score. Occupation seemed to make no difference in the strength of these

values but color, style, and material were less likely to be mentioned by farmers as means to economy than by men in the other occupational classifications.

The greatest concern of the average teenager was in being approved by his social group, while economy was the most important to his elders. A larger proportion of the teen-aged men thought they could gain economy by means of color while more of their elders relied upon material for it.

About half the men who had bought year round suits since 1944 reported that a woman had participated at some stage in their decision. Advice and assistance from women was received most often by the teen agers and the married men.

Advertising had little or no remembered effect for a considerable number of buyers. The displays of merchandise in store windows had more influence on purchases than did magazine or radio advertising. The majority of men did some looking around before they bought but many of them were satisfied customers of a certain store or tailor and went directly to them when buying.

A survey of women's preferences among selected textile products showed that 59 per cent of the women buy ready-made house dresses (Hochstim, 6). Eighty-six per cent of these women said they preferred house dresses made of cotton and 60 per cent of them prefer cotton because it had better laundering qualities. Durability and appearance were also cited as important characteristics by women who buy ready-made house dresses.

Appearance, launderability, and durability were ranked in that order by the women who purchased summer street dresses. The women who bought one-piece winter street dresses also ranked appearance and style first,

with durability and dry-cleaning qualities second and third, respectively. The purchasers of short-sleeved blouses placed style factors first and good laundering qualities and durability as the two next most important qualities looked for in these garments. Inexpensiveness was mentioned less often than many of the other factors.

Cotton was mentioned much more often than rayon in regard to good wearing qualities, launderability, and appearance after laundering. Rayon was liked more frequently for qualities of attractive, dressy appearance and for its comfortable feel to the skin. The chief reasons some women dislike cotton are: they think cotton fabrics are not colorfast, that cotton does not have a dressy appearance, and that it looks sleazy. The qualities they found undesirable in rayon were fraying and pulling at the seams, sticking to the iron, and lack of durability.

Brew, O'Leary, and Dean's (2) study made in 1949 and 1950 of 900 families, both urban and rural, stated that farm husbands and wives owned about 70 per cent as much clothing as did the city husbands and wives. It was found that farm husbands purchased about three-fourths as much clothing as the city husbands, and farm wives about two-thirds as much clothing as city wives. It was further stated that cotton accounted for about one-fifth of the total family expenditures for all new, ready-to-wear clothing. Nearly half of the children's and proportionately more of the husbands' than of the wives expenditures were for cotton garments. Almost half of the total family expenditures for clothing were for wool garments. The husbands spent almost two-thirds of their total for wool garments while the wives and the children spent about one-third.

Income, as it affects clothing purchases, was also studied. It was

found that expenditures for garments made of each of the fibers increased successively with income and that those for wool garments were used the most. The lower income group spent 39 per cent of the total family expenditures for wool clothing while the upper income group spent 47 per cent. The family's expenditures for cotton clothing at the higher income level were about one and three-fourths those at the lower income level. The distribution of expenditures by the wives among garments made of the various fibers changed less with an increase in income than did those of the men. The women in the higher income group purchased only 43 per cent more clothing than those in the lower income group but they spent nearly twice as much. The amount of clothing made at home was only slightly more for the farm wives than for the city wives.

Among teenage girls included in Hochstim's (4) study of their wardrobes and their attitudes toward cotton and other fibers, cotton was more widely used among 14 to 17 year old girls than any other fiber. Sixty per cent of them said there was nothing they disliked about cotton. The major criticism made by about a fourth of the girls, was that cotton wrinkles easily. Ease of care and laundering was the reason given by seven in ten of all girls as nylon's most desirable quality. About half the girls criticized nylon's weight and comfort. Seven out of ten girls gave warmth as the outstanding virtue of wool, but said that its appearance and wrinkle resistance and its durability and shape retention were of almost equal importance. No criticism of wool was given by a third of the girls while about two in five said that wool is scratchy and irritating to the skin.

The major advantages of Orlon as given by about three girls in ten were ease of care and laundering, weight and comfort, and durability.

Sixty-seven per cent of the girls had not had experience with Dacron. Of the others, 15 per cent gave ease of care and laundering as Dacron's major advantage.

About half of the girls were unable to express an opinion, either positive or negative, about rayon. Two out of ten said that there was nothing they liked about rayon and a little more than two in ten that there was nothing disliked about it. Since independence in clothing shopping increases markedly as the girls grow older, their opinions are of great value to producers and marketers of teenagers' clothes.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

A trial schedule was used in interviewing 10 Manhattan women concerning their opinions of clothing fabrics made from various fibers. A revision of the schedule was made in the light of information gained from these interviews. The revised schedule, Form I, which can be found in appendix A, was used in gathering information for this study.

The interview method was used in obtaining the data. Approximately 30 minutes were required to conduct each interview. However, in many cases, more time was used because of the obvious interest of the interviewee in textiles. Information was not given nor questions answered until after the schedule was completed so that influence would not be exerted on the respondents.

The interviewees were selected from a random sample of two groups of homemakers. A list of the farm families of Cloud and Mitchell counties having two or more children was assigned random numbers. Interviews were arranged with the families corresponding to the random number until 100

had been held. A similar procedure was used to obtain the sample of 100 wives of Fort Hays Kansas State College personnel.

To begin the interview, the respondent was asked about the number and ages of children in the family as well as the towns or cities in which the family's clothing shopping was done. Following this was a group of questions concerning the amount of clothing constructed in the home and the fiber content of the fabrics. Respondents were also queried as to the qualities they wanted and looked for when buying yard goods.

In the next four questions, the homemaker was asked about the fibers used in various articles of the family's clothing as well as the reasons for the choice of these fibers. The articles included for the mothers and daughters were slips, house dresses or play dresses, other dresses, skirts, blouses, sweaters and suits. Socks, work shirts, sports shirts, dress shirts, slacks, work trousers, sports coats, and suits were the articles of clothing of the fathers and sons included in this study.

