

**APPAREL BUYING BEHAVIORS OF
BLACK MALES AND WHITE MALES WHEN PURCHASING
MEN'S BUSINESS SUITS**

by

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(Abstract)

More information is needed to understand the Black male consumer. Although expanding in the past five years, research about the buying behaviors of consumers has tended to avoid males, particularly Black males. Retailers and marketers should understand the immense diversity among consumers if they are to market apparel accurately and successfully.

The purpose of this research was to investigate Black males and Whites males to examine if differences in their buying behavior for apparel exist. In addition, consumer attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, self-esteem, reference group, social class, media) and personal characteristics were investigated separately and in relation to the purchase behavior of Black male and White male administrators and professors on a predominantly White campus. Data were collected from a convenience sample of 15 Black males and 15 White males. A questionnaire was pilot tested for content validity and reliability. Descriptive statistics (i.e., frequencies and percentages), ANOVAs, t-tests and chi-squares were used for data analysis to test the hypotheses.

The following Hypotheses were formulated for this study. Hypothesis 1 stated race will affect likelihood of purchase for color of men's business suits within the buying process among Black and White faculty, staff and administrators. Hypothesis 2 stated that selected attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, media, reference group, self-esteem, social class) will be related within the buying process among Black and White faculty, staff, and administrators. For Hypothesis 1, the results showed a significant relationship between color and the likelihood of purchase for men's business suits. For Hypothesis 2, apparel involvement, social class and media were significantly related to race.

DEDICATION

To God first and foremost, because without him this project would not have been possible; and to my late mother for her help and encouragement when this long journey began.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

According to Jacob (1990), “a man’s business suit consist of a jacket, pants and possibly a vest cut from the same cloth” (p.14). Business suits are the identity for the professional man. “Business men and other professional men, sometimes called white collar workers, have selected the business suit to signify their social position to themselves and others” (Jacob, 1990, p.14). Other articles of apparel that are included in professional male dress are neckties and dress shirts.

Apparel fashion has always changed no matter what category of apparel it is, and men’s business wear is no exception. Although the business suit is similar enough for some men to be a uniform, variations of the suit do exist. Social forces are believed to influence fashion including men’s fashions (Jacob, 1990; Kaiser, 1985). Ones spouse, family and culture are some of the forces that change fashion. An example of ones spouse influencing an individual, when he buys a suit, is that she may accompany him and offer suggestions when he purchases items of apparel. A male consumer’s family and culture can influence his purchase decision because of the social interaction he has with them, including whether his dress is acceptable to the group. A good example of Black males being influenced by their culture and families can be seen during the civil rights era of the 1960s and 1970s. Black males wore apparel and hairstyles that were symbols of their West African

heritage. Many Black males during this time wore bright colored Kaftans and donned the Kofi hats.

According to Ericksen (1983), identification of the role of apparel as a sign of business success is not a new concept. Ericksen also stated that a review of related literature revealed that self-image/product image congruity was related to an individual's behavior to a particular item and that apparel products had symbolic meaning. She later mentioned that studies have considered the relationship between the self and apparel and have taken into account the various aspects of the self such as actual self-image and ideal self-image. Ericksen indicated that a small number of empirical studies have focused on the concept of clothing-image and self-image congruity.

The results of Ericksen's study (1983) provide support for the theory that self-image is related to the choice of apparel for work. She reported that if the image of an outfit were a positive match with the self-image, including both the actual self and the ideal self, the apparel item would be worn most of the time. Based on this theory one can propose that men's suits are an important aspect of who men are. Men wear suits for identity and to separate themselves from the crowd.

Statement of the Problem

Market segmentation has become an important tool used by retailers and marketers for identifying target customers. Weinstein (1987) defined market

segmentation as the process of partitioning markets into segments of potential customers who have similar characteristics and who are likely to exhibit similar purchasing behavior. Segmentation has become a major tool of companies for planning marketing strategies. Segmentation research has several objectives that include analyzing markets, finding a niche, and developing and capitalizing on a superior competitive position (Summers, Belleau & Wozniak, 1992). One important question that needs to be answered is why retailers and manufacturers have not used market segmentation to target Black professional males as a potential market.

One possible answer might be the myth that all professional male consumers are alike and share similar characteristics. Researchers such as Jacob (1990) generalized business attire to all males. This concept is not true because Black consumers in general, not excluding Black professional men, exhibit apparel-shopping behaviors different from their White counterparts. For example, Legette (1993) suggested that Black consumers have become much more sophisticated, affluent and selective in their buying decisions than the average White consumers. This difference is exhibited in the dress of Black professional males in the middle to late 1980s. They wore dress suits that exhibited brighter colors than the traditional dress suits of the past (O'Neal, 1998) and different from White males of the same time period. This difference in apparel selection may continue to exist for Black male consumers.

A second reason could be the myth that Black consumers do not have discretionary income to spend on apparel. This concept is also false. Goldsmith,

White, and Stith (1989) stated that both Black workers and Black consumers are important to today's business success. The 1990 U. S. Census recorded how important Blacks are to business success. Blacks spent \$250 billion on consumer goods and composed only 12 percent of the population (Legette, 1994). If Black professional male shoppers consisted of one percent of this group, they would have spent \$2.5 billion on consumer goods.

The size and characteristics of this market are an indication that retailers and manufacturers of apparel should identify this group as a target market. Most previous research has concentrated on Black consumers as being a homogenous group. With so many inconsistencies in the research on Black consumers, future research should try segmenting this group. In future research, Ericksen (1983) states that demographics such as age, marital status, years of employment both total and continuous should be researched in relation to apparel choices. Previous research in the area of professional Black men is scarce and conflicting, especially where apparel buying behaviors are concerned (Legette, 1994). A possible demographic to examine is the professional Black male because of the apparel requirements for the professional male.

Black Male Buying Habits

Several reasons are offered for why researchers, retailers and manufacturers have considered all Black consumers, including Black male consumers, to be a homogenous group. One of these reasons is addressed by Portis (1966), who stated

that historically Blacks have been identified as a group who spend excessive amounts on apparel. The explanation for Blacks excessive spending habits is that Blacks in the past were denied the opportunity to spend freely for housing, leisure, recreational oriented products and other non-essential products (Alexis, 1962; Portis, 1966); therefore, apparel became a substitute product (Legette, 1993). These reasons are speculative because studies have failed to show any empirical evidence that these hypotheses about Black consumers are true. If the above research were true, this would be another reason for marketers and retailers to target this group of shoppers. This type of research is available to those that are involved in retail and marketing; therefore, the question is again posited why the Black male consumer has not been thoroughly researched as a market niche.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate Black males and White males to examine if differences in their buying behavior for apparel exist. More information is needed to understand the Black male consumer. Although expanding in the past five years, research about the buying behaviors of consumers has tended to avoid males, particularly Black males. There is little or no research about this particular consumer. Toerien (1987) did a review on previous cross-cultural studies. She found no previous research using the Creekmore Importance of Clothing questionnaire to compare the apparel interest of two Western cultures, but a number of researchers have explored differences in related areas of women's

apparel behavior, such as attitudes and values. The extensive information about women's shopping behaviors can be used as a guide for this research. The cultural influences of the professional male may affect shopping. This research investigates cultural factors such as race, apparel involvement, media, reference group influences, self-esteem and social class. It also investigates demographics such as income and age.

Do cultural influences, how much money they earn, and their age make a difference in their apparel choices? Do they let their wives chose their clothes or do they make these choices? When shopping for apparel does either the Black male or White male, or both, take advice from others in the store? In other words, do they get advice from other customers in the store or store employees. Answers to those and other consumer behavior questions were sought in this research.

Theoretical Framework

EBM Model

The Engel, Blackwell & Miniard (EBM) Model of Consumer Behavior (EBM, 1995) defines the Buying Behavior process and specifies variables that influence and shape that decision-making. For this study, the EBM model was not used directly because the researcher used variables from the Chen-Yu model that was adapted from the EBM model and from the Sproles model. Still a discussion of the EBM model is necessary in order to show the similarities of this

model to the models used in this research. The EBM model is a foundation for the final research model.

Buying Behavior Process. The EBM Model explains information about a person's shopping behavior. The model has several sections: information input, information processing, decision processing, product evaluations, motivating and environmental influences. The model has been used extensively to examine the apparel buying behavior of women (e.g., Goldsmith, Heitmeyer & Freiden, 1991; Shim & Kotsiopoulos, 1991).

One important factor that plays a major part in buyer behavior according to Engel, Blackwell & Miniard (1995) is what happens as the consumer is exposed to information during an external search. This effect is explained in the information processing section of the EBM model by the five steps that the authors list. These steps are exposure, attention, comprehension, acceptance and retention. According to Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995), when exposure occurs as a first step, information and persuasive communication must reach consumers in all aspects of their daily life. After exposure, the next step (i.e., attention) is to decide if one is to allocate or not allocate information-processing capacity to the incoming information. "If attention is attracted, the message is further analyzed against categories of meaning stored in memory" (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995, p. 149-150). The next step is acceptance when the consumer modifies or changes existing attitudes or beliefs. Lastly, the step is retention and the information to be

stored in memory so it can be retrieved for future use. Information is needed to determine if this information process is true for males.

The steps of buying in the EBM Model (1995) are in the decision processing and product evaluation sections. These steps include need recognition, search, pre-purchase alternative evaluation, purchase, consumption, and post-purchase alternative evaluation that results in satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If the consumer experiences dissatisfaction or satisfaction he or she will return to the pre-purchase alternative evaluation.

Influences. The decision processing section from the EBM Model (1995) is a good source to use when building a model of buyer behavior. In this section of the EBM model (1995), the buying stages of identifying the problem, the search, need recognition and pre-purchase alternative evaluation are influenced by environmental influences (e.g., social interaction) and individual differences (e.g., age, race). The stages of purchase, consumption and post-purchase alternative evaluation of the product by the consumer are also influenced by the environmental influences and individual differences. This process of influences and decision-making are important steps for the consumer in deciding whether the choice will end in satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The EBM model (1995) identifies many influences that may be affecting the buying behaviors of consumers.

