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**THE IMPACT OF CLOTHING EXPERIENCE AS A CHILD
WHEN BUYING CLOTHES FOR OUR OWN CHILDREN**

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Project Work presented as partial requirement for obtaining
the Master's degree in Information Management

NOVA Information Management School
Instituto Superior de Estatística e Gestão de Informação
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by

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Work presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in Information Management/ Master's degree in Statistics and Information Management , with a specialization in Marketing Intelligence

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November 2022

AKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is the result of a year's work that closes a chapter in my life, my academic life. Although this journey is somewhat individual, it acquires much more meaning and it is a lot more joyful when shared with people around me.

The company and care of my family, especially my father, my mother and my husband. My father for frequently asking the status of the thesis, without wanting to pressure and always giving me the freedom to do what I thought best. My mother for taking an interest in following up, in her own way that works so well for me, and for wanting to see me close one more chapter. Also a big thank you to my parents, who provided me the opportunity to enroll on a Master.

A sincere thank you to my dear husband João who was crucial to the success of my academic journey. Did not have a special role specifically relatively to the master's degree but for making me believe that I can do anything I want if I dedicate myself. For creating positive pressure and for challenging and demanding me to be a better person, and therefore a better student, throughout these years.

A big thank you to my supervisor, professor Teodóra Szabó-Douat, for such a friendly, easy and close contact along the way. For all the feedback given and guidelines provided since day one.

ABSTRACT

Childhood processes have a strong impact on identity formation but there is still poor understanding about how these process works as children grow. From early ages an individual is constantly being shaped by who surrounds him and that brings consequences for his development as a child and later as an adult. My particular question of the shopping habits of children clothing gives me the chance to explore childhood process and contribute with my research to this topic. To be able to take conclusions I will make a survey with a few open-ended questions almost as if it was a reflective interview. My target are Portuguese parents who have children under de age of 12.

My research aims to understand how the experience these parents had during their childhood about how they were dressed by their parents shaped the way they dress their own children. Are these parents doing to their children the same as their parents did with them? Is it different? In what way? And why is that? Would they like to change something in the way they were raised? Are they making that change on how they are raising their children?

KEYWORDS

Childhood; childhood clothing; parents influence; family of origin; shopping habits.

INDEX

- 1. Introduction.....6
- 2. Literature review7
 - 2.1. Identity7
 - 2.2. Socialization.....8
 - 2.3. Influence9
 - 2.4. Becoming an Adult9
 - 2.5. Household type10
 - 2.6. Theoretical gap12
- 3. Hypothesis development.....14
- Methodology.....15
- 4. Results and discussion16
 - 4.1. Descriptive statistics16
 - 4.1.1. Sample demographic characterization.....16
 - 4.1.2. Brand recognition and childhood experience17
 - 4.1.3. Household composition, clothing experience & shopping habits18
 - 4.1.4. Financial situation23
 - 4.2. Hypothesis Testing27
 - 4.2.1. Hypothesis 127
 - 4.2.2. Hypothesis 228
 - 4.2.3. Hypothesis 328
 - 4.2.4. Hypothesis 429
- 5. Conclusions.....30
- 6. Limitations and recommendations for future works31
- 7. References.....32
- 8. Appendix.....37
 - Annex 1 - Online survey.....37

TABLE INDEX

Table 1 – <i>Age</i>	17
Table 2 – <i>Gender</i>	17
Table 3 – <i>Number of siblings</i>	19
Table 4 – <i>Number of children</i>	19
Table 5 – <i>Did your parents received or do you receive second-hand clothing for your children from family and friends?</i>	20
Table 6 - <i>Did you have high quality clothing as a child or do you buy high quality clothing for your children as a parent?</i>	20
Table 7 - <i>In your opinion, do you spend more money on your kids clothing than your parents spent at yours?</i>	21
Table 8 - <i>In your opinion, are you more concerned about your children clothing than your parents were about yours?</i>	22
Table 9 – <i>Shopping habits when buying clothes for respondent himself and for children</i>	22
Table 10 – <i>Preference on buying clothes</i>	23
Table 11 – <i>Impact of financial situation on buying high quality clothing</i>	24
Table 12 – <i>Do you live better financially now than your parents when they were your age?</i>	24
Table 13 – <i>Academic Qualifications</i>	25
Table 14 – <i>Annual household income</i>	25
Table 15 – <i>House Situation</i>	26
Table 16 – <i>Number of vehicles per household</i>	26
Table 17 – <i>Out of country vacation in the last year</i>	27

1. INTRODUCTION

From the first steps to adulthood people who raised us play a major role on our way of being and how we see the world. Our family of origin is the first one to teach us and gives us tools to distinguish between right and wrong, guidelines are given to us about what we should aspire and what should be put aside. Our parents social status, education, financial situation, political position and even our parents religion shape us since the very beginning. As we are growing we start to make our first choices but we are already somehow shaped and every decision we make is already influenced in a certain way for our family of origin whether we like it or not. My research tries to shed a light on this key element of individual's growing process: the family of origin and in what way parents influence individuals on how they dress their children based on their childhood clothing experience. The aim of this study is to make contributions to the hypothesis which asserts that an individual clothing experience as a child can have a direct influence on their behavior when buying clothes for their own children.

I believe this is an important topic to study since, in today's world, the interest and real value of understanding consumer motivations is increasing. Through the analysis of existing studies and also supported by the questionnaire results I developed, I will explore a part of individuals' lives that is likely to have a relevant impact on the way we consume: childhood. Whether you are a simple reader or someone from a consumer goods brand I think you can take advantage of what I write in this study, either from a more psychological or economic way. According to Tsiotou (2006), purchase intention information could support marketing decisions linked to products, facilitate market segmentation and contribute to the construction of promotion plans and my thesis is a tentative to help understand better customer purchase intention related with family of origin and type of household.