A check was made on all fabrics used by the family in order to summarize their statements concerning the desirable qualities of these fabrics. Their responses to questions concerning undesirable qualities of some fabrics were then noted.

The information thus gathered was tabulated, summarized, and evaluated. Tables were prepared to compare the findings of the study.

DISCUSSION

The opinions of the two groups of homemakers concerning the values possessed by clothing fabrics made from various fibers were compared. Distinct differences were noted in several respects. As with most farm

families, members of this group did not have a set income but instead were dependent upon their crops. Weather conditions had not been favorable for the last five years and as a consequence, undoubtedly had an effect on the amount and the quality of clothing purchased by these rural families. This was strictly a farming area with no large towns nearby. Therefore, these families had depended upon the merchandise available in the small towns in which they did their shopping. This had a definite influence on the fabric used since many of these small towns probably did not stock the fabrics made from the new fibers or garments made from these fabrics.

The work that many farm women perform had a definite effect on the type of clothing selected. The social life in these small communities was limited, thus making an extensive wardrobe unnecessary.

There were 129 boys and 143 girls in the 100 farm families, making a combined total of 272 children. Sixty-nine per cent of these families did their shopping in Beloit, 30 per cent in Salina, 13 per cent in Concordia, and 18 per cent shopped by mail.

The second group of 100 homemakers was selected from wives of Fort Hays Kansas State College personnel. The fact that this was a salaried group probably had some influence on the amount of money these families spent for clothing. In some cases the husbands were working on advanced degrees or were paying on indebtedness accrued while doing previous study, thus limiting money for clothing purchases in some cases. The age of the wage earner and the number in the family also were found to exert some influence on the amount of money available for clothing. This was true for farm families as well.

Social demands on these groups were greater than on the majority of

farm families studied. They not only were expected to attend functions that called for a more formal type of dress, but the frequency with which they were attended was greater.

A number of the mothers in this group were employed outside the home. In many cases this necessitated not only better clothing but more of it than they might otherwise have had. It is true that, in some cases, the supplementary income made more money available for clothing purchases.

In the faculty group there were 123 girls and 123 boys, a total of 246 children in the 100 families, compared to a total of 272 children in the farm families. A summary of the number and ages of boys and girls included in the two groups of families studied is found in Table 1. Ninety-nine of the faculty families did at least a part and some did all of their shopping in Hays. A small number of them shopped in Wichita, Hutchinson, Topeka, Denver, and Salina. In shopping areas of this size it should be possible to purchase most any kind of apparel the families might need. It was interesting to note that 33 faculty families as compared to 18 farm families ordered by mail. Some of the farm women stated that they would prefer buying the garments at hand rather than take a chance on ordering from catalogues.

Home Sewing and the Purchase of Yard Goods

The interviewees were questioned concerning the amount of clothing constructed in the home. The findings were contrary to what might be expected since 61 per cent of faculty families said they constructed garments at home while only 40 per cent of the farm families did home sewing. However, it was found that seven of the farm homemakers and only one of the faculty

Table 1. The number and ages of boys and girls included in the 200 families studied.

Ages	Girls		Boys	
	Farm	Faculty	Farm	Faculty
6 mo. to 1 year	5	8	6	8
2	5	4	5	3
3	11	9	4	7
4	8	7	9	9
5	7	4	9	5
6	6	4	8	10
7	10	7	9	4
8	9	10	10	8
9	10	5	11	6
10	6	3	6	8
11	9	5	8	5
12	5	17	4	8
13	15	2	8	6
14	7	8	5	8
15	8	2	5	2
16	9	11	2	3
17	6	2	4	3
18	1	4	5	8
19	1	4	3	5
20 and over	5	7	8	7

homemakers made 75 per cent of their family's clothing. Sixteen of the farm women and 10 of the faculty women questioned made 50 per cent of their family's clothing. When the total amount of clothing constructed by each group was considered, there was very little difference in the total number of garments made at home by each group. The extent to which clothing was constructed by these families is shown in Table 2. Brew, O'Leary, and Dean's (2) study stated that the amount of clothing made at home was only slightly more for farm wives than for city wives.

Table 2. The extent to which clothing was constructed by homemakers of the 200 families.

Percentage clothing constructed	:	Farm	:	Faculty
%	:	%	:	%
75	:	7	:	1
50	:	16	:	10
25	:	9	:	23
10	:	8	:	27
None	:	60	:	39

Cotton and wool were the two fibers with which these groups of women had had the most experience in the construction of the family's clothing. Sixty-one faculty and 39 farm women had had the most experience with cotton and 43 faculty and 12 farm women had worked with wool. The man-made fibers most used by both groups were nylon and rayon. When asked about the difficulty in handling man-made fibers 22 of the farm women had experienced some difficulty with them while seven found them satisfactory and 11 had not used any of the man-made fibers. Nylon was the fiber they found most

difficult to handle. Of the faculty families, 35 had found man-made fibers difficult to handle, seven found the fibers satisfactory and 19 had not used them. They also found nylon more difficult to handle than rayon.

In the selection of yard goods, sanforized was mentioned as the quality considered most important by 51 faculty and 38 farm women. Minimum care, durability, wrinkle resistance and wash fastness, in that order, were given by the faculty women as other desirable qualities for yard goods, while farm women gave wash-fastness a close second to Sanforized, followed by minimum care, wrinkle resistance and durability, in that order, as the qualities they wanted most. Other than the qualities just mentioned, interviewees were asked to mention other points that they look for when selecting yard goods. Forty-seven of the faculty women named suitability, 43, price, and 37 gave fiber content. Thirty-six farm women gave price, 17 fiber content, and 11 brand name as the other points they looked for in purchasing yard goods. Therefore, suitability was far more important to the faculty women than to farm women since it was mentioned by only 10 farm women compared to 47 faculty women. Price was of almost equal importance to members of both groups. Table 3 shows a comparison of the qualities farm and faculty families looked for in fabrics purchased by the yard.

