2000

Consumers' Reasoned Behavior Toward American Alligator Leather Products.

Yingjiao Xu
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/7307

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®
CONSUMERS' REASONED BEHAVIOR
TOWARD
AMERICAN ALLIGATOR LEATHER PRODUCTS

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in
The School of Human Ecology

by
Yingjiao Xu
B.S. China Textile University, 1993
M.S. Renmin University of China, 1996
August, 2000

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I am extremely grateful to my major professor, Dr. Teresa A. Summers, for her consistent, patient and generous guidance and supervision of this project from the very beginning to the end. Moreover, she is always the first and also the last judge of every piece of my dissertation writing. Without her help, I would not have been able to complete this work. Besides being a mentor, she is also a friend, whose kind understanding and support during the past four years made my abroad study journey much easier and more pleasing.

I am also grateful to my committee members, Dr. Bonnie D. Belleau, Dr. Betsy Garrison, and Dr. Jenna Kuttruff, of School of Human Ecology for their interest, encouragement and support of this project. I also appreciate their cooperation in reviewing this manuscript. Special thanks goes to my minor professor, Dr. Barry Moser, the head of the Department of Experimental Statistics, for his persistent support and guidance through this project.

Special thanks are extended to Dr. Yan Chen and his wife, Peiyu, whose friendship have helped me to overcome lots of difficulties in a country far away from home. Ms. Vicky Tiller, you also deserve my appreciation for all you did for me.

I also would like to thank Tao, Monica, Gillian, Ovidiu and Kendi for their help and assistance in the past years, especially during the course of this research. Their assistance, from moving heavy boxes with hundreds of surveys, stuffing, coding, scanning figures, to recommending measurements for survey instrument, is highly appreciated.

Most of all, I would like to thank my family for their love and unwavering support. Mom and Dad set very good examples for me to work hard and their
expectation for the achievement of their children is the greatest motivation of my study here in the states. I am grateful to my brothers, Xiongliang and Xionghui, for their taking care of Mom and Dad when I was not able to be there. Special thanks also go to my beloved husband, Leijun Huang. He has always been there for me whatever the crisis. I want him to know how much I appreciate the sacrifices he has made over the years for me to finish my degree work.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** ................................................................. ii  
**LIST OF TABLES** ........................................................................ vii  
**LIST OF FIGURES** ................................................................. viii  
**ABSTRACT** ................................................................................ ix  

## CHAPTER

### 1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1  
Statement of Problem ............................................................... 4  
Purpose of the Study ................................................................. 5  
Hypotheses ................................................................................ 6  
Assumptions ............................................................................. 7  
Delimitations ............................................................................ 7  
Definition of Terms ................................................................ 8  

### 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE ............................................... 10  
Consumer Behavior .................................................................. 10  
Influence of Reference Group on Consumer Behavior ............... 21  
Media Usage and Consumer Behavior ....................................... 23  
Summary .................................................................................. 25  

### 3 METHODOLOGY .............................................................. 27  
Sample .................................................................................... 27  
Research Design ....................................................................... 28  
Research Model and Instruments ............................................. 29  
Pilot Survey ............................................................................ 34  
Final Survey ............................................................................ 35  
Data Analysis ........................................................................... 35  

### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ......................................... 38  
Profile of the Respondents ....................................................... 38  
Descriptive Analyses of the Main Variables ............................... 43  
Hypotheses Test ...................................................................... 52  
Discussion ................................................................................ 67  

### 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS ................................................. 76  
Conclusions ............................................................................. 79  
Limitations ............................................................................... 79  
Implications to the Industry ..................................................... 81  
Recommendations for Future Research ..................................... 83  

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
REFERENCES ..............................................................................................................84

APPENDIX

A  APPROVED APPLICATION FOR USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS FOR THE PROJECT ......................................................89
B  SURVEY LETTERS .............................................................................91
C  SURVEY INSTRUMENT .....................................................................96

VITA ............................................................................................................................109
## LIST OF TABLES

1. Race Distribution of the Sample ................................................................. 39
2. Age Distribution of the Sample ................................................................. 39
3. Marital Status Distribution of the Sample .................................................. 40
4. Education Distribution of the Sample ......................................................... 40
5. Work Status Distribution of the Sample ...................................................... 41
6. Occupation Distribution of the Sample ...................................................... 42
7. Income Distribution of the Sample .............................................................. 42
8. Consumers' Beliefs (Knowledge) of American Alligator Leather Products 44
10. Descriptive Statistics of Attitude toward Purchasing Alligator Leather Products 47
11. Consumers' Normative Beliefs ................................................................. 48
12. Consumers' Motivation to Comply with Referents .................................... 48
13. Descriptive Statistics of Consumers' Subjective Norm ............................. 49
14. Consumers' Fashion Involvement .............................................................. 50
15. Consumers' Self-confidence ..................................................................... 51
16. Consumers' Public Self-consciousness ....................................................... 51
17. Consumers' Price-Quality Schema .......................................................... 52
18. Consumers' Prestige Sensitivity based on Price ........................................ 52
19. Results of GLM Analysis ........................................................................... 53
20. T-test of Fashion Involvement by Purchase Intention ............................... 55
21. T-test of Self-confidence by Purchase Intention ....................................... 56
22. T-test of Public Self-consciousness ......................................................... 57
23. T-test of Prestige Sensitivity by Purchase Intention ................................. 58
24. T-test of Price-Quality Schema by Purchase Intention ............................. 58
25. T-test of Purchase Intention between White and All Other Respondents ...... 59
26. Results of ANOVA for Purchase Intention by Age .................................... 60
27. T-test of Purchase Intention between Married and All Other Respondents ... 61
28. Bonferroni T-tests for Purchase Intention by Education ............................ 61
29. Results of ANOVA for Purchase Intention by Work Status ....................... 62
30. T-test of Purchase Intention by Occupation ............................................ 63
31. T-test of Income by Purchase Intention .................................................. 63
32. Consumers' Usage of Media for Fashion Information .............................. 65
33. Correlations between Consumers' Media Usage and Purchase Intention ... 65
34. Review of Hypotheses Test Results ...................................................... 68
LIST OF FIGURES

1. Research Model (Modified from Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) ................. 30
ABSTRACT

This study determined consumers' perception of and attitude toward American alligator leather products and evaluated factors affecting consumers' purchase intention of the products. The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory of reasoned behavior served as the theoretical framework for the study. The influence of six variables on purchase intention was measured: attitude toward purchase based on product attributes, subjective norm with respect to purchase, traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement), personality traits (self-confidence and self-consciousness), price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity), and demographics. The correlation between consumers' usage of media for fashion information and purchase intention was also explored.

Mail surveys were conducted on a total sample of 1800 females from the population with household incomes of $75,000 or more, residing in eight selected metropolitan statistical areas of the United States. Among them, 690 returned their questionnaires for a response rate of 39%. Data were analyzed using GLM analysis, T-tests, ANOVA, and correlation analyses.

The GLM analysis showed attitude and subjective norm had the most significant influences on purchase intention. Self-confidence and education also had significant influences. Prospective purchasers were individuals who had a favorable attitude toward the products, felt strong social pressure to buy the products, had some college education, and were self-confident. No other variables were found to have any significant influence on purchase intention. T-tests and correlation analyses did, however, distinguish intended purchasers from non-purchasers based on their fashion involvement, public self-consciousness and price perception.
Consumers' media usage for fashion information and purchase intention were significantly positively correlated. Usage of up-scale catalogs had the most significant correlation with purchase intention, followed by movies, celebrities, magazines, TV shows, and the Internet.

This study incorporated all proposed variables in one model and evaluated the relative importance of each variable in predicting consumers' purchase intention of the product. The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory seemed to be effective in predicting consumers' purchase intention of American alligator leather products. Results of this study may be useful to the American alligator industry in targeting their prospective market.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Leather is one of humankind's oldest materials. Long before people learned to plant cotton and make fabrics, they were skilled in the tanning and use of leather for sandals and crude garments. The unique qualities of leather continue to make it desirable in today's sophisticated, technologically advanced age. In the fashion field, dominated by natural textiles and manufactured fibers, leather occupies a small but important place (Jarnow, 1997).

Leather has long been regarded as a material signifying wealth and taste. However, increasing affordability resulting from lower prices in recent years has resulted in more and more consumers purchasing leather products. With the increasing number of consumers who own one or more leather products has come the loss of status associated with leather (Agins, 1994). Certain consumers, especially trend-setters and fashion leaders, are seeking new, exciting and unique products to fill the void.

The fashion industry has responded to this demand. Many well-known fashion designers are promoting products featuring leathers from exotic animals in their collections. All types of exotic leathers, crocodile, lizard, ostrich, and shark, as well as American alligator, are in demand. The American alligator is a member of the crocodilian specie. It has survived since the Age of Dinosaurs, existing for almost 200 million years. The alligator is a wild, sometimes dangerous, animal; however, tanned alligator leather is highly prized for its elegant, beautiful, and unique features. Alligator leather was so highly valued that the American alligator was almost hunted to extinction. From 1967 until 1987, the American alligator was listed as an endangered or threatened
species. Through professional wildlife management, the population of the alligator has returned to sustainable levels.

In addition to its adaptability in the natural environment, alligator is equally adaptable to cultivation on farms. In the southeastern United States, there are currently more than 200 farmers raising alligators under controlled environmental conditions (American alligator). In 1995 the American alligator population in Louisiana was approximately 1 million, and 150,000 farmed and wild skins were sold. In 1995-96, 72% of all raw Louisiana alligator skins were shipped to foreign markets. Most went to France (31%), with Italy as the other major destination (20%). Other countries receiving Louisiana alligator leather were Singapore (11%), Japan (11%), and Switzerland (2%) (McNease & Elsey, 1996).

Alligator leather products are highly prized in both European and American markets. Alligator leather products are valued for their versatility, durability, but primarily, for their unique natural beauty (American alligator). In the past, western wear, handbags, briefcases and small personal leathergoods such as wallets and belts comprised the majority of classic alligator products. Today's manufacturers and designers are becoming more creative in the use of alligator leather. Alligator leather is now being used as an accent to complement other leathers, and in new custom items, such as lap-top computer cases and jewelry inlaid with alligator leather.

Many consumers are unaware of the unique characteristics and availability of alligator leather products. Additionally, some consumers are sensitive to owning and wearing products made from the leather of wild animals. Therefore, producers in the alligator industry need to know consumers' knowledge of, attitude toward, and purchase
intention of American alligator leather products. It is also very important for the industry to understand the factors that will influence consumers’ purchase intention. This study used the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975;1980) reasoned behavior model as the theoretical framework to provide this information.

The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) reasoned behavior model states that a person’s behavioral intention is a function of two basic determinants, the individual’s attitude toward the behavior and the individual’s perception of the social pressures placed on him/her to perform or not perform the behavior, referred to as the subjective norm. The individual’s attitude toward the behavior is a function of the beliefs of the outcomes of performing the behavior and evaluation of the outcomes. The subjective norm is also a function of the beliefs of specific individuals’ or groups’ opinions about the individual performing the behavior and his/her motivation to comply with these referents. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) gave further explanation of the model and stated that external variables such as demographics, traditional attitudes toward targets, and personality traits will also affect the behavior intention indirectly.

Based on the above theoretical framework, this study proposed that a consumer’s intention to purchase American alligator leather products is determined by two factors - the consumer’s attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products and the consumer’s perception of social pressure to purchase or not purchase the alligator leather products. The consumer’s attitude toward purchasing alligator leather products is a function of the consumer’s beliefs about the characteristics of alligator leather products and the evaluations of these characteristics. The subjective norm is a function of the consumer’s beliefs of specific referents’ opinions toward his/her purchasing American
alligator leather products and his/her motivation to comply with the referents. Specific individuals or groups that have great influence on the consumer's decision making, such as friends, family members, and social groups, are one kind of referent. Another kind of referent is mass media. With the abundance of products on the market, consumers sometimes are at a loss as to what to buy and what not to buy. They often need more information and more suggestions to help them make their purchase decisions. TV, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet play a significant role in informing consumers. Other factors that likely exert indirect effects on a consumer's purchase intention toward American alligator leather products include demographics, general attitude toward fashion products, and personality traits. Because American alligator leather products are higher priced than products made from other leathers, this study proposed that price perception may also have an effect on consumer's purchase intention.

Statement of Problem

Consumers continually seek new and unique fashion products. Apparel, accessories, and interiors products made with American alligator leather offer potential to satisfy this demand. Although American alligator was at one time endangered, the species has dramatically increased in numbers and is now at a sustainable population level in the southeastern United States due to scientific wildlife management. However, a majority of the raw American alligator skins produced annually are exported with very low added value, compared to the high value of finished products made from the skins. U.S. producers are losing the financial rewards of the value added to the leather after tanning. This loss, in part, appears to be due to the lack of domestic demand for American alligator leather products and to the limited variety of products made with American alligator leather.
Justification of the Study

Consumers are the final determinant of the market demand for products. To increase the domestic demand for American alligator leather products, it is very important for members of the American alligator industry including farmers, tanners, manufacturers, and retailers of alligator leather products to understand consumers' perception and attitude toward the products. However, very little of this information on consumers is available to the industry. No published research on consumers’ attitudes toward alligator leather products was found in a review of literature. This study of consumers’ attitude toward American alligator leather products was part of a larger research project supported by the Louisiana State Board of Regents and the Louisiana alligator industry. The results of this study provided information to the industry about consumers’ attitude toward products made with American alligator leather. This information can be used by the industry to stimulate demand for their products.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were to determine consumers’ perception of American alligator leather products and to evaluate the factors that may influence their purchase intention toward American alligator leather products using the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) reasoned behavior model. Specifically, the effects of the following factors on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products were evaluated:

1. product-attribute based attitude;
2. perception of social pressure - subjective norm;
3. demographic;
4. price perception;
5. fashion involvement; and
6. personality traits.

