

**FOOTWEAR CUES INFLUENCING PERCEIVED QUALITY AND CONSUMER
SATISFACTION AMONGST GENERATION Y CONSUMERS AT RIVER SQUARE
MALL, VEREENIGING**



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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Technologiae: Fashion.

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This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by giving explicit references. A list of references is appended.

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this dissertation is to examine the relationship between footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction amongst Generation Y at River Square mall in Vereeniging. This research considers the effects of these cues as important arrays of quality indicators that consumers utilise in their evaluation process when selecting products. This knowledge is important to managers in the footwear industry. The lack of these considerations may lead to the manufacturing of fashion footwear that may not meet the consumers expectation regarding quality of the product and hence their satisfaction or possibly dissatisfaction. Footwear is alleged to be indispensable for the development of fashion apparel. Thus, the study sought to investigate underlying variables that influence footwear for the purpose of identifying ways in which the fashion industry can improve performance and presentation of footwear.

A conceptual model was developed, drawing from cue utilization theory (CU) and utility theory (UT). Generation Y consumers at River Square mall in Vereeniging formed the sample of the study. A survey was conducted and research data was collected from 550 consumers. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to analyse the data via Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22 and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 22. The findings indicate that footwear cues have a strong influence on perceived quality and perceived quality has a strong influence on satisfaction amongst Generation Y consumers. This indicates that Generation Y consumers perceive quality of footwear through extrinsic and intrinsic cues hence their satisfaction. Consequently fashion footwear business should regard effective cues when trading footwear.

KEY WORDS: Footwear, extrinsic and intrinsic cues, perceived quality, consumer satisfaction

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

RSA	Republic of South Africa
UT	Utility Theory
CUT	Cue Utilization Theory
CV	.....	Confident Value
PV	.....	Predictive Value
COO	.....	Country of Origin
EFC	.....	Extrinsic Footwear Cues
IFC	.....	Intrinsic Footwear Cues
PC	.....	Perceive Quality
CS	.....	Consumer Satisfaction
RFID	.....	Radio Frequency Identification
ADC	.....	Advanced Data Capture
ASP	.....	Active Server Pages
TPS	.....	Transaction Process System
CR	.....	Composite Reliability
AVE	.....	Average Variance Extracted
SEM	.....	Structural Equation Modelling
GFI	.....	Goodness of Fit Index
AGFI	.....	Augmented Goodness of Fit Index
NFI	.....	Normed Fit Index
IFI	.....	Incremental Fit Index
TLI	.....	Tucker-Lewis Index
CFI	.....	Composite Fit Index
RMSEA	.....	Random Measure of Standard Error Approximation
CFA	.....	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
EFA	.....	Exploratory Factor Analysis
PM	.....	Path Modelling

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the context of global competition and the frequently altering world of fashion, providing quality products that satisfy consumers is essential in order for manufacturing companies to be sustainable, have a competitive advantage and to remain profitable. Increasing consumer expectations concerning product quality and the competitive environment of products are motivating manufacturers to place greater emphasis on understanding consumer behaviour (Shaharudin, Menson, Hassan, Omar & Hanur 2011:8164). Behaviour is drawn largely from expectations of achieving desirable outcomes, which are positive incentives (Solomon & Rabolt 2009:121).

Fashion products, including footwear, form a vital component of the fashion industry and are essential to the success of the apparel industry (Burn, Mullet & Bryant 2011:489). Footwear is manufactured according to the needs of the consumers and therefore priority should be given to the consumers (Saeed & Baig 2013:56), who spend large amounts of money on it, notably in promoting quality and various benefits to satisfy their divergent needs. Fashion clothing inhabits a focal position in the industry and is more than a basic need in the lives of many people. According to O'Cass (2004:870), the understanding of participating antecedents and consequences in the fashion industry is important because of the economic value of the industry, its social function and the meaning it has for consumers.

There is renewed interest in research on fashion cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction, particularly with regard to apparel (Forney, Park & Brandon 2005:158; De Klerk & Lubbe 2008; Smith 2010; Kang & Park-Poaps 2011). South Africa is an emerging economy, with retail expected to address the needs of a diverse consumer population (Prinsloo 2011:13). Consequently, this study aims to investigate the effects

of footwear cues on perceived quality and consumer satisfaction amongst members of the Generation Y cohort.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Footwear is associated with social status, and fashion aspects are an important criterion that often dominate shoe design (Krauss, Viliant, Horstman & Grau 2010:114-115). According to the statistical release P6242.1 of retail trade sales in South Africa, textiles, clothing and footwear have by far the strongest annual sales growth rate, with a volume growth of 16.9 percent (RSA 2011a:2) and a retail trade sales increase of 2,2 percent year-on-year in February (RSA 2014:2). The main contributors to the increase were retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (contributing 2,0 percentage points). Positive annual growth rates were recorded for retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods at 10,4 percent (RSA 2014:2). On the other hand, statistical release P0100, (income and expenditure of households in South Africa) declared that the second largest percentage increase in average annual household expenditure in clothing and footwear was 42,7 percent (RSA 2011b:4), with retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods being the second largest contributors to the retail trade growth by 3.8 percent (RSA 2013:2). According to these consumption statistics, it is evident that consumers invest much money on clothing and footwear and it is therefore important for designers and manufacturers to ensure good quality products and consumer satisfaction. More recently, statistical release P6242.1 (RSA 2017:3) of January 2017 indicates a decrease of 5,3 percent in retail sales for clothing, footwear and leather goods, perhaps motivated by discontent with the kind of footwear available in stores in relation to the expectations of the consumers.

Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006:245) state that a generation can be seen as a cohort, that is, a large number of individuals who are related to each other by age, providing a means for marketers to segment markets according to age sub-cultures. Each generational cohort group experiences a phase of life differently, depending on historic moments that have shaped it (Keiser & Garner 2008:76), hence different generations have different tastes and decision-making strategies according to which fashion items are selected. Generation Y consumers are portrayed as a group of

people living in the greatest time of technological advancement (Sutherland & Thompson 2003:8) and like spending on products that are eye-catching, such as footwear and clothing. Generation Y is an important sector for retailers to focus on, since these consumers are entering the labour force, which indicates an increase in their purchasing power.

Cues, quality perception and consumer satisfaction are topics of significant research and have many purposes, predominantly with regard to the understanding of product consumption (Kang & Park-Poaps 2011:67; Kumar & Manjunath 2012:463). Most of the studies completed on extrinsic cues, intrinsic cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction variables are focused on either one or two of the variables separately, but seldom with all four variables interconnected, especially those studies conducted on footwear in the context of South Africa. Footwear fashion has been an area of limited concern to researchers, with most of the fashion-related studies conducted in developed countries (Saeed & Baig 2013:53). In developing countries, such as South Africa, this area has seen limited research, despite knowledge of footwear cues, quality perceptions and consumer satisfaction being significant to designers, retailers and managers in the footwear industry. The deficit may perhaps lead to the manufacturing of footwear that does not meet consumers' expectations of quality and hence their satisfaction.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

'Fashion businesses need to understand how consumers evaluate the quality of their products and services offers' (Jackson & Shaw 2009:238). Extensive research has been conducted to highlight which cues consumers mostly rely on when performing quality evaluations (Solomon & Rabolt 2009:394; Veale & Queste 2009:195). However, quality is a difficult concept to quantify for apparel products as it may mean one thing to one consumer and something else to another (Rosenau & Wilson 2007:282). Consequently, controversy exists over which cues on footwear matter most to consumers and how they should be presented in order to meet consumer expectations and satisfy consumer needs. Footwear that meets consumer needs is essential because consumers do not necessarily have the knowledge, experience or time to judge quality in a range of products presented in retail stores. Assuming that

consumers' choice of footwear might be based ultimately on selected cues, footwear that is designed according to selected cues on which consumers rely most would have a better chance of being selected.

Extrinsic cues to be focused on in this study will be based on price, brand names, image of retailer and country of origin. These criteria were selected on the basis that the literature has deemed these four extrinsic cues to be more influential, as consumers rely heavily on them when evaluating products (Brown & Rice 2001:48; Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:90; Shiffman & Kanuk 2007:176; Lee & Goonetilleke 2008:23; Veale & Quester 2009:142). This study focuses on the criteria for intrinsic footwear cues such as comfort, material, style and fit as aspects of consumer satisfaction. The aforementioned cues were rated most significant in a study conducted in Hong Kong that evaluated the criteria related to buying ladies' shoes (Au & Goonetillek 2007:689).

Previous research conducted in South Africa on footwear focuses on challenges relating to fit, the footwear industry and foot morphology (Thompson 2008; Forster 2009). Coupled with these, previous studies conducted in South Africa on fashion have focused predominantly on investigating decision-making, quality indicators, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction concerning garments as opposed to footwear (Kuhn 2010; Smith 2010). There is a paucity of studies in the context of South Africa which give attention specifically to footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

It is evident that uncertainty exists as to which footwear cues significantly affect perceived quality and consumer satisfaction, and therefore this study seeks to answer the following question:

- To what extent do selected footwear cues influence perceived quality and consumer satisfaction?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In light of the problem area, this study seeks to close the aforementioned gap and perhaps reveal significant relationships between footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. In considering this area of research, the study will also contribute to empirical literature findings and concepts that might encourage further studies. It should serve as a stimulus for footwear designers and businesses to examine and identify areas of concern and improve their knowledge of and attitude towards footwear consumption in relation to cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. Knowledge of footwear cues and their relative significance to perceived quality and satisfaction will allow designers and marketers to develop their product intrinsically, in line with consumers' preferences, as well as to employ effective extrinsic cues in order to make an impact on consumer satisfaction. Lastly, this study intends to sustain key values and create strategies that will ensure continued expertise and satisfaction in footwear consumption.

1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The broad aim of the study is to investigate the influence of extrinsic and intrinsic cues on perceived quality and consumer satisfaction with footwear amongst Generation Y cohort members at River Square shopping mall in Vereeniging. This research considers the effects of these cues as important arrays of quality indicators that consumers utilise in their evaluation process when selecting products, as knowledge important to managers in the footwear industry. The lack of these considerations may lead to the manufacturing of fashion footwear that may not meet the consumers' expectations regarding the quality of the product, resulting in their possible dissatisfaction.

1.6.1 Theoretical objectives

The theoretical objective of the study is to conduct a literature review on extrinsic cues, intrinsic cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

1.6.2 Empirical objectives

The empirical objectives are based on the relationships between the research variables that seek to investigate the influence of:

- Extrinsic footwear cues on perceived quality
- Extrinsic footwear cues on consumer satisfaction
- Intrinsic footwear cues on perceived quality
- Intrinsic footwear cues on consumer satisfaction
- Perceived quality on consumer satisfaction.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study included Generation Y footwear consumers in Gauteng province, particularly in River Square shopping mall in Vereeniging.

1.8 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATIONS

The study will consist of the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction of the study

Chapter 1 has presented the background and scope of the study with focus on the aims, objectives and the problem statement of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review – footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction

Chapter 2 will include an overview and review of all the literature collected regarding footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

Chapter 3: Conceptual model and hypotheses development

Chapter 3 will focus on the development of the model and hypotheses.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

Chapter 4 will focus on the sampling and data collection, as well as how the acquired data will be analysed. Attention will also be given to the techniques that will be

utilised in order to ensure that efficient, valid and reliable results are obtained in the interpretation of the responses.

Chapter 5: Data analysis and findings

Chapter 5 will deal with the statistical analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the research findings derived from the data collected through the questionnaires.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

In Chapter 6, the conclusions drawn will be based on the findings reported in Chapter 5. Recommendations will be made with a view to understanding the relationships between footwear quality cues and consumer perceived quality and improving consumer satisfaction levels with regard to footwear amongst members of the Generation Y cohort.