Sprole's Model

Buyer Behavior Process. The main or central section of Sproles' Consumer Fashion Adoption Process Model (1979) is the channel of consumer information seeking and decision making. This channel of decision making and information seeking or buyer behavior process consists of five components: (a) awareness of the object to be purchased, (b) interest in that particular object for what ever reason, for example, style, color or brand name, (c) evaluation of the object, (d) identification of alternatives, and (e) decision to purchase or not. This is similar to the need recognition section in the EBM model.

The first step of this process is awareness of the object in which the consumer intends to purchase. In this case, the object would be a man's suit. In order to make a purchase, the consumer needs to have some type of idea of what he wants to buy. Once the consumer has an idea or awareness of the object that he wants to purchase, he would proceed to the next step.

In the next step, the consumer shows interest in the object that he considers purchasing. Interest in the style of a particular object is important in this stage. Interest in the color of that object at this stage is also important (Sproles, 1979). For example, the consumer may be trying to match that object with another object to make a set or to select a favorite or meaningful color. The brand name of a particular object could also be of interest to the to the consumer. Some consumers may prefer brand names because of assumed quality in that name, or because brand names are popular. Color, brand, and style are components of fashion.

The third step involves the evaluation of the object. The consumer makes an evaluation so that the functional purposes of the object are clearer in the consumer's mind. In other words, the consumer will identify apparel and fashion needs that he may have at that particular time. Thus, Sproles (1979) says that the consumer begins to identify specific apparel items or fashion needs at this time. Sproles (1979) also states that the whole process of decision may stop at this point if the consumer sees no functional purpose, no need, or some undesirable characteristic of the object.

The Sproles' model states that if evaluations are favorable, the process continues to the identification of alternatives stage with shopping in stores, and social influences from other consumers being driving forces on continued decision making. "At this point, behavior becomes overt and purposeful, possibly for the first time in the decision process. The consumer actively seeks information, learns which alternatives are actually available, and begins to narrow the choice to a limited number of acceptable alternatives" (Sproles, 1979, p. 198). The Consumer's Fashion Adoption Process Model identifies some critical characteristics that may help a person decide whether to consider making a purchase or reject it. These characteristics include color, style, fit, price, brand, physical characteristics, and climate of use. If the consumer's decision is to reject a purchase, he will begin again or save that information for a later decision.

Influences. According to Sproles (1979), situational variables set the stage or influence fashion adoption. These influencing variables are seen at the start of

the buyer behavior process. The first variable that Sproles (1979) mentions is existence of the fashion. Fashion used in this particular model is a style of apparel. The second influential variable deals with a current level of acceptance of the style. Sproles proposes that the current acceptance ranges from high acceptance (i.e., established fashion) to low acceptance (i.e., new style). Especially, acceptance in the consumer's immediate social environment is an important influence at the initial stage of consumer decision making. "This is because the level of acceptance determines how much social visibility the style has, and this visibility is an important initial stimulant to the consumer's decision-making process" (Sproles 1979, p.196). This concept of fashion is unique to the Sproles model.

The Consumer's Fashion Adoption Process Model by Sproles (1979) says that the identity of the potential adopter becomes the third situational condition. The model also suggests that fashion-oriented behavior differs among people of different age, sex, socioeconomic descriptions, and physical features. Thus, the model assumes that these characteristics can help to arrange consumers into groups that approach fashion selections with different attitudes. This assumption is the basis for target market segmentation. These influences are similar to those found in the EBM Model (1995).

Chen-Yu Model

The Chen-Yu model (1995) is a proposed model of consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction with the performance of ready-to-wear apparel products. The model

was developed from an extensive literature review and a study of consumer purchase behavior. This particular model deals with the stages involved in the purchase process and the stages involved in consumption of the product after it has been purchased. Chen-Yu, in the stage of purchase process, starts her model with product information provided in the market. This information consists of price of the item, brand/store names, country of origin and performance information. According to Chen-Yu, four main types of information influence consumers' perceptions and/or expectations of product quality. The next step in the stage of purchase process discusses the fact that consumers have expectations about future performance of the product because of prior consumption experience and information delivered at the time of purchase. Then, the model moves to the confirmation /disconfirmation steps where consumers compare their perceptions of performance with a norm based on their past experiences. This will lead to consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction or indifference. The next step deals with the consumers' likelihood to purchase or price they are willing to pay. The last step is purchase decision.

The Chen-Yu model next discusses the stage of product consumption after usage. The first step in this process deals with product usage, which is followed by product care, then perceived after-wash performance. After these steps have been completed, a comparison process happens when confirmation or above-expectation disconfirmation or below-expectation disconfirmation is expected. At the last step in this stage, the consumer is satisfied, dissatisfied or is indifferent about the results. The Chen-Yu model also has an additional stage, the behavioral responses

to satisfaction/ indifference/ dissatisfaction of the product after consumption.

These last two stages are beyond the scope of this study.

Influences. This model also identifies variables for influencing the purchase process. Chen-Yu adapted these variables from the consumer behavior model proposed by Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995). In her model Chen-Yu included two main factors from the EBM Model (1995). They are environmental influences and individual characteristics, which influence all the decisions made in the three stages of the model. “The environmental influence factors included five variables: (1) culture, (2) family, (3) personal influence, (4) situation (communication situation, purchase situation, usage situation), and (5) social class. The individual characteristic factors included seven variables: (1) attitudes, (2) consumer resources, (3) familiarity / knowledge (4) involvement, (5) motivation, (6) lifestyle / personality / values, and (7) demographics” (Chen-Yu, 1995, Appendix A.1).

Research Model

To create a model of consumer purchase behavior for this research project, the researcher chose to adapt from the three previously mentioned models (see Figure 1). One reason these particular models were chosen is the fact that they are similar. They are similar in the steps used in the consumer purchase process; however, all three models have different names for these stages or processes. The Engel, Blackwell & Miniard model (1995) of consumer behavior calls these steps or stages the decision process stages. The Sproles' model (1979), also named the Consumer Fashion Adoption Process Model, calls this part of its model decision making and information seeking. The Chen-Yu model, which is named the proposed model of consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction with the performance of ready to wear apparel, calls this section of the model the stage of purchase. All three models also identify outside influences that describe the factors that influence the process of consumer behavior. Regardless of the terminology, the three models describe a process of consumer buying. This study will focus on the purchase step in this consumer buying process.

The three models identify influences that affect the consumer buying process. When comparing the three models in terms of influences, the EBM model cites cultural norms and values, reference group, and family as influences.

BUYER BEHAVIOR MODEL

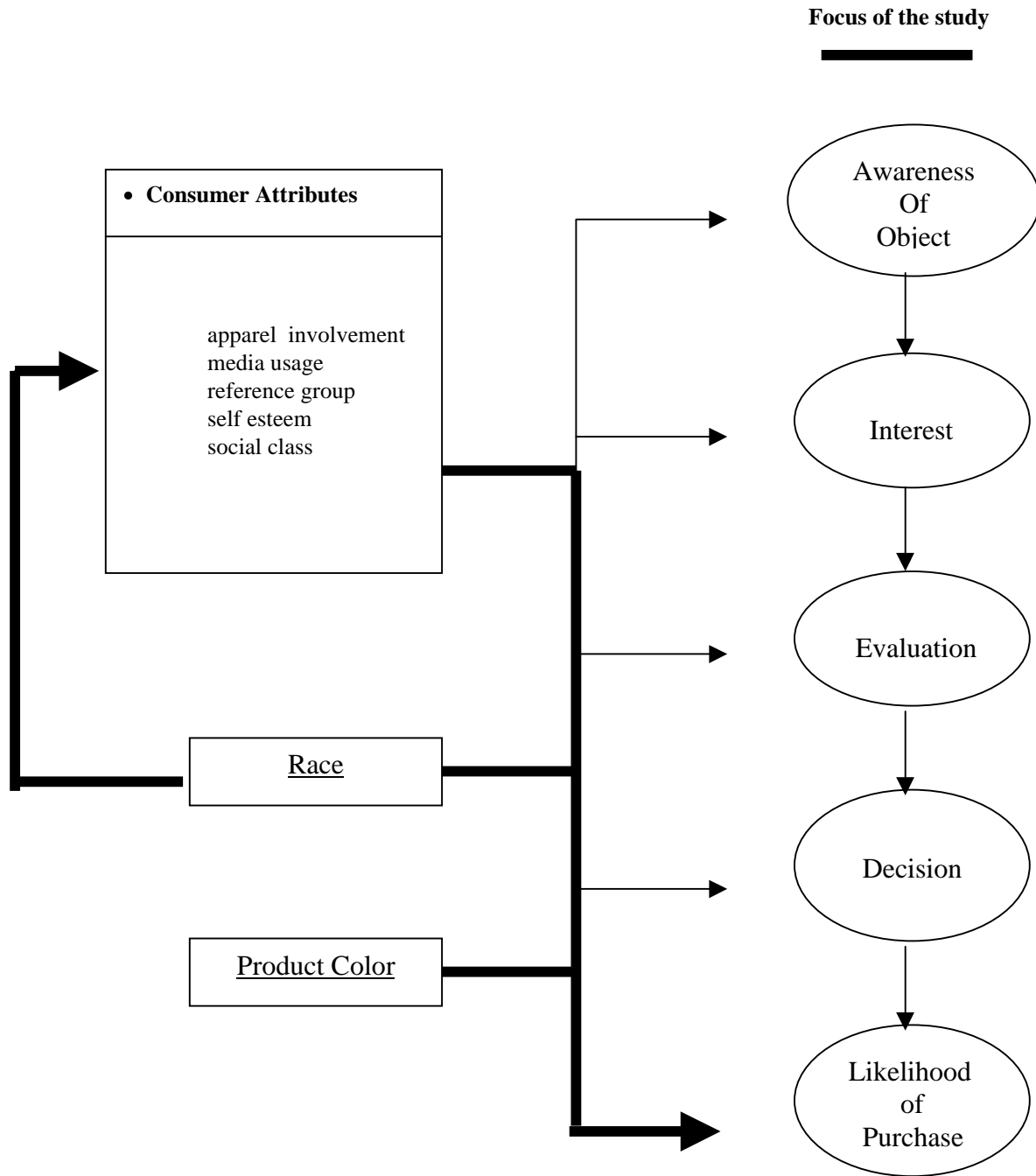


Figure 1. Buyer Behavior Model for Purchasing Men's Business Suits

Similarly, the Sproles' model says that lifestyles of individuals and sociocultural change influence consumer behavior. As the EBM model and Sproles' models, the Chen-Yu model also states that culture, family and social class influence ones buying decisions. The Sproles' model does not state that demographics influence the process during the decision making stage; however, the Chen-Yu model and EBM model do account for demographic influences. Demographic influences will be included in the research model. The reason for this inclusion is that demographics have been reported to influence the decision-making stages or processes of some consumer-buying behavior. Chen-Yu found that some consumer behaviors studies and previous apparel studies with women consumers have found demographics to be a significant factor in the consumer buying behavior process, (e.g., Cassill & Drake, 1987). Each model contains consumer attributes, which will be the influences used to create the researcher's model (see Figure 1).