In answer to the questions concerning the influence advertising has had on their decisions to purchase man-made fibers, the members of both groups said that it had had only "some" influence. As a result of advertising, they looked for the fabrics made of these fibers but the qualities mentioned previously were the determining factors in the purchase of yard goods. All but one member of each group stated that they read the labels attached to the bolt of fabric and that they noted the fiber content given

Table 3. A comparison of the qualities looked for in fabrics purchased by the yard by farm and faculty families.

Fabric qualities	:	Farm families	:	Faculty families
Wrinkle resistant		14		33
Drip dry		11		27
Wash and wear		7		29
Sanforized		38		51
Minimum care		15		37
Durability		7		35
Easy to work with		5		11
Wash fastness		32		32
Solution dyed				1
Price		36		43
Availability		1		26
Fiber content		17		37
Suitability		10		47
Brand name		11		5
Texture		1		16
Design		3		11

on the counter sign before making the selection of fabric by the yard.

The Selection of Ready-Made Garments

The interviewees were next asked of their interest in the labels attached to ready-made garments when buying. Thirty-five farm women said they always looked at the labels, 34 most of the time, 15, frequently, 14, seldom, and two never. Eighty-five per cent of these women were influenced by the information given on labels. Twenty-five faculty women said they always looked at the labels, 56, most of the time, 13, frequently, and 6, seldom. Ninety-five per cent of these women were influenced by this information. When asked what information on the label they felt was most important, the farm women mentioned shrinkage most often, followed by color fastness to washing and recommended care. With faculty women, the recommended care was of first importance, followed by fiber content, then with colorfastness to washing and shrinkage, these being of almost equal importance. A comparison of information farm and faculty women would like to find given on labels attached to ready-made garments is given in Table 4.

When questioned concerning fibers used in selected articles of ready-made apparel, a notable difference was evident in the use of nylon for slips. Ninety-three faculty women used nylon slips while only 64 of the farm women included them in their wardrobe. Many farm women thought nylon slips cost more than they were justified in paying. Almost half of the homemakers in both groups bought and liked cotton slips. They found them durable, comfortable to wear, and in most cases, fairly inexpensive. Ten of the faculty and six of the farm women had worn cotton and Dacron slips. All were enthusiastic about them and said they liked them for comfort since

Table 4. The information 200 homemakers would like to find given on labels attached to ready-made garments, comparing farm and faculty groups.

Information desired	:	Farm	:	Faculty
Recommended care		70		85
Fiber content		30		75
Colorfastness (sun)		1		6
Colorfastness (washing)		80		64
Shrinkage		94		62
Finish		1		39
Brand name		23		35
Manufacturer's name and address		1		1

the cotton made them more absorbent; for texture and appearance, because they were soft like cotton but had a silky sheen; and for weight, as they were heavier than nylon and could be worn under dresses made of sheer fabrics. Only seven women in the two groups included rayon slips in their wardrobe.

Cotton was the fiber used in the fabric of house dresses or play dresses by all but one of the 200 homemakers. Ninety-nine of the faculty women used cotton in other dresses also, but only 45 farm women said their better dresses were made of cotton. Cotton probably still suggests a house dress to many of them, but because of the newer cotton finishes, the interesting designs, and the comfort, they are gradually turning to cotton for use in all types of dresses. In a survey of women's preferences among selected textile products (Hochstim, 6), it was found that 59 per cent of the women buy ready-made house dresses. Eighty-six per cent of these women said

they preferred house dresses of cotton and 60 per cent of them prefer cotton because it has better laundering qualities.

Rayon was the fiber used for their other dresses by a little less than half the farm women. Almost one-half of the faculty women included wool dresses in their wardrobe but only one-fifth of the farm women were wearing wool. Thirty-nine per cent of faculty and only five per cent of farm women had dresses made of cotton and Dacron. The faculty homemakers had included few dresses of silk, Dacron, cotton and rayon, and cotton and nylon, but none of these fibers had been reported by farm women for their dresses.

Skirts and sweaters or skirts and blouses were popular with faculty homemakers but were worn by less than a fourth of the farm homemakers. Eighty per cent of the faculty wives owned cotton skirts while 72 per cent had skirts of wool. Ninety-nine of them as compared to only 30 farm women owned blouses made of cotton. Nylon, rayon, cotton and Dacron, silk and wool were other fibers of some importance to faculty women for their blouses. None of the farm women had used rayon, silk, or wool for blouses and only five of the group had used cotton and Dacron, two, nylon, and one had a blouse of Dacron.

Almost half of the faculty women had chosen sweaters of wool and about an equal number used Orlon. Among farm women, only four owned wool sweaters and 22 had sweaters of Orlon. The cost was a factor that made the selection of wool prohibitive to many of the farm and to some of the faculty women.

Suits were an important item in the wardrobe of faculty wives. The most popular fiber, wool, was owned by 91 of these women while 24 of them had selected suits of rayon and acetate. However, only 37 farm wives owned suits and all of these were made of wool. It was found in Hochstim's (5)

study of women's attitudes toward wool and other fibers that the great majority of women considered wool the best fiber for suits and skirts and a plurality considered it best for sweaters. Table 5 shows a comparison of the fibers most frequently used in the ready-made garments of these two groups of women.

As might be expected, the fibers chosen for fabrics in the selected articles of the daughters' wardrobes were similar to those used by their mothers. There was greater difference in the selection of slip fabrics between the daughters of farm and faculty families than was seen in a comparison of the fabrics chosen by their mothers. Fifty-five daughters of faculty families used cotton and an equal number chose nylon for their slips. Cotton was used by 61 of the daughters of farm families but only 22 owned nylon slips.