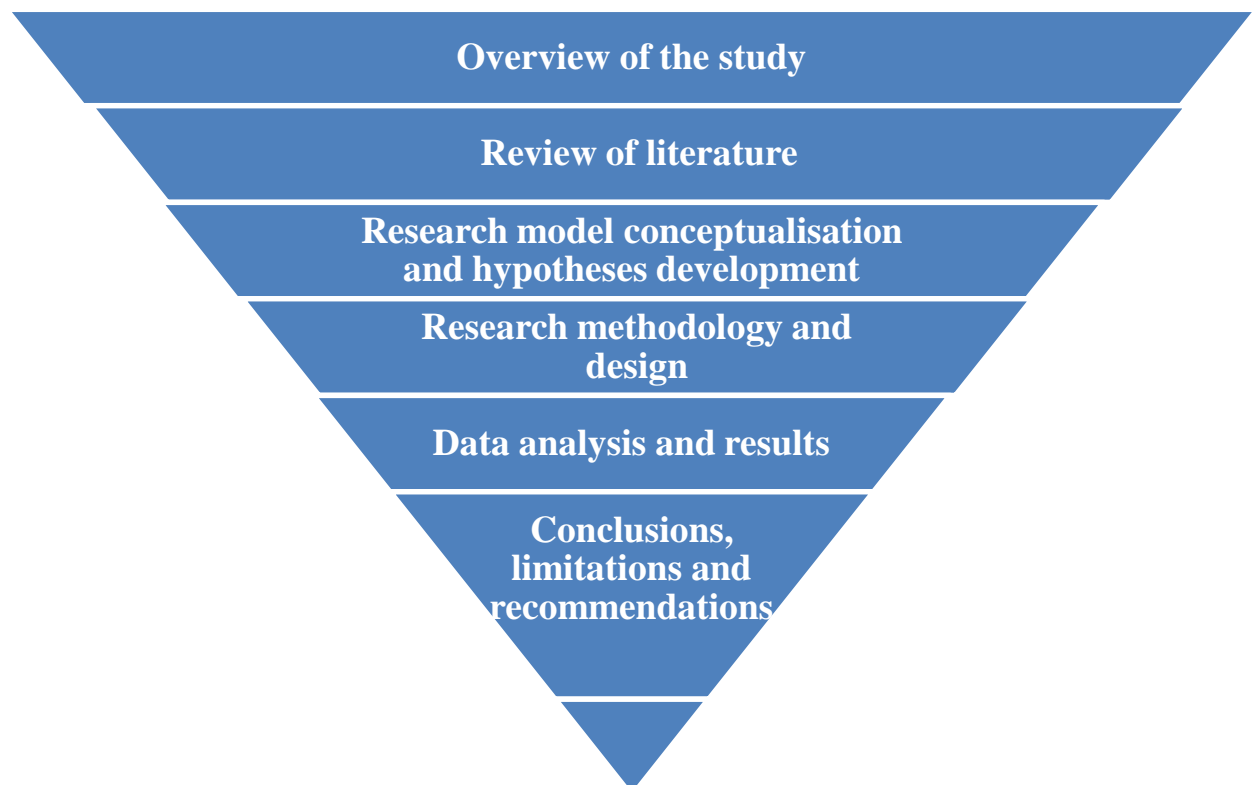


Figure 1.1 Research flow

1.9 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 has introduced the researcher's awareness of the topic of study. The problem related to footwear, cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction was outlined throughout the introduction, background and problem statement of the study. The aim of the study was presented, followed by the primary research objectives, both theoretical and empirical. The research questions were then declared followed by a justification of the study and the selected scope of the study. The chapter concluded with an outline of the ensuing chapters of the study

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A literature study of relevant sources was carried out to determine the scope of footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. In order to establish a theoretical background and a solid foundation for the research, the literature was drawn from textbooks, journals, articles, publications and internet searches. Reviewing current literature relevant to a research topic was the first step and foundation crucial for undertaking the research study.

The aim of the literature review was to discuss key issues. This chapter offers a comprehensive scrutiny of the relevant empirical studies and theoretical grounding dealing with the research topic. Detailed discussions of the theories that were consulted for this study, namely, utility theory (UT) and cue utilisation theory (CUT), were undertaken. These theories will unpack the link between variables in the proposed model, which seeks to find a relationship between quality cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

The empirical literature review is also discussed, with all the research variables that were employed for this study being explored. Explicit variables are extrinsic and intrinsic cues concerning footwear, perceived quality, and consumer satisfaction. Empirical research was based on observed and measured phenomena (Moody 2002:1), with actual observations or experiments using quantitative research methods to generate numerical data between two or more variables.

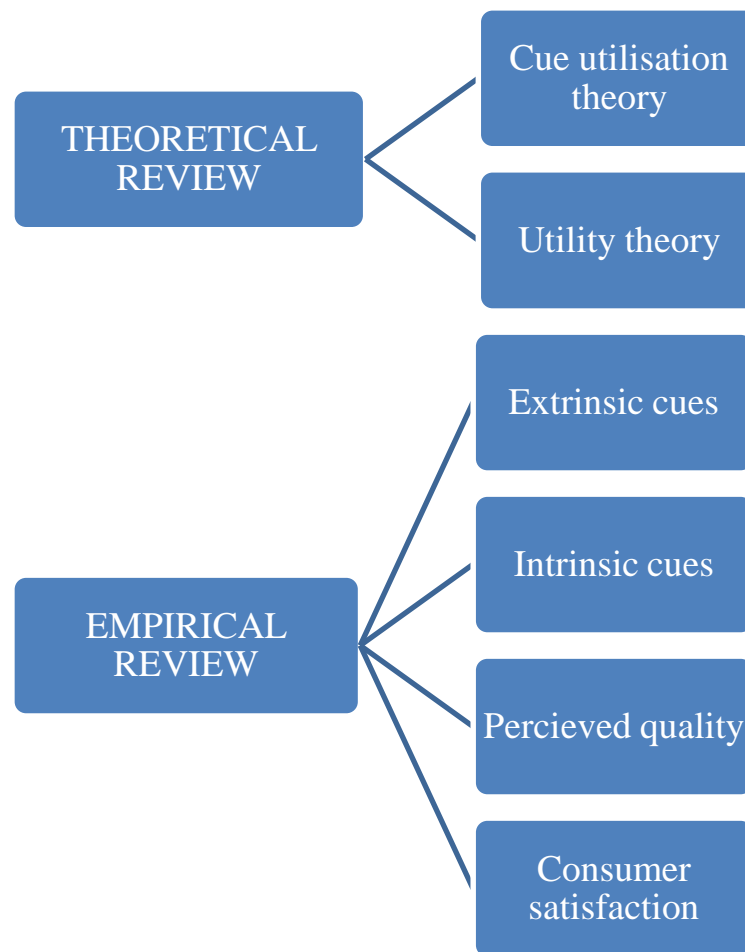


Figure 2.1 Diagrammatic representation of Chapter 2

2.2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

This section reviews the theories used in the research.

2.2.1 Cue utilisation theory

The dissertation asserts that cue utilisation theory (CUT) has been developed to foretell consumer behaviour concerning the buying and selection of products such as footwear. The ability to use cues in order to perform product evaluation is recognised as ‘cue utilisation’ (Lawley, Birch & Hamblin 2012:262). Cue utilisation may signify a structure through which to assess consumer perceptions of quality, similar to the characteristics of the cues which indicate the reliability and the probability of a cue and that utilising cues would lead to a successful task resolution (Richardson, Dick & Jain 1994:29).

Cue utilisation theory states that products display arrays of intrinsic and extrinsic cues that serve as indicators of quality to consumers. According to Richardson *et al.* (1994:30), the relative weight of extrinsic versus intrinsic cues in quality appraisal depends on the cues' predictive value (PV) and confidence value (CV). Cues characterised by high CV and high PV are acknowledged to be the supreme weight in the quality appraisal process. The PV of a cue is depicted as the extent to which consumers relate a given cue with product quality, for example, the quality of the features of a stiletto heel would be a high PV cue in quality whereas the colour of a stiletto heel would be a low PV cue. On the other hand, confidence value (CV) is the extent to which consumers have confidence in their ability to use and judge that cue precisely (Richardson *et al.* 1994:31). The quality of the components of a stiletto heel would be a high CV cue for consumers who have knowledge of footwear products, but low in CV for those who have little understanding of these product types.

Cox (1967:S.a) states that consumers tend to use cues understood to be high PV or high CV and depend more on high CV and low PV cues than on high PV and low CV cues. Consumers are prone to decrease risk by relying more on high CV and low PV cues as consumers' quality judgment is based on those cues that they can use with some level of confidence (Chung, Yu & Pysarchik 2006:200-201). In addition, based on relative discrepancies in PV and CV, cues can be divided into the varied areas of extrinsic and intrinsic cues (Lawley *et al.* 2012:261). Intrinsic attributes are the ones that easily change the central purpose of the product if they were ruined or not present, as per cue utilisation theory the product would naturally have a high degree of PV (Olson & Jacoby 1972).

2.2.2 Utility theory

Utility Theory (UT) (Kahneman & Tversky 1979) is another theory that will establish the grounding of the study. Early studies carried out in economics have candidly presented utility as an element of the concept of value. UT originates from the foundation of economics and is identified as the determinant of the benefits that the consumer perceives, usually measured as perceived quality, and the sacrifice made to acquire the product, which may or may not include the financial costs (Campo &

Yague 2009:129). Fashion products benefit the consumer because fashion is connected to the conspicuous use of a product to express meaning such as social status and success (Jackson & Shaw 2009: 88). Consumers can make a decision about the benefits they are purchasing before paying for the product.

Utility theory is derived from the theory of expected value first predicted by Pascal in 1666 (Lengwiler 2008:1). He argued that the significance of any course of action could be verified by multiplying the growth that could be recognised from that action by the possibility of receiving that gain. The product which is labelled 'expected value' was now understood to symbolise a balanced decision variable. While Pascal agreed that not all human decision-making could be accurately described by expected value theory, he stipulated that all lucid decision-making should pursue this rigid theory (Glimcher, Dorris, Bayer 2005:219). It is based on the idea of satisfying needs through decisions regarding alternative goods and services, and thus, according to Cornachione (2010:32-33), 'UT is centred on agents, which are choices and decisions, because it is concerned with people's preferences and judgments of preferred ability, worth, value, goodness or any number of similar concepts'. He expands this concept up to the level of analysing two distinct categories, namely, predictive and prescriptive. The author also argues that 'the predictive approach is interested in the ability of a theory to predict actual choice behaviour' and 'the prescriptive approach is interested in saying how a person ought to make a decision'(Cornachione 2010:32-33).

The concept of utility is crucial to the researcher's perception of consumer behaviour (Barbera, Hammond & Seidl 2000:466) as UT concerns the habitual task and update of the value of alternative actions given the value of alternative result and the level of belief in the result. Furthermore, the concept of utility and its derivatives has been emerging through centuries of the economic notion and is facing extremely diverse contextual challenges. The power of UT may be connected to such advancement capacity involving alterations, while keeping the core intention and key elements.

Drawing from the cue theory, it can be argued that in this study consumers use both intrinsic and extrinsic cues to assess the quality of footwear. A positive perception of

footwear quality is expected to lead to the purchase and use of footwear which is eventually expected to lead to their satisfaction. The satisfaction experienced indicates the utility the consumer derives from the use of footwear, hence the applicability of the utility theory in this study.

2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Consumers may try to overcome their hesitation by looking into cues as a basis for their evaluation of the quality within products (Solomon & Rabolt 2009:395). Cues are defined as quality indicators or signs that consumers utilise when selecting products (Banovic, Grunert, Barreira & Fontes 2010:58). Cues are typically divided into two key groups, namely, *intrinsic* or tangible, and *extrinsic* or non-tangible, when consumers make evaluations on perceived quality (Veale & Quester 2009:134; Shaharudin *et al.* 2010:166).

2.3.1 EXTRINSIC FOOTWEAR CUES

According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:179) and Shaharudin *et al.* (2010:166), extrinsic attributes exist in the form of non-physical or external characteristics that are related to the product, such as brand name, image and reputation of the manufacturer, price, retail store and country of origin. Brown and Rice (2001:48) argue that extrinsic cues carry the implication of quality and influence the consumer's perception of fashion product quality either positively or negatively.

Common extrinsic cues are brand name, price, image of store and country of origin (COO). As far as extrinsic cues are concerned, price stands as a significant criterion in purchasing decisions, whereas the importance of other cues varies from place to place and country to country (Sanjeev 2004:249). It has been concluded in research that applying such market research work across various cultural borders is risky and it is recognised that lower-priced products lack certain intrinsic values, such as durability and quality (Veronica and Vanni 2013:213). Thus, the external factors and their influence change greatly and have a connection with other cues when researched in different geographic locations (Babu & Barad 2016:382).

Extrinsic cues can be more influential than intrinsic cues, even when consumers experience all intrinsic product attributes via their consumption experience. Research has shown that when intrinsic product attributes are not obtainable, or when consumers are not certain of their ability to evaluate them, consumers will depend more on extrinsic cues (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:94; Wells, Valacich & Hess 2011:375). In addition, Devlin (2011:1369) posits that, in the absence of the actual experience of a product, consumers habitually evaluate quality on the basis of the cues that are external to the product. Those with low levels of information relevant to the product or product category are also more at risk of being influenced by extrinsic cues (Veale & Quester 2009:135); therefore, given that there are realistically few undeniable product experts in any given category, consumers' confidence in extrinsic cues should not be taken lightly.

Extrinsic cues are recognised by consumers to be trustworthy and reliable predictors of quality or to signify high levels of emotional appeal intensified by price, brand name, retail outlet and country of origin (Dodds 1991:17; Kardes, Cronley, Kellaris & Posavac 2004:371). Extrinsic cues bring about a bona fide effect on product quality, a number of them having been set up to totally manipulate consumer perceptions of product quality. These cues consist of price, brand, reputation of retail outlet and COO (Veale & Quester 2009:195-196).

2.3.1.1 Price

Price plays a large role in influencing customer behaviour and has been studied comprehensively in the literature. It indicates the perceived value of consumer and retailer regarding the product, which is the observable attribute that leads to purchasing or not purchasing and impacts on the profit margins (Che 2008:10; Aghaei, Asadollahi, Hosseini, Javani, Ghahramani 2010:874). Conceptually, the economic and behavioural models that have been used to study the price versus product buying decision relationship propose that price may play numerous roles in the process of making buying decisions. In traditional economic theory, given that higher prices have a negative influence on consumers' budget price, price is viewed as having a negative impact on choice (Rao & Monroe 1988:353).