In my thesis I contribute to the literature in three aspects: first, I analyze the relationship between clothing experience as a child and the consumption habits when buying clothes for children. Second, I take into account the household type in terms of number of siblings, children and also financial situation. Third, the differences between the experience these individuals lived as a child and the experience they are giving to their own children.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. IDENTITY

As claimed by Stets and Burke (2000), social psychology has two different theories which contribute to the general theory of the self. Even knowing there are differences between the two theories it is mandatory that we link them to each other, only by linking them we can achieve a holistic and fully integrated view of the self. We can divide theories in social identity theory and identity theory. In both theories the self is reflexive and has the ability to classify itself when making a comparison with others. This process has different names on both theories: self-categorization in social identity one and identification on the identity one. Identity is also divergent in both theories. According to social identity theory, identity is an individual perception of belonging to a specific social category or group (group of people who has a social identification in common). By comparing themselves to other individuals, an individual can label people into in-group or out-group whether they are similar or not with them respectively. On the other hand, according to the identity theory states that identity is the defined by occupying a specific role and the integration of the meaning and expectation associated with that role and its performance (Stets & Burke, 2000).

It is Eccles (1999) who defines time between childhood and the beginning of adolescence (from 6 to 14 years old) as an important time for development progress that together establish sense of identity of children. It is during this time between 6 and 14 years old that individuals start to become more involved in the world of their families by becoming more conscious of who they are and what role do they have, more independent and capable of more. The first friends appear during these ages and therefore social relationships start to happen not only because of their families but by their own by entering school and other social groups (such sports, church, summer camps, extracurricular activities). Having all these together, children create a sense of individuality developing an identity (Eccles 1999).

According to a study (Braun et al, 2007), it was verified that individual's childhood experience have a direct influence and therefore an impact on ongoing and future preferences in predictable ways along the customer life cycle. An important factor when choosing a brand can be defined as self-congruity which refers to the intensity of congruence between the consumer's image and the brand image (Sirgy et al, 2008). This theory suggests that consumer

behavior of an individual is directly affected by the degree to which this individual perceives the match between the individual's self-concept and brand user image (Sirgy et al, 1997). The same authors believe that consumer preference for a brand increases the more congruence there is between the individual self-image and brand user image (Sirgy et al, 1997). Several research demonstrated that self-congruity is a very relevant driver of consumer brand preferences (Jamal & Al-Marri, 2007; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Kressmann et al., 2006). To know whether an individual's self-perception of personality is consistent or not with a certain type of product, the individual must be educated and have a reasonable level of self-knowledge. This education and self-knowledge evolve over time, with childhood playing a central role (Eccles, 1999).

2.2. SOCIALIZATION

Socialization is one of the strongest influencer on consumer habits in a way that the influence of others on our individual behavior is an important determinant to our consumption habits (Bearden et al., 1989). Consumer socialization is the process by which people develop consumer-related skills, knowledge, and attitudes (Moschis & Churchill 1978) and therefore peers can have a strong influence towards a potential consumer. Peers can appear as friends or family, more specifically siblings or close cousins around same age. Bandura says that everyone is a passive participant in the learning process where every point of view and decision is the result from the socialization with others. This is something that will never go away, we will always live in society and we will be forever, as individuals, influenced by the ones who surround us. The first and one of the most intense contacts with socializations begins right after we born, in our own houses and the first years of life are crucial to our development. Childhood has a crucial impact on our adult lives, whether positive or negative. Childhood socialization is the process by which a child's behaviors, attitudes, and social skills are influenced by parents (or paternal figures) which mold the child into a society member (Maccoby and Martin 1983; Taylor, Clayton, and Rowley 2004). It is during the first years of life that each one of us is shaped into what is going to be in the future in terms of beliefs, way of thinking and where necessary skills to function in the society are developed.

2.3. INFLUENCE

At first glance it may seem that brands are solely responsible for attracting and retaining customers but in fact their job is not only within the scope of the company. From the moment we live in a society and are part of a community, we are constantly being flooded with information and stimulus that certainly influence, even if not consciencely, who we are and therefore the way we make decisions whether they are important or practically irrelevant. Even knowing that social persuasion is an integral part of our everyday lives it is not easy to persuade others to change their attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors because it almost always meets resistance and the fear of losing control or identity (Benoliel, M. et al., 2020). There are a few reasons for this to happen. First, for centuries humans were not used to interact with strangers. Second, the power of persuasion and influence are usually underestimated. And third, most people are self-centered and have the tendency to influence others from their self-perspective and not from the recipient's perspective (Benoliel, M. et al., 2020). This is a phenomenon that happen naturally inside every household and it must be taken into account.

It is around age six when a major shift happens in children's cognitive abilities. All countries which provide official school for their children have students entering school between their 5 and 7 years old (Eccles, 1999). It is consensual among different theories that during this time children develop their way of thinking and the ability to reflect on themselves increases. Along with this ability they also begin to absorb the perspective of others and giving it true credit because they are able to understand it (Eccles, 1999).

Lee & Beatty (2002) studied the influence of mothers and fathers on decision making and came to the conclusion that mothers are the ones that make more an influence effort when compared with fathers. Decisions related to how to run the household are much more wife-dominant. In a family with children, dressing children is part of the daily routine of running an household and therefore it is possible to conclude that mothers play a more significant role than fathers in terms of what children have to wear.