For house dresses or play dresses, other dresses and blouses, cotton was the fiber used almost exclusively by both groups of girls. Only six farm girls as compared to 26 faculty girls owned wool dresses. Nylon, rayon, and Dacron and cotton blends were used by only a few of the girls in each group. Approximately 50 per cent of faculty and 40 per cent of farm girls owned wool skirts. A few of the faculty daughters had chosen wool and nylon or wool and Dacron for their skirts. Only six per cent of daughters of farm families chose wool sweaters whereas 34 per cent of the faculty daughters wore wool ones. About an equal number of girls in both groups used Orlon, the fiber chosen most often by both groups, while only a few of the girls owned sweaters made of nylon. A number of mothers had purchased cotton sweaters but these were for the younger girls in the family. Hochstim's (4) study found that young girls gave Orlon more than a two to

one lead over wool as the fiber they thought best for sweaters.

None of the daughters of farm families owned a suit of any kind and only 20 per cent of the faculty daughters had wool suits in their wardrobes. A few owned suits of rayon and acetate and of wool and nylon. Teen-age girls seemed to prefer dresses rather than suits; they preferred spending the money available to them for several garments rather than investing it all in a suit. A comparison of the fibers used in ready-made apparel by the daughters of farm and faculty families is shown in Table 6.

The fibers used in the fabrics for clothing of the husbands' wardrobe were also of interest. Eighty per cent of faculty compared to only 27 per cent of farm husbands chose nylon socks. Cotton for socks was the choice of fiber by 76 per cent of men on the farm because they were less expensive and were also more comfortable to wear. Only 29 per cent of the faculty men wore cotton socks; wool was used by 14 of them but only two farm men wore wool.

Cotton was the fiber chosen by most of the men in these two groups for both sports and dress shirts. Only two farm men owned wool shirts and two, shirts of Dacron, whereas faculty men had a wider variety as well as a greater number of shirts made of other fibers than cotton. Twenty-five owned shirts of nylon, 24, cotton and Dacron, 19, rayon, and 11 wore wool sports shirts.

Most of the husbands of faculty families chose wool for their slacks, sports coats, and suits. Dacron was a frequent choice by these men. Thirty of them chose it for slacks and 15 for suits. Dacron and wool suits were worn by 11, and wool and silk by seven members of this group.

Farm men stated that they wore wool almost exclusively for slacks,

Table 6. The fibers most frequently used in selected articles of ready-made apparel for daughters in the 200 families, farm and faculty groups compared.

Articles of clothing	Cotton	Wool	Rayon	Nylon	Orlon	Dacron	Cotton and Dacron	Rayon and wool	Rayon and acetate	Wool and nylon	Dacron and wool
Slips:											
Farm	61			22			2				
Faculty	55		1	55			1				
House dresses or play dresses:											
Farm	80										
Faculty	69			1		1	1				
Dresses (other):											
Farm	54	6	13	2		5	3				
Faculty	64	26	9	16	1	2	11		11		
Skirts:											
Farm	33	41				1		1			
Faculty	63	51	1					4			8
Blouses:											
Farm	52			1	1	2	1				
Faculty	67	1	1	7		3	2				
Sweaters:											
Farm		6		12	52						
Faculty	10	34		11	51						
Suits:											
Farm											
Faculty		20		1	1			4	5		

sport shirts, and suits. However, only 36 owned wool slacks and only 29 wore wool sports coats. Bayton and Shepherd's (1) study stated that family income was found to be related to suit ownership for, as income increased, so did the number of suits in their wardrobe. Table 7 compares fibers used by the fathers of these families in their ready-made apparel.

The fiber-use pattern for the boys in these families was similar to that of their fathers. One exception was the fibers chosen for socks by the sons of faculty families. These boys used about an equal amount of both cotton and nylon because they liked to wear cotton better when participating in sports, so wore it to school much of the time.

Cotton was the choice of these two groups of boys for sports and dress shirts. Farm boys wore cotton almost exclusively while 17 sons of faculty wore nylon, 11, rayon, and 9, Dacron and cotton.

The fiber preferred by these two groups of boys for slacks, sports, coats and suits was wool. An equal number of boys from faculty families wore slacks of cotton poplin but only three farm boys had them in their wardrobe. Instead, they wore blue jeans which they considered as work trousers and not slacks. A small percentage of both groups of boys had used rayon and acetate for slacks and suits. Other fibers used by them occasionally were rayon, Dacron and Dacron and wool. The comparison for the articles of apparel in the sons' wardrobe is given in Table 8.

Evaluation of Fibers Used in the Family's Clothing

The homemakers in these groups were asked to give the qualities they found desirable in the fibers that had been used in the fabrics of their family's clothing. In many cases, faculty wives gave several reasons for

Table 7. The fibers most frequently used in selected articles of ready-made apparel of fathers in 200 families, farm and faculty groups compared.

Articles of clothing	Cotton	Wool	Silk	Rayon	Nylon	Orlon	Dacron	Cotton and rayon	Cotton and nylon	Cotton and Dacron	Rayon and acetate	Wool and silk	Dacron and wool
Socks:													
Farm	76	2		1	27				1				
Faculty	29	14		2	80								
Sports shirts:													
Farm	69	2					2						
Faculty	94	11	2	19	25	1	9	4		24			2
Dress shirts:													
Farm	96				2								
Faculty	94					1	1			6			
Slacks:													
Farm	2	36			2		8	2		1	2		
Faculty	10	86		8	2		30		4			1	
Sports coats:													
Farm	2	29									1		
Faculty	14	94			1				1		1		2
Suits:													
Farm		89		1			3					1	
Faculty		98			1		15					7	11

Table 8. The fibers most frequently used in selected articles of ready-made apparel of sons in 200 families, farm and faculty groups compared.