One vital difference connecting the economic and behavioural conceptualisations on the use of price in buying decisions is the estimation of perfect information. High perceived quality is allied with high price as customers evaluate high perceived quality over high price. According to Iqbal, Rizwan, Zafar, Khan, Usman and Iqbal (2013:214), consumers associate the premium prices with higher quality, and low prices are considered signs of lesser quality. The literature on quality measurement recommends that price is the finest attribute to measure the product quality. Therefore, price may be understood as an indicator of sacrifice, or as a quality cue.

Price is described as the monetary value that the consumer pays to attain a product. Price perception is defined as the process whereby consumers interpret price into meaningful knowledge (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:90). Consequently, price is responsible for two functions, firstly as an indicator of the amount of sacrifice needed to purchase a product, and secondly as an indicator of the level of quality (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:91). Price is more significant when information about other attributes is lacking and there is a risk of choosing the wrong option (Chocarro, Cortiñas & Elorz 2008:183).

One of the most noteworthy influences on consumer preference, price is an extrinsic cue that stands as a significant criterion in purchasing decisions, while the importance of other cues varies according to place (Sanjeev 2004:251). Consumers usually check the price suitability of the products they purchase and agree that lower-priced products lack certain intrinsic values, such as durability and quality (Veronica and Vanni 2013:217). Accepting that consumers are often not entirely familiar with products and product alternatives, researchers have suggested that consumer expertise or familiarity may mediate the effect of price on perceptions of quality (Babu & Barad 2016:382).

The role of price, as demonstrated in the literature relative to consumer evaluation of product alternatives and their ultimate buying decisions, is multi-dimensional. Consumers have been found to trust that there is a natural ordering of products according to a price scale, where the higher quality products are more expensive and products of lesser quality are cheaper. This price and quality relationship, described in

the literature as a price-reliance schema, reveals that consumers strongly hold an opinion that 'one gets what one pays for'. Finding an adequate sense of balance in the sacrifice that will be made and the value received clearly represents an important challenge for many consumers. Brand positioning can be most powerful in this context as it will trigger an expectation of price and hence quality in the minds of consumers (Bredahl 2003:72). The power of price is often connected to the additional information obtainable for consumers to consider, making price a predominantly powerful tool to support other product cues provided in order to strengthen positioning (Veale & Quester 2009:136).

Price regularly presents quality cues to consumers, whereby low prices of a product indicate the perceptions of quality, highlighting that repeat purchases at selected footwear retailers do not depend on quality but on price (Li 2013:44). Some researchers suggest that because of the versatile nature of price it is one of the most useful tools in a decision-making process. For instance, in a previous study conducted by Jegethesan, Sneddon and Soutar (2012:283), respondents favoured jeans that were priced between \$150 and \$400, rather than ones priced under \$150. This signifies that young adults are prepared to pay a higher price for perceived quality. On the other hand, it also seemed that these consumers were price-sensitive at upper levels as they were reluctant to buy jeans that were priced at more than \$400. Consumers are interested in getting maximum use from products by sacrificing their money and the benefits of other products which are competitors of those specific products (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:91).

Efforts to confirm the price-quality relationship have progressed to testing whether a positive association between actual product quality and price exists. According to Gerstner (1985:216), the degree of positive correlation between quality and price for 145 products concluded that the relationship between quality and price appeared to be product-specific and generally weak. Their findings imply that some products display a positive quality price association in the marketplace but others do not. Although the statistical implication of the diverse research efforts has been incoherent, combined analysis of research indicates a positive price-perceived quality relationship (Rao & Olson 1990:253).

2.3.1.2 Brand names

Generally, consumers use brand names as informational chunks that signify compound information about a number of aspects of the product, such as price, size, shape, manufacturer, and performance factors. Consumers put high value on brand when they perceive that it has superior quality over the competitor's products (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:214). More often, consumers buy not only the product but also the image associated with it, which is represented by the brand name, symbol and association. Thus, they usually refer to brand image before formation of their product attitude (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:90).

Brand image is often defined as perceptions about a brand as reflected by associations held in the memory. According to Taylor (2003:5), a true brand has a distinctive name and symbols that are known, and is not just functional but appeals to the emotions of a large group of consumers. The brand name is another way of differentiating a product, its role being to represent the aggregate consumer perception of a particular firm (Chocarro, Cortiñas & Elorz 2008:176). A brand name is a valuable asset and successful companies invest years of marketing resources in developing and maintaining one (Lee & Lee 2011:412).

Kotler and Kelle (2006:521) argues that brand is a name, term, symbol, design or all of the above, and is used to distinguish one's products and services from competitors. For example, *Nike* takes on a check mark as its brand symbol, supposedly having a positive effect indicating approval. Branding does not exist in the technology, features or the actual product itself, but is something brought out by promotions, advertisements, or users. Through brand image, consumers are able to recognise a product, evaluate its quality, lower purchase risks, and obtain certain experience and satisfaction out of differentiation (Bhakar, Bhakar, Bhakar 2013:27). As far as brand names are concerned, many businesses concentrate on creating trust for their brand, although the primary way to success is to eliminate distrust associated with brands.

Branding is a result of the promotional activities undertaken by companies (Hsiung, 2011:7732). Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010:375) noted that brand image is the

thought that occurs in consumer's minds when they come across certain brands. In examining the effect of branding on consumers' loyalty toward brands it has been stated by Hu, Jou, and Liu (2009:12) that branding comprises three components, that is, the image of the product itself, followed by the corporation's image, and lastly, the image of competitors' brands. It has been concluded that to enhance consumer loyalty towards a brand it is important to improve the image of the product as well as the corporate image. Yagci (2001:73) has confirmed that branding is an important factor that plays an influential role not only in affecting consumers' quality perception and attitude towards products but also in consumers' purchases of products as it is also a strong predictor of consumers' purchase intention. On the other hand, the opposite has been revealed by Eze, Yee and Wamala (2012:269), who noted that consumers do not express their intentions by purchasing products based on the image of the brand, by demonstrating that brand name is not always prioritised by consumers in making their purchases (Haque, Anwar, Yasmin, Sarwar, Ibrahim, Momen 2015:3).

Previous studies have found branding is used frequently to assess apparel and is an important consideration when making clothing purchases (Carrigan & Attalla 2001:574). Findings were consistent with prior studies that had found that brand was important when people considered garment purchases, perhaps because designer clothing brands were seen as trustworthy and of high quality (Keller & Lehmann 2006:742). As a result, a strong and favourable brand image can bias consumers' impression of product attributes. The favourability of brand associations creates significant viewpoints that transfer to the product; thus, the more favourable the brand image the more positive the attitude toward the branded product and its attributes (Simonian, Forsythe, Kwon & Chattaraman 2012:326).

It is often difficult for clothing consumers to judge the quality of garment ensembles and therefore they are dependent on store or brand names to appraise the quality (Chen-Yu & Kincade 2001:33). Consumers search for information pertaining to the brand and they react positively to that brand which relates to their knowledge and self-worth. Habitually, consumers focus on the brand's prospect, appropriateness, benefit and prestige when they evaluate brand image (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:90). Brand image is found to be an influential factor in product evaluation of a product

type that typically requires physical evaluation, such as footwear. Some of the information sought for making a purchase decision is not available so brand image may be an important surrogate for information that is not available on intrinsic product attributes (Simonian *et al.* 2012:326).

The brand image of a fashion product has become significant for both customer image and manufacturer correspondence via a quick response in order to re-design. It is expressed by companies' value in terms of its semantics, which can convey values to meet their expectation. Tangchaidee and Butdee (2009:43) affirm that semantics can benefit a fashion designer so as to know what the consumers want and concentrate on the brand identity. Shukla (2010:120) observes that due to the highly social nature of opulence, consumers try to gain social advantage by following the desired group's consumption pattern. Focusing on different facets of the independent self, consumers will demonstrate fitting-in behaviour by using brands that match the image of the group to which they wish to belong (Shukla 2011:245). This is also reflected in another study carried out by Shukla (2010:127), in which brands associated with higher social acceptability were significantly preferred by consumers in collectivist markets.

Own brands differentiate a fashion product in a highly competitive market and are acknowledged as the means by which fashion business could, in operational terms, control not only the supply chain but also the portrayal of the brand through advertising, design, merchandise and store image, offering opportunities for expansion. This level of control allows fashion retailers to react more quickly to market developments (McColl & Moore 2011:100). Brand image consistency is crucial to the development and success of any brand (Ritson 2003:16) and with greater regularity of consumer travel and increasing international media, consumers expect brands to deliver the same values on a worldwide basis. The indication for fashion retailers is a need to understand the importance of their own brand as both a strategic and a marketing tool but this requires centralised control of operational management to ensure consistency of image in terms of external communications and internal store environments, and necessitates centralised staff policies to ensure

consistency and excellence in terms of consumer interface (McColl & Moore 2011:101).

2.3.1.3 Image and reputation of retailer

Dimensions can be explained by numerous attributes, such as quality, design, range and price. Creating a striking store image that speaks to one's customer subdivision is essential for retailers in order to draw customers and distinguish themselves from competitors (Kumar & Manjunath 2012:463-464). The store image consistently needs to change as shopping behaviour and competition shifts, updating in a more fashionable manner so that product sales improve. Dimensions of quality expectations may have different effects on various dimensions of store image perceptions. A consumer forms store image based on a subjective outlook of assorted attributes, both tangible and intangible (Chang and Tseng 2013:864), with the former usually including elements such as product assortment, price, display and facility, and the latter, services, courtesy of staff, store atmosphere, and convenience. Past studies present several classifications of store image characteristics, notably physical store environment: merchandise, price, promotion, service, staff attitude, convenience, facilities, post-purchase satisfaction, store reputation and store atmosphere (Chang & Tu 2005:199).

Competitive differentiation in retailing could be based on store image, defined as the 'personality' of a store in the customer's mind (Burt & Mavromatis 2006:403; Chang & Tu 2005:200). It has been argued that store image should be observed as the sum of distinct parts or as the overall perception customers have of a store. Some studies have tried to identify the fundamental elements or dimensions that contribute to store image, such as a customer's set of beliefs about attractiveness. Customer perceptions of store image vary across countries, geographical regions, market sectors and store formats and are considered relative to existing competition (Bouzaabia, Allard & van Riel 2013:114).

Diallo (2012:362) posits that store image is defined in the shopper's mind partly by the functional qualities and partly by an aura of psychological attributes. Store image, which develops from the consumer's objective and subjective perceptions, is learned

over time. Store image is the way in which consumers perceive the store based on its functional qualities and environmental attributes (Simonian *et al.* 2012:326). For instance, reactions to unbranded jeans may reflect a perception that they are of poor quality and have an 'uncool' image, which is of concern to many young consumers (Herbst & Burger 2010:44). These findings may suggest creating a brand philosophy and image that appeal to young consumers as the basis of a marketing strategy targeting this cohort.

Extensive research has indicated that store reputation has a minimal effect on perceived quality when it is presented with other cues, such as price and brand name (Teas & Agarwal 2000:102). This suggests that store reputation is unlikely to be utilised as criteria information in evaluating the quality of a product and assumes that consumers' evaluations of a product's quality are based primarily on utilitarian aspects such as durability or workmanship. However, according to the cue utilisation theory, store image can be a determinant of product quality (Richardson, Dick & Jain 1994:30). Cues that can address social identity goals, such as store reputation, will be used in making judgments of product quality (Lee & Shavitt 2006:261). A number of previous studies have found that the perceived quality of the physical environment or the service quality can significantly influence store image (Ryu, Lee & Kim 2012:201).

A positive correlation between store image and customer satisfaction ultimately leads to store loyalty (Kumar & Manjunath 2012:464); however, other research suggests that consumers perceive that quality varies over a broad set of dimensions. The extent to which consumers can manage their social identity through a product is one such dimension (Lee & Shavitt 2006:261) as they see certain product-related features such as price and brand name as more relevant to evaluating prestige than to evaluating other indexes of quality such as durability or performance.

Preceding studies suggest that stores can carry social identity information. Prestigious products can fulfil internally generated needs for self-enhancement, role position, group membership or ego identification and symbolic or social identity needs (Park, Jaworski & MacInnis 1986:141). Consumers sometimes associate a store they

patronise with the image or identity they present rather than simply viewing it as the place to purchase a product. When evaluating products, consumers may sometimes be concerned with their social identity; therefore, with the image conveyed by the products, under these conditions they may be influenced by the favourability of a store's reputation in evaluating the quality of products that are sold.

It has been argued that if retailers wish to enhance customers' impressions of the prestige of their stores, they might emphasise more employee service competency; therefore training employees to be professional, reliable, dependable and competent would assist in the formation of customers' perceptions of an upscale and elegant store image. On the other hand, companies that strive to focus on customers' perceptions of product availability and wide selections in the stores may be more likely to achieve their goals if they prepare their employees to be more personable, understanding, flexible, compassionate and sensitive to customers' needs and wants (Yan, Yurchisin & Watchravesringkan 2011:357).

Ideally, a winning store image is one that matches the targeted consumer's expectations with the overall objectives. A favourable store image not only affects purchase behaviour in an positive way but can also offer the clients more value. Customers value a particular product more when it is bought from a certain store so a favourable store image can act as a competitive advantage. Customers are also prepared to pay more for the products and this gives the retailer an advantage when negotiating with suppliers.