2.4. BECOMING AN ADULT

The entry into adult life was defined by Modell et al. (1976) using five different social markers that are distinct stages of life: finishing education; going to the labor market; leaving

the original or family home; marrying and later the foundation of a new family or household. Bringing to this theory to the present day it is not difficult to think that a life path is not always as outlined as the one described by Modell et al (1976). After Modell et al., it was Cavalli & Galland (1995) who tried to learn this adulthood process and they came to the conclusion that there are two phases on the adult definition: from school to having a job and from the family of origin to the family of procreation.

The transition from youth to adulthood is now more tricky than it was and some decades ago society looked into it has something definitive. Nowadays it is common to happen what Walther & Biggart (2005) called as Yo-Yo Transitions - return to live with parents after having an experience of independent living. Furlong & Cartmel (2007) named extended dependency to characterize the fact that modern youth is leaving home later each day due to many factors such as lack of job, money or commitment with a partner. Both phenomena described by Walther & Biggart (2005) and by Furlong & Cartmel (2007) are very relevant to this research because this new modern reality of leaving parents' house sustains one of the particularities of my research: the influence of the family of origin in the formation of adults and later what type of parents they will be.

It is evident that how parents dress their children can be reflected on shopping behavior such as in types of clothes, brands categories, shopping frequency, new or second handed clothes and other particularities. The act of purchase is the end of a decision-making process of a need or a desire of having a particular item. Decision-making has three core elements: judgement, or in what way individuals predict the consequences of possible choices; preference, how individuals balance those consequences; and choice, or in what way individuals put judgments and preferences together to make the final decision (Fischhoff & Broomell, 2020).

2.5. HOUSEHOLD TYPE

Our household is where we grow and are developed as individuals, with a strong emotional component linked to it, making it an important element for current and further customer experience (Havlina & Holbrook, 1986). As we are aware, consumers can engage emotionally with a brand and grow positive feelings towards it (Schmitt, 1999). This theory

opens a door for the relation between childhood brand usage and later consumption in order to respond to this stimulus of brand trust and childhood memories.

Several studies show us a positive relationship between the expected family size and the number of siblings and one possible reason for this positive correlation is the transposal of family values from parents to children (Buhr et al, 2018). After raising this finding, it is reasonable to think that this effect of value transmission can be extended to other habits and way of purchasing from parents to children. When it comes to clothing, there is no doubt that the way someone was usually dressed as a child resulted in a relationship between that individual and the clothing and therefore has an impact on his or her future shopping habits, whether positive (doing the same as what is was lived during childhood), or negative (doing something different than what is was lived during childhood). Parents are responsible for the first contact that children have with the world of consumption and therefor they are very important in defining the young consumers who in the future will also be responsible for other human beings.

In terms of household size, families with fewer children have the ability to provide more resources to them and also be more supportive when speaking about education (Blake, 1981). Another Blake (1981) insight was that parents' capacity of providing more to their children results in higher educational levels which will have has a consequence higher income and therefore better welfare outcomes along their adult life.

Trust is one of the essential components of long lasting and reliable connections between individuals. According to Fournier's research (1998) personal relationships were often used as a comparison when describing the connection between purchaser and the brand. Based on these findings, we can consider that using a clothing brand during childhood, can create trust between brands and these children when becoming parents and this can result in a long-term relation between these individuals and the brand.

2.6. THEORETICAL GAP

Several studies were made about the consequences that childhood has on individual's life but the vast majority are related to health subjects such as oral hygiene (Tabassum S. et al 2020, Sharna N. et al. 2019, Harris R. et al 2004), eating habits (Wells R. et al 2020, Ogden C. et al. 2014, Beauchamp G., Mennella J. 2009), physical and psychological diseases (Ibrahim M. et al 2017, Kinge & Morris 2018, Bernstein D. et al 2003, Costello E. et al 2003) and violence and aggressive behavior (Bellis M. et al. 2013, Felitti V. et al.1998, Anda R. et al. 2006). During my research It was very difficult to find studies about childhood consequences on decision making as adults. It is easy to understand that decision making process is a much more subjective matter when compared with health situations but nevertheless it seems that decision making process is being put aside.

My research arises from this fact, an important part of who we are - since who we are depends on how we live - is being underestimated by literature and therefore this happens to be an opportunity for this present study. There is a need to be concrete therefore I decided to develop a study focused on how childhood influences individuals' way of looking and buying clothes to their children. Children's clothing can be an important aspect to analyze parents shopping behavior and consumption. Clothes are one of the first things bought by parents to their children and it is something that is constantly being replaced to keep up with growth. This constant need makes guaranteeing children clothing an habit whether parents like it or not and requires repeated consumption decisions.

For some today's parents (and this is stronger on mothers) the decisions made about their children clothing may be challenging since it can contribute to define their way of parenting not only to their children but also to other adults. How parents dress their children can work as an indicator of the family social status and may increase pressure on mothers and fathers about the right way of parenting (Rose, 2013). Dress code has the ability to place people in the class hierarchy and the way individuals dress can work as a statement about social class (Crane 2000). This makes possible that child clothing can act as a resource for social class identity perception (Nenga, 2003). During social interaction it is important not to forget the connections between dress and identity since how individuals dress influences others perception about them and results in associations with a certain type of person. It is possible

for us to think about how we dress as part of our identity and personal style but the truth is that, nowadays, our style is not personal but social, shaped and limited by countless social influences (Taylor and Francis, 2019). The clothes we wear can attribute us a certain social status outside our house but sometimes it is simply a cover used as self-defense.