The buying process includes the stages of awareness, interest, evaluation, decision, and likelihood of purchase. The second component of the model is the influential consumer attributes, which include: apparel involvement, employment, income, media usage, reference group, self-esteem, and social class. The third component of the model contains the independent variables of the study: race and color. Consumer attributes, race and color influence the buying process. Race also is viewed as an influence on consumer attributes.

Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical model, and review of literature, the following hypotheses were formulated.

Hypothesis 1-Race will affect the likelihood of purchase for color of men's business suits within the buying process among Black and White faculty, staff, and administrators.

H1a- Race will affect likelihood of purchase.

H1b- Color will affect likelihood of purchase.

H1c- Interaction of race and color will affect likelihood of purchase.

Hypothesis 2- Selected consumer attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, media, reference group, self-esteem, social class) will be related significantly to race within the buying process among Black and White faculty, staff, and administrators.

H2a- Apparel involvement will be related significantly to Race.

H2b- Media usage will be related significantly to Race.

H2c- Reference group will be significantly related to Race.

H2d- Self-esteem will be related significantly to Race.

H2e- Social class will be related significantly to Race.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

In this chapter, cultural influences including apparel involvement, reference groups, and media usage are discussed. This background will develop explanations of why professional Black males and professional White males wear the color business suits they do. Demographic influences will also be discussed. Previous consumer studies that include these variables are reviewed.

According to Hamilton and Hamilton (1989), selecting and wearing apparel is a behavior that is unique to humans. Hamilton and Hamilton also believe that a certain set of apparel, worn in a particular cultural context, is an example of the unique ability of humans to create symbols. Men's business suits are an example of a set of apparel that has become a symbol (Jacob, 1990). In addition, O'Neal (1998) stated that subjects in her study agreed that an African American aesthetic of dress exists and is shown in observable ways. One way is the preference for bright or high effect colors (e.g., yellow, orange).

Hamilton and Hamilton (1989) also believe extensive variations in apparel choices exist among individuals; however, the cultural values and meanings in a society, all of which are arbitrary, delimit the variations that a consumer selects. According to these authors, apparel selection can be seen as something that is unique to humans and is also driven by one's culture. If the authors' presumptions are true, cultural variables could prove to be one of the key factors that influence male purchase behavior.

“Fashion has been defined as a form of collective behavior that is socially approved at a given time but is expected to change” (Summers, Belleau, & Wozniak, 1992, p. 85). The existence of fashion depends upon a group or groups of people who are living together and behaving collectively. In addition, it implies that social approval is important to the people in the group or groups. Fashion exists because people attach a degree of significance to it (Kaiser, 1985). Social interaction influences the acceptance and adoption of any given fashion. Fashionable apparel also conveys information to other people in a given social situation. For example, people will evaluate what a person is wearing and will draw conclusions as to whether they like or dislike the fashion. Fashion acceptance follows an adoption path similar to the innovation process described by Rogers (1983) and by Sproles (1978) and is thought to be affected by a variety of cultural influences.

According to Harps-Logan (1997), absolute apparel expenditures of Blacks are somewhat higher than those of the entire population of U.S. consumers. When considering the numerical growth of the Black middle class, plus their buying power, this market maybe one of the major players in the U. S. economy today (Goldsmith, White & Stith, 1987; Ness & Stith, 1984). The Black population currently represents about 12% of the population in the United States. Relevant studies of Black consumers are reviewed in the following sections. Because of the limited research on Black consumers, studies using demographics and buying practices with more general populations are also included.

Race

According to O'Neal, "race refers to groups that are socially defined on the basis of physical criteria" (1998, p. 29). O'Neal's study on women's professional dress states that African American women do not abandon the dress of the dominant culture, but they often share a level of acculturation, which can be described as bicultural. They combine both the dominant culture of dress and their own culture of dress. For example, these women may wear navy or other conservative color clothes, and wear bright colored scarves or accessories to express their ethnic heritage. In other words, "The women have chosen to quietly but visibly take control of the definition of self and to implement an agenda to debunk the myth of African Americans as only a race. Dress serves as the visual expression of that ethnicity" (O'Neal, 1998, p. 32).

Kang and Kim's (1998) study on ethnicity and acculturation suggests that Asian Americans should not be considered a homogenous group. According to Kang and Kim, "each Chinese, Japanese and Korean immigrant exhibits significant differences in terms of how much he or she is affected by the different sources of reference group, media, and store attributes" (Kang & Kim, 1998, p. 113). The findings from this study provide data in terms of a theoretical base for the study of Asian and others subcultures in America. This study suggests that race is one of several variables that should be studied by marketers and academics. Race both as a demographic and as a cultural orientation have been significant as an influential variable on consumer buying behavior.

Harps-Logan (1997) reviewed two classic marketing studies, one by Bauer and one by Alexis. These studies examined the effect of race on buying behavior of middle-class Black women and White women to determine their expenditures in various categories. “Although these race categories did not identify product buying behavior beyond general category (i. e., clothing), they showed that in comparison to Whites, Blacks spent more on apparel in proportion to their incomes than they spent on other goods” (Harps-Logan, 1997 p. 17). The results of Fan’s (1998) study of household expenditure patterns suggest that some differences in expenditure patterns, among different ethnic groups, are caused by cultural differences among the groups. Black consumers were part of Fan’s sample. The fact that Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to have a food-and-utilities-dominated expenditure pattern may reflect a cultural preference for dining with friends and extended family rather than going to a restaurant for an evening out (Fan, 1998). Whites households were more likely to be in the service-dominated cluster. The individuals in this cluster spent a larger proportion of their budget on food away from home, household equipment and operation, apparel, entertainment, and alcoholic beverages.

The Edmonds’ (1979) study on employed Black women and White women stated that differences in race had an impact on the participants’ apparel buying habits. Edmonds examined the apparel-buying behavior of Black women and White women in the Washington, D. C. area. In this particular study, Blacks were more fashion conscious and went shopping more frequently than their white counterparts. The results of Edmonds’ study stated that differences in race had a

considerable impact on the participants' apparel buying habits. Black women, as shown in Edmond's study, go shopping more frequently; therefore, retailer and marketers should be willing to increase the way they target apparel merchandise to this group. The reason retailers should be more interested is that Black women who shop more than White women are more likely to be influenced by external sources when shopping for clothing. They receive more exposure to the marketing strategies by retailers and marketers. In this research, race is being used as a proxy for the concept of ethnicity. Ethnicity as defined by O'Neal (1998), refers to a socially defined group based on cultural criteria.

Consumer Attributes

In addition to culture, other factors are known to influence female consumer buying behavior. The previous sentence is true for the consumer behavior model, which will be used in this research project. These influences are: apparel involvement, media usage, reference group influence, self-esteem and social class. As people interact with people in their daily lives people care about who they are and what other people think and say.

Age

“Zikmund’s study (as cited in Davis, 1994) shows that age and the number of children in the household are the best demographic predictors of Black’s shopping behaviors” (p. 18). Davis’ study on Black consumers found that Black college-age consumers shop for and purchase their own apparel. She concluded that Black college-age consumers do not have a favorite store that they shop in or make purchases from.

According to Ko (1995), age and income have been known to influence the purchasing behavior of employed women. Ko’s study included a wide range of ages for women but did not include race as a variable. Ko also showed that younger women and those with higher incomes are more likely to accept influences from reference persons when they purchase a business dress. The conclusions of Cassill and Drake’s (1987) study of female consumer’s employment orientations indicated that career-oriented working women tended to be between 25-34 years of age. Age was significantly related to their apparel selection.

Apparel Involvement

Involvement in a product category is widely recognized as a major variable influencing consumer-buying behavior. Thomas, Cassill and Forsythe (1991) defines apparel involvement as “the extent to which consumers are concerned with a particular purchase decision and consider it to be important to them (p. 45).

According to Shim and Kotsiopoulos (1991) “involvement is defined as a person’s perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interest” (p. 16). Ericksen (1983) uses the terms clothing behavior to define apparel involvement. Clothing behavior is defined as “the clothing a woman repeatedly wears to work over a period of time” (Ericksen, 1983, p. 50). This same apparel involvement may be true of men and the apparel they wear to work.

Ericksen’s (1983) study on the apparel behavior of working women concluded that most of the time women wear apparel that is similar to their self-image beliefs and avoid those which are unlike these beliefs. Thomas, Cassill, and Forsythe (1991) did a study to determine if apparel involvement in consumer purchase decisions is composed of more than one dimension. In their study on women’s consumer purchase decisions, they stated that involvement is an important mediator in terms of consumer behavior. Their review of literature also states that Schiffman and Kanuk’s study, and Traylor’s study (as cited in Thomas, Cassill, & Forsythe, 1991) found that consumers consider apparel purchases to be important to them. They also mention that limited research is available in the area of apparel involvement. Shim and Kotsiopoulos (1991) study on big and tall men revealed that higher usage of apparel as a tool of impression management and higher interest in fashion reflects high apparel involvement. They also found that the more engaged in cultural/social activities the person is, the greater the involvement with apparel. The Shim and Kotsiopoulos (1991) study also stated that those individuals who did not think apparel was important were less frequently engaged in club meeting and business activities. Findings suggest that, in general,

apparel involvement is an influence on consumers' apparel decisions (Forsythe, Cassill & Thomas, 1991).