2.3.1.4 Country of origin (COO)

When consumers do not have knowledge of a brand or product, country of origin serves as an extrinsic cue because many intrinsic cues, such as style and performance, are difficult to evaluate. Indeed, consumers choose products produced in countries with a high COO reflection (Liu & Johnson 2005:89), shaped by variables such as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history and traditions. This may be instigated by consumers' experiences when they are visiting a particular country, based on knowledge of it.

In today's marketplace, many brands use strong brand origin cues in their promotion appeal, especially in the case of luxury brands such as *LVMH* and *Gucci*, and specialist luxury players such as *Patek Phillipe* and *Bremont*, which highlight their brand origin in every promotion. For example, specialist luxury watchmaker *Baume and Mercier* highlight their brand origin within the logo itself. In markets such as luxury fashions and accessories, a specific COO or foreign image in general may carry a prestige connotation (Shukla 2011:244), adding to the consumer's status or ego enhancement and so making the product more attractive:

Independent of consumers' experience with the product, COO information represents an extrinsic cue which communicates quality and value to consumers, thus influencing their attitudes, and therefore, their purchase intentions and product choices' (Vida & Reardon 2008:35).

The image of the country of origin plays a vital role in affecting consumer's product choice. Not every country's product is evaluated positively because consumers' perception of some countries is better than that of others. Consumers' evaluation of a product becomes favourable when a country's name on the label is tied with a good image. Products from industrially developed countries tend to be evaluated as being superior to those from less developed ones. The majority of consumers think that the industrially developed countries produce superior quality products because they are financially strong and their production and marketing ability is advanced. Thus, COO influences consumers' brand assessment if the country has a good image (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:93).

Knowledge of consumer perceptions of products from newly developed countries is important as these are progressively achieving prominence in the universal marketplace, and as they grow the products are increasingly competing directly with the products of developed countries (Speece & Nguyen 2005:42; Dagger & Raciti 2011:201). On the other hand, existing evidence in some emerging markets suggests that the perceived quality difference between Western products and those from transitional economies may be one of the primary drivers behind the purchase of foreign products (Reardon Miller, Vida & Kim 2005:107).

Country of origin is widely accepted as the overall perception that consumers form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country's production marketing strengths and weaknesses (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:93). Samiee (1994:12) defined the COO effects as the stereotyping effect and the positive or negative influence that the country of manufacture might have on the consumer's choice processes or consequent behaviour. The image of countries as the origin of products is a good example of extrinsic cues that might develop into part of a product's total image. This indicates the diverse ways that the COO or 'made in' phenomenon, issue, effect or cue are different in the literature. COO image is a vital extrinsic product cue, and most studies show that it affects consumer perceptions and overall evaluations of the product. Country of origin also has a great influence on consumer trends in purchasing products (Lee & Lee 2011:412). Knowledge related to product origin has previously been investigated in the literature from two perspectives, namely the generators that drive preferences for domestic products and the perspective of how consumers obtain their knowledge and review of products from foreign countries.

If consumers are angry or have fear directed at a specific country, their emotions would prevent them from buying its products, regardless of quality judgments. On the positive side of COO cues in preference structure, consumers are likely to relate the source country to their own national identities, and to price and class when possessing products from a specific country (Reardon *et al.* 2005:109; Vida & Reardon 2008:35). This is chiefly because COO sways consumers' product evaluations and eventually their product choice (Speece & Nguyen 2005:42). Consumers generally perceive and evaluate German cars, Japanese electronics and Italian fashion differently from Russian cars, Brazilian electronics or Israeli fashion. COO thus reflects consumers' perceptions of the relative qualities of the goods and services produced in various countries and their preferences for them (Roth & Romeo 1992:97; Dagger & Raciti 2011:2001).

In the retail environment, consumers may use COO information to understand product quality and set pricing expectations. Previous studies have revealed that consumer

perceptions of products decline when the COO alters from a country with a greater link with the product category to a country with a substandard link with the product category (Pappu, Quester & Cookesey 2006:699). General country attributes represent consumer perceptions about COO swayed by their opinion concerning the country in its entirety and its people's capacity to produce good quality products (Lee & Lee 2011:413). Studies suggest that consumers have various perceptions about products associated with foreign countries, and that these perceptions have an effect on their behaviour because of stereotyped national images. The COO influence on consumers is one extrinsic cue that has developed progressively and more significantly as a trend towards the globalisation of production and cosmopolitan enterprise (Li 2013:43). It has been found to be more significant when consumers are evaluating high-involvement, status or specialised items such as clothing or motorcars and less so in the evaluation of low-involvement and low-priced items such as toothpaste or t-shirts.

2.3.2 INTRINSIC CUES

The fast information-sharing process and globalised trends encourage consumers to shop (Hoffman 2007:6). According to previous studies, colour, fit, fabric quality, style and workmanship are some of the intrinsic cues that customers consider when purchasing clothing and footwear. For daily wear, a cue such as durability may be important but when consumers consider party wear or office wear their preferences as to which cue influences them may differ. Habitually, people give more importance to comfort and fit, with the feel of the fabric, ease of maintenance and suitability of the fabric for body structure. Colour, weight of the fabric and the appearance are other important cues which are commonly considered by people before purchasing clothes.

Fashion products, including footwear, are tangible and can be evaluated in terms of style, comfort, and fit, which are observed as physical attributes and therefore intrinsic (Jackson & Shaw 2009:237). The intrinsic cues or the inner attributes refer to the physical specifics of the product such as, colour, style, and appearance, which will alter the product directly (Shaharudin *et al.* 2010:166). When consumers evaluate intrinsic cues, they conduct the complex process of quality perceptions that begins with getting hold of sensory stimuli and classifying signs such as appearance, colour, and product presentation (Espejel, Fandos & Flaviano 2007:686).

2.3.2.1 Comfort

The perceived comfort of a shoe may differ, with various physical factors being reported as essential, such as material properties (Yung-Hui & Hong 2005:358), shoe fit (Witana, Feng & Goonetilleke 2004:1307), skeletal alignment (Miller, Niggi, Liu, Stefanyshyn & Nurse 2000:763) and fashion (Au & Goonetilleke 2007:691). The explicit conditions that describe a comfortable shoe, and consequently good fit, are not clear but the most regular and noteworthy findings have been certified by Yung-Hui and Hong (2005:335) as a feeling of support from the upper. Witana *et al.* (2004:1311) found the foot-bed contact with the foot to be important and Miller *et al.* (2000:577) noted the stability of the shoe as a whole. Divergence from any of these parameters may play a substantial role in influencing the perceived comfort level, which has been revealed as a considerable factor when purchasing footwear (Branthewaite, Chockalingam, Jones & Grogan 2013:1429).

Besides product identity and appearance, footwear design should produce comfort features. Zhang and Helander (1996:387) state that these are set against lack of comfort, then linked with a sensation of relaxation and contentment and lastly, with positive feelings. Footwear comfort is in some way predictable from biomechanical variables such as impact forces and plantar pressures, even though comfort is a greatly individual measure depending on experience, age, gender, and body mass (Hennig, Valliant & Liu 1996:154; Lam, Sterzing & Cheung 2011:151).

Uncomfortable shoes are often recognised to be the cause of foot pain and pathology, with 60% of females experiencing foot pain linked to footwear. Research points out that the most regular area of discomfort and pain is around the toes, with the population studied having a greater perimeter of the metatarsal heads associated with pain (Paiva de Castro, Rebelatto & Aurichio 2010:94). Footwear that is either too loose or too tight can also manipulate comfort, with tissue compression in a snug shoe and slippage or friction in a larger one. Observations on footwear habits in the elderly show that up to 72% wear shoes that are ill-fitting and the cause of foot pain and ulceration (Burns, Leese & Mcmurdo 2002:345). Regardless of such evidence, consumers continue to wear ill-fitting footwear (Menz & Morris 2005:348).

Given that individual disparities in foot dimension are high, matching the shape of the foot to a suitable shoe style in order to improve the fit can be difficult. For instance, in orthopaedic footwear the profile and depth of the toe box has formerly been examined for its involvement with increased plantar pressure under the toes (Pinzur, Slovenkai, Trepman & Shields 2005:114; Cho, Hwang, Chang & Kho 2009:518). Supplementary toe box depth did not improve skin cut in rheumatoid patients even though pain and function scores did improve (Cho *et al.* 2009:520). This type of orthopaedic shoe with improved toe depth is worn only by a small sample of the population, often the elderly, and little is known about the impact that shoe styling and manufacturing variations have on the comfort of shoes worn every day by younger generations (Branthwaitea, Chockalingama, Greenhalgha, Chatzistergosa 2014:116-117)

Correct fit and comfort are fundamental to advanced shoe design and minimise unpleasant effects on the human musculoskeletal system (Lam, Sterzing & Cheung. 2011:51). In general, excellent footwear comfort is described as the favoured personal sensation of one shoe over another. Good fit is a requirement for comfort (Luximon, Goonetilleke & Tsui 2003:366) while very tight or very loose-fitting fit is related to discomfort (Au & Goonetilleke 2007:689). Kadolph and Langford (2002:24) recommend a physically comfortable fashion product that a consumer will wear without being upset and annoyed. The weight, texture and hand of the fabric add to the physical comfort of a fashion product (Van Staden 2008:38). According to Frings (2005:60), comfort characteristics consist of absorbency, hydrophobic, hydrophylic and hydroscopic attributes, wicking, electric conductivity, allergenic potential, heat or thermal conductivity and heat or thermal retention.

In the case of the use of shoes, parameters can be quite diverse and include, for example, the pressure on the foot, the vertical force and shock absorption, the precise shape of the foot, foot emotional response and the inside shoe temperature (Au & Goonetilleke 2007:692; Luximon & Luximon 2009:628). Additionally, comfort dimensions are the consequence of a multifaceted interaction between the nature of the body and the diverse elements of footwear, such as the form and the properties of

its component materials, and the design of these (Ruperez, Moneserrate, Alemany, and Juan & Alcanz 2010:426)

To realise how consumers develop their perceptions of comfort is an intricate task which arises because individual perception is based on numerous parameters that are the outcome of an intricate interaction between the nature of the human body, the diverse properties of the footwear, such as the form and the elements of its component materials, and the design of these components (Branthewaitea *et al.* 2013:1425). Individual perception of comfort can be greatly affected by other complementary aspects, such as the design of the shoe (Luximon & Luximon 2009:629; Ruperez *et al.* 2010:425) and its materials, but not particularly by the thermal parameters that are expected to be examined. In brief, the comfort of shoes is influenced by two main factors, one associated with the mechanical properties of the footwear and the other concerning the thermal factors (Arezes, Neves, Teixeira & Cunha 2012:587).

The intent when evaluating the comfort of a particular object, such as footwear, is to appreciate how the specific object is modified ergonomically for its potential users. The user's subjective evaluation is common when the comfort of a particular product must be evaluated. The greater part of the comfort evaluation studies is focused on the users' discomfort experience (Arezes *et al.* 2012:588); however, subjective evaluations have been submitted in the literature and some disadvantages were established when compared with other types of assessments. For instance, it is often found that this type of evaluation requires a large number of subjects, is extremely time consuming, and is linked by users' individual liking. Subjective measurements are important for the valid assessment of footwear comfort (Lam *et al.* 2011:151). Additionally, some recognised sources doubt the validity of assessment when using subjective measurements, such as time error and the context effects (Annett 2002:967).

2.3.2.2 Fabric

Many consumers react to fabric rather than to the style or colour of the fashion product as fabric not only articulates the designer's aesthetics but also motivates his/her own ideas. For example, it can be an inspiration as many times an idea for a shoe is born inspired by the fabric only. The huge appeal of fabric and the fibres of which it is made lie in its many assorted textures, finishes, uses and colours. The invention of fibre and fabrics is the first step in the manufacturing of footwear (Stone 2004:92).

Williams (2007:167-168) lists the essential fabrics for footwear development as follows:

- **Upper materials**

Leather is the most popular material as it has the advantage of being permanent and can disperse moisture away from the foot. The benefit to foot health is that the skin is less macerated and hence less likely to breed fungal infections. Leather also stretches and accommodates the uniqueness of the foot shape. The reward of leather is negated by the use of an artificial lining, which is frequently used to look after the leather. Some man-made materials are also breathable but are less flexible than leather. The use of footwear with man-made uppers should not be undermined, as long as they fit well and a suitable period of drying out is permissible between periods of use. Similarly, materials such as cotton corduroy may feel comfortable, but extend reinforcement predominantly in the heel and 'counter' of the shoe.

- **Linings**

In conventional footwear, the lining is generally soft leather or synthetic material. This does not normally cause difficulty as it is typically limited to the back of the shoe, which is the 'quarter' and to the sock-lining, where the loss of stretch and permeability is not a setback. Some of the contemporary lining materials are known to be breathable.

- Soling and heel

The sole must be hard-wearing, water-resistant and have enough friction to avoid slipping of the foot. Leather is the customary soling material, but it is luxurious and not resilient in some circumstances. Synthetic soling may be more resilient in water as several are anticipated by means of better grip, depending on the pattern. The soles can be lighter, with a cavity in the soling material inserted with lighter weight foam. A mixture of material, for example a tougher outermost layer and a softer more supple midsole for greater comfort, can be used.