3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Based on the literature review, there are a few questions that can be raised. In order to take conclusions, the following hypothesis were formed:

- **Hypothesis 1:** The more children you have the less frequent you buy clothes for your children.
 - With this hypothesis I intend to find a positive correlation between the dependent variable shopping frequency and the independent variable number of children. As Buhr et al (2018) argue there is a positive relationship between the expected family size and the number of siblings and I believe that, by having a bigger family, the need to chop for children clothing is smaller.
- **Hypothesis 2:** The more children clothing received from family and friends the more high quality clothing their parents buy.
 - By having a bigger support in terms of receiving clothing (and probably other kind of baby materials) for their children, individual can spend more and improve quality in what they provide for their children.
- **Hypothesis 3:** The more parents buy clothing for their children the more high quality clothing they buy.
 - Through this hypothesis I want to clarify if someone that shops more often is likely to value more and therefore to provide more high quality clothing to their children.
- **Hypothesis 4:** The more high quality clothing parents buy the more concerned parents are about how they dress their children.
 - By analyzing this hypothesis I plan to find a correlation between clothing concern and high quality possession.

METHODOLOGY

My research is both quantitative and qualitative. It is quantitative in a way that I will be collecting data to analyze statistical relationships; it is qualitative when I address more in-depth questions about how these parents lived their childhood related to clothing, as researcher I want to explore the why and how type of questions. It is crucial for this research to have context of how these parents look in retrospective to their childhood to make it possible to relate their memories to how they behave currently as parents. As Yin (2013) explains the qualitative research is needed when the researcher has a major focus on “a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context”. One of the purposes of this type of research is to have a look into real life phenomenon that participants have gone through, in my case, it is about the childhood experience they had in terms of clothing. The second part of the study is to evaluate how this experience has impacted the way they are parenting their children in terms of clothing. In order to gather information and lead my research to more accurate conclusions I will conduct an exploratory research.

The primary data is specifically pursued with the purpose of the research (Hramiak, 2005) and the participants are male and female Portuguese parents who have children below 12 years old. The questionnaire was divided into 3 major parts:

1. **Brand recognition and childhood experience related to clothing:** participants were asked to write the first three brands of children clothing that came to mind and to answer an open question about participants childhood experience related to clothing where they could tell an remarkable episode of their childhood.
2. **Household composition, clothing experience & shopping habits:** number of siblings, number of children, birth order, origin of clothing when a child, new vs 2nd hand clothing, experience with high quality clothing as a child and as a parent, frequency of clothing purchase for himself vs for children, etc.
3. **Financial situation and academic qualification:** comparison of clothing expenditures of participants and their parents, academic qualification, annual income, house situation between rented or owned, etc.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As already mentioned, the data were obtained through an online questionnaire (Annex 1 - Survey) built in Qualtrics Online Software platform. The questionnaire was shared through a link on social networks and it was mandatory that participants would be portuguese adults, both male and female, parents of children below 12 years old. The results were analyzed through JASP (Jeffrey's Amazing Statistics Program) online program.

In the first place I analyzed the information gathered in a descriptive way in order to characterize the sample and to make a mapping of the reality of respondents related to the three main parts of the survey: Brand recognition and childhood experience related to clothing; Household composition, clothing experience & shopping habits; Financial situation and academic qualification. Secondly, I analyzed data more deeply, searching for statistical significance, by relating the different variables in order to respond to the formulated hypotheses, whether they are verified or not.

In many questions the scale used was Likert Scale which allows respondents to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement.

4.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.1.1. Sample demographic characterization

Although there were over 200 people answering the questionnaire, the total number of valid participants was 155 (only 155 participants answered the entire questionnaire). The age of the valid participants ranged from 25 to 48 years of age, with the average age being 33 years old. Approximately 81% (N=125) of the participants were female and 19% (N=30) were male. All participants were Portuguese parents.

Table 1 – Age

Age	N	%
25 - 30	46	29,68%
31-35	69	44,52%
36-40	26	16,77%
41-45	11	7,10%
46-50	3	1,94%
	155	100%

Table 2 – Gender

Gender	N	%
Male	30	19,35%
Female	125	80,65%
	155	100%

4.1.2. Brand recognition and childhood experience

Regarding one of the initial questions about which are the first 3 brands of children's clothing that come to mind, it was possible to easily identify a top 3 in the first, second and third brand identified. As the first top of mind brand the top 3 clothing brands were Zippy (N=40), Zara Kids (N=37) and Gocco (N=14); the top 3 clothing brands as second top of mind brands were Zara Kids (N=35), Zippy (N=24) and H&M (N=15); the third top of mind brand the top 3 clothing brands were Zippy (N=27), Zara Kids (N=13) and Patinhos (N=14).

The second question of the survey was an open-ended question where the participant could write memories about his childhood experience. In this question it was possible to verify a few distinct types of memories that can be classified as:

- **Positive (80% of respondents, N=124)** when respondents openly say *“My parents were relaxed”, “We had comfortable clothes, my parents weren’t very picky. They wanted us to be able to run so the clothes were easy”, “I think it was balanced, I don’t have bad memories”, “Very relaxed, my parents were cool”, “I remember being at home and it started to rain a lot, we were already on pajamas but my father took me and 2 sisters to play*

in the rain, my parents were not very stricter”, “Clothing was never an issue to me”, “Clothing has always been an unimportant detail, seen only as utilitarian.”, “I always had clothes to wear and therefore always had the best relationship”, “Always had free movement clothes, nothing fancy, normal for a child to get dirty”, “Very calm, I have no big memories about it”, “It was fine, I don’t feel the need to change anything”

- **Negative (12% of respondents, N=18)** when participants answer like *“A little stricter, not comfortable clothes, always looking very nice and smelling good”, “We didn’t get a say on what we wore. My parents bought me a rain jacket two sizes bigger what I needed to make sure it will last and I never liked that jacket.”, “Too many rules, always very well dressed”, “Very conservative clothing”, “My mom was very concern about appearances.”*

- **Neutral (8% of respondents, N=13)** when respondents argue that they don’t have a specific memory about their childhood experience or they don’t make a judgement if it was good or not as it was.

