



## UNIVERSAL AND BRA CONSUMERS' EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

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The purpose of this research was to identify evaluative criteria used universally by apparel consumers and verify appropriateness of those criteria via a consumer survey.

Citations of apparel evaluative criteria from 25 studies were inventoried yielding a list of 275 criteria citations. Each unique criteria was assigned a frequency and ranked. Criteria with frequencies representing less than 2.5% of the citations were eliminated. Thirteen universal evaluative criteria remained. Then, over a two-week period, 293 female consumers were surveyed in the intimate apparel department of a department store regarding the bra purchase decision. The chi-square test statistic was used to determine if criteria cited by bra consumers differed from universal criteria.

Of the evaluative criteria cited by bra consumers, 94.8% mapped directly back to the universal evaluative criteria. Although bra consumers used the universal criteria, results indicated that criteria varied in importance. Overall, bra consumers cited intrinsic criteria more frequently than extrinsic, and inability to find the correct size was the most common reason for not purchasing.

Results confirmed the appropriateness of universal criteria discerned through analysis of the literature. However, the individual universal evaluative criteria are not equally salient across all product categories. The presence of bra evaluative criteria that did not map to universal criteria suggests that some product specific criteria are also used in the purchase decision. This would explain the large quantity of infrequently cited criteria found in the literature; each was unique to the product studied.

Engle, J., Blackwell, R., & Miniard, P. (1995). Consumer behavior (8th ed.). Fort Worth: The Dryden Press.