In addition, the relationship between consumers’ media usage for fashion information and their purchase intention of American alligator leather products was explored. This exploration was designed to assist the industry in distributing appropriate information through appropriate channels to their target consumers.

**Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses for this study were as follows:

H1. Attitude toward the products will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H2. Perception of social pressure - subjective norm - will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H3. Traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H4. Personality traits (public self-consciousness and self-confidence) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H5. Price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H6. Demographic (race, age, marital status, education, work status, occupation and income) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products; and

H7. There will be no significant correlation between the consumer’s media usage for fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator products.
Assumptions

The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) reasoned behavior theory assumes that consumers are quite rational and make systematic use of the information available to them. It is also assumed that consumers' purchase intention of alligator leather products is immediate determinant of their future purchase behavior.

The subjects were selected from eight metropolitan statistical areas across the United States. These eight areas were assumed to be representative of the primary fashion centers in the U.S.. The sample was affluent consumers. The assumption was made that these affluent consumers are more likely to purchase American alligator leather products than average consumers.

Several of the questions related to the consumer's attitude toward the products were based on the consumer's beliefs of the characteristics of the products. It was assumed that subjects in the study had seen or heard of the American alligator leather products before they received the study's questionnaire.

A pilot survey was conducted 2- months prior to the final survey. It was assumed that respondents' beliefs of, attitude toward, and purchase intention of the products would not dramatically change over the 2-month time period.

Delimitations

The sample was limited to affluent female consumers in the eight selected metropolitan statistical areas of the United States. The consumers in other large cities may or may not behave the same way as those in the selected areas. Also, the results based on the affluent female consumers can not be generalized to female consumers with moderate incomes or male consumers.
Another limitation of this study was that the consumers may not have knowledge about the products. This lack of knowledge may influence the validity of the theoretic framework of this study.

For the purpose of this study, American alligator leather products were defined as American alligator leather accessories. The consumer's attitude toward, and purchase intention of American alligator leather accessories may differ from other American alligator leather products.

**Definition of Terms**

**Accessories** - accompanying items for a woman's dress, such as shoes, gloves, handbags and small leather products, millinery/hats, and jewelry

**Alligator** - "a member of Alligator, a genus of large reptiles of the crocodile family found mostly in the rivers of tropical America" (Watson, 1976, p. 26). There are only two alligator species: American Alligator and Chinese Alligator (Alligator).

**American Alligator** - one of the two species of alligator, which resides in the southeastern United States (Alligator)

**American Alligator Leather Products** - products made of American alligator leather

**Attitude** - learned predispositions to respond to an object or class of objects in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way (Allport, 1935)

**Consumer behavior** - the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using and evaluating products, services, and ideas that they expect will satisfy their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978).

**Involvement** - "a person's perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interests" (Zaichkowsky, 1985, p. 342)
**Fashion involvement** - a person's perceived relevance of fashion based on inherent needs, values, and interests (modified from the definition of involvement by Zaichkowsky, 1985)

**Reference group** - specific individuals or groups which have the ability to modify or reinforce an individual's attitudes toward an object or a behavior (Robertson et al., 1984)

**Self-confidence** - "person's perception of oneself as a leader and having confidence" (Bruner & Hensel, 1992, p. 582)

**Public self-consciousness** - "a general awareness of the self as a social object that has an effect on others" (Fenigstein et. al, 1975, p. 523)
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Consumers are the final determinant of the market demand for products. To increase the domestic demand for American alligator leather products, it is very important for members of the American alligator industry to understand consumers' perception and attitude toward the products. However, very little information on consumers is available to the industry. This study proposed to provide a portion of this information. This chapter contains a review of literature of consumer behavior theories and research. The review served as a guide for this study of consumer behavior related to American alligator leather products.

Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior is defined as the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using and evaluating products, services, and ideas that they expect will satisfy their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978). The study of consumer behavior is an interdisciplinary field of study that focuses on what goods and services people buy, how, and why they buy them. The objective of studying consumer behavior is to understand, explain, and predict consumer action under given circumstances (Robertson, Zielinski & Ward, 1984).

Since the 1950s, consumer behavior has been extensively researched by scholars in many different fields. Economists have applied demand theory to the study of consumer behavior, while social psychologists have focused more on attitude theory to explain consumer behavior (Warshaw & Droge, 1986).

Traditional demand theory states that the bundle of goods chosen by consumers will depend on three variables: (1) preferences for goods; (2) income, and (3) the prices
of goods. Demand theory focuses on consumers' constrained choice, but no attribution of
the characteristics of the products is considered (Henderson & Quandt, 1980). Though
the newer theory of consumer demand proposes that goods are also valued for the
attributes they possess and that different products are different packages of these
attributes, it neglects the psychological, social, and cultural effect on consumer behavior.
Even though economics has made valuable contributions to the study of consumer
behavior, its usefulness is often obscure (Robertson et al., 1984). As Schiffman and
Kanuk (1978) commented, “Marketing scientists had long noted that consumers did not
always act or react as economic theory would suggest” (p. 10).

Within social psychology, the focus of consumer behavior research is on attitudes.
As Lutz (1981) noted:

Perhaps the most heavily researched variable in the field of consumer behavior is
the attitude concept. Attitude, defined as an affective state of favorability or
unfavorability toward some object (e.g. how much a consumer likes or dislikes a
particular brand), has long enjoyed a prominent position in psychological
research, as well as in consumer behavior. (p. 243)

An early definition of attitudes as “learned predispositions to respond to an object
or class of objects in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way” (Allport, 1935) led to
research about attitude and behavior. Robertson, Zielinski, and Ward (1984) found that
the more favorable the attitude held by consumers, the higher the incidence of product
usage; and the more unfavorable consumers' attitudes are toward a product, the more
likely they are to stop using it. They also noted that the attitudes of consumers who have
never tried a product tend to be distributed around the mean in the shape of a normal
distribution (Robertson et al., 1984).
Multiple theories have been proposed to explain attitude and behavior. Among them, the most widely adopted has been the Fishbein and Ajzen theory of reasoned action (Robertson, Zielinski & Ward, 1984). The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) model was explicitly constructed to explain relationships between attitude and behavior by using the variables of belief, attitude, behavioral intention, and behavior.

**The Fishbein and Ajzen Theory of Reasoned Behavior**

The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) theory is based on the assumption that human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of the information available to them. Though the ultimate goal is to predict and understand an individual's behavior, the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) theory focuses on the influences of relevant factors on the behavioral intention and views the intention to perform or not perform a behavior as the immediate determinant of the action.

According to the theory of reasoned behavior, a person's behavioral intention (BI), defined as an individual's likelihood of engaging in the behavior of interest, is a function of two basic determinants, one personal in nature and the other reflecting social influence. The personal factor is the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior. This factor is termed as attitude toward the behavior ($A_b$) and simply refers to the person's judgment that performing the behavior is good or bad or that he/she is in favor of or against performing the behavior. The second determinant of intention is the person's perception of the social pressures placed on him/her to perform or not perform the behavior in question. This factor is termed as the subjective norm (SN). These two components, $A_b$ and SN, are proposed to influence behavioral intention, which is viewed as the immediate precursor of actual behavior (B). The model can be represented by the following formula:
\[ B \sim BI = w_1(A_b) + w_2(SN) \]

where: \( B \) = actual behavior;

\( BI \) = individual's behavioral intention;

\( A_b \) = individual's attitude toward performing behavior \( B \);

\( SN \) = subjective norm;

\( w_1 \) and \( w_2 \) = empirically determined weights representing the components' relative influence (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

The first component, \( A_b \), is the individual's attitude toward performing a particular behavior under a given set of circumstances. According to the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) theory, attitude is a function of beliefs \( (b_i) \) that the object/behavior has certain attributes and the evaluation of the beliefs \( (e_i) \). Generally speaking, a person who believes that performing a given behavior will lead to mostly positive outcomes will hold a favorable attitude toward performing the behavior, while a person who believes that performing the behavior will lead to mostly negative outcomes will hold an unfavorable attitude. The relationship between beliefs and attitude can be symbolically expressed as:

\[ A_b = \sum_{i=1}^{n} b_i e_i \]

where: \( b_i \) = the belief that performing behavior \( B \) leads to outcome \( i \);

\( e_i \) = the evaluation of outcome \( i \);

\( n \) = the number of salient outcomes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

The second component, subjective norm (SN), is also a function of a consumer's beliefs that specific individuals or groups think he/she should or should not perform the behavior \( (NB_i) \) and the individual's motivation to comply with these referents \( (MC_i) \).

Generally speaking, if a person believes that most referents with whom he/she is
motivated to comply think he/she should perform the behavior, he/she will perceive social pressure to do so. Conversely, if a person believes that most referents with whom he/she is motivated to comply think he/she should not perform the behavior, he/she will avoid performing the behavior. The relationship between the subjective norm and beliefs can be symbolically expressed as:

\[ SN = \sum_{j=1}^{k} NB_j MC_j \]

where: \( NB_j \) = normative belief reflecting a person’s perception of what a specific referent \( j \) thinks concerning whether he/she should or should not perform a certain behavior;

\( MC_j \) = person’s motivation to comply with referent \( j \);

\( k \) = the total number of relevant referents (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Both the attitudinal component (\( A_b \)) and the normative component (\( SN \)) contribute to predicting the behavioral intention, which is viewed as the best predictor of the actual behavior.

Though the above concepts and variables are the focus of the theory and considered to be central for predicting and understanding human behavior, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) did not deny that “There is plenty of evidence that factors such as attitudes toward targets, personality traits, and demographic characteristics are sometimes related to the behavior of interest” (p. 9). Though stating that there is no necessary relation between any given external variable and behavior, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) proposed that “external variables”, such as demographics, personality traits, and traditional attitude toward objects, may affect behavior indirectly by their effects on
behavioral beliefs, outcome evaluations, normative beliefs, motivations to comply, or on
the relative weights of the attitudinal and normative components.

Demographics such as age, sex, income, and geographic location are indicators of
society's characteristics (Robertson, 1984). Occupation, education, religion, race, and
ethnicity or nationality are also the variables that are frequently included in demographic
studies. Researchers have noted that demographics have an influence on consumer
behavior (Packard & Raine, 1977; Robertson, 1984).

Whatever the behavior, there are always one or more personality traits that appear
to underlie or influence the behavior in question. In marketing research, attempts have
been made to explain the purchase of different products by looking at consumers'
masculinity-femininity, life-style, nurturance, or extroversion-introversion (Ajzen &
Fishbein, 1980). In the textile and apparel field, researchers have focused on the effects
of life-style and self-perception on consumers' purchase intention or behavior toward
clothing products (Gutman & Mills, 1982; Shim, et al., 1989). These studies revealed
that individuals with different self-perceptions have different attitudes or responses
toward fashion/clothing products.

Self-confidence and public self-consciousness are two aspects of self-concept that
have frequently been studied to determine their influence on consumers' purchase
intention and product brand choices (Solomon & Schopler, 1982; Wells & Tigert, 1971).
In Solomon's and Schopler's (1982) study, public self-consciousness was designed to
measure the extent to which people are concerned about their appearance, style of
behavior, and the general impression they make on others. The results of their study
indicated that clothing measures showed a consistent and pervasive correlation with
scores on public self-consciousness. The standardized index of public self-consciousness was constructed by Feningstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975). The 7-item, 7-point, Likert-type scale was designed to measure the degree to which a person expresses an awareness of self as a social object with an effect on others (Feningstein, et. al., 1975). A high reliability and nomological validity of the index were assessed by Bearden and Rose (1990).

Wells and Tigerts (1971) studied how psychographics help describe target audiences and product users through a survey of the users of eye make-up and shortening. The results of their study showed that self-confidence is part of the psychographic profile that can be created to differentiate consumers' preferences for products (Wells & Tigert, 1971). Self-confidence was described as a measurement of the perception of oneself as a leader and having confidence. Wells and Tigert (1971) developed a 4-item index for measuring self-confidence. Modifications of this index are widely used in the social science and marketing field. The index was assessed through factor analysis and the reliability of the index is at least .61 (Davis & Rubin, 1983; Dickerson & Gentry, 1983; Lumpkin & Hunt, 1989).

As in the case of demographics and personality traits, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) stated that there is no reason to expect that attitudes toward a target will be related to each and every behavior that a person can perform with respect to that target. However, the assumption has usually been made that the more favorable a person's attitude toward some object, the more likely he/she will be to perform any given positive behavior with respect to that object, and the less likely he/she will be to perform any negative behavior with respect to the object.
In the textiles and apparel field, researchers have focused on the effect of clothing attitude, fashion involvement and fashion orientation on consumer behavior (Gutman & Mills, 1982; Shim et al., 1989). In their study of 6261 consumers, Gutman and Mills (1982) defined fashion orientation as individual’s attitudes, interests, and opinions regarding fashion products. Based on Yang’s life-style model, Gutman and Mills (1982) employed 67 life-style items in the first section of their study. Then, utilizing factor analysis, 17 items were extracted as having relevance to fashion orientation. These 17 items were classified into 4 factors: leadership, interest, social importance and anti-fashion attitude.

Shim and her coauthors (1989) studied the attitudes of 741 students enrolled in a major Western university toward imported and domestic apparel. Clothing attitude and fashion involvement were two external variables that they found to have significant influence on the students’ attitude toward apparel. Four factors were extracted from factor analysis of the responses to the questions measuring clothing attitude - a prestige clothing attitude, a garment styling clothing attitude, a quality clothing attitude, and a social activities clothing attitude. Among them, prestige clothing attitude, social activity clothing attitude, and garment styling clothing attitude had significant influences on students’ attitudes toward both imported and domestic apparel. Fashion involvement was defined as a person’s relevance of fashion, based on inherent needs, values, and interests. Data analysis revealed that students who have favorable attitudes toward both domestic and imported clothing have high fashion involvement.