4.1.3. Household composition, clothing experience & shopping habits

Since one of the main goals of this study is to be able to draw parallels between the participants' lives as children and as parents in relation to clothing, throughout the questionnaire, the same questions are asked regarding the participants' current lives and also directly related to their own parents. As a result, it was possible to collect relevant data not only about participants' current life but also about their childhood life where parents play a major role.

Based on the results given by the questionnaire it is possible to conclude that 63% (N=98) of participants have 2 or more siblings and that more than 31% (N=49) has 3 or more children. In order to statistically analyze the relationship between number of siblings and number of children, by having the information regarding these two indicators and doing the ANOVA analysis for the dependent variable "Number of Children" the results show that there is a statistically significant effect $F(1,155)=2.86, p=0.026$.

Table 3 – Number of siblings

Siblings	N	%
0	15	9,68%
1	42	27,10%
2	38	24,52%
3	33	21,29%
More than 3	27	17,42%
	155	100%

Table 4 – Number of children

Children	N	%
1	36	23,23%
2	70	45,16%
3	43	27,74%
More than 3	6	3,87%
	155	100%

Regarding the origin of clothes in participants' childhood, 70% (N=109) of the respondents stated that most of their clothes as a child were bought by their parents and 30% (N=46) claimed that most of their clothes as a child were not bought by their parents.

When asking about receiving clothing for children from family and friends it was relevant to make this same question both about to respondents as children as to respondents as parents. The results showed that there is a statistically significant effect between these two values showing $F(1,155)=5.63$, $p = 0.023$. As shown below it is possible to verify the frequency distribution being relatively similar in both scenarios.

Table 5 – Did your parents received or do you receive second-hand clothing for your children from family and friends?

Frequency	Respondents' parents		Respondents' children	
	N	%	N	%
1 (did not receive second-hand clothing at all)	33	21,29%	13	8,39%
2	17	10,97%	9	5,81%
3	27	17,42%	19	12,26%
4	23	14,84%	26	16,77%
5	29	18,71%	41	26,45%
6	10	6,45%	22	14,19%
7 (did receive almost every clothing second-hand)	16	10,32%	25	16,13%
	155	100%	155	100%

When it comes to high quality clothing it is possible to see that the tendency to buy this type of clothing is decreasing. When asked about their childhood, 23% of the respondents say that most of their clothes during childhood were of high quality, and nowadays, when they buy clothes for their children, only 18% say they buy high quality clothes for their children. When doing the analysis to try to find a correlation between these two factors it was possible to verify that there is no statistically significant relationship between having had high quality clothing as a child and buying high quality clothing for children.

Table 6 - Did you have high quality clothing as a child or do you buy high quality clothing for your children as a parent?

Frequency	As a child		As a parent	
	N	%	N	%
1 (mostly no)	47	30,32%	60	38,71%
2	17	10,97%	20	12,90%
3	26	16,77%	26	16,77%
4 (balanced)	29	18,71%	21	13,55%
5	14	9,03%	15	9,68%
6	8	5,16%	8	5,16%
7 (mostly yes)	14	9,03%	5	3,23%
	155	100%	155	100%

In this study, it was considered relevant to ascertain the respondents' feelings about the expenses associated with children's clothing when comparing their current expenses and their parents' expenses during respondents' childhood. It could be verified that the answers are quite balanced since 31% (N=48) believe they spend less on their children clothing than their parents did, 35% (N=55) believe that they spend around the same amount on children clothing as their parents did and 34% (N=52) believe that they spend more on children clothing than their parents did.

Table 7 – In your opinion, do you spend more money on your kids clothing than your parents spent at yours? (please do not consider price inflation)

Clothing Expenditure on children clothing	N	%
1 (I spend less)	25	16,13%
2	9	5,81%
3	14	9,03%
4 (I spend equal)	55	35,48%
5	17	10,97%
6	15	9,68%
7 (I spend more)	20	12,90%
	155	100%

Regarding children clothing concern, by the answers given it was verified that 77% of respondents believe that they are equally or more concerned about their children's clothing than their parents. We can match this information with the answer of the open question about childhood memories related to clothing: since 80% of respondents (N=124) consider to have had a good experience with clothing in their childhood and many of them specifically refers that considers parents to be relaxed and not very concerned about clothing during participants' childhood.

Table 8 - In your opinion, are you more concerned about your children clothing than your parents were about yours?

Clothing concern	N	%
1 (no, respondent doesn't care more)	24	15,48%
2	5	3,23%
3	7	4,52%
4 (equal)	72	46,45%
5	18	11,61%
6	13	8,39%
7 (yes, respondent cares more)	16	10,32%
	155	100%

Regarding clothing shopping habits, it was important to distinguish between shopping clothing for the respondents themselves or shopping clothing for respondents' children since this segregation would enable to compare consumer type in these two distinct ways of shopping.

Table 9 – Shopping habits when buying clothes for respondent himself and for children

Frequency	For respondent		For respondents' children	
	N	%	N	%
Once per year or less	22	14,19%	5	3,23%
Every 6 months	36	23,23%	23	14,84%
Every 3 months	63	40,65%	69	44,52%
Once a month	33	21,29%	51	32,90%
Once in every two weeks	0	0,00%	5	3,23%
Once per week or more	1	0,65%	2	1,29%
	155	100%	155	100%

As shown above, there are significant differences in clothing shopping habits for the respondents and for their children. Only 22% (N=34) of respondents shop with a frequency of once a month or more when buying clothes for themselves. When buying clothes for children, 37% (N=58) of respondents shops with a frequency of once a month or more.