The heel can be produced from man-made material or stacked layers of leather. The heel is covered with a top piece, which can be replaced or repaired as the heel wears down with usage. The shank can be made of steel, wood or synthetic material. Toe boxes and stiffeners support the upper material and prevent it from collapsing onto the toe or inwards at the back of the shoe.

These abovementioned essential fabrics are basics for the formation of footwear for both males and females. The development of lining materials appears to be of fundamental importance currently, particularly as the improvement of comfort is on the rise. The compilation of specific material can play an important part in the wet sensation of the consumers' feet. If the sweat is not passed on from the skin to the surrounding air or to the external shoe layers, it will leave a wet sensation which is realised as discomfort (Arezes *et al.* 2012:588). The distinctiveness and performance of the material are verified by factors such as fibre content, which, according to Kadolph (2007:24-29), involves the physical, artistic, resilience and comfort traits as well as the performance of the fashion fabric.

Materials used in footwear production consist of fabric, trims, closures and other products necessary for producing garments (Glock & Kunz 2005:342). Fabric is the

textiles material from which fashion footwear is manufactured. Of all the components used to produce footwear, fabric makes the greatest contribution to the cost and quality of a fashion product. The performance of the fabric does not automatically anticipate the performance of the finished footwear but the two are closely related (Brown & Rice 2001:173).

2.3.2.3 Style

Style is the silhouette of a fashion product combined with all of its unique components, the arrangement of which distinguishes the product from others of the same or similar type. Once invented and accepted it remains a style, possibly being altered to reveal the needs and direction of a specific time but essentially not changing. For example, a blazer has a unique form, but for a number of fashion periods it has been double-breasted or single-breasted. Nevertheless, the silhouette and distinctive characteristics of the blazer have not changed. A style is not just a unique aspect of fashion but is also common in architecture, automobiles, furniture and many other facets of our lives (Kincade & Gibson 2010:342).

Design is the personal understanding of a garment of the same style, while style is the distinctive characteristics of a product that distinguish it from other products of the same type (Ma, Luximon & Zhang 2011:29). A style refers to a specific design, shape or type of garment item with specific characteristics that help identify it as a certain style (Liddell & Samuels 2002:37). Style is a second dimension that is important for the suitable fit of a fashion product and although driven by fashion it should agree with a specific figure type (Rasband 2001:220). Some styles are appropriate for different foot forms, while certain styles would not look suitable or be comfortable with other foot forms. It is not only about freedom of movement, fabric and size of the product, but also about the preference of a specific style that would match a specific type of foot form (Tselepis & De Klerk 2004:89).

The main feature of style appears to complement the form of the foot (Hugo & Van Aardt 2012:464). The *Fairchild Dictionary of Fashion* (Perna 1987:48) states that fashion is the tradition or style of dressing that prevails among a specific group of persons. North, Mostert and Duplessis (2003:42) categorised style into three basic

segments: *high* fashion is the preferred style of the moment; *classic* is a style that is always available and suitable for several dress codes; the *comfortable fit* focuses on comfort and practicality (Van Staden 2008:36). It is the style of the present, which may trend for a year or two or a number of years to come; however, if a look or trend perseveres for long enough it develops into a classic. A classic style is a look that is constantly accessible in some form that is proper for many occasions and is acceptable to many consumer groups (North *et al.* 2003:42).

The implication of a shoe style is footwear within a system compatible to holding the foot in the heel of the shoe to facilitate support during push off, so there are two important aspects of shoes, that is the fastening around the instep and the section related to the heel. There is a diversity of footwear styles that have advanced over centuries. Although style is guided by current fashion and the required properties of footwear, any shoe that is considered suitable for foot function and protection must have an apparatus for holding the foot back into the heel of the shoe (Williams 2007:168-169).

Innovative and diverse leather finishes, textures, plastic, fabric materials and assortment of colours instigate shoe styles that not only keep up with the changes in fashion but in many cases originate fashion trends. Styles have run the fashion scope from pointed to square toes, from high to flat heels and from naked sandals to high boots. The slim elegant designs have been admired when clothing fashions have stressed formality and the heavier more down-to-earth styles have been the trend in seasons when more casual clothing styles came into being (Stone 2004:262). Commonly, the two essential parts of any style of footwear are a band around the instep and related support at the heel, which needs to be firm and to fit closely to the curve of the foot. The appropriateness of each of the main styles is dictated by the exact styling, heel height, material used and, most importantly, the use to which a consumer will put the footwear (Williams 2007:168-169).

Evaluating criteria employed by fashion consumers includes style as one of the top five attributes (Lee & Burns 1993:32). Results of a study undertaken by Fiore and Damhorst (1992:176), employing actual products, indicate the significance of style in

the perception of overall quality. Analysis carried out by Forsythe, Presley and Caton (1996:303-304) indicated that the style significantly predicted consumers' perceptions of fashion product quality. These results suggest that consumers do not consider fashion products high quality if they are not the right style. The style and design of a fashion product adds to the fashion consumers' need to convey their uniqueness through clothing preference. The need for exclusivity reveals the type of fashion consumers favour (Solomon & Rabolt 2004:401-402). A number of other studies found style to be at least amongst the first four most important traits thought of when appraising fashion of a product (Taylor & Cosenza 2002:402). Style was considered the most essential feature in making buying decisions by women taking part in a study by North *et al.* (2003:50).

2.3.2.4 Fit

The outcome of a stunning design, gorgeous fabric and superb workmanship is ruined if the completed product does not fit the intended wearer. Fashion products that fit well are more attractive than ill-fitting ones and they are more comfortable (Brown & Rice 2001:153). The most common complaint from consumers about apparel products is that the consumer cannot find something that fits. It is often easier for consumers to find colours, prices and styles they like as opposed to achieving a good fit. According to Keiser and Garner (2008:386), the basic problem underlying complaints is an obsolete median-size measuring standard, conflicting grading and a lack of understanding of comfort. When looking at the basic view of what comprises good fit, one sees that there are some primary guidelines to help evaluate the fit. However, even then, one is still perplexed by fabric innovations and properties of the material used in new style construction. The problem is exacerbated because of individual taste and the pressure of what comprises fashion appropriateness at any given time.

Recommendations for suitable fit of footwear include the presence of a fastening (Yung-Hui & Hong 2005:360), firm heel counter (Witana *et al.* 2004:1310), suitable bending stiffness of the sole (Miller *et al.* 2000:763) and height of the heel (Nacher, Alemany, Gonzalez, Alcantara, Garcia-Hernandez & Heras 2006:25). According to research reports, poor-fitting shoes can be harmful to the wearer. For example, an increase in heel height increases forefoot plantar pressure (Speksnijder, Moonen &

Walenkamp 2005:19) and the distorted flare at the toe box being incompatible with foot shape causes increase in toe pressure (Goonetilleke, Luximon & Tsui 2000:509). The way the sole is assembled and the material properties influence stability and comfort. While a thick-soled shoe reduces stability, a thinner, firmer sole material is preferable (Robbins, Gerard & McLaren 1992:52). For heeled shoes, an amplified instability is observed when there is an alteration of heel shape with the narrowing of the heel impacting on the medial and lateral centre of pressure progression angle in the front (Chien & Lu 2013:s.a). Centre of Pressure (CoP) has been recognised as the direct point of application of the ground reaction force and the progression of CoP shows the advances that this point makes in the duration of dynamic heel-to-toe walking (De Cock, Vanrenterghem, Willems, Witvrouw & De Clercq 2008:675).

Telespis & De Klerk (2004:89) state that ‘it is clear that certain intrinsic garment factors, such as fabric, style and design, and construction and size, can influence the final fit of a garment’. While intrinsic characteristics may influence mainly how well a garment fits, extrinsic factors have a part to play in the emotional and cognitive-aesthetic dimension and thus satisfy the socio-psychological needs of the wearer. Right sizes are closely associated with clothing evaluation. When clothing fits the body perfectly it is aesthetically satisfying and physically comfortable (Branthwaite *et al.* 2014:119).

Fit can be assessed objectively, by means of geometrical and functional biomechanical measurements, as well as subjectively, by perception measurement (Lam *et al.* 2011:15). The fit can be observed as a twofold dimension. Firstly, it can be an aesthetic feature as the fit of the garment has to look good on the wearer. Secondly, it can be a physical as well as functional attribute, such that the garment must fit the wearer comfortably, and consequently the sizing must be accurate (Brown & Rice 2001:48, Telespis & De Klerk 2004:89; Frings 2005:59-60; Alexander, Connell & Presley 2005:52).

To describe and understand fit, a number of factors that relate to both the foot and the shoe must be considered. In simplest form, fit describes the conformance of the attire to the shape and size of the individual who wears them (Keiser & Garner 2008:386).

Shoe fit can be defined as the ability of footwear to conform to the size, width, shape and proportions of the foot. Footwear fit can also be described as the functional geometrical match of foot and shoe (Lam *et al.* 2011:151). Product fit refers to how the article of fashion relates to body shape, while permitting for ease of movement (Alexander *et al.* 2005:61). To describe and understand fit, a number of factors that relate to both the foot and the shoe must be considered. Market surveys in Hong Kong and Europe also showed that next to shoe fashion and style, good fit and comfort are the second most important determinants in the purchase of footwear (Xiong & Jianhui, Jiang, zuhna & Dong 2010:11).

Fit is a crucial aspect in determining comfort in fashion, as an uncomfortable garment does not fit (LaBat & DeLong 1990:44). Garments that do not fit well, regardless of the customer definition of fit, may give customers the idea that there is something wrong with their bodies. Similarly, a garment that fits well can give the customer confidence, boost self-esteem, enhance psychological and social wellbeing, and improve comfort (Alexander *et al.* 2005:55). Considering that clothing fit is to some extent dictated by personal preference, understanding fit satisfaction from the consumer perspective is significant (LaBat & DeLong 1990:45). Fit and function of clothing, whether for performance or fashion, are of major significance. When fit is not satisfied appropriately garments may be uncomfortable, or in some circumstances hazardous, for example by obstructing the movement of the wearer (Kinley 2010:398).

Physical and psychological comfort, as well as appearance, contributes to consumers' perceived satisfaction with fit, and consumers ought to be satisfied physically and socio-psychologically. There are two kinds of fit, psychological and functional, as proposed by Tselepis and De Klerk (2004:87); a psychological fit refers to aesthetic appearance, whereas functional fit indicates that comfort creates a painless experience. For the reason that measurements alone cannot meet all sizing needs, the psychological and social implications of size develop into imperative cues and present consumers with a proper fit (Apeagyei, Otieno & Tyler 2007:342). The definitions of a good fit can be intricate, but it is a critical factor in acceptance or rejection of clothing products. Existing fashion trends, cultural influences, age, gender, body

shape and lifestyle also play an essential part in fit preferences (Pisut & Connell 2007:371). Because of the high demand for emergency ready-to-wear clothing, many consumers have a forfeited absolute fit for convenience (Li, Au & Au 2010:272). Understanding of fit satisfaction from customers' perception is a vital and complex subject since standard size is no longer suitable and they request a good fit that is bespoke (Locker, Ashdown & Schoenfelder 2005:8). Other studies point out that the fit problem is the core reason for 50% of catalogue returns (Des Marteau 2000:47). Poor fit can be the primary attributed to a non-standard size rolls, influenced by other characteristics such as garment style and brand image. Pisut and Connell (2007:369) argued that it is essential for manufacturers to comprehend the intricacy of consumers' fit preferences in order to attain consumer satisfaction and decrease the number of markdowns and lost sales. Apeagyei *et al.* (2007:344) state that efforts to investigate the impact of sizing on consumer needs for suitable fit and consumer satisfaction with fashion is the focus of the fashion industry, although 3D scanning has been used for automated fit, size prediction, mass customisation, pattern development and even as a solution for solving fit dissatisfaction (Hei 2013:58).

Alexander *et al.* (2005:58) states that fit is one of the fashion product attributes that is a major cause of dissatisfaction amongst consumers when purchasing apparel. According to Ma *et al.* (2011:26), scientific development of footwear lasts, quality characteristics that evaluate fit between a person's foot and the shoe is of utmost importance to the consumer. Proper fit feeds the physical comfort of consumers as well as their self-confidence. Products that do not fit well do not appear attractive and may even form a sense of poor quality (Alexander *et al.* 2005:5261). In a study conducted by Zhang and Helander (2002:55-56), the fit in relation to other properties, such as comfort, style, and workmanship, was regarded as the most important attribute by clothing consumers.

It has been recommended that good footwear fit can be accomplished by matching the shape and size of the foot to the footwear (Janisse 1992:262), although in a demographic foot measurement survey conducted by the Prescription Footwear Association, Au (2008:10) discovered that no two feet are precisely alike in size and in shape. Guidelines for proper shoe fit have been proposed for some areas of the foot.

For a lengthwise fit, Janisse (1992:261) suggested that a well-fitting shoe should have a clearance of 9.5 to 12.7mm between the end of the shoes and the longest toe. This clearance fit may permit some movement of the heel in the counter since the foot will stretch during gait.