Theoretically, an overall fashion involvement continuum can be defined based on the aggregate effect of a variety of important fashion behavioral activities. Based on
previous fashion segmentation research, Sproles and King (1973) suggested that there are at least five important dimensions of the aggregate fashion involvement continuum. These dimensions are fashion innovativeness and time of purchase, fashion interpersonal communication, fashion interest, fashion knowledgeability, and fashion awareness and reaction to changing fashion trends. Tigert, Ring, and King (1976) conducted a methodological study on fashion involvement and consumer behavior. Five individual questions, each measuring a dimension, were selected for the development of a “fashion involvement index”. Several cross-classification analyses revealed that the more highly involved fashion consumers (based on the fashion involvement index) were heavier purchasers of clothing fashions in terms of both volume and price per unit than less fashion-involved individuals. This offered support for the validity of the index, though none of the traditional estimates of internal consistency were reported.

In addition to the above three “external variables” mentioned by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), other variables may also exert influence on consumer behavior or behavioral intention, such as consumers’ price perception. Ehrenberg, Schriven and Barnard (1997) stated that consumers may not just buy cheap. Instead, they have their individual price perceptions and will buy products which are priced within their portfolios of prices that they are willing to pay for products. In other words, consumers’ price perceptions have effects on their purchase behavior or purchase intention.

Lichtenstein, Ridgway, and Netemeyer (1994) conducted a study to explore the relationship between consumers’ price perceptions and shopping behavior. The results of their study indicated that when price is viewed positively, consumers use price information as a signal of the quality and prestige status of the product. When consumers
are prestige sensitive, they are very concerned about how others view them. Consumers who use price as an indicator of product quality use it as a global indicator without relying directly on the price per se. When consumers view price as the cash outlay that they must make for the product, they tend to be more value and price conscious, more responsive to sales and coupon opportunities, and try to keep up-to-date on marketplace prices. By considering how consumers are using price information, retailers can better understand their target market's behavior, including purchase intention of their products.

Lichtenstein, Ridgway, and Netemeyer (1993) offered a conceptual view of perception of prices in a "negative role" and a "positive role". In a negative role, price represents the amount of money that must be given up to engage in a given purchase transaction. In a positive role, the price cue has been used as a signal to indicate quality, thus positively affecting purchase. Consistent with this view, the authors offered five constructs representing the negative role of price and two representing the positive role of price. The five constructs representing the negative role of price are value consciousness, price consciousness, coupon proneness, sale proneness, and price mavenism. Price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity are the two constructs used to represent the positive role of price. Multi-item indices were developed to measure each of the seven constructs. All items are scored on 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Since Fishbein and Ajzen first proposed their model in the 1970s, a large body of empirical research has been reported in which various forms or adaptations of the model have been tested in a marketing context using cross-sectional regression analysis as the principal analytical tool. Results from these studies indicated that the model has value in
predicting and explaining variance in intentions and behaviors over a wide range of purchase intentions and purchase behavior (Ryan & Bonfield, 1975). In addition, a number of studies have discussed the shortcomings of the model (Lutz, 1977; Miniard & Cohen, 1983; Ryan & Bonfield, 1975; Warshaw & Droge, 1986). Most of the discussion focused on the normative component, either about the nature of the component or about the influence of the component on the attitudinal component. However, even in these studies, the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) model was suggested as having good predictability of behavior and behavioral intention. Lutz (1977) reported the results of two laboratory-style experiments designed to investigate causal relationships within the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) model and provided empirical evidence to support the explanatory power of the model.

In the past 10 years a number of studies in the textiles and apparel field using the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1985) theory of reasoned behavior have been reported (Lee & Green, 1990; Shim & Drake, 1990a, 1990b; Shim, Morris & Morgan, 1989). Results from these studies were similar to studies in other fields (Doll & Orth, 1993; Ellis & Arieli, 1999; Fishbein et al., 1992; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995; Krahe & Reiss, 1995; Trafimow, 1996; Vincent, Peplau & Hill, 1998) and supported the ability of the theory to predict and explain consumers’ behavioral intentions.

Shim and her coauthors (1989) studied attitudes toward imported and domestic apparel of college students by utilizing the Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) model. They found that the external variables, including demographics, clothing attitudes, students’ self-perception, and level of fashion involvement, did have some influence on the students’ attitudes toward imported and domestic apparel.
Shim and Drake (1990b) examined consumers’ intention to use an electronic shopping mode in a study based on the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) model. They found that the attitudinal component and normative belief were similarly important in predicting electronic shopping intention without the function of motivation to comply. Shim and Drake (1990a) also used the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) model to study consumer intention to purchase apparel by mail order. The results showed that the model served well in predicting purchase intention.

Lee and Green (1990) conducted an international study to examine the applicability of the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) behavioral intention model in Korea and the United States. Their findings suggested that the model can be employed to explain consumers’ behavioral intention formation in a Confucian culture like Korea as well as in the United States.

**Influence of Reference Group on Consumer Behavior**

The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) theory of reasoned behavior states that consumers’ attitudes toward performing a behavior and the subjective norm will affect consumer behavior. The subjective norm reflects the consumer’s perception of the social pressure placed on him/her to perform or not perform the behavior in question. The source of the social pressure is his/her reference group, which is defined as specific individuals or groups having the ability to modify or reinforce an individual’s attitudes (Robertson et al., 1984). Reference groups have great influence on an individual’s behavior as Rabolt and Drake (1984) stated:

“People depend on others for their views of the world, for normative guidelines in a social situation, and for standards by which to evaluate themselves and their
behavior. Most people belong to many groups, not all of which hold the same meaning or importance and individuals use different groups for different types of behavioral guidelines. One’s reference group need not be a group to which he or she belongs, but it may be a group to which one aspires; thus, superiors in the workplace and prominent individuals in the media may be possible reference groups for career women” (p. 11).

Consumers use reference groups in guiding their purchasing decisions, particularly for highly visible products/brands. Clothing is a public necessity that is visible; hence, the individual is subject to great influence from others when purchasing clothing (Bearden & Etzel, 1982).

Rabolt and Drake (1984) studied reference person influence on career women’s dress. One role played by groups is that of information source. Professional women looked to female referents, both at work and outside work, for information about the selection of career clothing. Another means by which referents influence consumers is by rewarding conformity to established group norms. Rabolt and Drake (1984) reported that female professionals looked to women for information on career dressing, but they looked to male superiors for approval in an effort to dress in a manner acceptable to upper management who were predominantly male. The results of their study also suggested that career women with different situational and personality characteristics accepted the influence from reference groups to varying degrees.

Drake and her coauthors (1992) identified four important reference groups for the consumer - family, friends, social classes and culture. All reference groups influence consumer purchase behavior to some degree, but small cohesive groups such as family and friends have the greatest influence. These groups offer frequent interaction, and the
consumer's behavior is very visible to the group members. However, when the product or brand is conspicuous, the social acceptability of the item is of greater importance. Retailers can benefit from identifying and understanding reference groups of the target consumer and incorporating appeals to the identified groups in promotions and advertisements. The three primary types of reference group appeals in promotions involve celebrities, experts, and the "common man".

**Media Usage and Consumer Behavior**

With the abundance of products on the market, consumers sometimes are at a loss as to what to buy and what not to buy. They often need more information and more suggestions to help make their purchase decisions. This information may be from informal channels of communication, such as advice of friends, neighbors, relatives, and sales persons or may be from formal media such as newspaper, television, and radio (Darden & Roper, 1987).

There are two classes of formal media - mass media and specialized media. Mass media includes newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Mass media are valuable channels of information. Used to deliver information to large audiences at relatively low costs, mass media can also deliver advertisements to special kinds of audiences who are attracted to each medium's editorial or programming content. Mass media tend to develop strong loyalties among audiences who return to their favorite medium with a high degree of regularity. Specialized media are those that have specific audiences and include handbills, direct mail, outdoor billboards, car cards that appear on buses or trucks, and free-standing inserts in newspapers. In addition to these traditional media, new media are emerging as channels of information, such as the Internet (Sissors & Bumba, 1990).
As Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1986) stated, consumer information search is an important part of most decision processes and is essential to the study of consumer decision making. Many researchers and marketers have recognized the importance of consumer information search, and a number of studies have focused on the influence of reference groups and media usage on consumer behavior (Heath, 1996; Khan, Chang, & Horridge, 1992; Rabolt & Drake, 1984; Shim, & Drake, 1988).

Consumers today are overwhelmed with information. Health (1996) stated "...on the media level, people are deluged by information...." However, no one channel of communication is appropriate for all purposes or all target audiences. Khan and her coauthors (1992) studied the influence of demographics and psychographics on the usage of media. Their study indicated that selection of media is based on the characteristics of media, the demographics and psychographics of the target market, and also the characteristics of the product. They found that consumer usage of newspaper, television, radio, magazines and direct mail was affected by self-consciousness. The demographic variables of marital status, age, education, ethnic group, political outlook, occupation and social level influenced the usage of newspapers, magazines, radio, television and direct mail. The usage of television was affected by one's political affiliation. The findings of their study also indicated that the individual's usage of newspaper, television, radio, magazines, and direct mail was affected by the classes of products. Newspapers, radio, and magazines were widely used when purchasing goods like clothing.

Shim and Drake (1988) studied the information search patterns of employed women purchasing apparel. Five segments of consumers were identified: 1) print-oriented information searcher; 2) audiovisual-oriented information searcher; 3) store-intensive information searcher; 4) professional advice information searcher; and 5) pal
advice information searcher. Each segment had a preferred source of apparel information. Each segment had its specific demographic and psychographic profile. These profiles are very important to retailers or manufacturers in selecting appropriate media to deliver messages to their target consumers.

Belleau and her coauthors studied the attitudes toward apparel and media of college students (1992) and women over 50 (1994). The studies showed that both types of consumers seek information about clothing from media, but many of the clothing images promoted by media depicting younger people did not appeal to women over the age of 50.

Summary

The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) theory of reasoned behavior is one of the most widely adopted theories explaining consumer behavior. This theory states that a person's behavioral intention is a function of the personal attitude toward the behavior and the subjective norm. The attitude toward the behavior is a function of beliefs that the behavior has certain attributes and the evaluation of the beliefs. The subjective norm is also a function of beliefs that specific referents (individuals or groups) think he/she should or should not perform the behavior. Both the attitude toward the behavior and the subjective norm will be indirectly affected by some "external variables", such as demographics, general attitude toward targets, and personality traits. Several studies focusing on textiles and apparel products have used the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) model as their theoretical framework. However, no study has been reported about consumer behavior with respect to alligator leather products. This study used the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) model as a framework to study consumers' perceptions and attitudes toward American alligator leather accessories and predict purchase.
intention. The operationalization of the external variables of this study is patterned, to some degree, after Shim and her coauthors' (1989) study of college students' attitudes toward imported and domestic apparel. The relationship between media usage and consumer's purchase intention of American alligator leather accessories was also explored in this study.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purposes of this study were to determine consumers’ perceptions of American alligator leather products and to determine the factors that influenced consumers’ purchase intention toward alligator leather products using the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; 1980) reasoned behavior model. Specifically, the effects of the following factors on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products were determined: product-attribute based attitude, subjective norm, demographic, consumers’ fashion involvement, consumers’ price perception, and consumers’ personality traits. Also, the relationship between consumers’ media usage for fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator leather products was explored. Products were defined as accessories made of American alligator leather.

Sample

The intended sample was limited to affluent females, 21 years of age and older with household incomes of $75,000 or more, residing in the following eight metropolitan statistical areas of the United States: Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, and San Francisco. These cities are regarded as primary U.S. fashion centers. The sample was representative of the racial mix of the female population of each locale within the desired age and income range. The sample represented the target market assumed to be most likely to purchase alligator leather products. Industry partners in the research project were specifically interested in information about affluent female consumers residing in primary fashion markets whom they perceived to be the most likely consumers of fine alligator leather products.
Names and addresses of 1800 female consumers were purchased from Survey Sampling Inc. (SSI), Fairfield, CT for use in the pilot and final survey. According to information provided by SSI, the sample was systematically nth-selected from a relevant sampling frame, which is constructed of all qualifying records for the eight cities. Household income of members of the sampling frame were predicted instead of being measured or reported.

In accordance with federal and university regulations, research that involves the use of human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the committee for Use of Animals or Human Subjects in Research. This study was part of a larger project, which was approved as shown in Appendix A.

**Research Design**

A mail survey was used to collect quantitative data to test the proposed model. The survey was conducted following Salant and Dillman’s (1994) total survey design strategy. A premium (small alligator key chain) was offered to the first 100 respondents in the pilot survey and first 100 in the final survey as an inducement for subjects to complete and return the survey instrument in a timely manner.

Initial contact with the sample was a personalized letter informing them of their selection for the study and the impending receipt of the survey. The survey instrument with cover letter and stamped, self-addressed return envelope was mailed approximately 1 week later. Approximately 7-10 days later, a postcard was sent to all respondents thanking them and reminding them to complete and return their survey if they have not already done so. Approximately 3 weeks after the first survey mailing, a follow-up letter with another copy of the survey and another stamped, self-addressed return envelope was mailed to non-responsive subjects. A sample contact letter, cover letter, postcard
Research Model and Instruments

Based on the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory of reasoned behavior, this study proposed that attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products and perception of social pressure placed on a consumer regarding her purchasing of the products, referenced as subjective norm, are the two most important determinants of the consumer's intention to buy American alligator leather products. Consumers' personality traits, traditional attitude toward fashion products, price perception, and demographics were also proposed as having influence on their purchase intention of American alligator leather products. The research model for this study is expressed in Figure 1.

Behavior Intention (BI) - Purchase Intention of American Alligator Leather Products

Behavior intention (BI) is defined as an individual's likelihood of engaging in the behavior of interest (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In this study, the behavior intention referred to the consumer's intention to purchase American alligator leather products and was measured by asking, "I would like to buy an alligator leather accessory.", using a 7-point Likert-type scale, with 1 = extremely disagree and 7 = extremely agree.