The question that followed this one was about shopping preference between buying clothing for themselves or for children. As we can verify in the table below, only 21% (N=33) of respondents prefer to buy clothing for themselves rather than for their children, 21% (N=33) do not have a preference and the remaining prefer to buy clothing for their children.

Table 10 – Preference on buying clothes

Shopping preference	N	%
1 (for me)	24	15,48%
2	6	3,87%
3	3	1,94%
4 (equal)	33	21,29%
5	20	12,90%
6	21	13,55%
7 (for my children)	48	30,97%
	155	100%

4.1.4. Financial situation

The first question in this part of the survey was if high quality clothing buying will increase if respondents or respondents parents had more money. When answering about their own financial capacity, 57% of respondents (N=88) said they will not buy more high quality clothing if they had more money. Exactly the same can be verified when respondents answer the same question regarding their parents financial situation since also 57% of respondents (N=88) argue that their parents would not buy more high quality clothes if they had more money at the time. 14% (N=21) of respondents claim that if they had more money they will definitely buy more high quality clothing for their children and 12% (N=18) of respondents believe that their parents will also definitely do it if they had more money.

Table 11 – Impact of financial situation on buying high quality clothing

Increase high quality clothing shopping	If respondents had more money		If respondents' parents had more money	
	N	%	N	%
1 (definitely no)	56	36,13%	48	30,97%
2	13	8,39%	14	9,03%
3	19	12,26%	26	16,77%
4 (equal)	19	12,26%	24	15,48%
5	21	13,55%	18	11,61%
6	6	3,87%	7	4,52%
7 (definitely yes)	21	13,55%	18	11,61%
	155	100%	155	100%

The second part of the question was if respondents believed to live better or worse financially than their parents lived during respondents' childhood. In total, 55% (N=85) feel that they live worse financially than they parents did when they were their age, 15% (N=24) of respondents believe that their financial status is equivalent to that of their parents when they were their age and 30% (N=46) claim that they live better than their parents did at the same life stage.

Table 12 – Do you live better financially now than your parents when they were your age?

Financial situation	N	%
1 (definitely no)	48	30,97%
2	17	10,97%
3	20	12,90%
4 (equal)	24	15,48%
5	16	10,32%
6	11	7,10%
7 (definitely yes)	19	12,26%
	155	100%

In terms of academic qualifications, only 3% (N=4) of respondents has less than a bachelor degree, being the most common qualification having a master degree (70%, N=108).

Regarding the respondents' parents, it is possible to state that both fathers and mothers have high levels of education, with 79% (N=122) of them holding at least a bachelor's degree.

Table 13 – Academic Qualifications

Academic Qualification	Respondent		Father		Mother	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary School or less	2	1,29%	4	2,58%	4	2,58%
Secondary technical school	1	0,65%	22	14,19%	20	12,90%
Secondary grammar school	1	0,65%	7	4,52%	9	5,81%
Bachelor's degree	41	26,45%	73	47,10%	84	54,19%
Master's degree	108	69,68%	38	24,52%	28	18,06%
Phd or above	2	1,29%	11	7,10%	10	6,45%
	155	100%	155	100%	155	100%

When it comes to the financial situation, we can say that respondents parents have bigger annual households income than respondents. In total, 45% (N=69) of respondents earn less than 50.000€ per year whereas only 27% (N=42) of respondents parents earn less than 50.000€ as annual household income. When it comes to annual incomes above 50.000€, parents also take advantage: 46% (N=72) of respondents exceed 50.000€/year and in parents this number increases to 53% (N=82). This was a question where 9% (N=14) of respondents preferred not to answer about their own income and 21% (N=32) of respondents also preferred not to answer about parents income.

Table 14 – Annual household income

Annual household income	Respondents		Parents	
	N	%	N	%
Less than 25.000€ per year	12	7,74%	8	5,16%
From 25.000€ to 50.000€ per year	57	36,77%	34	21,94%
From 50.000€ to 80.000€ per year	56	36,13%	47	30,32%
+80.000€ per year	16	10,32%	35	22,58%
Prefer not to say	14	9,03%	31	20,00%
	155	100%	155	100%

Other indicators that were considered relevant and that help to understand an individual's financial situation were whether they are renting or have bought the house where they live, the number of vehicles in the household, and whether they have made any trips outside the country in the last year. All these questions were made about respondents and also about their parents in order to be able to compare both realities.

When comparing house situation between respondents and their parents when they were children it was possible to verify that there are less respondents owning a house than their parents did when they were in the same stage of life. Nowadays 66% (N=102) of respondents own the house where they live while 83% (N=128) of respondents' parents owned the house when respondents were children.

Table 15 – House Situation

House Situation	Respondents		Parents when respondents were children	
	N	%	N	%
Owned	102	65,81%	128	82,58%
Rented	53	34,19%	27	17,42%
	155	100%	155	100%

Regarding the number of vehicles per household, as shown below, it was possible to ascertain that numbers are very similar between respondents and their parents when respondents were children.

Table 16 – Number of vehicles per household

Number of Vehicles	Respondents		Parents when respondents were children	
	N	%	N	%
0	4	2,58%	1	0,65%
1	47	30,32%	47	30,32%
2	82	52,90%	89	57,42%
3	18	11,61%	12	7,74%
More than 3	4	2,58%	6	3,87%
	155	100%	155	100%

This similarity also takes place when comparing out of country vacations between respondents and their parents as evidenced below.