Articles of clothing	Cotton	Wool	Rayon	Nylon	Dacron	Cotton and rayon	Cotton and Dacron	Rayon and wool	Rayon and acetate	Dacron and wool
Socks:										
Farm	40	1		27						
Faculty	51	2		49						
Sports shirts:										
Farm	58		2	3	2					
Faculty	70	1	11	17	1	6	9			
Dress shirts:										
Farm	27			1						
Faculty	66						2			
Slacks:										
Farm	3	20	17	1	5			1	9	
Faculty	40	45	4		5			2	22	4
Sports coats:										
Farm	9	28							7	
Faculty	5	45						3	12	
Suits:										
Farm		34	1					2	1	
Faculty	2	40	2	1	1	1	1		10	2

their choice while farm women gave only one or two. This accounts for the difference in the number of reasons recorded for the two groups in Table 9.

Comfort was the quality found most desirable in cotton by the women in both of these groups. Ease of care and absorbency were considered almost equal in importance to comfort by faculty wives, followed by finish, appearance, color resistance to washing, and durability, in that order. Durability, appearance, color resistance to sun, and ease of care were other qualities of cotton important to farm women. It would seem that faculty women had had more experience than farm women with the newer finishes on cotton.

Ninety-five per cent of the faculty homemakers said that appearance was the most desirable quality of wool. This was followed very closely by warmth and shape retention as other desirable qualities. Appearance was not mentioned by any of the women in the farm group. The qualities they liked most in wool and the order of their preference were durability, warmth, and shape retention.

Silk was worn by only a small number of women and most all of them were faculty wives. This group liked the beauty of the fabric made of this fiber and also found it comfortable to wear. Linen played a minor part in the wardrobes of these women. It was considered a luxurious fiber by those who had worn it. About one-fourth of the farm women and only a few faculty women included rayon in their wardrobes. Those who had purchased it did so because it was available in the color, style, and price range wanted. They did state that they liked the texture of the fiber.

Ease of care was the quality found most desirable in nylon by about 80 per cent of the members of both groups. Its durability, wrinkle

resistance, and quick drying quality were of interest to a small percentage of these women. Only 11 homemakers in the two groups said they liked it because it was comfortable to wear.

About 50 per cent of members of both groups also gave ease of care as Orlon's most desirable quality. Twenty-two faculty wives said it was comfortable to wear and 10 liked it because it dried quickly. Twenty of the farm homemakers liked Orlon because it dried quickly while only five of them mentioned its comfort.

Dacron was liked by about half of the faculty women for its ease of care and about one-fifth of these women mentioned durability, wrinkle resistance, and comfort as other qualities they found desirable. Only a small number of farm women had used Dacron. Twelve of them liked it for its ease of care, six, because it retained its shape, and five, because it was comfortable to wear and dried quickly.

In the use of fabrics made of cotton and Dacron, 33 faculty women said they liked it because it was comfortable to wear whereas only 10 mentioned ease of care. Twenty-six said it was wrinkle resistant, 20 liked its appearance, and 17 had found it durable. Very few farm women had used fabrics of cotton and Dacron, but the qualities liked most by the women who had used it were ease of care and comfort.

Twelve farm families liked rayon and acetate for its texture while 10 faculty families found it durable. As with rayon, availability was the reason given most often for the purchase of garments of rayon and acetate.

Of the wool blends, Dacron and wool was the one used most by faculty families. They liked it for its ease of care since such items as the daughter's skirts were washable with good results. Farm families had not

used fabrics made of Dacron and wool.

Wool and silk was used by only a few in each group but they liked it, especially for its texture and appearance. A small number in these groups had used wool and nylon. Its ease of care and durability were the qualities liked most. Table 9 gives a comparison of qualities desired in fabrics of the various fibers used in ready-to-wear garments by farm and faculty families.

When asked about the qualities found undesirable in the fabrics of the various fibers used in ready-to-wear garments, 90 farm women said that the only thing they disliked about cotton was that it wrinkled easily. Only 11 faculty women objected to cotton for the same reason while 15 had had difficulty in caring for it.

Fifty-four faculty women found wool irritating to the skin, whereas only six farm women found this true. About 40 per cent of the farm women objected to wool because of its cost and because it attracted moths. Only 15 faculty women mentioned cost, and only seven had had difficulty with moths. The fact that it wrinkled easily was the reason linen was disliked by the few women who had worn it.

Forty-three faculty compared to 13 farm homemakers disliked rayon because it wrinkled easily and ten of the farm women said that rayon had an odor. Seventy-five homemakers said that nylon was uncomfortable because it was non-absorbent. Forty-six of this group disliked nylon because it accumulated static electricity and 15 said it discolored. About one-fifth of the farm women disliked nylon because of cost and because it tends to accumulate static electricity, to be non-absorbent, and to discolor.

The qualities found undesirable in acetate and rayon were similar to

Table 9 (concl.)

Desirable qualities														
	Cotton	Wool	Silk	Linen	Rayon	Nylon	Orlon	Dacron	Cotton and rayon	Cotton and Dacron	Rayon and wool	Rayon and acetate	Wool and silk	Wool and nylon
Warmth:														
Farm	40													
Faculty	91											1		
Luxurious:														
Farm		1			4									
Faculty	6	15	8			3	1	2	2	3	1			
Beauty of fabrics:														
Farm	1				1									
Faculty	6	17	14	4		4	1	2		1		1		
Durability:														
Farm	62	10			4	4								
Faculty	40	52		1	2	33	4	19		17		10		3
Less cost of care:														
Farm														
Faculty	9					1				1				
Appearance:														
Farm	58												1	
Faculty	58	95	1	2		4	6	3	2	20		6		7

those of rayon. These women found that fabrics of these fibers wrinkled easily and they experienced difficulty in caring for them. Dacron and a blend of Dacron and cotton were liked by the women in these two groups except for their cost which was considered excessive by farm women. A comparison of the qualities found undesirable in fabrics of the various fibers used in ready-to-wear garments by farm and faculty families is given in Table 10.