Attitude toward Behavior (A_u) - Attitude toward Purchasing American Alligator Leather Products

Attitude toward behavior (A_u) in this study was defined as the consumer's attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), the consumer's attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products is a function of her beliefs about the characteristics of the products (b_i) and her...
Figure 1: Research Model (Modified from Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980)
evaluations of these characteristics ($e_i$). The overall attitude score was computed as the sum of the products of the score of $b_i$ and the score of $e_i$ for all the attributes.

**Measure of $b_i$.**

Shim and her coauthors (1989) developed a 14-item product characteristic index to measure students' beliefs about imported and domestic apparel. Nine of these items were used along with one additional item added by Nowlin (1999) for her study of consumer preferences for alligator, ostrich, and emu leather apparel products. The 10 attributes used by Nowlin (1999) included unique quality, durability, price, color, ease-of-care, social acceptance, endangerment status, attractiveness, fashionability, and prestigiousness and were used in this study. Subjects were asked to indicate their opinions on the likelihood of the American alligator leather products processing each attribute on a 7-point scale, $1 = \text{extremely disagree}$ and $7 = \text{extremely agree}$.

**Measure of $e_i$.**

The evaluation of each belief about American alligator leather products($e_i$) was also measured based on the 10 attributes of American alligator leather products. The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement on the importance of each of the 10 attributes with respect to their selection of fashion products on a 7 point scale, with $1 = \text{extremely disagree}$ and $7 = \text{extremely agree}$.

**Subjective Norm (SN)**

The subjective norm (SN) was defined as the consumer's perception of social pressures placed on her by others regarding the purchase of American alligator leather products. According to the theoretical framework of this study, the subjective norm is a function of normative belief ($NB_i$) reflecting the consumer's perception of what a specific
referent \( j \) thinks about whether she should or should not purchase American alligator leather products and her motivation to comply with referent \( j \) \((\text{MC}_j)\). The overall subjective norm score was derived as the summation of the products of the score of \( \text{NB}_j \) and the score of \( \text{MC}_j \) for all the referents.

**Measure of normative belief (NB)***

The consumer’s normative belief reflected her perception of social pressure placed on her by others with respect to purchasing American alligator leather products. The following referents were identified for use in this study: significant other/husband, friends, colleagues, social status, and media. Subjects were asked to indicate their opinions on the likelihood that a specific referent would think they should or should not purchase American alligator leather products on a 7-point scale from 1 to 7, with 1 = extremely disagree and 7 = extremely agree. Subjects were asked about their usage of media for fashion information by adopting and modifying the index used by Belleau and her coauthors (1994).

**Measure of motivation to comply with referent \( j \) (MC)***

Consumers’ motivation to comply with referents was also measured. Consumers were asked to indicate their motivation to comply with referents on a 7-point scale from 1 to 7, with 1 = extremely disagree to comply and 7 = extremely agree to comply.

**Demographics (DEMO)***

Demographic information was collected to test the effect of demographics on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products. Race, age, marital status, education, work status, occupation, and income were measured with forced choices and open-ended responses.
Traditional Attitude toward Fashion Products-Fashion Involvement (FI)

The fashion involvement index developed by Tigert, Ring and King (1976) was adopted to measure consumers’ traditional attitude toward fashion products. Five dimensions were included in the index as follows: fashion innovativeness and time of purchase, fashion interpersonal communication, fashion interest, fashion knowledgeability, fashion awareness and reaction to changing fashion trends. Each of the first four dimensions was measured by a single item on a 3-point scale. A 5-point scale for a single item was used to measure the fifth dimension.

Personality Traits

Self-confidence (SCF)

The Wells and Tigert (1971) self-confidence index was used to measure consumers’ perceptions of themselves as leaders and having confidence. This study used the 6-item modified index. Each item was measured on a 7-point scale, with 1 = extremely disagree and 7 = extremely agree.

Public Self-consciousness (SCS)

This study adopted Feningstein, Scheier, and Buss’s (1975) index to measure public self-consciousness. The 7-item, 7-point, Likert-type scale measured the degree to which a person expresses an awareness of self as a social object with an effect on others. The 7-point scale was from 1 to 7, with 1 = extremely disagree and 7 = extremely agree.

Price Perception (P)

The two indices developed by Lichtenstein, Ridway, and Netemeyer (1993) were used to measure price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity. A 4-item index was used to measure the price-quality schema. Prestige sensitivity was measured by an 8-item
Both indices used a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = extremely disagree and 7 = extremely agree. In summary, the model for this study can be expressed in the following formula:

\[ B \sim BI = w_1( A_b ) + w_2(SN) + w_3(FI) + w_4(SCF) + w_5(SCS) + w_6(P) + w_7(PQ) + w_8(DEMO) \]

where: 
- \( B \) = actual behavior;
- \( BI \) = consumer's purchase intention of American alligator leather accessories;
- \( A_b \) = consumer's attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather accessories;
- \( SN \) = consumer's subjective norm;
- \( FI \) = consumer's traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement);
- \( SCF \) = consumer's personality traits (self-confidence);
- \( SCS \) = consumer's personality traits (public self-consciousness);
- \( P \) = consumer's price perception (prestige sensitivity);
- \( PQ \) = consumer's price perception (price-quality schema);
- \( DEMO \) = demographic; and
- \( w_i \) = empirically determined weights representing the components' relative influence, \( i = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 \).

**Pilot Survey**

A pilot survey of 600 consumers was conducted in May 1999 to evaluate the clarity and validity of the instrument. The names and addresses were included in the sample purchased from Survey Sampling Inc. (SSI) and therefore had the same
parameters as the final survey. The same survey procedures were applied to the pilot test as intended for use in the final survey.

Twelve questionnaires were returned as undeliverable, and 217 questionnaires were completed and returned for a response rate of 36.9%. Reliability analyses of the survey measures revealed reliability coefficients of at least 73%. The survey items appeared to be well understood by a majority of the respondents based on the frequency analysis results of the data. With the exception of about 15% of the respondents not answering the question about the endangerment status of the American alligator, the other items were answered by the majority of respondents (95% or more). No written negative comments were made on the clarity of individual question and answer options.

**Final Survey**

Based on the results of the pilot survey, some minor changes were made in the questionnaire to refine two items. The question asking consumers if they thought purchasing an alligator leather accessory would be rewarding was changed to ask if they thought the purchase would be personally rewarding. Another minor change was in the purchase intention question from “I would like to buy an alligator leather accessory if it fits my clothing needs.” to “I would like to buy an alligator leather accessory.”

The final survey was conducted in July 1999 with a sample size of 1200. Seventeen questionnaires were returned as undeliverable, and 473 questionnaires were completed and returned for a response rate of 39.9%.

**Data Analysis**

Each returned questionnaire was coded and entered into an SPSS (Version 9.0 for Windows) data file for each survey. The coded data were cross-checked and corrected.
Selected variables, consumers' beliefs of the price and care of American alligator leather accessories, were re-coded to allow the data to be converted into the appropriate format for analyses. The answer options for two of the items measuring fashion involvement, fashion innovativeness and time of purchase and fashion awareness and reaction to changing fashion trends, were ordered in a reverse direction with the other three items of the fashion involvement index. These two variables were reversed in the coding procedure. Individual question items measuring the same construct were collapsed into a single variable, such as fashion involvement, price-quality schema, prestige sensitivity, self-confidence and public self-consciousness.

Because the final survey was conducted only 2-months after the pilot survey, the assumption was made that respondents' perceptions of, attitude toward, and purchase intention of products would not dramatically change over the 2-month time period. Additionally, the two surveys used the same questionnaire except for minor wording differences and sampled from the same population. Therefore, the data from the two surveys were merged for analysis and hypotheses testing. The merged file was then converted into a file for use in a SAS program.

Descriptive analyses (frequency analyses) were conducted to determine the respondents' profile, knowledge of, attitude toward, and purchase intention of the product. Reliability analyses were employed to test the survey measures that were determined by groups of variables. A General Linear Model analysis (GLM) was conducted to test the following null hypotheses:

H1. Attitude toward the products will have no influence on the consumer's purchase intention of American alligator leather products;
H2. Perception of social pressure - subjective norm - will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H3. Traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H4. Personality traits (public self-consciousness and self-confidence) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H5. Price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

H6. Demographics (race, age, marital status, education, work status, occupation and income) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products;

Pearson Correlation analyses were used to test the last null hypothesis as follows:

H7: There will be no significant correlation between the consumer’s media usage for fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator products.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of merged data from the pilot survey and final survey. Characteristics of the respondents are described, and descriptions of the main variables are presented. For those measures determined by groups of questionnaire items, results of reliability analyses are presented. Factors that have significant influences on consumers’ purchase intention are identified from tests of the null hypotheses. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the results and the theoretical framework.

Profile of the Respondents

From the combined sample of 1800, 29 questionnaires were returned as undeliverable and 690 questionnaires were completed and returned. The resulting response rate was 39%. A number of the returned questionnaires contained missing observations; therefore, the reported frequencies are based on valid observations only.

Approximately 80% of the respondents were white, not of Hispanic origin and the remaining 20% were either Asian, Hispanic, African American, or other unidentified races as shown in Table 1. The majority, 81.5%, of the respondents, were between 31-60 years of age and could be characterized as baby boomers (see Table 2). Only 4.4% of respondents were under 31 years old and 14% were over the age of 60.

As shown in Table 3, most respondents, 80%, were married. Respondents were relatively well educated, with 90% having at least some college education (see Table 4). More than half of the respondents, 65%, were currently employed. The remaining 35% were homemakers, retired, un-employed, or other (see Table 5). Among those who were currently employed, about 60% were professionals, 20% had management positions, and the remaining respondents were self-employed, employed in other unidentified
### Table 1  Race Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American (Black)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, not of Hispanic origin</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>656</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 34

### Table 2  Age Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 and over</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>662</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 28
### Table 3: Marital Status Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single, never married</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>80.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living together</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>662</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 28

### Table 4: Education Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school diploma</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade or technical school</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>662</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 28
Table 5  Work Status Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>659</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 31

occupations, or in technical positions (see Table 6). Respondents were affluent with 60% having household incomes over $75,000 a year (see Table 7). The original intent of the survey design was to focus on affluent consumers with household income of at least $75,000 a year. The 60% incidence is almost double the natural incidence of the Targeted Income Sampling procedure, which uses multiple regression analysis of both individual household data and census data at the block group level to derive the income predictor.

Around 40% of the respondents stated that when considering a leather purchase, they rarely think about where it was produced. However, if given a choice, a majority (63.2%) of the respondents stated that they would choose leather products made in America over imports. About 28% stated, if given a choice, they would choose accessories made with genuine American alligator leather over other crocodilian species, while 27% disagreed, and 45% had mixed feeling.
Table 6  Occupation Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 182

Table 7  Income Distribution of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than $50,000</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 50,000-$ 74,999</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 75,000-$ 99,999</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$124,999</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$125,000-$149,999</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 and over</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency Missing = 100
Descriptive Analyses of the Main Variables

As discussed in Chapter 3, some of the variables were measured by single items, while others were measured by groupings of items. For single-item variables, descriptive analyses were conducted, and results follow. For each multi-item variable, reliability analysis was first conducted, then a variable score was computed as the mean of the items, and finally descriptive analysis was conducted on the variable. Results follow.

Consumers' Beliefs/Knowledge of American Alligator Leather Accessories

Ten attributes of American alligator leather accessories were measured. These included unique quality, durability, social acceptance, ease-of-care, endangerment status of American alligator, color, fashionability, attractiveness, and prestigiousness. Each attribute was measured by a single item. Results of frequency analysis for each attribute are shown in Table 8.

Just over 80% of the respondents agreed that American alligator leather accessories have unique qualities, such as texture, suppleness and luster, and that they are durable. Approximately 75% agreed that American alligator leather accessories are much higher priced than accessories made from other leathers and considered American alligator leather accessories attractive. Just over 60% of the respondents agreed that American alligator leather accessories are fashionable, and almost 60% knew that American alligator accessories are available in a wide variety of colors. About 50% of the respondents agreed that American alligator leather accessories need special care. However, only about 47% thought wearing alligator leather accessories is prestigious and agreed that American alligator has been removed from the endangered species list. Accordingly, only about 44% agreed that wearing alligator leather accessories is socially
acceptable, leaving the remaining 56% either with mixed feelings or in disagreement on the social acceptance of wearing American alligator leather accessories.

Table 8 Consumers' Beliefs (Knowledge) of American Alligator Leather Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories have unique qualities, such as texture, suppleness and luster.</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are durable.</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing alligator leather accessories is socially acceptable.</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories require special care.</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories made from alligator leather are higher priced than products made from other leathers.</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>75.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American alligator was removed from the endangered species list in the late 1980s.</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are available in a wide assortment of colors.</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are fashionable.</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are attractive.</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing alligator leather accessories is prestigious.</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consumers' Evaluation of the Importance of the Attributes of Alligator Leather Accessories

The 10 attributes used to measure respondents' beliefs about American alligator leather products were further evaluated to determine their importance to respondents'
selection of leather products. Results of frequency analyses conducted on the 10 evaluation items are shown in Table 9.

Table 9 Consumers' Evaluation of the Attributes of Alligator Leather Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of Attributes</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It's important for my accessories to be unique.</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durability is an important quality to be considered when selecting accessories.</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social acceptance is important for me when I select accessories.</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of the product is a factor that influences my selection of accessories.</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price is very influential on my selection of accessories.</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will not buy products made of skins from endangered animals.</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color is very influential on my choice of accessories.</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy accessories that are fashionable.</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing accessories that are pleasing to others is important to me.</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing prestigious accessories is important to me.</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all respondents agreed that durability is an important quality to be considered when selecting accessories. Most respondents also agreed that color is very
influential on their choice of accessories, and price and care of the products will affect their selection of accessories. Almost three-fourths stated that they would buy accessories that are fashionable, but would not buy products made of skins from endangered animals. Just over half of respondents stated that it is important for their accessories to be unique; however, less than half agreed that social acceptance is important for them when selecting accessories. Even fewer respondents thought attractiveness and prestige of the products are important for selection of accessories.