Table 17 – Out of country vacation in the last year

Out of country vacation	Respondents		Parents	
	N	%	N	%
No	77	49,68%	75	48,39%
Yes	78	50,32%	80	51,61%
	155	100%	155	100%

4.2. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

To validate the hypotheses established for the study, a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. In each of the hypotheses, the dependent and independent variable and the result of the statistical significance analysis will be identified. Statistical significance will be considered significant whenever $p > 0.05$.

4.2.1. Hypothesis 1

H1: The more children you have the less frequent you buy clothing for your children.

In this first hypothesis the independent variable is “number of children” and the dependent variable is “frequency shopping of children clothing”. By analyzing the relationship between these two variables, results show that the results show that there is a statistically significant effect: $F(1,155)=3.775$, $p=0.012$.

In order to get additional information for this hypothesis it was also performed the analysis between the independent variable “number of siblings” and the dependent variable “number of children”, and found statistical significance: $F(1,155)=2.860$, $p=0.026$. This conclusion supports Buhr et al (2018) argument that is a positive relationship between the expected family size and the number of siblings.

At a first glance this positive effect between the two variables of hypothesis 1 can be surprising but if we but if we take into account that children's clothing is typically worn by more than one child, and assuming as we could verify above that those who have more

children also have more siblings, then it is easy to see why the correlation in hypothesis 1 holds true.

Final conclusion: Hypothesis 1 is supported.

4.2.2. Hypothesis 2

H2: The more children clothing received from family and friends the more high quality clothing their parents buy.

The independent variable is “amount of children clothing received from family and friends” and the dependent variable is “high quality children clothing shopping”. By performing the analysis it was verified that the relation between this two components exists since there is a statistically significant effect: $F(1,155)=3.495$, $p=0.030$. This is also verified (although not so strongly) regarding childhood clothing of respondents where the more children clothing respondents received as a child the more high quality they claim they had: $F(1,155)=2.105$, $p=0.046$. It could have been interesting to study and understand the origin of the high quality clothing of this children: was it bough or was it given (or borrowed) from family and friends?

Also relatively to high quality clothing it was also unsurprisingly verified that the higher the annual income of parents, the more high-quality clothing they buy: $F(1,155)=2.401$, $p=0.05$. Additionally, the more respondents believe they are in a better financial situation than their parents were at the same life status the more high quality clothing they buy for their children: $F(1,155)=2.757$, $p=0.014$.

Final conclusion: Hypothesis 2 is supported.

4.2.3. Hypothesis 3

H3: The more parents buy clothing for their children the more high quality clothing they buy.

In the third hypothesis the independent variable is “frequency shopping of children clothing” and the dependent variable is “high quality children clothing shopping”. By analyzing

the relationship between these two variables, results show that the results show that there is a statistically significant effect: $F(1,155)=22321, p=0.046$.

Additionally, when trying to find a relationship between shopping habits of respondents for themselves (as dependent variable) and for their children (as independent variable) it was performed the analysis of these two variables and it was found that if an individual buys more children clothing that doesn't mean that the same individual also buys more clothing for himself since the test was not statistically significant.

Final conclusion: Hypothesis 3 is supported.

4.2.4. Hypothesis 4

H4: The more high quality clothing parents buy the more concerned they are about how they dress their children.

The independent variable is "high quality children clothing shopping" and the dependent variable is "parents concern of children clothing". By performing the analysis it was verified that the relation between this two components exists since there is a statistically significant effect: $F(1,155)=3.582, p=0.02$.

Another test made was assuming as variable independent "frequency shopping of children clothing" and as dependent variable "parents clothing concern of children clothing" and the conclusion was that there is not a correlation between them: $F(1,155)=1.587, p=0.167$. In addition to this it was also performed another analysis trying to find an effect between the number of children (independent variable) and parents concern of children clothing (dependent variable) and it was verified that there wasn't a statistically significant effect: $F(1,155)=1.091, p=0.355$.

Final conclusion: Hypothesis 4 is supported.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Through the study and the analysis of the survey results it was possible to reach some conclusions regarding the impact of the previous clothing experience as a child when dressing children as a parent. It was also possible to verify relationships between the type of household and shopping behavior in terms of children clothing and concern about how children are dressed.

The result of the descriptive analysis of the study concluded that the vast majority of participants had a positive experience related to clothing as a child and this automatically imbues the study with a positive stamp. The majority of respondents tend to believe that their financial situation is equivalent or worse than the financial situation their parents had when they were at the same life stage and that can be seen as a sign of the times and struggling of families nowadays.

It was also interesting to find that the great majority of respondents (and considering that most of respondents were female) prefers to buy clothing for their children instead of buying for themselves.

Another conclusion taken was that there was a big similarity in terms of children clothing received from family and friends both in respondents parents and respondents. A possible explanation to this is the fact that they are part of relatively large families making it easier children clothing sharing.

The conclusions of this research are a small contribution to the study of the impact of childhood on the formation of adults who later become parents and their relationship with children clothing also based on what they lived as children. I believe this is a topic that is worth exploring also in a psychological way since the whole experience as a child (shapes our way of being).

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORKS

While it was possible to draw a few interesting conclusions, however, it is important to mention and highlight some limitations that emerged during the course of the study, and which are points that may have impacted the research.

The vast majority of the results I got through my survey came from female voices (81%, N=125). This is not surprising since this is a topic that is naturally of greater interest to the female gender. However, it would be important to have more responses from fathers who demonstrate their viewpoint as fathers.

It would also be good to be able to gather information from a more diverse sample of participants. As we could see from the academic qualifications, the majority of the sample is quite well qualified. In relation to the annual household income, we can also say that this is a group of people in a relatively comfortable financial situation and therefore it would be interesting to reach people with more diverse incomes in order to be able to aggregate more diverse information.