According to Cheng and Perng (1999:176), 'the foot-shoe allowance at width and girth are very vital for foot-shoe fit'. Fit is accomplished when the dimensions of the shoe last at the forefoot and mid-foot are smaller than the foot dimensions by 8mm and 15mm respectively (Au 2008:13). Moreover, fit relates to sizing methods that permit suitable alignment and foot functions inside the shoe. Sherrington and Menz (2003:179) state that a good enough fit can be obtained by a match of the footwear or the foot shape and foot measurements, hence the importance of accurate foot measurement. For foot functions this will mean that some areas of the foot need a close snug fit to the shoe, while other parts require clearance away from the shoe. Therefore, poor fit could be illustrated by both excessive tightness as well as excessive clearance.

2.4 OVERALL PERCEIVED QUALITY

Perceived product quality is 'an idiosyncratic value verdict with respect to the fitness for consumption, which is derived from the conscious and unconscious processing of quality cues relative to relevant quality attributes within the context of significant personal and situational variables' (Steenkamp 1997:317). A product conveys 'an array of cues' such as brand, price, colour, taste, and scent, that which consumers use to judge product quality (Chung *et al.* 2006:200). Consumers' perceptions of quality are influenced by both the product's intrinsic attributes and its extrinsic indicators (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:218). Consumers are prepared to pay more money for products that are of high quality. Consumer's perception of quality plays an important role because they spend much money buying a product which is favoured because of its quality (Ndwandwe 2008:50). Consumers trust that there is a natural arrangement of products, whereby the superior quality products are more expensive and those of lesser quality are cheaper (Veale & Quester 2009:136).

Perceived quality of goods has been a matter of sizeable interest to both practitioners and researchers because of the favourable effects of trust on consumer behaviour (Agrawal, Banerjee & Singh 2006:514). Previous studies argued that perceived quality influences consumer behaviour. In a study conducted by Richardson *et al.* (1994:32) it was discovered that a consumer decision-making process which results in consumer behaviour is influenced mainly by perceived quality. On the other hand, Brown and Rice (1998:54) are of the view that the behavioural characteristics of clothing products can be divided into the functional and the aesthetic. The former refers to properties such as the durability and comfort of the item (Espejel *et al.* 2007:686), the latter to the prettiness or aesthetic experience that the apparel item can convey. On the sensory level it is whether the colour of the fabric is pleasing to the consumer or the fabric feels soft touching the skin; on an emotional level it stirs up particular feelings in the consumer, or, thirdly, on a cognitive level, it has a positive symbolic meaning for the consumer (Espejel *et al.* 2007:686).

Quality is a notion that has diverse descriptions as people add their own understanding to describe it with different criteria from different perspectives. According to Parvin and Chowdhury (2006:94), quality is described as the combination of characteristics of a product based on its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs. Hawkins, Best and Coney (2004:320) define quality as "the consumer's evaluative judgment about an entire overall excellence or superiority in providing desired benefits". Furthermore, Hawkins *et al.* (2004:320) affirm that quality can be described as consumers' evaluation or verdict of an entire overall excellence *or* supremacy in providing advantage. According to Bredahl (2003:1), it is often reported in consumer research that product quality is acknowledged by consumers in the form of subjective impressions based on intellectual processes that are affected by the level of previous knowledge of the individual consumer. Hence, from the consumer's perspective, quality research is not observed from an objective logic but rather from perception.

Iqbal *et al.* (2013:210) are of the view that perceived quality is different from definite or objective quality as it is a consumer's perception and judgment about products. The notion of product quality can be categorised under two main perspectives:

objective quality and subjective or perceived quality. Objective quality relates to the technological, quantifiable and verifiable nature of products, processes and quality controls (Espejel *et al.* 2007:132-133). In the literature, the term "objective quality" relates to measurable and verifiable dominance on some predetermined ideal standard or standards. Researchers have argued the use of objective measures of quality on methodological grounds (Curry & Faulds 1986:76). Concerns about objective measures of quality point to the selection of traits and weights to measure objective quality, researchers do not agree on what the ideal standard or standards should be. Others affirm that objective quality does not exist, therefore stating that all quality assessments are subjective. The basic term "objective quality" is correlated very much to but not the same as other concepts used to describe the technical supremacy of a product. On the other hand, quality is insignificant apart from estimated experience or use, which is to an extent regarded as the perception of consumers (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:214).

Perception is described as grasping something with the mind and placing a degree of interpretation upon it (Jackson & Shaw 2009:6) Perception of products is also described as a process of receiving, selecting and interpreting environmental stimuli that present themselves via the five senses, namely sight, sound, smell, taste and touch (Kardes *et al.* 2011:143). Numerous authors have defined perceived quality in diverse ways. Perceived product quality is a global estimation varying from bad to good, distinguished by a high abstraction level, and refers to an exact consumption setting (Agrawal *et al.* 2006:521). Perceived quality is conceptualised as the perception of the quality of products offered by retailers (Pappu, Quester & Cookesey 2006:699; Das 2014:285). Zeithaml (1988:4) defined perceived quality as consumers' views about product performance and how much better one product is than others. In addition, Zeithaml (1988:3) states that perceived quality can be described as consumer's value judgments or opinions about a product's general excellence or superiority.

Perceived quality gives a reason to customers for purchasing products from a range of competing ones and this reason affords value to consumers (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:214). In considering the above definitions, it is evident that perceived quality is a consumer

opinion about the quality of product or service. Moreover, perceived quality has also been depicted as type of attitude associated with, but not equal to, satisfaction, which is an outcome of comparing expectations with performance. These definitions highlight that it is not always obligatory that perceived quality should have a relation to the real quality of products because it may have a relation to a consumer's product knowledge or result from weighing it against other products. In this study, quality perception is defined as a multifaceted process that starts with the getting hold of and categorisation of signs that are related to excellence, as well as intrinsic attributes like appearance, colour and fit and extrinsic attributes like price, country of origin and brand names for product presentation.

At present, in the footwear industry, the evidence of how consumers' perceptions make a high-quality product impression has become more significant (Li 2013:44). Perceived quality has advantages in large market shares, decreasing cost and reducing price flexibility (Ndwandwe 2008:247). Moreover, the main dimensions on which perceived quality relies are reliability and performance of products. Performance, features, conformance with specifications, reliability, durability, serviceability and quality also play a crucial role in perceived quality dimensions. Through perceived quality, consumers make a mental evaluation of products and choose the one that is better quality.

Perceived quality is a major factor by which consumers make distinctions between products, although quality arguably 'lies in the eye of the beholder' (Idoko *et al.* 2013:5). According to Brown and Rice (2001:82), consumers can assess a product when buying, when using it or after use. They found that extensive satisfaction of consumers with the quality of fashion products could be measured at the point of purchase when the item is used and again when it is discarded. It is, however, in the first instance, essential that the quality should be appraised during the decision-making process (Ndwandwe 2008:249). Nevertheless, clothing consumers consistently do not deliberately evaluate the quality of a fashion item before, during or after obtaining it. In many cases, the perception of quality is then gathered from specific extrinsic indicators, such as the store or the brand name (De Klerk & Lubbe 2008:37). Clothing consumers have precise expectations about the product as a result

of preceding experiences with a comparable product or from accessible information that could perhaps refer to quality. It is consequently important that they should purposely evaluate the quality of any new items at the point of sale. The goal of assessing the quality of a fashion product is that the consumer will be satisfied with the item to the extent that it would lead to additional purchases (De Klerk & Lubbe 2008:38).

2.5 OVERALL CONSUMER SATISFACTION

Empirical evidence points out that the market for shoes is highly competitive. With an increase in competitiveness and unpredictability in the markets for shoes, the major key for success in footwear business is consumer satisfaction in order to ensure a repurchase of goods (Li 2013:41). Given the intense competitive business world and the increase in consumer knowledge, consumer satisfaction has become a crucial issue among scholars and practitioners (Chinomona & Sandada 2013:1632-1633) owing to improved competition; hence it is expressed as a major feature in the determination of competitiveness (Kumar & Manjunath 2012:464). The concept of satisfaction is essential because it is the core of success in today's extremely competitive world (Evans, Jamal, Foxall 2009:129; Kumar & Manjunath 2012:463). Consequently, to remain competitive and sustainable, fashion businesses need to make sure that they satisfy their customers.

Although consumer satisfaction is elucidated cognitively in the literature, consumers have a tendency to experience it as a feeling or emotion that performs a key role in affecting consumer behaviour. Consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction become a motive that eventually shapes a consumer's future attitudes and behaviour (Blackwell *et al.* 2006:213; Cheng, Chiu, Hu & Chang 2011:5120), and therefore customer satisfaction becomes an important measure of the behaviour of consumers. Behaviour observed through word-of-mouth communications further helps in shaping other consumers' expectations, consumers' price sensitivity supports in engaging business competitors and in the end influences shareholder value (Espejel *et al.* 2007:681). From the above it can be concluded that consumer expectation plays an imperative role in consumer satisfaction and effective consumer satisfaction is crucial for footwear retailers' success. It is also important for apparel retailers to understand that

consumers hold holistic perspectives towards satisfaction (Parker & Mathews 2001:42). This means that consumer satisfaction begins with assessing the attributes of several qualities concurrently.

Satisfaction is a multifaceted concept of an explicit nature, for which it is difficult to develop a generic definition (Giese & Cote 2000:18; Espejel *et al.* 2007:684). Customer satisfaction has been the topic of significant research and has been defined and determined in many ways. Early concepts of satisfaction research have in general defined satisfaction as a post-choice evaluative judgment relating to a specific purchase decision. Conversely, satisfaction is a subjective concept, as it can be derived from different definitions found in the literature. Comprehensive scrutiny of the diverse definitions that researchers give to the term 'satisfaction' indicates that some distinctions are substantially different from the methodologies applied to approximate and quantify such a term (Campo and Yagu'e 2009:128-130). Most researchers have the opinion that satisfaction is an attitude or evaluation that is formed by the consumer. Literature characterises satisfaction as the global evaluation that consumers make after a purchase.

Kumar & Manjunath (2012:463) refer to satisfaction as a post-purchase evaluative decision connected with an exact purchase decision. Consumer satisfaction is also described as a general evaluation reaction that represents the sum of the customer's objective reaction to the different quality attributes of products (Chiu *et al.* 2011:9781). Espejel *et al.* (2007:684) describe satisfaction as an effect of consumer perception or an effect of disconfirmation. Lin *et al.* (2010:256) define consumer satisfaction as the customer's final response to a consumption incident. These definitions describe how the consumer formulates the evaluation by comparing what is received with what is expected. This is a result of purchase and use arising from the buyer's comparison of the costs and rewards of purchase regarding the anticipated consequences. On the other hand, Teka (2012:9-10) depicts satisfaction as the feeling of pleasure or disappointment achieved from comparing a product's perceived performance (outcome) in relation to one's expectations.

Thus, it is possible to indicate that satisfaction is a consumer's affective state resulting from global evaluation of all the aspects that shape a relationship (Sanzo et al. 2003:337). The consumer's evaluation of a specific purchase is highlighted in these definitions. These definitions concentrate on the cognitive component of satisfaction, which is satisfaction as the evaluation of an experience (Campo & Yagu'e 2009:128-130). Finally, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two ends of a continuum, where the situation is defined by a judgment between expectations and outcome (Kumar & Manjunath 2012:464). The operational definition for this study refers to satisfaction as the level to which consumers are stimulated by cues and hence are pleased with the products provided.

Consumer satisfaction is also described as a twofold construct with an emotional and an informational response. The former arises as a result of consumers' feelings towards the product and the latter when the consumer makes an objective evaluation of the initial expectation and the final product (Espejel *et al.* 2007:684). Consumers assess their perception of performance against their expectations cognitively, as articulated in the expectancy disconfirmation. The expectancy disconfirmation paradigm suggests that consumers form expectations about product performance before and after purchasing a product. This is done by comparing perceptions of performance in various attributes against the degree of performance that was expected from the same attributes (Kardes *et al.* 2011:92).

The disconfirmation paradigm is utilised by a majority of studies conducted on the consumer satisfaction variable, with reference to a variation of the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm, which stipulates that satisfaction is related to the size and direction of the disconfirmation experience, where disconfirmation is related to the person's initial expectations (Yuan & Jang 2008:280). When perceived performance surpasses a customer's expectation, positive disconfirmation arises and the customer experiences satisfaction (Evans *et al.* 2009:130). Therefore, if the perceived performance falls short of a customer's expectations, a negative disconfirmation will result, and thus the customer will be dissatisfied. A description by Choi and Sheel (2012:345) includes the output and process aspects of customer satisfaction. The output views customer satisfaction as a cognitive or mental state in which consumers

feel that they have been compensated adequately or inadequately. Regarding the process, customer satisfaction occurs when customer experience with quality matches or exceeds the expectations (Chinomona & Sandada 2013:1632).