Consumers' Attitude Toward Purchasing American Alligator Leather Products

Consumers' attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products was based on their beliefs about the attributes of the product and their evaluation of the importance of these attributes to their selection process. Generally speaking, a person who thinks a specific attribute is important and believes that a product possess that attribute will likely have a more positive attitude toward buying that product. Following the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) theory of reasoned behavior, attitude toward purchasing was computed as a function of the strength of belief about the product and the evaluation aspect of the belief. The overall attitude score \( A_b \) was derived as the sum of the products of the score of belief about a specific attribute \( b_i \) and the score of evaluation of that attribute \( e_i \) for all attributes. The computation of the overall attitude score can be expressed as: 

\[
A_b = \sum_{i=1}^{10} b_i e_i .
\]

The descriptive analysis of the attitude toward purchasing alligator leather accessories as shown in Table 10 produced a mean much larger than the "neutral" point. The neutral point was defined as the attitude score of a respondent who had mixed
feelings (score = 4) on both the belief and evaluation for each of the 10 attributes ($A_b = 4 \times 4 \times 10 = 160$). Based on the mean of the computed attitude score, respondents in general had a positive attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather accessories.

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics of Attitude toward Purchasing Alligator Leather Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>613</td>
<td>223.00</td>
<td>60.15</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>405.00</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consumers’ Normative Beliefs

A consumer’s normative belief reflects her perception of social pressure placed on her by others with respect to purchasing American alligator leather products. Five referents were identified as follows: significant other, friends, colleagues, social status, and media. Results of frequency analyses of these normative beliefs are presented in Table 11. More than 75% of the respondents agreed that their husband/significant other would not object if they bought an American alligator leather accessory. However only about 10% of the respondents thought that fashion media, friends, social status or professional colleagues would suggest them buy an American alligator leather accessory.

Consumers’ Motivation to Comply with Referents

Results of the frequency analyses of the motivation to comply with referents are presented in Table 12. A significant majority of respondents disagreed that they would do what their husband/significant other, friends, professional colleagues or media thought they should do. However, respondents were almost equally divided in agreement that they want their behavior to fit their social status.
Table 11 Consumers' Normative Beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referents</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My husband/significant other will not object if I buy an alligator leather accessory.</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of my friends think that I should buy an alligator leather accessory.</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professional colleagues think I should buy an alligator leather accessory.</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My social status makes me think of purchasing an alligator leather accessory.</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fashion media suggests that I should buy an alligator leather accessory.</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 Consumers Motivation to Comply with Referents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to Comply with Specific Referents</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, I want to do what my husband/significant other thinks I should do.</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, I want to do what my close friends think I should do.</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, I want to do what my professional colleagues think I should do.</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, I want my behavior to fit my social status.</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally speaking, I want to do what the media suggests I should do.</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consumers’ Subjective Norm

Generally speaking, if a consumer believes that most of her referents think she should buy a product and she has the motivation to comply with these referents, then she would probably feel social pressure to buy that product. According to the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) theory of reasoned behavior, the subjective norm score is computed as the sum of the products of the score of normative belief and the score of motivation to comply with referents. Descriptive statistics of the subjective norm are presented in Table 13. The mean of respondents’ subjective norm score was much smaller than the neutral-point value of the variable. The neutral point value was defined as the subjective norm score of a respondent who has mixed feelings on normative belief and motivation to comply for each of the five referents \((SN = 4 \times 4 \times 5 = 80)\). This finding indicates that the respondents, in general, did not feel strong social pressure to buy American alligator leather accessories.

Table 13 Descriptive Statistics of Consumers’ Subjective Norm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>632</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consumers’ Purchase Intention toward American Alligator Leather Products

Subjects were asked directly if they would buy an American alligator leather accessory. Frequency analysis of responses \((n = 672)\) showed that 46% of respondents stated they would like to buy an alligator accessory, 32% said they would not buy and about 22% were not sure if they would or would not buy at the time of survey.
Consumers' Traditional Attitude Toward Fashion Products: Fashion Involvement

Reliability analysis produced a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.76, indicating high intra-correlations among the five items used to measure fashion involvement, as shown in Table 14. Fashion involvement index was computed as the mean of the five items in the survey measure. Four of the items were measured on a 3-point scale, with 1 = least fashion involved and 3 = highest fashion involved. The last item was measured on a 5-point scale. The neutral point of 2.2 is the fashion involvement score of a respondent who expresses neutral fashion involvement with respect to each of the five dimensions of fashion involvement (FI = [2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 3] / 5 = 2.2). This finding indicted that respondents, in general, were not highly fashion involved.

Table 14 Consumers' Fashion Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.76</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consumers’ Personality Traits

Self-confidence

Self-confidence was measured by six items on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 = lowest self-confidence and 7 = highest self-confidence. The reliability analysis revealed the six items were highly correlated with each other, and they offered consistent measurement of self-confidence based on the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.80 as shown in Table 15. An index was computed as the mean of the six items to measure self-confidence and showed, in general, the respondents did not have high self-confidence.
Table 15 Consumers' Self-confidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient Alpha</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.80</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public Self-consciousness

The seven items used to measure public self-consciousness on a 7-point Likert scale of 1 = lowest self-consciousness and 7 = highest self-consciousness showed high intra-correlations based on the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.76, as shown in Table 16. An index was computed as the mean of the seven items. As a whole, respondents did not express high self-consciousness.

Table 16 Consumers' Public Self-consciousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient Alpha</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.76</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consumers' Price Perception

Price-Quality Schema

Four items scored on a 7-point Likert-type scale were used to measure the price-quality schema. The Cronbach’s alpha of 0.80 indicated a high internal consistency of the price-quality measure. An index was computed as the mean of the four items in the measure. As shown in Table 17, the respondents, in general, had a positive view of the price-quality relationship.
Table 17 Consumers' Price-Quality Schema

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient Alpha</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.80</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prestige Sensitivity

The eight items used to measure prestige sensitivity based on price on a 7-point Likert-type scale showed very high intra-correlations (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.91). The index was computed as the mean of the eight items. The descriptive analysis revealed the respondents, as a whole, did not view high price as a sign of the purchasers’ status (see Table 18).

Table 18 Consumers' Prestige Sensitivity based on Price

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient Alpha</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Neutral Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.91</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses Test

A SAS GLM analysis was employed to test null hypotheses 1 through 6 with purchase intention of alligator leather accessories as the dependent variable and the proposed determinants, attitude toward products, subjective norm, fashion involvement, price perception, personality traits and demographics, as independent variables of the regression model. The model was significant in explaining the variance of the dependent variable ($p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.47$) as shown in Table 19. For the consideration that the
industry may not be able to have the information of all the predicting variables, some one-at-a-time analyses, such as multiple correlation analyses, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and T-tests were employed to analyze the bivariate relationship between the purchase intention and the individual predictor. Multiple bivariate correlation analyses were conducted to test Null Hypothesis 7 about the relationship between the consumer's media usage and purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

Table 19 Results of GLM Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>868.809</td>
<td>51.106</td>
<td>23.83</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>999.571</td>
<td>2.145</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>1868.380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R-Square 0.465

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>277.11</td>
<td>277.41</td>
<td>129.33</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Norm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41.39</td>
<td>41.39</td>
<td>19.30</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Involvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.0804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.32</td>
<td>8.32</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.0495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-consciousness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>0.1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige Sensitivity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.9398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price-quality Schema</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.6896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.1118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.5948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.94</td>
<td>7.94</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.0550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.52</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>0.0439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Status</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.3765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.2907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.6444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Null Hypothesis 1:** Attitude toward the products will have no influence on the consumer's purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

As presented in Table 19, results from the GLM analysis revealed that the F statistic of the attitude toward American alligator leather products was highly significant. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 1 was rejected. Results suggest that respondents’ attitude toward American alligator leather products had a significant influence on their purchase intention.

The correlation analysis showed that there was high positive correlation between consumers' attitude toward alligator leather products and their purchase intention ($r = 0.62$). The more favorable the attitude toward the products, the higher the purchase intention.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** Perception of social pressure - subjective norm - will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

The GLM analysis showed that with the other variables already in the model, the F statistic of the subjective norm was highly significant, as shown in Table 19. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 2 was rejected. The results suggested that the subjective norm was significantly related to purchase intention.

The Pearson correlation coefficient between consumers’ subjective norm and purchase intention was 0.46 with a $p < 0.01$, indicating the subjective norm was positively correlated to purchase intention. The stronger the respondent’s perception of social pressure on her to buy American alligator leather products, the more likely she was to purchase the products.
Null Hypothesis 3: Traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

As shown in Table 19, at 0.05 significance level, fashion involvement was not significant in predicting the consumer’s purchase intention. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 3 was not rejected.

The Pearson correlation coefficient between fashion involvement and purchase intention was 0.28 with p < 0.01. Though this relationship was not very strong, it did show the pattern of the relationship. The higher the consumers’ involvement with fashion products, the greater the purchase intention.

To further explore the relationship between fashion involvement and purchase intention, a T-test of fashion involvement was conducted between those who intended to buy and those who did not. Results showed that respondents who intended to buy alligator leather products had significantly higher fashion involvement than those who did not intend to buy (see Table 20).

| Purchase Intention | N   | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance   | T       | DF   | Prob>||T| |
|--------------------|-----|------|-----------|------------|------------|---------|------|------|
| No                 | 228 | 1.8  | 0.5       | 0.03       | Unequal    | -7.239  | 500.6| .0001|
| Yes                | 305 | 2.1  | 0.5       | 0.03       | Equal      | -7.18   | 531.0| .0000|

For H0: Variance are equal, F = 1.1, DF = (304, 227), Prob > F = .46
Null Hypothesis 4: Personality traits (public self-consciousness and self-confidence) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

As shown in Table 19, the results of the GLM analysis revealed that respondents’ self-confidence level had significant influence on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products, while public self-consciousness did not. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 4 was partially rejected.

A bivariate correlation analysis showed that there was significant correlation between respondents’ self-confidence and their purchase intention of American alligator leather products with a correlation coefficient of 0.11 and p < 0.003. The higher the self-confidence level, the greater the purchase intention. A T-test of self-confidence was conducted between respondents who indicated an intent to purchase American alligator leather accessories and those who did not. As shown in Table 21, the results revealed that the self-confidence levels of respondents who intended to purchase was significantly higher than those of respondents who did not intend to purchase.

Table 21 T-test of Self-confidence by Purchase Intention

| Purchase Intention | N  | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance  | T    | DF    | Prob>|T| |
|--------------------|----|------|-----------|------------|-----------|------|-------|------|
| No                 | 229| 3.86 | 0.63      | 0.04       | Unequal   | -1.91| 476.5 | .0567|
| Yes                | 303| 3.96 | 0.59      | 0.03       | Equal     | -1.92| 530.0 | .0548|

For H0: Variance are equal, F = 1.12 DF = (228, 302) Prob > F = .46
Even though the GLM analysis showed that self-consciousness did not have a significant influence on respondents' purchase intention, the bivariate correlation analysis revealed these two variables were correlated ($r = 0.18, p < 0.01$). The T-test result also showed a significant difference in levels of public self-consciousness between respondents who had a purchase intention and respondents who did not (see Table 22).

Table 22 T-test of Public Self-consciousness by Purchase Intention

| Purchase Intention | N  | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance | T   | DF  | Prob>|T| |
|-------------------|----|------|-----------|------------|----------|-----|-----|-----|
| No                | 229| 3.22 | 0.61      | 0.04       | Unequal  | -4.11| 517.2| .0001|
| Yes               | 302| 3.45 | 0.69      | 0.03       | Equal    | -4.04| 529.0| .0001|

For H0: Variance are equal, $F = 1.29$ $DF = (301, 228)$ $Prob > F = .044$

Null Hypothesis 5: Price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity) will have no influence on the consumer's purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

As shown in Table 19, with other variables in the regression model, prestige sensitivity and price-quality schema had no significant influence on purchase intention. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 5 was not rejected.

While the GLM analysis did not show that price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity as significant have significant influences on purchase intention with other variables in the model, bivariate correlation analyses revealed significant correlations between purchase intention and price perception. The Pearson correlation coefficients
were 0.28 between purchase intention and prestige sensitivity and 0.23 between purchase intention and price-quality schema.

T-tests of respondents' price perception were conducted between individuals who intended to purchase and those who did not intend to purchase. Those who intended to purchase American alligator leather products had significantly higher prestige sensitivity scores than those who did not intend to buy, as shown in Table 23. Respondents who intended to buy American alligator leather products had more positive opinions on the price-quality relationship than those who did not have purchase intentions (see Table 24).

Table 23 T-test of Prestige Sensitivity by Purchase Intention

| Purchase Intention | N  | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance       | T      | DF   | Prob>|T| |
|--------------------|----|------|-----------|------------|----------------|--------|------|------|------|
| No                 | 229| 2.74 | 1.16      | 0.08       | Unequal        | -7.66  | 520.8| .0001|
| Yes                | 306| 3.57 | 1.33      | 0.08       | Equal          | -7.51  | 533.0| .0000|
| For H0: Variance are equal, F = 1.32 |     | DF = (305, 228) | Prob > F = .03 |

Table 24 T-test of Price-Quality Schema by Purchase Intention

| Purchase Intention | N  | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance       | T      | DF   | Prob>|T| |
|--------------------|----|------|-----------|------------|----------------|--------|------|------|------|
| No                 | 231| 4.48 | 1.14      | 0.08       | Unequal        | -5.46  | 463.6| .0001|
| Yes                | 308| 5.00 | 1.02      | 0.06       | Equal          | -5.55  | 537.0| .0000|
| For H0: Variance are equal, F = 1.25 |     | DF = (230, 307) | Prob > F = .068 |
Null Hypothesis 6: Demographics (race, age, marital status, education, work status, occupation and income) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

**Race.** The descriptive analysis of race showed that about 80% of respondents were white and only about 20% had other racial backgrounds. For analytical purposes, race was collapsed into two groups, white and all other. The GLM analysis showed that with the other variables in the model, the addition of race to the model as the last variable did not produce a significant effect, as shown in Table 19.