Employment

Cassill and Drake (1987), who investigated female consumers, stated that roles are determined by the consumer's culture and are related to the individual's interaction with others in a structured situation. One of the roles that is performed is employment. Employment orientation, which is a combination of a person's attitude toward employment and their actual job, is an influential variable in choice of apparel for female consumers. Women's roles in the workplace affect their buying decision processes as consumers. In a study of professional women by Harps-Logan (1997), she wrote that professional women often patronize specialty, department and discount stores. Employment is recommended as a variable for target market segmentation and is way of defining the female consumer market (Cassill & Drake). This variable might also be useful in segmenting the male consumer.

Income

In earlier studies on Black women's and White women's apparel buying practices, differences were found in income levels (Cortrone, 1967; Hunter, 1967). In a 1988 report issued by the Bureau of the Census, the median income for Blacks

was approximately \$16,000 compared to \$29,000 for Whites. In 1989, the year when this particular Census data was collected, the data divided income in nine separate categories by race in the U.S. Bureau of the Census report (as cited in Harps-Logan, 1997).

In the study by Harps-Logan (1997), the research reported the apparel buying practices of Black women and White women with total household income in the \$25,000-\$79,000 range. The reason for this large income base was the disparity between incomes of White subjects and Black subjects used in this study. Fan's (1998) study was on household expenditure patterns of families across several cultures. Fan suggested that households, with the highest mean annual after-tax income, per capita income, total expenditure, and per capita expenditure, spent a larger proportion of their budget on apparel, entertainment, alcoholic beverages, food away from home and household equipment and operation. Fan's study includes White, Asian, Black and Hispanic consumers in the sample. Differences in income between consumers of different races continue to exist.

Harps-Logan (1997) chose to use the middle three census categories of income for her study. The choice of the middle three categories represents the middle range for household income. Thus, the income range is considerably above the poverty level and represents the median income in America during the 1980s. The range of \$25,000-\$79,000 accommodates both single and dual income households (Harps-Logan). The findings from these studies indicate that Blacks make less money on average than their White counterparts, but spend more money proportionally on clothing than Whites. Based on this information, the growing

number of middle-class Black professionals would be an excellent target market for retailers and manufacturers of business apparel. Categories of income as an influence need further study.

Media Usage

Rogers (1983) identified four components in the diffusion of innovation process: the innovation, communication channels, time and social system. Rogers observed that often mass media introduces an innovation, and individuals influence the decisions of others in the social system to adopt or reject an innovation. Sproles (1979) lists media as a social communication, and notes that “communications are crucial influences” p. 196. A good example of this can be seen when looking at the way black musicians in music videos wear baggy apparel that Tommy Hilfiger designs. This type of loose fitting apparel, especially the Tommy Hilfiger brand, was adopted and is popular among most black youths. Tommy Hilfiger is not the only brand name of apparel that is popular among this group of youths. Phatt Farm, a Black owned apparel brand that has the same baggy style as Hilfiger, is also popular among most Black youths.

Thomas, Cassill, and Forsythe (1991) identified three sources of influence that were marketer-dominated sources: (a) retailer (e. g., sales associates), (b) media, and (c) neutral (garment labels, hang tags). These were significant variables in their study of female apparel consumers from three southern malls. Kang and Kim’s (1998) study on ethnicity and acculturation of Asian American consumers

revealed that respondents with low-and high-acculturation levels will be influenced by the media at different extents, depending on one's ethnicity. The results of their study showed that for both Chinese and Koreans, "the low-acculturation group was more influenced by both television and radio than was the high acculturation group". On the other hand, for Japanese, the results were reversed: "The high acculturation group seemed to rely more on both television and radio than did the low-acculturation group" (p. 109).

The results of Wilson and MacGillivray's (1998) study on adolescent clothing choice revealed that when ranked in rank order of most influence on apparel choice, Black adolescents had the highest score for media influence. Parental and friend influences were the next highest influence on apparel choice for Black adolescents, while siblings had the least influence. For White adolescents, their friends influenced them the most on apparel choice. The second highest ranking of influence on apparel choice for White adolescents was tied between parents and media. Like Black adolescents, siblings ranked last as an influence on apparel choice for White adolescents. Although no research is found on the shopping habits and apparel choices of Black males, these variables could be used to for future research where Black males are involved.

Reference Group Influences

Kaiser (1985) gave an explanation of fashion and social acceptance as an influence on apparel purchase. Although fashion is a form of collective behavior

that is socially approved, this social approval does not mean that everyone in a society approves of that fashion for a certain category of apparel (i.e., professional male dress). Social approval for an individual can come from certain cultural or reference groups. For example, the style of business suit that White males socially approve might not fit the aesthetic of Black males because of cultural or ethnic differences.

Fashion opinion leaders are considered to be individuals who influence the decisions of other people to accept or reject an innovation and are reference groups for many consumers. Fashion opinion leaders, if they endorse a particular fashion, can influence an entire segment of consumers. Baumgarten (1975) found male fashion leaders to be socially active. If this finding can be generalized, it could possibly be a way for retailers and marketers to reach the Black professional male consumer. Previous research also supports the idea that professional males maybe influenced by fashion leaders or may themselves be leaders.

The central point of a study on mature customers by Huddleston, Ford and Bickle (1993) was to profile characteristics of an interpersonal communication channel (e.g., fashion opinion leaders). They found lifestyle characteristics among older customers to be predictors of fashion opinion leaders. Acceptance of products by fashion opinion leaders adds to the likelihood of acceptance by the general population.

Another reference group is family. Wilson and MacGillivray (1998) in their study on adolescent apparel choice described family influence as one of the influencing factors of apparel choice. They reported that, in contrast to traditional

conflict perspectives on parent-adolescent relationships, some recent studies have shown that most adolescents manage to balance peer relationships and individuation from family. Adolescents then achieve social competence with a minimum of intergenerational conflict. This balance is especially true if parents are generally supportive. This means that adolescents typically respect the opinion of their parents or family. The study by Wilson and MacGillivray (1998) also mentions that the extent to which parents control what their children wear during adolescence is unclear. Thomas, Cassill and Forsythe (1991) identified as a non-marketer influence the interpersonal reference groups of family and friends. Their study was with female apparel consumers from southern malls as the sample. According to Lunt and Livingston (1992), studies of buying practices show that women are the principle purchasers of apparel. Because Black women put special emphasis on apparel, they may in many cases influence their husbands or boy friends when they purchase apparel. For professional men, wives, significant others, or other family members may be reference groups for apparel choices.

Self-esteem

Marketing scholars began writing about the relationship between brands, products and stores as symbols and the interaction of the symbols with consumer's perceptions and personalities in the mid-1950s studies by Gardner and Levy, and Levy and Newman (as cited in Ericksen, 1983). Self-esteem is one aspect of personality, and self-esteem of Blacks has been a topic addressed by researchers in

past years, with a number of these historical studies comparing Blacks with Whites (Holloman, 1989). The self-esteem of Black professional men may play a role in their buying behavior patterns. If Black males have low self-esteem, their ability to purchase apparel may be affected in two ways. Others might influence their purchase choice, or they may be less likely to shop for apparel.

A study on the self-esteem of Black adults by Holloman (1989) gave a definition of self-esteem that is appropriate for this study. Rosenberg, Webster and Sobrieszek, and Horrocks' studies (as cited in Holloman), "defined self-esteem as a dimension of self-concept that involves a subjective evaluation of one's traits resulting in a positive or negative attitude toward the self" (p. 50). Past studies have resulted in mixed conclusions as to which group has higher self-esteem, Blacks or Whites.

Prior to her survey of Black adults, Holloman (1989) conducted a thorough study of previous research on Black self-esteem. Researchers such as Kardine and Ovessey; Clark and Clark; and Pettigrew, Grier and Cobb (as cited in Holloman) suggested that self-esteem is lower among Blacks largely because of their unfavorable comparison of themselves with Whites. Other researchers Baughman and Dahlstrom, Rosenberg and Simmons, and Ford and Drake (as cited in Holloman) did not agree with these conclusions and instead found self-esteem to be higher among Blacks. Holloman concludes that these studies challenge the notion of Blacks comparing themselves unfavorably to Whites. Research as reviewed by Holloman found conflicting evidence as to whether Blacks have low self-esteem when comparing themselves to Whites.

Social Class

Social class is an informal ranking of people in a culture based on their income, occupation, education, dwelling, and other factors (Berman & Evans, 1998). Previous studies that focused on the buying practices of Black women and White women found that these apparel practices were related to social class. One of the studies (Samli, Tozier & Harps), as reviewed by Lunt and Livingston (1992), indicated that, unlike their White counterparts, Black women, regardless of their social class status, put special emphasis on apparel. Another study (Stone & Form), as reviewed by Lunt and Livingston, found that among Black women and White women from all socioeconomic levels, middle class women knew what they wanted to purchase when shopping for apparel. According to a report by Henry (as cited in Harps-Logan, 1997), when socioeconomic status is controlled in a statistical analysis, Blacks appear to show similar traits to their White counterparts. In a recent study of Black women and White women, the upper and lower class groups were unsure of the apparel items they wanted to purchase (Harps-Logan, 1997).

Realizing an increasing number of women in the work-force, Apple (1986) focused on the buying practices of professional Black women by identifying and examining lifestyles, types of retail outlets shopped, fashion information sources used, desirable store attributes, and the relationship of these factors to specific demographic variables. Apple's results were that women who rated economic apparel values high, paid less for suits and spent less on apparel yearly than those

with a low economic ranking do. A study of employed Black women and White women done by Edmonds (1979) stated that differences in lifestyle had an impact on the participants' apparel buying habits.

Buying behavior research has focused mainly on White women or on White versus Black women. These previous studies identify a number of variables that affect the buying behavior of women; however, little or no research is available on buying behaviors of men especially Black males. This research project will help to create a better understanding of the buying behaviors of Black males and White males.

CHAPTER III

Research Method

The purpose of this study of Black males and White males was to test a conceptual model that examines apparel buying behavior when evaluating business suits. Two objectives were examined with this model: (a) investigate the differences between the two races in the purchase of business suits and (b) profile and compare the attributes of the Black male and White male consumers. The following sections cover the procedure to achieve these research objectives: (a) research design, and control, (b) sampling, (c) instrument, (d) pilot study, (e) data collection, and (f) data analysis.