Satisfaction consists of two dimensions, firstly, the degree to which a product provides key requirements to customers and, secondly, how reliably these requirements are delivered (Yazdanpanah Zamani, Hochrainers-Stigler, Monfared & Yogahoubi 2013:3). It should be highlighted that consumers' perceptions of performance might be the consumers' personal opinions and are therefore subjective (Shiffmam & Kanuk 2007:163). Satisfaction is fundamental to consumerism and consumer-oriented philosophies (Huddleston, Whipple, Mattick & Lee 2009:63). These authors reason that satisfying a consumer paves the way for profit-making; consequently, the business will make a profit as long as customers are satisfied (Chinomona & Sandada 2013:1633). Scholars such as Cheng *et al.* (2011:5118) believe that satisfying a consumer is even more significant than making a profit. The obvious purpose of satisfying consumers is to increase the business, to amplify the market share and to acquire repeat and referral business, all of which contribute to better productivity and profitability (Kumar & Manjunath 2012: 464)

The significance of customer satisfaction has been explicated by many researchers and academicians, who have emphasised customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention. Getting close to the customers will provide an understanding of their needs, the attributes that matter most, their influence on decision-making, the relative importance of the attributes, and the quality evaluation of the organisation's delivery of each attribute (Teka 2012:20). Customer satisfaction levels can be measured using survey techniques and questionnaires, considered the most reliable feedback system, since it provides an effective, direct, meaningful and objective way to analyse clients' preferences and expectations (Yazdanpanaha *et al.* 2013:3).

Customer satisfaction measures are a valuable way of achieving numerous objectives of organisations. According to Kotler and Keller (2006:144), measures permit organisations to assess their abilities and capacities to meet consumers' expectations, wants and needs successfully. Customer satisfaction measures are not an end in

themselves, but they pave the way to the accomplishing of several objectives of business organisations. Reasons for measuring customer satisfaction will possibly differ amongst companies, and the value of the measurement depends on whether or not the measurement is incorporated into the firm's corporate culture. Organisations which realise the importance of customer satisfaction value the expectations and needs of consumers in order to improve their products. Evidence points out that many organisations realise the importance of customer satisfaction but lack an effective evaluation index to measure it so that they can understand the customer's expectations and needs and improve the quality of their products (Chiu *et al.* 2011:9781).

Understanding customer needs is closely related to the achievement of strong customer satisfaction. The Kano model states that customer needs can be divided into three categories: (a) Basic needs are described as clear needs of customers and if not met, the customer is dissatisfied, although meeting these needs may not be sufficient for customer satisfaction. Its satisfaction results in “must-be quality”. (b) Expected needs are the essential needs that customers are aware of and satisfaction is expected in all purchases; their satisfaction creates “expected quality”. (c) Excitement needs are explicated as the unaware and unspoken needs of customers. By classifying and satisfying such needs, companies will have added large value to customers and can win loyal customers. This satisfaction creates “attractive quality” (Teka 2012:9).

The need to satisfy customers in order to achieve success in any commercial enterprise is evident. The income of all commercial enterprises is derived from the payments received for the products and services from its external customers. Customers are the motive for the existence of commercial establishments. Since sales are the fundamental goal of any commercial business venture, it becomes crucial to satisfy consumers. For customer satisfaction it is essential to ascertain and uphold certain significant characteristics such as quality, fair prices and serious consideration of consumer complaints (Teka 2012:9-10).

2.6 CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented two key sections of related literature review. These are the theoretical literature review and the empirical literature review. The theoretical literature review section discussed the main theories that form the theoretical underpinning of this study. This chapter commences with a general introduction followed by the theoretical framework that discusses the theories grounding this study, which are the cue utilisation theory and utility theory. The author then proceeded with an empirical review of the literature on all the variables relevant to this study, from extrinsic cues, intrinsic cues and perceived quality to consumer satisfaction. The next chapter deals with the conceptual model and hypotheses development.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

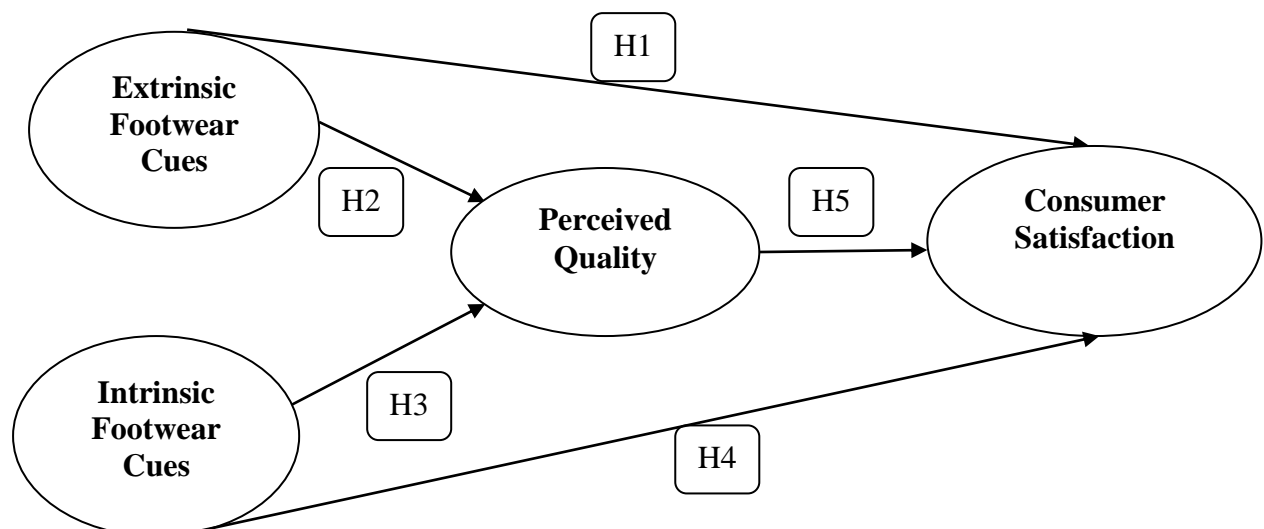
3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to articulate the research model highlighting the entire study as well as to develop the hypotheses put forward. Firstly, the chapter presents an illustration of the proposed conceptual model. In this incidence, the function of each research construct is described, as well as the relationships between them. Afterwards, the development of each hypothesis is provided. The purpose of this is to validate the relationships put forward, as well as to expand on the course by which the relationships develop.

3.2 CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Drawing from the literature review, a research model was conceptualised. Five hypothesised relationships between four research constructs were subsequently determined. In the conceptual research model, extrinsic cues and intrinsic cues will be predictors, perceived quality will be the mediator, and consumer satisfaction will be the outcome variable. The following diagram indicates the research model conceptualised by the researcher for testing the proposed research hypothesis. The model is not adapted from those of previous researchers.

Figure 3.1 Illustration of the proposed conceptual model



3.3 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

3.3.1 Extrinsic cues and consumer satisfaction

Consumers want to get maximum utility from a product, which they buy by sacrificing money and benefit from other products, which are competitors (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:91). The sum of utility related to a meticulous decision can be weighed against another sum of utility related to an alternative decision, and these elements are linked to the concepts of ordinal and cardinal utility functions (Pindyck & Rubinfeld 2001:127). Thus, a consumer will be able to dissect a decision concerning substitute choice and a budget limitation based on the equivalent utility or satisfaction levels. When a brand can fulfil consumers' expectations, consumers hold positive impressions of that brand; therefore, it is evident that brand image may provide consumers with a symbolic motivation in product consumption, which leads to consumer satisfaction.

A favourable store image not only affects purchase behaviour in a positive way; it can also offer the clients added value. This observation implies that store image has an impact on other outcome variables, such as perceived quality and satisfaction (Ryu, Lee & Kim 2010:20). To examine the influence of image on consumers' genuine behaviour, country image is a major consideration when the consumer has no familiarity with or knowledge of the product or brand (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:92). Consumers have an assortment of perceptions about products based on stereotyped national images of the country where the product is produced or is perceived to be produced. These perceptions influence consumer attitudes, purchase intentions and behaviours (Vida & Reardon 2008:35). Price plays a big role in influencing customer behaviour and has been studied comprehensively in the literature. However, from a behavioural point of view, price may also be viewed as a product quality cue. As a result, price may be understood as an indicator of sacrifice, which leads to satisfaction, or as a quality cue (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:214). Therefore, based on abovementioned reasoning, this study posits that:

H1: Extrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

3.3.2 Extrinsic cues and perceived quality

Consumers have a tendency to use both extrinsic and intrinsic cues concurrently when assessing product quality. It is understood that this influence could be clearly diverse (Espejel *et al.* 2007: 132-133). Steenkamp (1997:6) considers it relevant to classify the concept of perceived quality into two groups of factors that permit the consumer to evaluate the products by intrinsic and extrinsic attributes. From the fundamental theories of utility and cue utilisation, it is observed that intrinsic and extrinsic quality cues shape quality perceptions of consumers during decision-making (Brown & Rice 2001:47; Schiffman & Kanuk 2007:176). The literature also recommends that consumers rely on extrinsic cues, such as price, brand name, packaging and store name, when making quality appraisals (Richardson *et al.* 1994:29). Moreover, the consumer reacts more favourably towards quality products than common products. Research proves that there is a positive relationship between price and product quality (Rao & Monroe 1989:353). In fact, the extrinsic cues theory has drawn attention from many researchers. Besides, some of the extrinsic cues have been found to significantly influence the evaluation of the product performance and quality on the customers' perceptions; these include country of origin, brand and price (Qasem, Baharun & Yassin 2016:86). The literature on quality measurement recommends that price is the best attribute for measuring the product quality (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:214).

The consumer's ability to evaluate the quality of a product will validate the emphasis placed on the brand name of a product (Blackwell *et al.* 2006:134). Store environment influences consumers' product quality perception, which in return influences their impressions of store image. In other words, product quality may serve as an antecedent of store image (Yurchisin & Watchravesringkan 2011:347). A large body of research dating back to the 1980s has consistently provided strong evidence of COO effects on consumers' perceptions of products from a particular country (Dagger & Raciti 2011:201). There is sufficient evidence that COO perceptions reveal the picture, reputation or stereotype that consumers relate to with regard to products from a particular country, and that COO is an extrinsic product quality cue (Teas & Agarwal 2000:74). Therefore, drawing from the aforementioned theories and empirical evidence, the thesis states that:

H2: Extrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on perceived quality.

3.3.3 Intrinsic cues and perceived quality

According to Bredahl (2003:3), intrinsic cues are commonly greater indicators of perceived quality than extrinsic cues, because intrinsic cues are related more closely to the product. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:178), highlight the view that consumers like to believe that their evaluations of product quality depend on intrinsic cues, because it enables them to validate their product decision as being rational product choice. There is a direct link between fabric quality, apparel and footwear quality. While high quality fabric doesn't warrant a high quality garment, fabric offers a basis for quality (Brown & Rice 2001:173). Fabric is being evaluated constantly in one way or the other during the entire apparel production process. This constant evaluation is a key indicator of the significant role fabric plays in maintaining quality. The fabric interrelates with other garments' components in order to win the design and creation of the article to influence overall quality (Brown & Rice 2001:173-174). Therefore, the appraisal of fabric is critical to assessing apparel and footwear quality.

Consumers may insist on comfort from their footwear, making this characteristic a vital consideration in footwear design and quality evaluation (Ruperez *et al.* 2010: 425). On the other hand, in a study conducted by Hugo and van Aardt (2012:464), it is indicated that "95.2% of the respondents indicate that style feature is very important". Several other studies reveal that style is the most important attribute when garments are evaluated by females (Fiore & Damhorst 1992:171; North *et al.* 2003a:63). Fit is described as how well the garment conforms to the three-dimensional human body. Fit is a significant consideration when buying footwear (Ma *et al.* 2011:1644). Therefore, drawing from the forgoing discussion, the current study postulates that:

H3: Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on perceived quality.

3.3.4 Intrinsic cue and consumer satisfaction

Consumers take more notice of specifics of a product, or intrinsic cues, since they are aware of the existence and potential significance of such cues (Devlin 2010:1369). According to cue utilisation theory, products consist of intrinsic and extrinsic cues that serve as substitute indicators of quality (Rahman 2011:3). Comfort is considered

a multidimensional attribute, which involves physical, physiological and psychological factors (Brown & Rice 2001:212). Physiological comfort is associated with textile comfort and the way in which the body cooperates with a textile product, as well as its ability to defend the body from harm. Psychological comfort affects the emotional, aesthetic and cognitive dimensions by which the consumer's psychosocial needs are satisfied (Kadolph 1998:193). Deciding on the appropriate fabric for a particular design is one of the most significant traits in the designing of new fashion (Frings 2005:175). Other features, such as the weaving method, texture, hand, patterns and colour of the material, are significant in terms of the characteristics of the product, which are imperative for consumer satisfaction (Kadolph 2007:109).

Respondents in the study conducted by Hugo and Van Aardt (2012:464) rated the importance of materials quite highly when judging garments before purchase. Style as a standard of satisfaction during product utilisation becomes fairly significant. Firms which pay attention to products that consistently fit their market discover they have larger consumer satisfaction and better overall sales (Keiser & Garner 2008:386). Good fit is critical to consumer satisfaction (Brown & Rice 2001:153). Park (2012:14) states that, "consumers pursue both beauty and pleasure from their consumption". Yet currently available footwear in the market is reported to prevent consumers from looking for aesthetic pleasure because of unsatisfactory fit problems (Lam *et al.* 2011:51). Therefore, inferring from the literature and the empirical evidence mentioned above, the study proposes that:

H4: Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction

3.3.5 Perceived quality and consumer satisfaction

Utility theory is based on the notion of satisfying needs via decisions about substitute goods and services (Cornachione 2010:32). Utility theory is well known as a determiner of the satisfaction and the reward that the consumer perceives and the sacrifice suffered to get this product, which incorporates the financial and non-financial costs (Campo & Yagu'e 2009:129-130). Satisfaction as a multidimensional construct outlines judgment of perceived quality in a specific setting. The conceptual path of consumer evaluations of consumption, with comparison of the perception of

the result with consumer expectations, is associated with ‘satisfaction theory’, which follows as a consequence of the fundamentals of the economic theory of utility that the consumer perceives (Kahneman & Tversky 1979:215).