To further explore the influence of race on purchase intention, a T-test was conducted between the two racial groupings. No significant difference in purchase intention between white respondents and respondents of all other races was found (see Table 25).

| Race         | N   | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance | T     | DF   | Prob>|T| |
|--------------|-----|------|-----------|------------|----------|-------|------|-------|
| White        | 512 | 4.01 | 1.98      | 0.09       | Unequal  | -0.318| 274.1| .7507 |
| All Other    | 160 | 4.07 | 1.91      | 0.15       | Equal    | -0.312| 670.0| .7550 |

For H0: Variance are equal, $F = 1.07$  DF = (511,159)  Prob $> F = .59$

**Age.** As presented in Table 19, with other variables in the regression model, age was not identified as a significant determinant of purchase intention. ANOVA also failed to show any significant differences in purchase intentions of respondents of different ages, as shown in Table 26.
Table 26 **ANOVA on Purchase Intention of Respondents of Different Ages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.98363646</td>
<td>7.32787882</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0.1259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>2557.29612545</td>
<td>3.82828761</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>2579.27976190</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Age was collapsed into four groups as followings:

1 = 21 - 40, 2 = 41 - 50, 3 = 51 - 60, 4 = 61 and older

**Marital Status.** A respondent’s marital status was measured by one of the following options: single never married, married, divorced, widowed, or living together. The descriptive analysis results of marital status in Table 3 showed that about 80% of the respondents were currently married, the other 20% either never married, divorced, widowed or living together. For analytical purposes, marital status was collapsed into 2 groupings, married and all other. As shown in Table 19, with other variables in the model, marital status did not produce a significant additional influence on consumers’ purchase intention. However, the T-test results showed that currently married consumers had a lower purchase intention than all others (see Table 27).

**Education.** Six education levels were used to describe the consumers’ education. The descriptive analysis results in Table 4 showed that about 90% of the respondents had at least some college education, with the other 10% less than college. In order to get a more valid comparison in the GLM analysis, the variable was collapsed into 4 levels: no
college education, some college, college degree and advanced degree. The GLM analysis results showed that with other variables in the model, the addition of education to the model produced an additional significant influence on purchase intention (see Table 19). Further ANOVA with Bonferroni Post-Hoc test was conducted to determine where the significant differences were among the different education levels, as shown in Table 28. Respondents with some college education had a significantly higher purchase intention than those who had advanced degrees. No other significant differences in purchase intention were noted among education levels.

Table 27 T-test of Purchase Intention between Married and All Other Respondents

| Marital Status | N   | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance  | T    | DF  | Prob>|T|
|----------------|-----|------|-----------|------------|-----------|------|-----|------|
| Married        | 520 | 3.95 | 1.98      | 0.09       | Unequal   | -1.79| 255.1| .0488|
| All Other      | 152 | 4.30 | 1.89      | 0.15       | Equal     | -1.93| 670.0| .0536|

For H0: Variance are equal, $F = 1.09$ $DF = (519,151)$ $Prob > F = .53$

Table 28 Bonferroni T-tests for Purchase Intention by Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean of BI</th>
<th>SD of BI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No college education</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4.37 (A, B)</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>4.40 (A)</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>3.87 (A, B)</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>3.80 (B)</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means with different letters are significantly different from each other at 0.05 significant level.
Work Status. Descriptive analysis results in Table 5 showed that about 65% of respondents were currently employed, 18% were homemakers and the other 17% were either retired, unemployed or other. For analytical purposes, work status was collapsed into three categories, currently employed, homemakers, and other. The GLM results in Table 19 showed that with other variables in the model, the addition of work status to the model did not produce a significant influence on purchase intention. To further explore the influence of work status on purchase intention, ANOVA was conducted and results showed that there was no significant difference in purchase intention among respondents with different work status (see Table 29).

Table 29 Results of ANOVA for Purchase Intention by Work Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.80397043</td>
<td>5.40198521</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.2480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>2474.19447436</td>
<td>3.86592887</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>2484.99844479</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occupation. Descriptive analysis results in Table 6 showed that, among those who were currently employed, about 60% were professionals and the other 40% were in management positions, self employed, in other unidentified fields, or in technical positions. The variable was collapsed into two categories, professionals and other occupations. The GLM analysis results in Table 19 showed that with other variables in the model, the addition of occupation to the model did not produce a significant influence.
on purchase intention. To further explore the relationship between occupation and purchase intention without considering other variables, a T-test was conducted and no significant difference was found in purchase intention between professionals and respondents having other occupations (see Table 30).

Table 30  **T-test of Purchase Intention by Occupation**

| Occupation | N  | Mean | Std.Dev. | Std.Error | Variance | T      | DF   | Prob>|T| |
|------------|----|------|----------|-----------|----------|--------|------|------|----|
| Professional | 286 | 3.91 | 1.92     | 0.11      | Unequal  | -1.29  | 623.4| 0.1962|
| Others     | 386 | 4.11 | 1.98     | 0.10      | Equal    | -1.28  | 670.0| 0.1988|

For H0: Variance are equal, $F = 1.06$  \(DF = (385, 285)\)  Prob > $F = .6146$

**Income.** As shown in Table 19, the GLM analysis showed that with other variables in the model, income did not have a significant influence on purchase intention. To further explore the relationship between income and purchase intention, a T-test was conducted, and the results confirmed no differences in income levels between consumers who had purchase intentions and those who did not (Table 31).

Table 31  **T-test of Income by Purchase Intention**

| Purchase Intention | N  | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | Variance | T      | DF   | Prob>|T| |
|--------------------|----|------|-----------|------------|----------|--------|------|------|----|
| No  | 196 | 3.21 | 1.60      | 0.11       | Unequal  | -0.18  | 428.3| .8535|
| Yes | 268 | 3.24 | 1.66      | 0.10       | Equal    | -0.18  | 462.0| .8543|

For H0: Variance are equal, $F = 1.07$  \(DF = (267, 195)\)  Prob > $F = .6087$
In summary, Null Hypothesis 6 was partially rejected based on the statistical results. Only education had a significant influence on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products, with other determinants in the model. Other demographics such as race, age, marital status, work status, occupation and income had no significant influence on purchase intention.

**Null Hypothesis 7: There will be no significant correlation between the consumer’s media usage for fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator leather products.**

Respondents were asked to indicate their usage of the following media for fashion information: magazines, TV shows, movies, up-scale catalogs, celebrities, and the Internet. Multiple bi-variate correlation analyses were employed to test this hypothesis.

**Magazines.** As shown in Table 32, a majority of respondents, 73%, stated that they tend to notice clothing in magazines. The correlation between respondents’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products and their awareness of clothing in magazines was very significant as shown in Table 33. Respondents who had purchase intentions tended to notice clothing in magazines more than those who did not have the purchase intention. Frequency analysis showed that the following magazines were read on a regular basis by a majority of the respondents: Vogue, Mademoiselle, and ELLE.

**Television Shows.** About 50% of the respondents agreed that they noticed clothing in television shows and about 30% stated that they did not (Table 32). As shown in Table 33, there was a significant high correlation between respondents’ purchase intention and their awareness of clothing in TV shows. Respondents who intended to purchase American alligator leather products were significantly more likely to notice clothing in TV shows than those who did not intend to purchase. Frequency analysis
showed that the favorite TV shows of a majority of the respondents were ER, Fraiser, 20/20, Friends, and Law & Order.

Table 32 Consumers' Usage of Media for Fashion Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Usage</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I notice clothing in magazines.</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I notice clothing in TV shows.</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tend to notice clothes in movies.</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to buy clothes and accessories from up-scale catalogs.</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy more accessories if I have seen them worn or used by a celebrity.</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seek out the latest fashions on the Internet.</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33 Correlations between Consumers' Media Usage and Purchase Intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation Coefficient with Purchase Intention</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Show</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogue</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrity</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.0036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Movies. As shown in Table 32, about 50% of respondents agreed that they tended to notice clothes in movies and about 30% said they did not. Correlation analysis showed that there was a significant correlation between consumers' purchase intentions of American alligator leather products and noticing clothes in movies. Respondents who had purchase intentions noticed clothes in movies more than respondents who did not intend to buy American alligator leather products (see Table 33).

Up-scale Catalogs. About 54% of the respondents stated that they did not like to buy clothes and accessories from up-scale catalogs (see Table 32). Correlation analysis showed that the correlation between usage of catalog and purchase intention of American alligator leather products was significantly high, as shown in Table 33. The higher the intention to buy clothing and accessories from up-scale catalogs, the greater the respondents' purchase intention.

Celebrities. Even though, the frequency analysis in Table 32 showed that a majority of respondents, 80%, disagreed that they would buy more accessories if they have seen them worn or used by a celebrity, correlation analysis showed that there was a significant correlation between consumers' purchase intention and their awareness of celebrities' attire (see Table 33). The more easily affected by what celebrities wore or used, the greater the respondents' purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

Internet. Though a majority of respondents, 88%, stated that they would not seek out the latest fashions on the Internet (Table 32), like other media, their usage of the Internet for fashion information was significantly correlated with their purchase intention of American alligator leather products (Table 33). Respondents who had purchase intentions indicated a higher usage of the Internet for fashion information.
Based on the above results, Null Hypothesis 7 was rejected. There was significant correlation between consumers’ media usage and their purchase intentions of American alligator leather products. Among the six media, respondents notice clothing most frequently in magazines, followed by TV shows, movies, catalogues, celebrities and the Internet (see Table 32). However, usage of catalogues had the most significant correlation with consumers’ purchase intention, followed by movies, celebrities, magazines, TV shows, and the Internet (see Table 33).

In summary, based on the GLM analysis, Null Hypothesis 1, 2 and part of Null Hypotheses 4 and 6 were rejected. Null Hypothesis 7 was rejected based on the results of the multiple bi-variate correlation analyses. A review of the hypotheses test results is presented in Table 34.

**Discussion**

This study used the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory of reasoned behavior as the theoretical framework to study the factors that have influence on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products. Six factors were proposed as significant determinants of purchase intention including attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products, subjective norm with respect to buying American alligator leather products, traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement), personality traits (self-confidence and public self-consciousness), price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity) and demographics. Price perception was not one of the external variables mentioned in the Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) model. It was included in the current study because of the specific characteristics of American alligator leather products.
Table 34 Review of Hypotheses Test Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Null Hypothesis</th>
<th>Results - Analysis Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Attitude toward the products will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Rejected - GLM analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: Perception of social pressure - subjective norm - will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Rejected - GLM analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Not Rejected - GLM analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4: Personality traits (self-confidence and public self-consciousness) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Partially Rejected-GLM analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5: Price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Not Rejected - GLM analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6: Demographics (race, age, marital status, education, work status, occupation and income) will have no influence on the consumer’s purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Partially Rejected - GLM analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7: There will be no significant correlation between the consumer’s media usage for fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator leather products.</td>
<td>Rejected - Correlation analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A Null hypothesis was rejected if p ≤ 0.05.


However, none applied the whole model to predict and understand an individual’s
behavioral intention. The major contribution of this study was to incorporate all variables proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980), including the two most important determinants, personal attitude and subjective norm, and the external variables into one model to study the relative importance of each variable in predicting behavioral intention. A GLM analysis was employed to test the influence of the proposed factors on consumers' purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

As predicted by the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory, a respondent's attitude toward American alligator leather products had a very significant influence on her purchase intention. The more favorable the attitude, the more likely the purchase intention. Therefore, in order to increase consumers' purchase intention, it is important to increase consumers' favorable attitude toward American alligator leather products. The attitude was measured based on consumers' beliefs about attributes of American alligator leather products and their evaluation of the beliefs. Generally, if an individual has positive beliefs about the product attributes and views those attributes as important, he/she will have a favorable attitude toward purchase.

More than 80% of respondents stated that durability, color, price and care of the products were very influential to their selection of accessories. However, while a majority of respondents had correct knowledge of the durability and uniqueness of the alligator leather products, many were unsure about the care of the products, color availability, social acceptance and prestigiousness. Therefore, it seems that consumer education focusing on care of the products and color availability could contribute to increasing consumers' favorable attitude toward purchasing alligator leather accessories.

Almost half of the respondents did not know the American alligator was removed from the endangered species list in the late 1980s. This lack of understanding of the
endangerment status of alligators may have affected respondents’ attitudes about social acceptance of wearing alligator leather products. The endangerment status of the alligator and social acceptance were viewed by some respondents as important factors in their selection of accessories. Informing and educating consumers about the correct endangerment status of alligators is a vital step in changing attitudes.

The subjective norm was the second most significant factor that had influence on respondents’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products. This result was also consistent with the theoretical framework of the study. The stronger the perceived subjective norm in favor of purchasing, the more likely the purchase intention.

Even though respondents, in general, were fairly independent and were less motivated to comply with others, about half of the respondents wanted their behavior to fit their social status. This result was just as Drake and her coauthors (1992) found. They reported that when the product is conspicuous, the social acceptability of the item is of greater importance to an individual’s purchase behavior. However, in this study only about 10% of the respondents agreed that their social status made them think of purchasing an alligator leather accessory. This hesitation may have been related to respondents’ uncertainty about the social acceptance of wearing alligator leather accessories.