Research Design

Descriptive research design with an experimental component was used to investigate the differences in the buying decision between White males and Black males. Descriptive design is useful to describe the characteristics of relevant groups (i.e., consumer, market area, organizations), to estimate the percentage of units in a specified population that exhibit a particular behavior, and to determine the group's characteristics (Malhorta, 1993).

Both survey method and an experimental method were used to collect data. This type of data collection increases the control of the study. In many cases,

survey research is descriptive research because it helps to identify characteristics of a particular group, measures attitudes, and describes behavioral patterns. Other advantages of the survey method include a decrease of researcher and sample bias. Malhotra (1993) also stated that the survey method is a good tool to use for obtaining information regarding the respondent's intentions, awareness, demographics, and lifestyle characteristics, and to determine the interrelations among variables.

The experimental design was used for identification of the likelihood of purchase variable (see Figure 2). The experimental design that will be used in this research is a factorial design. The factorial design is a statistical experimental design, which is used to measure the effects of two or more independent variables at various levels and to allow for interactions between variables (Malhotra, 1993).

Three suits were chosen. Suit A was called the traditional suit and was selected based on criteria described by Jacob (1990). Suit A consisted of design features that are often described as the Brook's Brothers suit. The color of suit A is black. Suit B was called the cultural suit and was selected based on criteria described by O'Neal (1990). Suit C consisted of design features that also resemble the Brook's Brothers suit, but entailed colors that were not associated with the Brook's Brothers brand of suit. The color of suit C was orange. Suit B also consisted of design features that resemble the Brook's Brothers suit and entailed colors that are associated with both the Brook's Brothers brand of suit, and the ethnic suit. The color of suit B was beige. The researcher went into the field and witnessed what the market was selling to this particular (i.e., Black) consumer. The

researcher also interviewed retailers to see what suits were being purchased. The choice of suit style and color as representative of current purchasing behavior was supported by the field research.

		<i>RACE</i>	
		Black	White
<i>COLOR</i>	Traditional	Black male Traditional Suit n=20	White male Traditional Suit n=20
	Neutral	Black male Neutral Suit n=20	White male Neutral Suit n=20
	Cultural	Black male Cultural Suit n=20	White male Cultural Suit n=20

Figure 2. Experimental design with three suits, two races, and number in sample.

Sampling

Black males and White males that wear suits to work were chosen as subjects in this study to investigate the differences in their purchase behaviors and specific attributes of the Black male consumer. To sample the Black male population, the researcher used a purposive sample of faculty, staff, and administrators from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The reason the researcher chose this population was for convenience of the sample. The Black population was identified through a web-site about Black employees, so the names and work addresses were readily available. To obtain the White male sample, the

researcher surveyed faculty and administrative staff from Virginia Tech. The reason the researcher chose Virginia Tech was the large number of professional White males employed at this institution.

These particular groups were used because of the occupations and business environment that require many of them to wear suits. This environment helped to ensure easy access and high return rates with the survey questionnaire. The demographics of the population, and a high percentage of White faculty and administrators at Virginia Tech, were helpful in ensuring a White population. The web-site for the Black males helped to ensure a Black population. This selection covered the need for focused groupings of Black males and White males in one environment. Selection bias was controlled through the use of the homogenous group for the study (Malhorta, 1993).

The expected sample size was 120, which is comparable with previous researchers that were examining apparel purchasing behavior (e.g., Ko, 1995 n=200; Kotsiopoulos, Oliver, and Shim (1993), n=86; Shim and Drake (1991), n=104). For the experimental design, six groups were formed with 20 participants in each group (see Figure 2). Participants were assigned randomly to a treatment cell.

Pilot Test

Black males and White males, residing in a small college town and not part of the sample were asked to complete the pilot test questionnaires. A total of 60

questionnaires were answered but only 58 were usable. The objective was to compare Black professional and White professional males as shoppers; therefore, those who did not answer a specific race were eliminated. The sample (n=58) included 30 White males and 28 Black males. The questionnaire was pilot tested to evaluate content validity of the variables: age, employment, occupation and clothing buying behaviors. The test was done to make sure the questions were representative of the material on apparel purchasing. The subjects who completed the questionnaire understood all the questions and thought the questions covered many aspects of their purchasing behavior.

The findings from this pilot test revealed differences and similarities between the purchasing behavior of White males and Black males. Black men showed more enjoyment of shopping than White men showed. Sixty-eight percent of the Black males surveyed said they enjoyed shopping, while sixty percent of the White males surveyed said they did not enjoy shopping. More Black males (71.4 %) compared to White males (36%) depended on their own opinion when shopping for business suits rather than other influences.

An additional pilot test was conducted to evaluate the content (face) validity of the final questionnaire. This instrument included additional questions that were not studied in the first pilot test. The pilot test was done to make sure it was representative of the material on buying. The instrument was pilot tested with eight faculty members from Virginia Tech who were similar to the subjects that were used in the research project (4 Black, 4 White). These members were not in the final sample. The pilot test also helped to ensure that it was the same over time

and in different situations (i.e., reliability). Results of pilot test confirmed the reliability of the questions, and participants agreed that questions covered their shopping behaviors. The participants also confirmed the appropriateness of the three suit types and clearly distinguished among the three photographs.

Instrument

An instrument was developed to address research objectives. The items in the questionnaire were selected from the review of literature (Forsythe & Bailey, 1996; Huddleston, Ford & Bickle, 1993; Legette, 1994; Toerien, 1987). The questionnaire was divided into six sections (see Table 1). Section I included questions about apparel involvement. Questions in Section II included: reference groups. The questions in Section III were about self-esteem. Questions I-III used a Likert-type scale. Questions in section IV were multiple choice questions, except for questions 9 and 10, which used a Likert-type scale. Questions in Section V included consumer demographics: age, employment, income, and race. These questions in section V were multiple choice questions. Question two from Section IV included the media question. Questions in Section V included suit questions.

The apparel involvement questions in Section I were adapted from Toerien (1987). Thomas, Cassill and Forsythe (1991) defined apparel involvement as “the extent to which consumers are concerned with a particular purchase decision and consider it to be important to them” (p. 45). Toerien (1987) defined apparel involvement as “the attitudes and beliefs about clothing, the knowledge of

attention and attention paid to clothing, the concern and curiosity a person has about his own clothing and that of others” (p.8). These questions used a scale ranging from 5 (Almost always, very few exceptions) to 1 (Almost never, very few exceptions). The apparel involvement section has twenty (Q1-Q20) questions. The apparel involvement questions were validated by Toerien to represent one concept. “The reliability of the item assignments was indicated by a significant relationship ($p < .001$) between each factor and the loadings of the factor items” (Toerien, 1987, p. 8). “The constructs identified by factor analysis provided evidence of construct validity. The results indicated five strong factors and one weak one” (Toerien, 1987, p. 9). Apparel involvement or clothing interest was one of the five strong factors. “Items with factor loadings under .350 or with low correlation coefficients were eliminated. Reliability coefficients for the five retained factors ranged from .626 to .880” (Toerien, 1987, p. 10). The variable is measured by the average of the summation score of the apparel involvement questions.

Reference group questions in Section II were also adopted from Toerien (1987). “Reference Group is an actual or imaginary individual or group conceived of having significant influence upon an individual’s evaluations, aspirations, or behavior” (Legette, 1994). Toerien (1987) defined reference group as “the use of clothing to attain a feeling of belonging or approval of others; usually indicates conformity to group norms” (p. 39). These questions used a scale ranging from 5 (Almost always, very few exceptions) to 1 (Almost never, very few exceptions). The reference group section has thirteen (Q1-Q13) questions. The reference group questions were also validated by Toerien to represent one concept. All phrases

measure one core concept (i.e., reference group). “The reliability of the item assignments was indicated by a significant relationship ($p < .001$) between each factor and the loadings of the factor items” (Toerien, 1987, p. 8). “The constructs identified by factor analysis provided evidence of construct validity. The results indicated five strong factors and one weak one” (Toerien, 1987, p. 9). “Reference group or conformity was one of the five strong factors. Items with factor loadings under .350 or with low correlation coefficients were eliminated. Reliability coefficients for the five retained factors ranged from .626 to .880” (Toerien, 1987, p. 10). The variable was measured by the average of the summation of scores. A high score means a strong influence by reference groups, and a low score means a limited influence from reference groups on apparel purchases.

The media usage question in Section IV was adapted from types of media in the Thomas, Cassill, and Forsythe (1991) article. This question was a multiple-choice question. The respondents were asked to select the type of media they used most often for apparel information. Types of media included: newspapers, magazines, TV, and Internet.

Self-esteem questions in Section III were adopted from Toerien (1987). Rosenberg, Webster and Sobrieszek, and Horrocks’ studies (as cited in Holloman), “defined self-esteem as a dimension of self-concept that involves a subjective evaluation of one’s traits resulting in a positive or negative attitude toward the self” (p. 50). Toerien (1987) defined self-esteem as “the use of clothing to boost morale and to increase feelings of security and self-confidence” (p. 74). The questions in this section used a scale ranging from 5 (Almost always, very few

exceptions) to 1 (Almost never, very few exceptions). The self-esteem section has thirteen (Q1-Q13) questions. The self-esteem questions were validated by Toerien to represent one concept. “The reliability of the item assignments was indicated by a significant relationship ($p < .001$) between each factor and the loadings of the factor items” (Toerien, 1987, p. 8). “The constructs identified by factor analysis provided evidence of construct validity. The results indicated five strong factors and one weak one” (Toerien, 1987, p. 9). Self-esteem or self-concept was one of the five strong factors. “Items with factor loadings under .350 or with low correlation coefficients were eliminated. Reliability coefficients for the five retained factors ranged from .626 to .880” (Toerien, 1987, p. 10). The variable was measured by the average of the summation of scores. A high score means high self-esteem and a low score means low self-esteem.