In order to collect more in-depth information it might be interesting to do this same study by collecting primary data in interview mode rather than in online survey mode. This way it would be possible to deepen some issues and have the opportunity to ask some questions that a multiple choice questionnaire does not allow.

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8. APPENDIX

ANNEX 1 - ONLINE SURVEY

Q0 – Questionnaire introduction

Dear participant,

this survey will contribute to my Master thesis focused on parents' shopping habits in children clothing.

If you have children below 12 years old this survey is for you. Your response is very important for my research, it is anonymous and will be used only for academic purposes. You can write your answers in Portuguese if you prefer.

Thank you very much for your help and feel free to share it with families that have kids below 12 years old.

Q1 - Please write a name of 3 clothing brands/stores for kids that come to your mind.

Q2- Why did you chose those 3 brands/stores?

Q3 - How was your childhood related to clothing? To help you answer you may think about what and how did you wear, where did the clothes came from (bought or 2nd handed), if you wore high quality clothes, how concerned were your parents about your clothes, if you shared clothing with your siblings etc.

Q4.1 - How many siblings do you have?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- More than 3

Q4.2 - How many children do you have?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

Q5 - What is your birth order?

- I am the oldest
- I am a middle child
- I am the youngest
- I am an only child

Q6 - Where did your clothes come from when you were a child?

- Most of my clothes as a child were bought by my parents
- Most of my clothes as a child were not bought by my parents

Q7.1- Did your parents receive second-hand clothing for their children from family/friends?

- 1 (did not receive second-hand clothing at all)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (did receive almost every clothing second-hand)

Q7.2 - Do you receive second-hand clothing for their children from family/friends?

- 1 (did not receive second-hand clothing at all)
- 2
- 3

- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (did receive almost every clothing second-hand)

Q8 - Do you buy new or second-hand clothing for your kids?

- Mostly new clothes
- Mostly second-hand clothes
- Both new and second-hand, roughly equal

Q9.1 - Did you have high quality clothing as a child?

- 1 (mostly no)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (mostly yes)

Q9.2 - Do you buy high quality clothing for your children?

- 1 (mostly no)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (mostly yes)

Q10 - In your opinion, do you spend more money on your kids clothing than your parents spent at yours (please do not consider price inflation)?

- 1 (I spend less)
- 2
- 3
- 4 (I spend equal)
- 5
- 6
- 7 (I spend more)

Q11.1 - How much do you care about how you dress your children?

- 1 (do not care at all)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (care a lot)

Q11.2 - In your opinion, how much did your parents care about how they dressed you?

- 1 (do not care at all)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (care a lot)

Q12 - In your opinion, are you more concerned about your children clothing than your parents were about yours?

- 1 (no)
- 2
- 3
- 4 (equal)
- 5
- 6
- 7 (yes)

Q13.1 How often do you buy clothing for you?

- Once per week or more
- Once in two weeks
- Once a month
- Every 3 months
- Every 6 months
- Once per year or less

Q13.2 How often do you buy clothing for your children?

- Once per week or more
- Once in two weeks
- Once a month
- Every 3 months
- Every 6 months
- Once per year or less

Q14 - Do you prefer buying clothing for your children or for you?

- 1 (for myself)

- 2
- 3
- 4 (equal)
- 5
- 6
- 7 (for my children)

Q15.1 - If you had more money would you buy more high quality clothing for your children?

- 1 (definitely no)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (definitely yes)

Q15.2 - In your opinion, if your parents had more money when you were a kid will they buy you more high quality clothing?

- 1 (definitely no)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (definitely yes)

Q15.3 - Do you live better financially now than your parents when they were your age?

- 1 (definitely no)

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (definitely yes)

Q16.1 – Your academic qualifications

- Primary school or less
- Secondary grammar school
- Secondary technical school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Phd or above
- I don't know / doesn't apply / Prefer not to say

Q16.2 – Your father academic qualifications

- Primary school or less
- Secondary grammar school
- Secondary technical school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Phd or above
- I don't know / doesn't apply / Prefer not to say

Q16.3 – Your mother academic qualifications

- Primary school or less
- Secondary grammar school

- Secondary technical school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Phd or above
- I don't know / doesn't apply / Prefer not to say

Q17.1 - What is your annual household income (before taxes)?

- Less than 25.000€ per year
- From 25.000€ to 50.000€ per year
- From 50.000€ to 80.000€ per year
- More than 80.000€ per year
- Prefer not to say

Q17.2 - What is your parents annual household income (before taxes)?

- Less than 25.000€ per year
- From 25.000€ to 50.000€ per year
- From 50.000€ to 80.000€ per year
- More than 80.000€ per year
- Prefer not to say

Q18.1 - Do you own (includes paying a mortgage) or rent a house?

- Owned
- Rented

Q18.2 - When you were a child did your parents own (includes paying a mortgage) or rent a house?

- Owned

- Rented

Q19.1 - Number of vehicles (cars, motorcycles, etc) of your household

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

Q19.2 - When you were a child what was the number of vehicles (cars, motorcycles, etc) of your parents household

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

Q20.1 – Your main occupation

- Student
- Employed / Self employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Prefer not to say

Q20.2 – Your mother main occupation

- Student
- Employed / Self employed

- Unemployed
- Retired
- Prefer not to say

Q20.3 – Your father main occupation

- Student
- Employed / Self employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Prefer not to say

Q21.1 - During the last year did you take an out-of-country vacation?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Q21.2 - During the last year did your parents take an out-of-country vacation?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Q22 – Gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Q23 – Age