Eighty-seven per cent of the faculty homemakers believed that man-made fibers had lived up to their claims while 62 per cent of the farm homemakers said they had failed in some way. Forty-five farm women said fabrics of man-made fibers were not comfortable, 30 said they discolored, and seven found they did not wear well. Thirteen faculty women said they had not found fabrics of man-made fibers easy to care for and 12 of this group said these fabrics had poor wearing qualities.

The question "Which one fiber would you find it most difficult to do without?" was asked to learn the comparative position held by the various fibers. In answer to this question, 99 farm women said cotton and one thought wool most important to her. Ninety-four faculty women named cotton while six said they would find it most difficult to do without nylon.

If the answer to the foregoing question was cotton, these women were asked to name the finishes on cotton they considered most desirable. Dimensional stability was thought most important by 95 of the farm women while 76 liked the crease-resistant finish and 14 found starchless finish helpful. These finishes were liked because they made for ease of care and helped cottons retain their crisp clean appearance.

Crease resistance was thought most important by 87 of the faculty

Table 10. The qualities found undesirable in fabrics of the various fibers used in ready-to-wear garments, comparing farm families with faculty families.

Undesirable qualities	Cotton	Wool	Silk	Linen	Rayon	Nylon	Orlon	Dacron	Cotton and rayon	Cotton and nylon	Cotton and Dacron	Rayon and wool	Rayon and acetate
	39	15	1	1	1	16	40	13		10			

Cost:

Farm	39					16	40	13		10			
Faculty	15	1	1	1									

Difficult to care for:

Farm	3				2							2	
Faculty	15	13	2	3	30	1	2		1		2	28	

Wrinkles easily:

Farm	90			1	13				1			2	10
Faculty	11	1	1	6	43				1		1		40

Attacked by moths:

Farm	40												
Faculty	7												

Non-absorbent:

Farm						18							
Faculty						75	3	6			1		

Static electricity:

Farm						18							
Faculty		1	1			46	1						

Discolors:

Farm						22							
Faculty						15	1	1					

Irritating to skin:

Farm	6					1							
Faculty	54					1							

Does not retain shape:

Farm	8					9	1	10					
Faculty						7		3	1			6	

women. Seventy-six found dimensional stability important and 29 liked the starchless finish. These women also liked the ease of care and appearance retention that were found as a result of finishes on cotton. About half of the faculty homemakers thought these fabrics dried faster and about one-fourth said the finishes helped protect the fabric. Table 11 compares the finishes on cotton fabrics most desirable to farm and faculty homemakers.

Table 11. Finishes on cotton fabrics most desired by 200 homemakers, farm and faculty families compared.

Finishes	:	Farm families	:	Faculty families
Crease resistant		76		87
Water repellent		1		2
Shrinkage		95		76
Glazing		2		7
Resistant to stains		5		4
Starchless finish		14		29
Wash and wear		1		35
Minimum care				27

SUMMARY

In the economy, consumer choice is free and decisive. The choices of consumers have shaped consumption patterns and led to the development of new products. This study sought to learn the opinions of two groups of homemakers concerning the values possessed by clothing fabrics made from various fibers.

The interviewees were selected from a random sample of two groups of homemakers. One group of 100 was selected from farm women in Cloud and Mitchell counties while the other group of 100 were wives of Fort Hays Kansas State College personnel. The interview method was used in obtaining the data. The information thus gathered was tabulated, summarized, and evaluated. Tables were prepared to compare the findings of the study.

It was found that 61 per cent of faculty families constructed garments at home while only 40 per cent of the farm families did home sewing. Cotton and wool were the two fibers with which these groups of women had had the most experience in the construction of the family's clothing. Approximately half of the women in each group who sew had experienced difficulty in handling nylon, the man-made fiber they had used most. Sanforized was named most often as the quality these women considered important in yard goods. They also mentioned minimum care, durability, wrinkle resistance and wash fastness as other desirable qualities they hoped to find. Some additional points they considered were suitability, price, and fiber content. Advertising had had very little influence on their decision to purchase fabrics of man-made fibers.

The majority of these women had been influenced to some degree by labels attached to ready-made garments. The information they liked to find on these labels concerned shrinkage, color fastness to washing, recommended care, and fiber content, in that order. Ninety-three faculty women used nylon for slips as compared to 64 farm women. Nylon slips were liked mainly for their ease of care and some said they liked their durability.

Cotton was the fiber used for house dresses or play dresses by all

but one of the 200 homemakers. All but one of these women also chose cotton for other dresses. Dresses of rayon were worn by about half of the farm and only a few faculty women, whereas about half of the faculty and only a small number of farm women had chosen dresses of wool. A blend of Dacron and cotton had been selected for dresses by over a third of the faculty women but only a few farm women had chosen it.

The majority of faculty women liked skirts of both cotton and wool while only a few farm women wore them. Cotton was the women's favorite fiber for blouses while some nylon, rayon, cotton and Dacron, silk, and wool had been worn. An equal number of faculty women chose sweaters of wool and of Orlon whereas farm women preferred those of Orlon. Both groups of women preferred wool for suits because of its appearance, warmth, shape retention, and durability.

The fibers chosen for fabrics in the selected articles of the daughters' wardrobes were similar to those used by their mothers. The farm girls wore more sweaters and skirts but none of them owned a suit. Suits were included in the wardrobes of only about one-fourth of the faculty daughters.

From the information reported on fibers used in fabrics of the husbands' wardrobe, it was found that faculty men preferred nylon for socks while farm husbands liked cotton. Cotton was the fiber chosen by most of the men in these two groups for both sports and dress shirts. Shirts of nylon, cotton and Dacron, rayon, and wool appeared occasionally in the faculty husbands' wardrobe but seldom in that of the farm husband.

Wool was the fiber chosen most often by men in both groups for their slacks, sports coats, and suits. Some of the faculty husbands owned suits and slacks of Dacron and a blend of Dacron and wool while a few of them had

suits of wool and silk.