The demographic questions in Section IV were adapted from Cassill (1986) except for social class, which was formed from Berman and Evans definition of the term (Berman & Evans, 1998). To develop a measure of social class, income Q6 from Section IV, education Q3 from Section IV, and employment orientation Q8 from Section IV were used. Three categories were used to describe social class: upper(3), middle(2), and lower class(1) (Berman & Evans, 1998). The upper class consisted of high income Q4 (levels 5 and 6), high education Q1 (levels 3 through 5) and the response that employment Q7 is career. The middle class consisted of moderate income Q4 (levels 3 and 4), college education Q1 (level 2) and response that employment Q6 is just a job. The lower class consisted of low income Q4 (levels 1 and 2), less than a college education Q1 (level 1) and the response that

employment Q6 is just a job. A match of two out of three criteria was labeled within the level of the two matches.

The purchase decision questions in Section IV and V were researcher formed based on a market study. These four questions asked about the purchase of business suits: own bright colored or dark colored suits section V-Q1, purchased a bright colored or dark colored suit in the past year section V-Q2, likelihood that the respondent will purchase the viewed suit for work section IV-Q9, and how likely is it that the respondent will purchase the viewed suit for other occasions section IV-Q10. A five point Likert-type scale was used in Q9 and Q10 in Section IV. The scale ranged from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely). Questions 9 and 10 were used as the dependent variable.

Table 1. Variable Chart

<i>Variable</i>	<i>How to Operationalize</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i># of Question</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Consumer Attributes				
Race	Black or White	Researcher Generated	Section IV Q7	Response
Apparel Involvement	Attitudes + Beliefs about clothing	Toerien, 1987	Section I	Average of sum
Employment Orientation	What type of job the respondent performs	Researcher Generated	Section IV Q8	Response
Income	Income of respondent	Cassill, 1986	Section IV Q6	Response
Media Usage	By what type or types of media are you influenced	Thomas Cassill & Forsythe, 1991	Section IV Q2	Response
Reference Group	Spousal influence	Toerien, 1987	Section II	Average of sum

Table 1. Variable Chart (continued)

Self-esteem	How that person feels about clothing	Toerien, 1987	Section III	Average of sum
Social Class	By determining which social class the respondent chooses (i.e., Upper, Middle, Lower)	Berman & Evans, 1998	Section IV Q 3,6,7	Category Formed
Purchase Decision				
	How likely is it that the respondent would buy this suit for work	Researcher Generated	Section IV Q9	Response
	How likely is it that the respondent, would buy this suit other occasions	Researcher Generated	Section IV Q10	Response

Data Collection

The data were collected during Spring 1999 in Blacksburg, VA. Before the data collection, request for exemption status was given to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The review ensures the ethical conduct of the research and that the human subjects involved in the research will be exposed to the least possible risk.

A stratified sample, of 60 White male and 60 Black male faculty, staff, and administration members, was chosen for their accessibility and assumed homogeneity. To sample the Black male population, the researcher used a purposive sample because of the limited amount of Black participants. To sample the White population the researcher also selected a purposive sample of White

faculty, staff, and administrators at Virginia Tech to ensure that the sample had experience wearing suits to work. A self-administered questionnaire was used to survey the male apparel consumers. The researcher hand delivered the questionnaire and pencils to the subjects in this study. For identification of likelihood or purchase, 20 White respondents saw suit A, 20 Black respondents saw suit A, 20 White respondents saw suit B, 20 Black respondents saw suit B and 20 White respondents saw suit C, 20 Black respondents saw suit C.

The researcher explained that the survey would take between 10 to 15 minutes to complete. The subjects were also told that their participation in this research project was on voluntary basis. The subjects signed a consent form before participating in this research project. The subjects in this study were thanked after completion of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Data analyses were performed using the statistical package SAS. Descriptive statistics were used to profile the respondents. Means and frequencies were used for the levels of demographics.

To test the first hypothesis, two-way analysis of variance was used. Analysis of variance can signify differences among sample means that are being compared and between the independent variable (i.e., race and color) (H1).

To test the second set of hypotheses, t-test and chi-square were used. T-test was used for hypothesis 2-a, race affects apparel involvement, 2-c, race affects reference group, 2-d, race affects self-esteem, and social class, 2e. The t-test was used with the interval variables. Chi-square was used when the dependent variable was nominal, in H2-b, race affects media.

CHAPTER IV

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to investigate Black males and White males to examine if differences in their buying behavior for apparel exist. This study also determined if selected consumer attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, media usage, reference group, self-esteem, social class) are significantly related to Black males and White males apparel buying behaviors when purchasing men's business suits. This chapter presents the description of the sample and results of the hypothesis testing.

Sample

The final sample used in this study consisted of 30 subjects (15 Black males and 15 White males) on the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University campus in Blacksburg with a response rate of 25 percent. Data were collected during April 1999. A convenience sample was used for this study.

To obtain a profile of the consumers, respondents were asked questions that indicated demographic characteristics and apparel buying behaviors. Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents by demographic characteristics.

The most common age category was 35-39. Eight respondents said they were between the ages of 35 to 39. This group represented 26.7 percent of the sample.

Most of the males sampled in this study reported that they were married. A total of 21 of the subjects surveyed said they were married. Those respondents who said they were married accounted for 70 percent of the sample. None of the respondents in this study were separated or divorced.

Wife was the most common category chosen in the personal and family influence variable. The results show 19 of the subjects said their wives were the most important influence on their choice for suits. Those individuals who said their wives influence their suit choice totaled 63 percent of the sampled population.

Magazines were the most common media influence category selected. There were 11 respondents who chose this category. Those 11 people represented 36 percent of the respondents.

With regard to education most of the respondents had a Ph.D., Ed. D., J. D., or M. D. There were 17 respondents in this advanced education group. Those individuals in this group represented 56.7 percent of the sample.

The income of the largest group of responses was \$50,000 to \$69,000. There were nine subjects in this income category. Those nine subjects represented 31% of the sampled population.

Almost all of the respondents said that they would describe their employment as a career and not just a job. The group of individuals who said they

describe their job as a career totaled 28. Those individuals represent 96.6 percent of the sampled population.

Table 2. Description of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age		
Below 30	6	20.0
30-34	1	3.3
35-39	8	26.7
40-44	5	16.7
45-50	5	16.7
50-60	2	6.7
Above-60	2	6.7
Race		
Black	14	48.3
White	15	51.7
Marital Status		
Never Married	7	23.3
Married	21	70.0
Divorced	2	6.7
Separated	0	0.0
Widowed	0	0.0
Personal/Family Influence		
Wife	19	63.0
Friends	1	3.3
Girl-Friend	6	20.0
Co-Worker	1	3.3
Others	3	10.0

Table 2. Description of Respondents (continued)

Media		
Television	3	10.0
Radio	0	0.0
Newspapers	3	10.0
Magazines	11	36.7
Internet	0	0.0
Others	4	13.3
Do not use	9	30.0
Education		
Associate's Degree	0	
Bachelor's Degree	3	10.0
Master's Degree	10	33.3
Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., or M.D	17	56.7
Other Professional Degree	0	
Income		
Below \$29,000	6	20.7
\$30,000-\$49,000	7	24.1
\$50,000-\$69,000	9	31.0
\$70,000-\$79,000	2	6.9
\$80,000-\$89,000	3	10.3
Above \$90,000	2	6.9
Employment		
Career	28	96.6
Job	1	3.4

For apparel involvement, out of a scale of 1 to 5, the range was from 1.42 to 3.95. The most frequent score was a measure of 2.36. The average mean for apparel involvement was 2.53. The scores were evenly divided across the range. For self-esteem, out of a scale of 1 to 5, the range was 1.11 to 3.5. The most frequent score was a measure of 2.33. The average mean for self-esteem was 2.31. For reference group out of scale of 1 to 5, the range was from 1.4 to 4. The mid-

range scores 2.1 to 2.6 were the most frequent scores. The average mean for reference group was 2.25.

The social class variable was created from the variables of income, education and employment orientation as defined by Berman and Evans (1998). Six respondents were categorized as being in the lower social class. Sixteen respondents were in the middle class, and no respondents were rated in the upper social class. Eight respondents had no matches among the three formation variables and were not classified.

Hypotheses Results

***Hypothesis 1-** Race will affect the likelihood of purchase for color of men's business suits within the buying process among Black and White faculty, staff, and administrators.*

The overall results of this hypothesis test revealed a significant relationship between race and likelihood to purchase a business suit. The result of the two-way ANOVA was $F(2, 23)=2.67, p=0.05$. Respondents, who were either Black males or White males, saw one of three suit colors. The significance of the overall F test indicated that the two variables of race and suit color had a relationship with the likelihood of purchase. Significance at this level permitted the examination of each independent variable and interaction, separately.

***H1a-** Race will affect the likelihood of purchase when buying men's business suits.*

The results of this treatment showed that race was not significantly related to

likelihood of purchase ($F[1, 23]=0.89, p=0.35$). This lack of significance is contrary to what was expected for the outcome of the study. Black males were expected to show preference for the brighter colored suits, as suggested by O'Neal (1998). White males had a mean score of 1.80 and the Black males had a mean of 1.46. Comments from the respondents indicated that both White males and Black males owned a variety of suit colors. Bright colors were used, by both races, for sports jackets for work. This finding did not support this hypothesis.

H1b- *Color will affect likelihood of purchase when buying men's business suits.*

ANOVA test for this treatment showed a significant relationship between color and the purchase of men's business suits. The results of the ANOVA for color was $F(1, 23)=3.53, p=0.04$. The probability levels associated with the means comparison of suit 1, the traditional suit, and suit 3, the cultural suit, indicated that these were significantly different. For the choice of suit, the mean for the traditional suit (1) was 2.1. The mean for the neutral suit (2) was 1.7. The mean for the cultural suit (3) was 1.1. This indicates that the Traditional (black) suit was liked more than the Orange (cultural) suit. This finding did support the hypothesis.

H1c- *Interaction of race and color will affect the purchase of men's business suits.*

The result of the ANOVA was $F(2, 23)=2.70, p=0.08$, which indicated no significant interaction. This finding should have further study. The small, homogeneous sample may play a part in the lack of significance for this hypothesis, or the variable may not be significant. Future research must be done on

a larger and a more heterogeneous sample, before a conclusive statement can be made. This finding did not support the hypothesis.

Although this is not significant, this small p-value is approaching significance. For this reason, the means were examined for each cell of the interaction. These means are shown in Table 3. The scores show that the traditional suit was more likely to be purchased by both Black males and White males than the cultural suit. The neutral suit was more likely to be purchased by White males over twice the rate of purchase by Black males. Black males rather than White males were more likely to buy the cultural suit.