The other referents, including husband/significant other, close friends, professional colleagues, or media, seemed to have little influence on the respondents’ behavior decision. This result was a bit unexpected since previous studies had suggested the influence from referents on an individual’s behavior was important (Rabolt & Drake, 1984; Robertson et. al. 1984). A possible explanation for this finding is that the
respondents in this study were selected from an affluent population instead of the general population. As Kahle (1995) stated, consumers who are low in susceptibility to normative influence tend to be relatively affluent people. Another reason may exist in the validity of the measurement or the respondents’ understanding of the measurement.

Fashion involvement, as a measure of traditional attitude toward fashion products, was not shown to be a significant determinant of purchase intention in the GLM model. However, there was a significant bivariate correlation between fashion involvement and purchase intention. The higher the fashion involvement, the more likely the purchase intention. These findings were consistent with previous studies (Shim et. al., 1989; Tigert et. al., 1976), that also found the more highly involved fashion consumers were the heavier purchasers of clothing fashions. Therefore, though it was not so influential as variables such as attitude toward the product and the subjective norm in predicting purchase intention, fashion involvement is a very important characteristic for manufacturers and retailers to use in identifying prospective purchasers of alligator leather products.

Self-confidence and public self-consciousness were used to measure consumers’ personality traits. Self-confidence proved to have a significant influence on consumers’ purchase intention, while public self-consciousness did not. The self-confidence level of respondents who intended to purchase American alligator leather products was significantly higher than that of respondents who did not intend to purchase. This result was consistent with Hanley’s (1986) finding that traditional boomers with low self-confidence relied on brand names to communicate identity and were less likely to try new and innovative products.
With other variables in the model, the influence of respondents' public self-consciousness level on their purchase intention was not significant, but when considered alone, significant differences in public-self consciousness were noted between respondents who intended to purchase and those who did not. The intended purchasers of American alligator leather products had higher self-consciousness levels. Individuals who have high self-consciousness report being more concerned about themselves as social objects and have been found to be more affected by shunning than those who had low self-consciousness (Fenigstein, 1979). High self-conscious individuals may prepare for social situations differently by trying to enhance their appearance. Miller and Cox (1982) found that women who had high self-consciousness wore more makeup and were more apt to believe that makeup enhances their social interactions. Similarly, respondents who were highly self-conscious may have intended purchasing American alligator leather products in the belief that the products could help them to enhance their appearance. However, this belief was not as strong as the attitude based on the product characteristics and the perceived subjective norm in influencing respondents' purchase intention.

With other variables in the model, price perception defined by price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity was not shown as having significant influence on respondents' purchase intention. However, when considered alone, there was a significant positive correlation between price perception and purchase intention. The T-test results also showed that respondents who intended to purchase American alligator leather products were more prestige sensitive and had a more positive price-quality schema than those who did not intend to purchase.
A majority of respondents were aware of the high price of American alligator leather products. Similar to Cleaver’s (1986) finding that the affluent are as value-conscious as other consumers, a majority of respondents in this study agreed that price is influential in their selection of products. Therefore, the affluent respondents who were prestige sensitive and who had positive price-quality schema would be more likely to be purchasers than their value-conscious affluent counterparts.

GLM analysis results showed that education was the only demographic that had significant influence on respondents’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products. The respondents who had some college education had significantly higher purchase intention than respondents who had advanced degree. No significant difference was found among the other education levels. Previous research has shown that consumers’ environmental concerns increase as their education increases (Newell & Green, 1997). Respondents with advanced degree may have had concerns about the endangerment status of alligator, which could explain their lower purchase intention. Respondents with less education may have a greater desire to purchase American alligator leather products, but may be restricted by their income. Manufacturers and retailers may need to focus on the correlation among education, income and environmental concerns in their efforts to stimulate demands for alligator leather products.

None of the other demographics such as race, age, marital status, work status, occupation or income had a significant influence on respondents’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products. The sample, as designed for this study, was more affluent than the general population and more homogeneous. If sampled from the general
population, other demographic characteristics might have had significant influences on
the purchase intention of respondents.

Multiple correlation analyses were conducted to test the relationship between
consumers' media usage for fashion information and their purchase intention of
American alligator leather products. The results showed that there were significant
correlations between media usage for fashion information and purchase intention. The
higher the usage of media for fashion information, the more likely the purchase intention
of American alligator leather products.

There was a significant correlation between respondents' usage of magazines for
fashion information and their purchase intention of American alligator leather products.
This result is consistent with the Khan's el. al. (1992) findings that magazines are widely
used by consumers for purchasing products like clothing. However, the correlation is not
as high as that of other media, such as up-scale catalogs, because of the homogeneity of
respondents in their use of magazines for fashion information. Similar patterns existed
for TV shows and movies.

Among the six media, usage of up-scale catalogs had the most significant
correlation with consumers' purchase intention of American alligator leather products.
Many companies targeting affluent female baby boomers use catalogs heavily to present
their products, such as high quality home, leisure, and casual apparel products. Rowland
(1989) found that catalog shoppers are often affluent people. Therefore, catalogs seem an
appropriate channel for the alligator industry to target affluent female consumers.

The correlation between usage of the Internet for the latest fashion products and
purchase intention was the least significant among all types of media. Frequency analysis
also showed that only about 4% of respondents agreed they seek the latest fashion products through the Internet. Murphy (1997) stated that the number of consumers using the Internet is still small with only a fifth of Americans on-line. Compared to the general population, on-line users are likely to be younger, more affluent, better educated and male. The respondents of this study were affluent, better educated, 31-60 years of age, and they were female. Therefore, it is not surprising to have a small number of respondents using the Internet for fashion information.

In summary, the results of this study supported the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory of reasoned behavior and contributed to a better understanding of the model. In contrast to previous research, this study incorporated all variables suggested by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) into one model and determined the relative importance of each variable in predicting the behavioral intention. Attitude toward purchasing and subjective norm were the two most significant determinants of respondents' purchase intention of American alligator leather products. External variables such as personality traits and education also had significant influence on purchase intention. Though other variables such as price perception and fashion involvement were not shown as significant determinants in the GLM model, they did have some bi-variate correlation with purchase intention. Significant correlation was also found between consumers' usage of media for fashion information and their purchase intention of American alligator leather products.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purposes of this study were to study consumers’ perceptions of and attitude toward American alligator leather products and to determine the factors that had influences on consumers’ purchase intention toward American alligator leather products. The Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory of reasoned behavior provided the theoretical framework for this study.

Based on the theoretical framework and the unique characteristics of American alligator leather products, the influence of six variables on the consumer’s purchase intention were measured in this study: the consumer’s attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products based on the attributes of the products, the consumer’s subjective norm with respect to purchasing American alligator leather products, the consumer’s traditional attitude toward fashion products (fashion involvement), the consumer’s personality traits (self-confidence and public self-consciousness), the consumer’s price perception (price-quality schema and prestige sensitivity) and demographics (Null Hypotheses 1 through 6). This study also explored the correlation between the consumer’s media usage for fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator leather products (Null Hypothesis 7).

A national mail survey with a total sample size of 1800 was conducted to collect the data. Of the sample, 690 returned their questionnaires for a response rate of 39%. Descriptive analyses were used to determine the sample profile and respondents’ perceptions of American alligator leather products. A SAS GLM analysis was employed to test Null Hypothesis 1 through 6, multiple T-tests, ANOVA and correlation analyses.
were used to further analyze the relationship between purchase intention and proposed determinants. Multiple correlation analyses were used to test Null Hypothesis 7.

A majority of the respondents were white and not of Hispanic origin (80%); between 31 to 60 years of age (81.5%), were married (80%), and had at least some college education (90%). More than half of the respondents (65%) were currently employed. Among those who were employed, 60% were professionals and 20% had management positions. The sample was affluent with 60% having household income over $75,000 a year.

The majority of the respondents had correct knowledge of some of the characteristics of American alligator leather products, such as uniqueness, durability, high price and thought wearing American alligator leather products was fashionable and attractive. However, consumers were less sure about the care of the products, color availability, social acceptance and prestigiousness. About half of the respondents did not know if American alligator was removed from the endangered species list in the late 1980s.

Durability, care of the product, price, color and fashionability were stated as very important to consumers' selection of accessories. About half of the respondents said that uniqueness, social acceptance, and endangerment status of animal were also important to their accessories selection. Only about 30% of the respondents thought attractiveness or prestigiousness was important.

In general, the sample had a relatively positive attitude toward American alligator leather products based on their knowledge of the characteristics of the products. However, they did not feel strong social pressure to buy American alligator leather accessories.
The frequency analyses also showed that respondents, in general, were not highly fashion involved; did not have high self-confidence and self-consciousness; and, while having a positive view of the price-quality relationship, did not view high price as a sign of the purchaser's status.

The GLM model, with purchase intention as the dependent variable and all the proposed determinants as independent variables, was significant in explaining consumers' purchase intention of American alligator leather products ($F = 23.83$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.47$). Based on the results of the GLM model, attitude toward the product, subjective norm, self-confidence, and education had significant influence on consumers' purchase intention of American alligator leather products. Prospective purchasers were individuals who had a favorable attitude toward the products, felt strong social pressure to buy the products, had some college education and were self-confident. Fashion involvement, public self-consciousness, price perception, race, age, marital status, work status, occupation and income did not have significant influence on consumers' purchase intention. However, T-tests and correlation analyses results did distinguish intended purchasers from non-purchasers based on their fashion involvement, public self-consciousness and price perception.

Correlation results showed that there were significant correlations between media usage and consumers' purchase intention of American alligator leather products. The higher the usage of media for fashion information, the higher the purchase intention. Among the six media, usage of up-scale catalogs had the most significant correlation with consumers' purchase intention, followed by movies, celebrities, magazines, TV shows, and the Internet.
Based on GLM analysis, Null Hypothesis 1, 2 and part of Null Hypotheses 4 and 6 were rejected. Null Hypothesis 7 was also rejected based on the results of multiple bivariate correlation analyses.

**Conclusions**

The following conclusions are drawn from this study:

1. The results of this study supported the predictability of the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) theory of reasoned behavior. A major contribution of this study was to incorporate all variables proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) into one model to study the relative importance of each variable in predicting behavioral intention. This incorporation offered a better understanding of the relative influence of each variable on behavioral intention.

2. With all the proposed variables in the model, the consumer's attribute-based attitude toward purchasing American alligator leather products, subjective norm, self-confidence and education were the best predictors of purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

3. Consumer's media usage for fashion information was an important indicator of purchase intention of American alligator leather products.

**Limitations**

The present research has several limitations. The first is sampling. The sample of this study was limited to affluent females, 21 years of age and older with household incomes of $75,000 or more, and residing in eight selected cities. The sampling method used multiple regression analysis of both individual household data and census data to
derive the income predictor. In other words, the income of each household to be sampled was predicted instead of measured or reported. Therefore, the sampling method could not guarantee all the sample members had household incomes of at least $75,000 a year. The results showed that around 60% of the respondents met the income criteria. Though this specific population was the target market of American alligator leather products, it was not representative of the racial, marital or other demographic mix of the general population. There were selected correlations among the demographics. For example, females who had a higher household income are more likely to have some high education, to be employed and be married. The frequency analyses of the demographics showed that a majority of respondents were white, married, had relatively higher education and were currently employed. Therefore, sampling from the targeted population created unbalanced demographic data. Statistical analyses based on unbalanced data may not lead to the correct results. For example, based on the findings of this study, income was not shown as having significant influence on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products. This limitation may have affected the test of the model. Also, it may have decreased this study’s guidance in the industry’s effort in identifying target market.

The second limitation is the representativeness of the sample. Among 1771 valid sample members, 690 completed and returned their questionnaires for a response rate of 39%. While this is an acceptable response rate in survey research, the 61% of non-respondents may tend to differ from the respondents in their attitude toward and purchase intention of alligator leather products. Thus the results from using only the respondents may be flawed. If funding had permitted, additional follow-up with non-respondents
would have been valuable to the study. Also, if general demographic information of the
targeted population had been available, weighting the collected data could be another
valuable method in increasing the generalization of the results from this study.

The third limitation is the lack of response to certain items. In this study, only
485 of the 690 returned questionnaires were completed and were used for the GLM
analysis. Therefore, the ability to generalize the results from the GLM analysis are
further decreased.

The forth limitation of the study is that consumers, in general, are not very
familiar with American alligator leather products. This lack of familiarity with products
may have skewed the results which were based on consumers' knowledge of the
products.

The last limitation lies in the theoretical framework. The ten product attributes
had different contributions in building the general attitude toward the products.
Therefore, combining all the attributes into one general index may not be a good strategy
to determine the significant influential attributes.

**Implications to the Industry**

The following suggestions will be made to the American alligator industry based
on the results of this study:

1. A consumer's attitude toward American alligator leather products was the
   most important factor in influencing the consumer's purchase intention.
   Durability, care of the product, price, color, fashionability, uniqueness,
   social acceptance, and endangerment status of the animal were all very
   important in a consumer's selection of accessories. However, some
consumers did not have correct knowledge of these characteristics of
American alligator leather products, such as color availability, and care of
the products. A significant number of consumers were not aware that the
American alligator was removed from the endangered species list in the
late 1980s. Therefore, the industry must educate consumers on the
attributes of American alligator leather products to increase consumers’
favorable attitudes toward the products.

2. Consumers who were highly involved with fashion products had higher
purchase intention of American alligator leather products, without
considering other variables. This relationship can help the industry to
better target their prospective market.

3. Consumers who had some college education were more likely to purchase
alligator leather products than those who had an advanced degree. This
finding can also help the industry to segment the target market of
American alligator leather products.

4. There were significant correlations between consumers’ media usage for
fashion information and purchase intention of American alligator leather
products. The higher the media usage for fashion information, the greater
the purchase intention. The correlations between purchase intention and
usage of each individual medium decreased in this order: up-scale catalog,
movie, celebrity, magazine, TV shows, and the Internet. This information
can be used by the industry in advertising strategies and in the selection of
appropriate media.
**Recommendations for Future Research**

The following recommendations for future research are suggested:

1. Replicate the study by sampling from the general population. The true influence of demographics on consumers’ purchase intention of American alligator leather products can be better identified.