The fiber pattern for the boys in these families was similar to that of their fathers. The fibers chosen for socks by the sons of faculty families was an exception since they liked cotton equally as well as nylon. These boys also wore slacks of cotton poplin. A small percentage of both groups of boys had used rayon and acetate for slacks and suits and a few of them had used Dacron and a blend of Dacron and wool.

The homemakers in both groups were asked to state the desirable qualities of fibers used in the family's clothing. Comfort was the reason for the choice of cotton by women in both groups. Other qualities they found desirable were ease of care, absorbency, appearance, color resistance to washing, and durability.

Wool was liked best by faculty women for its appearance but farm women did not mention this quality. The warmth of wool was the characteristic they liked best. Other desirable qualities of this fiber named by both groups were durability and shape retention.

The few women who had included silk in their wardrobes liked the comfort and the beauty of this fiber. Linen was considered a luxurious fiber by the small number who had worn it. Garments of rayon and a blend of rayon and acetate had been worn by about one-fourth of these women. Its availability in color, style and price was the principal reason for this choice.

Ease of care was the quality of nylon found most desirable by the majority of homemakers in both groups. Its durability, wrinkle resistance, and the quick drying quality were of interest to a small percentage of these women and a few liked it because it was comfortable to wear.

The majority of women of both groups liked Orlon for its ease of care.

The fact that it dried quickly and was comfortable to wear were also important. Dacron was also liked for its ease of care as well as its durability, wrinkle resistance, and comfort. A blend of Dacron and cotton was liked by faculty women for its comfort, wrinkle resistance, durability, and appearance. Only a few liked it for its ease of care. Few farm women had used a fabric of Dacron and cotton but those who had, found ease of care and comfort desirable qualities. A blend of Dacron and wool had not been used by farm families and by only a few faculty families. Those who had used it liked it for its ease of care. Wool and silk was used by a few in each group who liked this blend for its texture and appearance. A few had also used wool and nylon and said its ease of care and durability were qualities liked most.

When asked about undesirable qualities of fibers used, the majority of women said they disliked cotton because it wrinkled easily. Faculty women found wool irritating to the skin while farm women objected to its cost. Rayon was disliked because it wrinkled easily and sometimes had an odor. Nylon was said to be uncomfortable because it was non-absorbent. Some objected to its tendencies to accumulate static electricity and to discolor. The major objection to Dacron or Dacron and cotton was their cost.

The majority of faculty homemakers believed that man-made fibers had lived up to their claims whereas the majority of farm homemakers think they had failed. They found these fibers uncomfortable and said the wearing qualities and ease of care were unsatisfactory.

In naming the one fiber they would find it most difficult to do without, 193 said cotton, six nylon, and one, wool. Of the finishes most desired on cotton, dimensional stability and crease resistance were mentioned

most often. These finishes were liked for ease of care and their help in retaining a crisp clean appearance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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APPENDIX

FORM I
Schedule

Group _____

Number _____

1. How many children are there in the family? _____

_____ Boys _____ Girls

_____ Ages _____ Ages

2. In which towns or cities do you do your shopping?

_____ Manhattan _____ Beloit

_____ Topeka _____ Concordia

_____ Kansas City _____ Wichita

_____ Other _____ Salina

_____ Mail Order

_____ Other

3. Do you sew for your family?

_____ Yes _____ No

4. How much of your family's clothing do you make?

_____ All _____ 25%

_____ 75% _____ 10%

_____ 50% _____ None

The following questions pertain to the fabric used in the construction of garments:

5. Who usually selects the fabrics used in making garments?

_____ Mother _____ Other

_____ Daughter

6. Part I - With which fibers have you had the most experience in making garments? (1st, 2nd, etc.)

Part II - With which fibers have you had very little experience? (1st, 2nd, etc.)

	Part I	Part II
Cotton	_____	_____
Wool	_____	_____
Silk	_____	_____
Linen	_____	_____
Rayon	_____	_____
Acetate	_____	_____
Nylon	_____	_____
Orlon	_____	_____
Dacron	_____	_____
Cotton and Rayon	_____	_____
Cotton and Nylon	_____	_____
Cotton and Orlon	_____	_____
Cotton and Dacron	_____	_____
Rayon and Wool	_____	_____
Rayon and Acetate	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

7. Have you found any of the man-made fibers difficult to handle in sewing?

_____ Yes

_____ No

8. If so, which ones?

_____ Rayon
_____ Acetate
_____ Nylon
_____ Orlon
_____ Dacron
_____ Other

9. What qualities do you look for when buying a fabric?
I am referring to yard goods. For example:
Doesn't show soil.

_____ Wrinkle resistant
_____ Drip dry
_____ Wash and wear
_____ Sanforized
_____ Ease of care (minimum of care)
_____ Durability
_____ Easy to work with
_____ Does not fume fade
_____ Wash fastness
_____ Solution dyed
_____ Other

10. Other than the qualities just mentioned, what other points would you look for when selecting a fabric? For example: you liked the color.

_____ Price

_____ Availability

_____ Fiber Content

_____ Suitability

_____ Brand Name

_____ Texture

_____ Design

_____ Other

11. How much influence has advertising had on your decision to purchase fabrics of man-made fibers?

_____ Great

_____ Very little

_____ Some

_____ None

12. Do you read the labels attached to the bolts of fabric or note the fiber content given on counter signs before you make your selection?

_____ Yes

_____ No

The following questions pertain to the selection of ready-made garments:

13. Do you look for labels attached to ready-made garments when buying?

_____ Always _____ Seldom
_____ Most of the time _____ Never
_____ Frequently

14. Are you influenced in your selection by the information given on these labels?

_____ Yes _____ No

15. What information on the label do you feel is most important? (1st, 2nd, 3rd)

_____ Care
_____ Fiber content
_____ Colorfastness (sum)
_____ Colorfastness (washing)
_____ Colorfastness (perspiration)
_____ Shrinkage
_____ Finish
_____ Brand name
_____ Manufacturer's name and address
_____ Other

17. Now would you please give me information about these same garments in your daughter's wardrobe?

[illegible]

19. We don't want to leave out the son, so would you please tell me about his wardrobe?

[illegible]

20. What are the qualities you find most desirable in fabrics made from the following fibers? (The fibers previously mentioned as being used will be the only ones on which the interviewee is queried.)