Table 3. Means for Interaction of Race and Color for Work

		<i>RACE</i>	
		Black	White
<i>COLOR</i>	Traditional	2.20	2.00
	Neutral	1.00	2.40
	Cultural	1.20	1.00

Hypothesis 1 (alternative)- Race will affect the likelihood of purchase for color of men's business suits within the buying process among Black and White faculty, staff, and administrators – for occasions other than work.

The overall results of this hypothesis test revealed that there was no significant relationship between race and likelihood to purchase business suit. The result of the two-way ANOVA was $F(2, 23)=1.90, p=0.13$. The suits purchased by both Black men and White men, for occasions other than work, were not

significantly different. Lack of significance at this level did not permit further examination of each independent variable and interaction, separately. A bigger, more random sample may have other results. This finding did not support the hypothesis.

Although this is not significant, this small p-value is approaching significance. For this reason, the means were examined for each cell of the interaction. These means are shown in Table 4. The scores show that the traditional suit was more likely to be purchased by both Black males and White males than the cultural suit. Black males rather than White males were more likely to buy the cultural suit. For both work and other occasions, Black males were more likely to indicate purchase of the traditional suit than other suit colors. This contradicts the findings of previous research by O’Neal (1998) on apparel color. However, this supports the findings of Jacobs (1990) who stated that men’s business suits have become a uniform for the professional male.

Table 4. Means for Interaction of Race and Color for Occasions Other than Work

		<i>RACE</i>	
		Black	White
<i>COLOR</i>	Traditional	3.20	2.20
	Neutral	2.75	2.60
	Cultural	1.60	1.00

Hypothesis 2- *Selected consumer attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, media, reference group, self-esteem, social class) will be related significantly to race within the buying process among Black and White faculty and staff administrators.*

H2a- *Apparel involvement will be related significantly to race.* Apparel involvement when purchasing business suit was significantly related to race. The result of the t-test was $t(1, 23.1)=2.89, p=0.008$, which indicates apparel involvement is significantly related to race. The mean score for the White male apparel involvement was 2.25. The mean score for Black male apparel involvement was 2.88. The 2.88 mean for the Black males implied that Black males were more likely to show apparel involvement when purchasing men's business suits than White males. This finding is similar to results from the classical studies of Alexis (1962) and Portis (1966). They stated that the Black consumer was denied opportunity to spend freely on other products and became more involved with apparel as an outlet of expression. This finding did support the hypothesis.

H2b- *Media usage will be related to significantly to race.* Media usage when purchasing men's business suit's was significantly related to race. For this test, the result was $X^2(4, n=29)=9.23, p=0.05$. Black males were more likely to use media as an influence to purchase apparel than White males. More Black males than White males said they watched television as a source for information about business suits (66.67%, 33.33%, respectively). More Black males than White

males said they used newspapers as a source for information about business suits (66.67%, 33.33%, respectively). More White males than Black males read magazines when searching for information about business suits (54.55%, 45.45%, respectively).. Black males also indicated that they used other forms of media as sources of information about male business suits. A large number of White males said they do not use media as a source for information about business suits. This finding is similar to the study by Wilson and MacGillivray (1998) who studied adolescents. They found that Black youth rated media as the first choice among several influences. White youth rated friends, not media, as their first choice of influence. This hypothesis did support the hypothesis.

Table 5. Number of Respondents Using Media

	TV	Radio	News- papers	Maga- zines	Internet	Other	Do Not Use
White	1	0	1	6	0	0	7
Black	2	0	2	5	0	4	1

H2c- *Reference group will be significantly related to race.* Reference group was not significantly related to race. Result of the t-test was $t(1, 24.6)=1.63, p=0.11$. The White males had a mean score of 2.11. The Black males had a mean score of 2.46. This finding is in contrast to the previous literature on reference groups for

women and for adolescents or size (e.g., Legette, 1994; Thomas, Cassill, & Forsythe, 1991; Wilson & MacGillivray, 1998). The lack of significance could be because of the homogeneity of the sample, or it could be because men may not be as influenced by others as women and adolescents. This finding did not support the hypothesis.

H2d- *Self-esteem will be significantly related to race.* Self-esteem of Black males and White males was not significantly related to race. The t-score for self-esteem was $t(1, 24.8)=0.30, p=0.76$. The mean scores for both the Black males and White males were similar. The White males had a mean score of 2.37. The Black males had a mean score of 2.30. This implies that self-esteem between the two groups were very similar. This variable is noted by conflicting evidence in the literature. This finding did not support the hypothesis.

H2e- *Social class will be significantly related to race.* Social class was significantly related to race. The t-score for social class was $t(1, 16)=2.0, p=0.05$. The mean scores for social class were 1.54 for White males and 1.90 for Black males. These results are similar to findings by Henry (as cited in Harps-Logan, 1997), who reported that when socio-economic status is controlled in a statistical analysis, Blacks appear to show similar traits to their White counterparts. However, the means are contrary to popular belief that Black consumers are of a lower social class. The literature related to this variable has some conflicting findings. For example, Samli, Tozier, and Harps (as cited in Lunt & Livingston,

1992) stated that the combination of race and social class had no influence on purchase of apparel and Harps-Logan (1997) found that social class was a factor when studying the buying habits of White women and Black women. Further research is needed to clarify this variable with Black males and White males. This finding did support the hypothesis.

CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

This study investigated the relationship between race, selected consumer attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, reference group, self-esteem, social class, media usage) and apparel buying behavior of Black males and White males. Objectives of this research were to investigate the differences between the two races in the purchase of business suits and to profile the attributes of Black male consumers and White male consumers.

Data were collected from a convenient sample of 120 faculty and administrators on the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University campus in Blacksburg. A questionnaire was designed to collect data from the sample of 60 Black male professors and administrators and 60 White male professors and administrators at Virginia Tech. The respondents totaled 30. The majority of the respondents was above 35 years of age and worked as administrators.

The first three sections of the instrument used in this research were developed through selection of items from various scales for data collection, as suggested by the literature. The last two parts of the instrument consisted of items inquiring about consumers' purchase behaviors and demographic characteristics.

Two main hypotheses were tested. Hypothesis 1 examined the relationship among race, color and likelihood of purchase. This hypothesis was significant for suits purchased for work. The suit variable was significant, but race and the

interaction of race and suit were not. This hypothesis was not significant when suits were to be purchased for occasions other than work.

Hypothesis 2 examined consumer attributes and demographics and their relationships to race. Apparel involvement, media, and social class were significantly related to race. These variables were predicted to be significant based on previous research and the model. These variables showed significance even with a small sample size. Black males had higher scores for apparel involvement and social class than the scores for White males. The Black males were more likely to use media as an influence than White males, when considering the purchase of apparel.

Self-esteem and reference group were not significantly related to race. These variables were predicted to be significant based on previous research and the model. Literature on these two variables had conflicting information about the influence of these variables. In addition, previous studies were on women and adolescents (e.g., Huddleston, Ford, & Bickle, 1993; Kang & Kim, 1998), not on male consumers.

Conclusions

Market segmentation is used by marketers and retailers for identifying target customers. Market segmentation depends on identification of significant consumer attributes that are similar characteristics within a market segment. Information about Black consumers, especially Black males, is not available for professional business dress. This study found that likelihood of purchase did vary

by suit color for the respondents. Several consumer attributes were also significant. This information can be useful for marketers and researcher.

The finding of significant relationship between color and the likelihood of purchase of men's business suits is an important finding. No previous research has examined male consumers for their purchase preferences about suits. This study found that suit color was related to purchase. The study found that race was not related to purchase. The interaction of race and color was also not related to the likelihood of purchase. The small sample size and its homogeneity may have caused the lack of a significant relationship between race and purchase, because the literature and market information indicated that race would be a significant influence on purchase (e.g., O'Neal, 1998). The same reasons could be true for interaction of race and color. However, the preconceptions on race may not be accurate for men's purchase of suits. Further studies are needed on Black males and White males about their purchase of apparel.

Another important finding in this study was the significant relationship between apparel involvement and race. The results of this test stated that Black males showed more apparel involvement when purchasing suits. This confirms findings of previous research on women's purchase behaviors for apparel (e.g., Edmonds, 1979).

Media usage also had a significant relationship with race. Black males were more likely to use media influences when purchasing suits than White males. Black males were more likely to use television as a source of information about the purchase of suits than White males. Black males were also more likely to read

newspapers as a source of apparel information than White males. White males were more likely to view magazines as an information source than Black males, or to use no media.

Implications

The results support part of the researcher's model explaining the relationships between consumer attribute race color and one step of the consumer buying process. Previous models of the consumer buying process were based on women's buying behaviors. This research provides information about male buying behaviors for men in this study. This is a small homogeneous sample, further research is needed to assume generalizability.

Retailers who sell to this market can use this information. This information may not be applicable to all male consumers, but provides some insight into the shopping behaviors of this consumer. To reach Black male consumers similar to those in this study, retailers should advertise primarily in magazines. Retailers can also use magazines to target White males; however, retailers should consider that many White males do not use media for apparel information.

Black males in this study scored higher on apparel involvement than White males. Apparel involvement indicates that the consumer is concerned with what he is wearing and purchasing to wear. Thus, retailers and marketers should consider that the purchase of business suits is highly important to some Black males. In advertising, retailers could use this information to develop images that show Black

male involvement in purchasing men's business suits. For example, an ad could show a Black male wearing the suit in a work environment.

Storeowners should recognize that some Black males are willing to stay in stores longer and try on more apparel products because of their involvement with apparel. To service this customer, storeowners need to hire sales associates who are knowledgeable about sales techniques, the product and fashion information. White consumers may not need the same assistance.

The results of this study provide baseline data to conduct further research on the Black male consumer. In addition, this research should serve as a basis for conducting in-depth research on the Black consumer with market segmentation.

CHAPTER VI

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Limitations

Data collection on one campus is a limitation because the demographics are too homogeneous to examine specific demographic influences. For example, Restricted income background is a limitation because of the close proximity of the occupations used in the study. The income base for the administrators and professors were in such a limited range that differences, if they existed, could not be determined.