2. Utilize additional methods to further increase the response rate of the survey. If non-respondents’ telephone numbers can be secured, callbacks could be an efficient way to increase subjects’ response to the survey.

3. Use appropriate imputation strategies for item non-responses to increase the ability to generalize the survey results.

4. Further analyses, with individual attributes in the model instead of the combined attitude measure, are recommended for future study to test if the predictability will be improved from the Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980) model.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

APPROVED APPLICATION FOR USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS FOR THE PROJECT
FORM 1  HUEC USE OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS IN RESEARCH - SUMMARY
1/16/97

To be included in attached required protocol summary are Title, Objectives, Justification, Procedures and Expected benefit(s). Attach consent form (if used), and any survey/questionnaires used. Try to limit the protocol summary to 1-2 typed pages. Studies with human subjects being routed through LAES need only add a separate justification because the form includes all other components of protocol summary.

Title: Market Analysis and Proportionate Strategy Development for Louisiana Alligator, Ostrich, and Emu Skin Products

Source of Funds: LAES
or Grant routed through: LSU Campus

Consent Form: Not needed Attached
Instruments: Not needed Attached

A student can only be a principal investigator (responsible for protection of human subjects) of an exempted study. Projects undergoing expedited or full review require the faculty advisor as the principal investigator.

Bonnie D. Belleau, Teresa Summers 4-29-98
Researcher (Faculty or Student) Date

Researcher (If Student, Faculty Advisor) Date

This proposal has been reviewed by the HUEC Human and Animal Research Representative and found to be:

Approved Non-approved In need of modification

Proposed research will be reviewed by:
LSU Campus LAES

If LSU Campus review then review status of proposal will be:
Exempt Expedited Full

Michael Keenan 5-5-98
HUEC Human and Animal Research Representative Date
May 7, 1999

Ms. «M_1st_name» «last_name»
«street»
«city», «state»
«zipcode»

Dear Ms. «last_name»:

Within the next few days, you will be receiving a request from us to complete a brief questionnaire. Your name was randomly selected from consumers residing in eight major metropolitan areas considered to be the key fashion centers of the United States. We want to learn more about your opinions regarding fashion products made with genuine American alligator leather.

We would greatly appreciate your taking the few minutes necessary to complete and return your questionnaire when it arrives. Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Teresa A. Summers, Ph.D.  
Professor and Project Director  
Division of Textiles, Apparel Design,  
and Merchandising  
School of Human Ecology  
Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Yingjiao Xu  
Ph.D. candidate
Survey Instrument Cover Letter

May 14, 1999

Ms. «M_1st_name» «last_name»
«street»
«city», «state»
«zipcode»

Dear Ms. «last_name»:

As a consumer, you may be interested in and aware of new and innovative fashion products. Our research team is studying the uses of American alligator leather with the goal of encouraging the manufacture of more fashion products made with this unique material. In order to achieve this goal, information is needed about what you, the consumer, think about these products.

Your name was randomly selected from consumers in eight major cities that are considered to represent the fashion centers of the U.S. In order that the results of the study truly represent the opinions of consumers like yourself, it is important that each questionnaire be completed, folded, and returned in the envelope provided. The first 100 respondents to return the completed questionnaire will receive a genuine alligator leather key chain with our compliments. The swatch of American alligator leather attached to the survey is yours to keep. You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire itself.

We would be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. Please write to the School of Human Ecology, LSU, Baton Rouge, LA 70803 or fax (225) 388-2697. Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely

Teresa A. Summers, Ph.D.
Professor and Project Director
Division of Textiles, Apparel Design, and Merchandising
School of Human Ecology
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Yingjiao Xu
Ph.D. candidate
Postcard

Last week, a questionnaire seeking your opinions about accessories made with American alligator leather was mailed to you. Your name was randomly drawn from a list of consumers in the eight large cities that are considered to represent the fashion centers of the U.S..

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire to us, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. We are especially grateful for your help because we believe that your responses are vital to our understanding of consumers and their needs.

If you did not receive a questionnaire or it was misplaced, please write or fax us at (225)388-2697, and we will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely

Teresa A. Summers, Ph.D.  
Professor and Project Director  
Division of Textiles, Apparel Dsgn, & Merch.  
LA State Univ. School of Human Ecology  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Yingjiao Xu  
Ph.D. Candidate
Follow-up Letter

June 7, 1999

Ms. «M_last_name» «last_name»
«street»
«city», «state»
«zipcode»

Dear Ms. «last_name»:

About three weeks ago, we wrote to you seeking your opinions about accessories made with American alligator leather. As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. We realize that you may not have had time to complete the survey; however, we would genuinely appreciate hearing from you.

The study is being conducted to better understand consumers. We are writing to you again because the usefulness of the study depends on receiving a questionnaire from each respondent. Your name was randomly drawn from a list of consumers in the eight cities that are considered to represent the fashion centers of the U.S.. In order for the study to be truly representative, it is essential that each person in the sample return her questionnaire.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. We would be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. Please write or fax us at (225)388-2697.

Sincerely

Teresa A. Summers, Ph.D.  Yingjiao Xu
Professor and Project Director  Ph.D. candidate
Division of Textiles, Apparel Design,  School of Human Ecology
and Merchandising  Louisiana State University
School of Human Ecology  Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Louisiana State University
APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUMENT
ALLIGATORS & FASHION

Who's interested?

Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed stamped envelope to:
Dr. Teresa A. Summers
Louisiana State University
School of Human Ecology
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
For purposes of this survey, accessories include shoes, handbags, gloves, belts and small leather products, such as wallets, credit card cases, billfolds, key cases, jewelry and eyeglass cases, cigarette cases and other similar items.

Completing the survey will only take you 10-15 minutes. We appreciate your cooperation!

Please remove the American alligator swatch below and keep it with our compliments.

Remember, the first 100 respondents to return their completed surveys will receive a genuine American alligator key chain!

Your completion of this questionnaire signifies your consent to voluntarily participate in this research study. Individual results of this study will be completely confidential; your name will never be used and analysis will be completed with groups of responses only.
# Please circle your response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alligator leather accessories have unique qualities, such as texture, suppleness and luster.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are durable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing alligator leather accessories is socially acceptable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories require special care.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories made from alligator leather are higher priced than products made from other leathers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American alligator was removed from the endangered species list in the late 1980s.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are available in a wide assortment of colors.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are fashionable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alligator leather accessories are attractive.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wearing alligator leather accessories is prestigious.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's important for my accessories to be unique.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle your response.</td>
<td>Extremely Disagree</td>
<td>Quite Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Mixed Feeling</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Quite Agree</td>
<td>Extremely Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Durability is an important quality to be considered when selecting accessories.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Social acceptance is important for me when I select accessories.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Care of the product is a factor that influences my selection of accessories.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Price is very influential on my selection of accessories.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I will not buy products made of skins from endangered animals.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Color is very influential on my choice of accessories.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I buy accessories that are fashionable.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Wearing accessories that are pleasing to others is important to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Wearing prestigious accessories is important to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Purchasing an alligator leather accessory will be personally rewarding.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Purchasing an alligator leather accessory will be a wise investment.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I would like to buy an alligator leather accessory.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please circle your response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Extremely Disagree</th>
<th>Quite Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Quite Agree</th>
<th>Extremely Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Most people who are important to me will not object if I buy an alligator leather accessory.................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ My husband/significant other will not object if I buy an alligator leather accessory...........................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Most of my friends think that I should buy an alligator leather accessory..........................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ My professional colleagues think I should buy an alligator leather accessory..........................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ My social status makes me think of purchasing an alligator leather accessory..........................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ The fashion media suggests that I should buy an alligator leather accessory..........................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Generally speaking, I want to do what my husband/significant other thinks I should do.............................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Generally speaking, I want to do what my close friends think I should do..............................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Generally speaking, I want to do what my professional colleagues think I should do..................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Generally speaking, I want my behavior to fit my social status...................................................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Generally speaking, I want to do what the media suggests I should do............................................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please circle your response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely Disagree</th>
<th>Quite Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Quite Agree</th>
<th>Extremely Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ The old saying &quot;you get what you pay for&quot; is generally true.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ The price of a product is a good indicator of its quality.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Generally speaking, the higher the price of the product, the higher the quality.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ You always have to pay a bit more for the best.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ People notice when you buy the most expensive brand of a product.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Buying a high price brand makes me feel good about myself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Buying the most expensive brand of a product makes me feel classy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I enjoy the prestige of buying a high priced product.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ It says something to people when you buy the high priced version of a product.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Your friends will think you are cheap if you consistently buy the lowest priced version of a product.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I think others make judgements about me by the kinds of products and brands I buy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Even for a relatively inexpensive product, I think that buying a costly brand is impressive.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please circle your response.

♦ In general, would you say you buy women's clothing fashions
  a. earlier in the season than most other women
  b. about the same time as most other women
  c. later in the season than most other women

♦ How much information about new women's clothing fashions do you give to your friends?
  a. very little
  b. average amount
  c. a great deal

♦ What would you say about your interests in women's clothing fashions?
  a. less interested than most other women
  b. about as interested as most other women
  c. more interested than most other women

♦ Compared with most other women, how likely are you to be asked for advice about new women's clothing fashions?
  a. less likely to be asked than most other women
  b. about as likely to be asked as most other women
  c. more likely to be asked than most other women

♦ Which one of the statements below best describes your reaction to changing fashions in women's clothes? (Even though there may be no statement listed that exactly describes how you feel, make the best choice you can from the answers listed.)
  a. I read the fashion news regularly and try to keep my wardrobe up to date with the fashion trends.
  b. I keep up to date on all the fashion changes although I don't always attempt to dress according to those changes.
  c. I check to see what is currently fashionable only when I need to buy some new clothes.
  d. I don't pay much attention to fashion trends unless a major change takes places.
  e. I am not at all interested in fashion trends.
Please circle your response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ If given a choice, I would choose accessories made with genuine alligator leather over other crocodilian species....</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ If given a choice, I would choose leather accessories made in America over imports......</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ When considering a leather purchase I rarely think about where it was produced........</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I have more self-confidence than most people.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I am more independent than most people.......</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I think I have a lot of personal ability.................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I like to be considered a leader............................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I've never been really outstanding at anything..</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I often can talk others into doing something.....</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I'm strongly concerned about my style of doing things........................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I'm concerned about the way I present myself..</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I'm self-conscious about the way I look...................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I usually worry about making a good impression</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ One of the last things I do before leaving my house is look in the mirror..........</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I'm usually aware of my appearance.......................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ I'm concerned about what others think of me...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please circle your response or provide your response in the blanks provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Mixed Feeling</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I often buy clothing and accessories that are advertised.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy more accessories if I have seen them worn or used by a celebrity.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tend to notice clothes in movies.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I notice clothing in television shows.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I notice the clothing in magazines.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seek out the latest fashions on the Internet.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to buy clothes and accessories from upper-scale catalogs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average, how many movies (including video rentals, TV, theater) do you see per month? __________

On average, how many hours per week do you watch TV? ______

What are your three favorite TV shows?

__________

__________

Which of the following magazines do you read on a regular basis? (Select all that apply.)

1. Elle
2. W
3. Mademoiselle
4. Marie Claire
5. Vogue
6. Harper’s Bazaar
7. Other. Please specify ________________
Please tell us about yourself. Circle the appropriate response.

♦ Do you own any genuine alligator/crocodile leather accessories?
   1. Yes
      If yes, how many items? ______
   2. No
   3. Not sure

♦ What is your racial or ethnic background?
   1. American Indian
   2. Asian or Pacific Islander
   3. African American (Black)
   4. Hispanic
   5. White, not of Hispanic origin
   6. Other

♦ Which category best describes your age?
   1. 21-30
   2. 31-40
   3. 41-50
   4. 51-60
   5. 61-70
   6. 71 and over

♦ What is your current marital status?
   1. Single, never married
   2. Married
   3. Divorced
   4. Widowed
   5. Living together
Please tell us about yourself. Circle the appropriate response.

♦ Which category best describes your education?
   1. Less than high school diploma
   2. High school graduate
   3. Trade or technical school
   4. Some college
   5. College degree
   6. Advanced degree

♦ What is your current employment status? (select only one)
   1. Employed
   2. Homemaker
   3. Retired
   4. Unemployed
   5. Other. Please specify________

♦ If employed, what is your usual occupation? (select only one)
   1. Professional
   2. Technical
   3. Management
   4. Self-employed
   5. Other. Please specify________

♦ Approximately how much have you spent on clothing in the last 6 months?

♦ What was your household income last year?
   1. less than $50,000
   2. $50,000-$74,999
   3. $75,000-$99,999
   4. $100,000-$124,999
   5. $125,000-$149,000
   6. $150,000 and over
Thank you for your participation. The information you have provided will help researchers understand preferences of fashion consumers. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to write them in the space provided below.

Please send me a summary of the results.

Louisiana State University
Agricultural Center
VITA

Yingjiao Xu was born September 14, 1971, in Zhejiang, People's Republic of China. In July, 1993, she received her bachelor of science degree in textile materials from China Textile University. In July, 1996, she received her master of science degree from Renmin University of China in textiles, apparel and merchandising. While completing the master's degree, Ms. Yingjiao Xu worked part time in the organizing committee of China International Clothing and Accessory Fair as the assistant to the director of foreign affairs. In August 1996, Ms. Xu came to Louisiana State University to pursue her doctoral degree in the School of Human Ecology, focusing on textiles, apparel and merchandising. Ms. Xu expects to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in August, 2000.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Yingjiao Xu

Major Field: Human Ecology

Title of Dissertation: Consumers' Reasoned Behavior Toward American Alligator Leather Products

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

March 20, 2000

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.