[illegible]

21. What are the qualities you do not like in these fabrics? (The fibers previously mentioned as being used will be the only ones on which the interviewee is queried.)

[illegible]

22. Do you feel that man-made fibers have lived up to their claims?

_____ Yes

_____ No

23. If not, where do you feel they have failed?

_____ Comfort

_____ Wearing quality

_____ Ease of care

_____ Discoloration

_____ Shrinkage

_____ Soil absorbency

_____ Cost

24. Would you please think about it for just a minute and then tell me which one fiber you would find it most difficult to do without?

25. If the answer is cotton, then what are the finishes on cotton that you find are most desirable? Why?

Finishes

Reasons

_____ Crease resistant

_____ Ease of care

_____ Water repellent

_____ Quick drying

_____ Shrinkage

_____ Appearance retention

_____ Glazing

_____ Hygienic

_____ Resistant to stains

_____ Protection of fabric

_____ Resistant to moths

_____ Resistant to mildew

_____ Starchless finish

_____ Other

OPINIONS OF TWO GROUPS OF HOMEMAKERS CONCERNING THE VALUES
POSSESSED BY CLOTHING FABRICS MADE FROM VARIOUS FIBERS

by

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B. S., Kansas State College
of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1936

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OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1958

The appearance of many new fibers has imposed a variety of problems on the buyers and consumers of textile fabrics. These new fibers alone or in blends with other fibers have definitely affected the values possessed by fabrics. The purpose of this study was to determine the fibers used in the families' clothing as well as the reasons for their choice, and to ascertain the opinions of two groups of homemakers concerning the values possessed by clothing fabrics made from various fibers.

Interviewees were selected from a random sample of two groups of homemakers; one group of 100 from farm women in Cloud and Mitchell counties, the other group of 100 from wives of Fort Hays State College personnel. Information was gathered by the interview method, then tabulated, summarized, and evaluated. Tables were prepared to compare the findings of the study.

It was found that 61 faculty compared to 40 farm homemakers did home sewing. Cotton and wool were the two fibers most used in clothing construction. Approximately half of the women who sewed had experienced difficulty in handling nylon. Sanforized was said to be the quality most desired in yard goods followed by minimum care, durability, wrinkle resistance, and wash fastness. Additional features considered in purchasing were suitability, price, and fiber content.

Labels on ready-made garments had influenced most of the women to some degree. They liked to find information on shrinkage, color fastness to washing, recommended care, and fiber content on these labels.

Most all of the faculty and approximately two-thirds of the farm women wore nylon slips; about half the homemakers in both groups also owned cotton slips. Cotton was the first choice of all women for house dresses or play dresses as well as for better dresses. About half of the farm and a few

of the faculty women chose rayon for their better dresses, whereas about half of the faculty and a small number of farm homemakers had included dresses of wool. A Dacron and cotton blend for dresses had been purchased by about one-third of the faculty women and by only a few farm women. Cotton and wool for skirts and cotton for blouses were the preference of these women. Faculty women liked Orlon equally as well as wool for sweaters while farm women preferred Orlon. Both groups of women preferred wool for suits. The fibers chosen by the daughters were almost identical to those of their mothers.

Faculty men preferred nylon for socks while farm husbands chose cotton. Cotton was preferred by men in both groups for sports and dress shirts. Nylon, a blend of cotton and Dacron, rayon, and wool were purchased occasionally by the faculty but seldom by the farm husband. Wool was their choice for slacks, sports coats, and suits. Suits and slacks of Dacron, a blend of Dacron and wool, and a blend of wool and silk appeared in the wardrobes of some faculty men. The fiber-use pattern for the sons was similar to that of their fathers. An exception was the equal use of cotton and nylon for socks by faculty sons.

Cotton was liked most often by families of both groups because it was comfortable to wear. Its other desirable qualities were ease of care, absorbency, appearance, washability and durability. Wool was liked most by faculty women for its appearance, while farm women did not mention this quality but gave warmth as the characteristic liked best. Durability and shape retention were other desirable qualities mentioned. Garments of rayon and rayon and acetate had been purchased because of their availability in color, style, and price range rather than because of inherent qualities.

Ease of care was the most desirable quality of nylon, with durability, wrinkle resistance, and quick drying, also being mentioned by a few. Only a few said it was comfortable to wear. Both Orlon and Dacron were liked first for ease of care, followed by comfort, wrinkle resistance, and durability. Dacron and wool blends were liked for ease of care, while the texture and appearance of wool and silk blends were found desirable.

Cotton was disliked because it wrinkled easily. Faculty women found wool irritating to the skin while farm women objected to its cost. Rayon was disliked because it wrinkled easily and sometimes had an odor. Nylon was said to be uncomfortable because it was non-absorbent. Some objected to its tendencies to accumulate static electricity and to discolor. The major objection to Dacron or Dacron and cotton was cost.

The majority of faculty homemakers believed man-made fibers had lived up to their claims whereas the majority of farm homemakers said they had failed. They found these fibers uncomfortable and said the wearing qualities and ease of care were unsatisfactory. In naming the one fiber they would find it most difficult to do without, 193 said cotton, six nylon, and one, wool. Of the finishes desired for cotton, dimensional stability and crease resistance were mentioned most often. These finishes were liked for ease of care and their help in retaining a crisp, clean appearance.

It was found that, outside of nylon for slips and socks, man-made fibers either alone or in blends were used by a relatively small number of these families. Cost and availability were the two chief factors affecting their use.