Another limitation of the study was the size of the population sampled. This is a significant limitation of the study. The respondent number of this study is 30, with 15 Black males sampled and 15 White males sampled. The Black population on the Virginia Tech campus is so small the sample was purposive. The use of a convenience sample was a limitation. A small convenience sample limited the generalizability of this study.

The choice of suits was also a limitation. A larger variety of suits would give the researcher information about more apparel products. The researcher only used three suits, a black suit (traditional), a beige suit (neutral), and an orange suit (ethnic). Other colors and suit colors could be used.

The fact that this project is about just store shopping is a limitation on the study. There are other resources that consumers can use when purchasing men's

business suits. The Internet can be used to purchase men's business suits. Consumers can also use catalogues to purchase business suits.

Suggestions for Future Research

An investigation using unstructured measures to obtain more in-depth information on the shopping and buying behavior patterns of Black male and White male consumers is recommended. These unstructured measures might include open-ended surveys, which allow consumers to discuss what is important to them in their own words. New variables may be identified with this technique.

A more diverse population in terms of age, income and education is needed. The age range of the people for this study was not representative of the general population. Future research should involve people from different occupations whose income will vary. Sampling people of all educational levels is important for generalizability.

Examining other shopping scenarios such as the Internet, catalogue shopping, and the home shopping on television is an option.

Casual wear and other apparel products such as separates were not investigated in this study. More men are wearing these items, as casual wear is more accepted in business. So, a recommendation is to examine these variables with other apparel products.

A similar investigation to the study using a larger sample size, comparing subjects from different jobs and parts of the country, or having variations in the

other demographics could be done. A larger sample size and age group from different regions of the country could lead to more generalizability of the results.

In addition to changes in the sample size and the research variables, suggestions are made for research methods. In studies similar to this one where terms are used to identify individual respondents, researchers should pilot test the terms to gain some insight into what words are acceptable to the respondents. For example, some respondents penciled in specific categories that were not listed, which indicates that other terms might have been more acceptable.

The location where the researcher collects data for a study similar to this one is also important. The researcher found that collecting data from an area that was unfamiliar to the researcher was difficult because of communication problems (e.g., telephone, e-mail). In order to survey respondents in an unfamiliar area, the researcher suggests having a contact person located at or near the data collection site.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed Consent for Participants of Investigative Projects

The title of the project is “Black Males and White Males Apparel Buying Behaviors when Purchasing Men’s Business Suits”.

The principle investigator is Terry Gravely

I. The Purpose of this Research/Project

You are invited to participate in a study about “Male Purchase Behaviors”. This study involves experimentation for the purpose of market research.

This study involves 119 subjects in addition to you.

II. Procedures

The procedures to be used in this research are survey questionnaire.

The time and conditions required for you to participate in this project are 15-20 minutes

The possible risks or discomfort to you as a participant may be: NO RISK

Safeguards that will be used to minimize or discomfort are -You DO NOT put your name or I D number on the Op-scan. You cannot be identified-

III. Benefits of this Project

Your participation in the project will provide the following information that may be helpful: Shopping Behaviors. This information may be used by businesses to provide you with improved products.

No guarantee of benefits have been made to encourage you to participate

You may receive a synopsis or summary of this research when completed. Please leave a self-addressed envelope (or other appropriate means). Write your name & campus address on a separate sheet.

IV. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

The results of this study will be kept strictly confidential. At no time will the researchers release the results about an individual to anyone other than individuals working on this project without your written consent. The information you provide will have your name removed and only a subject number will identify you during analyses and any written reports of the research.

V. Compensation

You will receive no compensation for your participation.

VI. Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.

VII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for projects involving human subjects at Virginia Polytechnic and State University, by the Department of Near Environments.

VIII. Subject's Responsibilities

I know of no reason I cannot participate in this study.

Signature

IX. Subject's Permission (provide tear-off for human subject to keep)

I have read and understand the informed consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project.

If I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project.

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I will contact:

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Appendix B
Business Suit Questionnaire
SECTION I :

Read the following statements and rate *each* according to the scale given below. Indicate your choice by recording the number in the blanks provided to the right of each statement.

Scale: Almost always, very few exceptions	5
Usually, majority of the time	4
Sometimes	3
Seldom, not very often	2
Almost never, very few exceptions	1

1. I try for pleasing color combinations in my clothing. _____
2. I try on some of the newest clothes each season to see how I look in the new styles. _____
3. I “wear dress-up” clothes to make an ordinary occasion seem more exciting. _____
4. I read magazines and newspapers to find out what is new in clothing. _____
5. When I buy a new garment I try many different accessories before I wear it _____
6. I avoid wearing certain clothes, which do not make me feel distinctive. _____
7. I am more careful with my clothing than my friends are with their clothing. _____
8. I look at accessories while shopping to see what I might use together. _____
9. I like to be considered outstandingly well dressed by my friends. _____
10. I spend a good deal of time coordinating the colors of items in my wardrobe. _____
11. When new styles appear on the market, I am one of the first to buy them. _____
12. I get bored with wearing the same type of clothes all the time. _____
13. I have a long-term plan for purchasing more expensive clothes items of clothing. _____
14. I try to buy clothes with well-known labels. _____
15. It’s fun to try on clothes with different accessories to see how they look. _____
16. I carefully coordinate the accessories that I wear with my clothing. _____
17. I plan and prepare clothes to wear several days in advance. _____
18. I try to keep my wardrobe up-to-date. _____
19. I like to know what is new in clothing even if my friends are uninterested and even though I would not wear it myself. _____

SECTION II :

Read the following statements and rate *each* according to the scale given below. Indicate your choice by recording the number in the blanks provided to the right of each statement.

Scale: Almost always, very few exceptions	5
Usually, majority of the time	4
Sometimes	3
Seldom, not very often	2
Almost never, very few exceptions	1

1. I ask my friends what they are wearing to an event before I decide what to wear. _____
2. I am uncomfortable when my clothes are different from all others at the party. _____
3. When I buy a new article of clothing I try to buy something similar to what my friends are wearing. _____
4. I wear what I like even though some of my friends do not approve. _____
5. I have gone places and felt uncomfortable because my clothes were not similar to others. _____
6. I get new clothes for a special occasion if the clothes I have are not the type my friends will be wearing. _____
7. I try to dress like my friends so that others will know that I am part of the group. _____
8. I feel more a part of the group if I am dressed like my friends. _____
9. I would rather miss something than wear clothes that are not appropriate. _____

SECTION III.

Read the following statements and rate *each* according to the scale given below. Indicate your choice by recording the number in the blanks provided to the right of each statement.

Scale: Almost always, very few exceptions	5
Usually, majority of the time	4
Sometimes	3
Seldom, not very often	2
Almost never, very few exceptions	1

1. I try on clothes in shops just to see how I will look in them without really planning to buy them. _____
2. I wear different clothes to impress people. _____
3. I decide on the clothes to wear according to the mood that I'm in that day. _____
4. I have more self-confidence when I wear my best clothes. _____
5. I am aware of being more friendly and outgoing when I wear certain clothing. _____
6. I enjoy wearing unusual clothing even though I attract attention. _____
7. Certain clothes make me feel more sure of myself. _____
8. I feel and act differently if I am wearing my best clothes. _____
9. I buy clothing to boost my morale. _____
10. I get bored with wearing the same type of clothes all the time. _____

SECTION IV:

Indicate your choice by placing a CHECK or X in the spaces provided after each response.

1. Who is the most important influence on your suit choice?(*check only one answer*)

- 1) WIFE _____
- 2) FRIENDS _____
- 3) GIRL-FRIEND _____
- 4) CO-WORKERS _____
- 5) OTHERS _____ (*explain*)_____

2. Which media do you use the **most** when looking for information about business suits?
(*check only one answer*)

- 1) TELEVISION _____
- 2) RADIO _____
- 3) NEWSPAPERS _____
- 4) MAGAZINES _____
- 5) INTERNET _____
- 6) OTHERS _____ (*explain*)_____
- 7) DO NOT USE _____

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 1) ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE _____
- 2) BACHELOR'S DEGREE _____
- 3) MASTER'S DEGREE _____
- 4) Ph.D., Ed. D., J. D., or M. D. _____
- 5) OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (**Specify**)_____

4. What is your marital status ?

- 1) NEVER MARRIED _____
- 2) MARRIED _____
- 3) DIVORCED _____
- 4) SEPARATED _____
- 5) WIDOWED _____

5. What is your age ?
- 1) BELOW 30 _____
 - 2) 30-34 _____
 - 3) 35-39 _____
 - 4) 40-44 _____
 - 5) 45-50 _____
 - 6) 50-60 _____
 - 7) ABOVE 60 _____
6. What was your annual total income that you, yourself, earned last year ?
- 1) BELOW \$29,000 _____
 - 2) \$30,000-49,000 _____
 - 3) \$50,000-69,000 _____
 - 4) \$70,000-79,000 _____
 - 5) \$80,000-89,000 _____
 - 6) ABOVE \$90,000 _____
7. What is your race?
- 1) WHITE _____
 - 2) BLACK _____
8. How do you describe your employment?
- 1) CAREER _____
 - 2) JUST A JOB _____

In order to answer questions 9 and 10 view the photo included in this package and circle your answer.

9. How likely is it that you would buy this suit for business?

Very unlikely		Neutral		Very likely
1	2	3	4	5

10. How likely is it that you would buy this suit for other occasions (**ex. church, dinner**) ?

Very unlikely		Neutral		Very likely
1	2	3	4	5

SECTION V:

Indicate your choice by placing a CHECK or X in the spaces provided after each response.

1. Which color business suit do you own ? (*check all that apply*)
 - 1) BLACK _____
 - 2) BLUE _____
 - 3) PURPLE _____
 - 4) ORANGE _____
 - 5) YELLOW _____
 - 6) GRAY _____
 - 7) OTHER (PLEASE NAME) _____

2. Which color suit for other occasions do you own ? (*check all that apply*)
 - 1) BLACK _____
 - 2) BLUE _____
 - 3) PURPLE _____
 - 4) ORANGE _____
 - 5) YELLOW _____
 - 6) GRAY _____
 - 7) OTHER (PLEASE NAME) _____

3. What is your current job title ? (*please fill in the blank*) _____