Furthermore, perceived quality versus expectations influences consumer satisfaction, whereby consumer satisfaction is observed as a multidimensional construct which is obliged to comprise quality (Evans *et al.* 2009:397; Kardes *et al.* 2011:91). Customer satisfaction holds an imperative position in overall quality management (Chiu *et al.* 2011:9782). “Quality influences satisfaction positively” (Cronin & Taylor 1992:59) and “sacrifice affects satisfaction negatively” (Dodds *et al.* 1991:17) to such an extent that if the consumers presume a greater sacrifice when purchasing a product, their satisfaction levels decline (Campo & Yaguë 2009:132). Many studies across diverse fields have offered support for the significant role of quality and satisfaction in intention formation (Lee & Lee 2011:418). The extant literature indicates that while the intricate nature of the relationship between quality and satisfaction exists, quality in general acts as a significant predictor of satisfaction, and this relationship is fundamental in generating behavioural intentions (Lee & Lee 2011:418). The significance of perceived quality originates from the beneficial impact on consumer satisfaction (Agrawal *et al.* 2006:010). This implies that product quality is a collection of an assortment of attributes, and some are there to accomplish minimum customer requirements, while others add value. The success of quality traits rarely improves overall customer satisfaction and not all product traits are observed as equally important to customers. There is a correspondent relationship connecting performance of quality attributes and overall customer satisfaction (Lin *et al.* 2010:255). Therefore, drawing from the literature and the empirical evidence mentioned above, the study assumes that:

H5: Overall perceived quality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction

3.4 SUMMARY

The purpose of chapter 3 was to exhibit the research model forming the basis of this study as well as develop the proposed hypotheses and support them theoretically. The chapter began with an introduction followed by an illustration of the research model with the hypothesised relationships indicated and finally, the development of the hypothesised relationships, which were:

Table 3.4.1 Summary of hypotheses

Hypothesis	Description	Relationship
H1	Extrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction.	EC \longrightarrow CS
H2	Extrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on perceived quality.	EC \longrightarrow PQ
H3	Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on perceived quality.	IC \longrightarrow PQ
H4	Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction	IC \longrightarrow CS
H5	Perceived quality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction	PQ \longrightarrow CS

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is a process of achieving solutions to problems using intended and systematic methods. Research methods submit to a system of clear rules and procedures, leading to a study that is based on such rules and procedures and against which claims for knowledge are evaluated (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1997:32-33). In addition, research methodology is a system designed for gathering information requisite for the research (Burns & Bush 2006:178). It is led by a research philosophy and it denotes all the methods and procedures for acquiring, analysing and drawing conclusions from the data, generating new knowledge. Quantitative and qualitative methods are used to conduct successful projects. In successfully drawing conclusions based on the study conducted, the methodology must be appropriate in addressing the research problem in its scope, depth and intensity.

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology that was used to investigate the influence of extrinsic and intrinsic footwear cues on perceived quality and consumer satisfaction with footwear amongst the Generation Y cohort at River Square shopping mall in Vereeniging. The process used to oversee the data collection instrument and the methods used to collect and analyse the data are also presented. This chapter also provides knowledge concerning the need for and how ethical considerations were maintained in this study. Understanding the use of relevant methodology for this study is fundamental in order to identify the unit of analysis and employ compatible methods that will provide intended results. A research design will typically include:

- How data are acquired
- What instruments are employed
- How the instruments are utilised and
- The means for analysing data collected.



Figure 4.1 Diagrammatic representation of chapter 4

4.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY: POSITIVIST PARADIGM

Research philosophy advances the nature of knowledge. Research philosophy is the law about how data are gathered, analysed and applied to comprehend phenomena in life (Holden & Lynch 2004:397). The notion of the paradigm is essential to the research process in all areas of study (Mangan, Lalwani & Gardner 2004:567). Collins (2010:385) acknowledged that positivism is an atomistic, ontological view (nature of reality) of the world consisting of discrete, observable elements and events that interrelate in an observable, determined and regular manner. The positivist paradigm is a philosophy in conformity with the empiricist observation that knowledge stems from human experience (Collins 2010:386). The positivist paradigm originates from natural science and hypothesis testing through the quantification of apparent social realities is its main characteristic.

The attribute of positivism makes epistemology deductive in nature (Flowers 2009:137). This perspective asserts that the world exists externally and objectively, that knowledge is functional only if it is fabricated from accounts of this external realism. It also realises that universal laws do exist in real world (Bryman 2004:784). Fundamentally, positivism is grounded on values of reason, truth and validity. It accentuates facts that can be evaluated empirically by means of quantitative methods – experiments and survey designs from which the collected data are analysed statistically (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe 2004:549; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:476). Furthermore, this indicates that it is possible to formulate models that are generalisable. These kinds of models can successfully explicate cause and effect associations, which are useful in forecasting outcomes.

Under the positivist paradigm or view, research is carried out scientifically, based on the principle that reality can be understood from an objective point of view (Hirschman 1986:237). It is a reality that footwear cues exist to facilitate essential wants and needs of consumers. Footwear cues afford implication which is achieved through the causal relationships between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. This allows the researcher to objectively study how perceived quality and satisfaction variables contribute to the ability of footwear cues to exert significant influence on consumer groups. Because cues are expected to adapt their capability for the success

of footwear, this paradigm is suitable for allowing the research to determine the effects of footwear cues on perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

In an attempt to understand how consumers' behaviour contributes to perceived quality and satisfaction regarding footwear cues, this study employs a positivist perspective, where research formulates and tests hypotheses that help to determine the causal relationships between the construct variables and uses quantified measurement scales in the research instrument to examine the variables under study. Quantitative or positivistic research intends to test hypotheses and applies objective measures to predict and control phenomena. Within positivist science, the major criteria for evaluating a research report include internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity (Campbell 1979:53).

4.3 PRIMARY DATA

Primary data are gathered when the researcher is occupied with empirical investigation or fieldwork. Primary data in a structured form was collected from Generation Y consumers at River Square mall, Vereeniging. An adapted, self-administered close-ended questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the sample of 500 respondents.

4.4 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data to verify results of this study were gathered from a comprehensive review of Internet articles, journal articles, textbooks, dissertations, publications, government gazettes, magazines, newspaper articles, conference proceedings and government policies.

4.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

The scientific approach borrowed for the positivist perspective leads the researcher to use quantitative research methodology (Mukher & Albon 2010:11). The quantitative method is regarded as appropriate for this study as it will examine the causal relationships between footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. Quantitative research is useful for unfolding trends and explaining the relationship

among variables found in the literature (Creswell 2009:645). According to Hunter and Erin (2008:290-306), quantitative methods include the following:

- The generation of models
- The development of an instrument and methods of measurement
- Experimental control and manipulation of variables
- Collection of empirical data
- Modelling and data analysis
- Evaluation of results

Quantitative research is constructive when the sample being investigated is large and it engages in collecting data, analysis, interpreting data and reporting on findings. Furthermore, Maree (2007:145) states that the quantitative research method is systematic and objective in its technique of using numerical data from a selected representative sample to generalise the findings to the population that is being studied (Monette, Sullivan & De Jong 2008:9). Silverman (2001:2) further confirms that the characteristics of quantitative research are ‘hard, fixed, objective, value-free, survey, hypothesis-testing and abstract’.

A research design is the strategy used to obtain research information from respondents and summarise the precise procedures for collecting, analysing and reporting in quantitative research (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell 2007:52). It may be considered as a map of how the research will unfold and provides a logical plan as to how it will be conducted and the findings validated. For Mouton (1996:175) the research design serves to plan, structure and implement the research in order to capitalise on the validity of the findings. The research design to be employed for this study is a quantitative survey approach, which was selected because it is a practical and an economical method of examining groups by means of a structured questionnaire. Through the quantitative approach, the relationship between the variables was analysed. Maree (2007:145) states that quantitative research is a procedure that is logical and objective in its ways of using numerical data from a selected group of a population in order to generalise the findings to the population that is being studied.

Yin (2003:175) suggests informally that research design is a plan of action for getting from 'here to there', where 'here' may be defined by a set of questions to be responded to and 'there' a set of results to be validated.

The design for this study was for quantitative research whereby a questionnaire was administered, containing dependent and independent variables. The items in section A are strictly general information while B and C served as independent variables. Sections D and E served as dependent variables. An independent variable is a variable with values that are not problematic in an analysis but are taken as simply given (Babbie 2008:19). In the research, factors such as footwear cues were considered to be independent variables, whilst the dependent variables were assumed to depend on or be influenced by the independent variables (Babbie 2010:21). Perceived quality and consumer satisfaction formed the dependent variables for this study.

4.5.1 Target population

Babbie and Mouton (2003:100) define a population as a group of people, items, objects, or elements who meet the selected set of criteria for the study, and about whom one wants to draw a conclusion. Since the study aimed to investigate which footwear cues affect quality perception and consumer satisfaction amongst Generation Y, the current study population was comprised of Generation Y consumers at River Square mall in Vereeniging. This particular population was selected because empirical evidence seems to indicate that Generation Y consumers spend more money than other consumer groups on clothes and accessories (Jackson & Shaw 2009:55).

According to Keiser & Garner (2008:77), Generation Y is described as people who were born between the years 1979 and 2000, meaning that these people were aged between 15 and 36 in the year 2015. Generation Y consumers are portrayed as a group of people living in the greatest time of technological advancements (Sutherland & Thompson 2003:8) and are fond of spending on products that are eye-catching, such as clothes and gadgets. The researcher requested permission from the management at River Square mall to conduct research at the mall for a period of seven days (see Annexure A).

4.5.2 Sampling frame

The sampling frame is the group of persons who have a real chance of being selected for the sample (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2011:198). A sampling frame refers to the researched environment and the subjects used in a study (Yang, Wang and Su 2006:603). The sampling frame for this research was obtained from card-carrying shoppers at River Square mall in Vereeniging. Research elements in Generation Y who are carrying loyalty cards from retailers, for instance Edgars, Exact, Woolworths, Mr Price, Truworths, Pep and many others, will constitute the sampling frame from which the final research sample would be generated. Framing allows the research to be relevant by ensuring that questions are suitable for the respondents so that pertinent information can be obtained for the research. The sample frame includes the members of the population that will form the basis of the research (Galpin 2013:467). The researcher made the decision to utilise this sampling frame as it has a sufficient quantity of Generation Y consumers who are potential consumers of footwear products in the various footwear stores. The researcher employed a verbal screening question to determine which candidates should be included or excluded from the survey. If the candidate did not form part of the Generation Y cohort and did not possess a loyalty card then the person was excluded.

4.5.3 Sample size

The sample size to be used in this study was decided based on the expense of data collection and the need to have adequate statistical power and the size of the establishment. Krejcie and Morgan (1970:608) posit that sampling procedures to be followed as guidelines for research activities are as follows: sample is (n) 384 for a population (N) of 1 000 000. River Square shopping mall welcomes approximately 460 000 consumers per month; however, out of the 460 000, the percentage that of Generation Y consumers is unknown. If the population parameters are unknown, the sample size can be estimated by an experienced researcher or on managerial judgment (Shoa 2002:610). Larger samples enable researchers to draw more representative, more accurate conclusions and predictions than smaller samples (De Vos *et al.* 2011:224). Consequently, for the purpose of this study, 550 questionnaires were distributed to Generation Y respondents and this sample size is deemed reasonably acceptable to perform structural equation modelling using AMOS 21.

4.5.4 Sampling method

The sampling method which was used for this study is non-probability in the form of convenience sampling. Convenience sampling entails situations whereby the population elements are selected because they are easily and conveniently available to make inquiries (Maree 2007:17). In this study, convenience sampling was selected because of the lack of funding available to take on the unknown and the massive number of members of the Generation Y cohort accessible in the Vaal region. Hence River Square mall was selected as a central destination where the majority of the members of the Generation Y cohort in the Vaal region are likely to congregate. In non-probability sampling, participants are selected based on characteristics they possess and their availability for participation in the study (Vanderstoep & Johnstone 2009:27). Non-probability sampling lacks the representativeness of the general population (Vanderstoep & Johnstone 2009:27). Consequently, the results cannot be generalised in industry; however, the results can provide insight into quality cues, perceptions and the satisfaction levels of footwear in the Vaal region.

4.6 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

The variables in this study were measured by means of a self-administered structured questionnaire developed to collect the data. In the context of this study, the researcher adapted all the measuring instruments from previous researchers. The measuring instruments for intrinsic and extrinsic cues were adapted from a study carried out on “Cue utilisation and quality perceptions with regards to branded beef” by Bredahl (2003:76). The questionnaire for perceived quality was adapted from a study conducted on “Linkages of retailer awareness, retailer association, retailer perceived quality and retailer loyalty with purchase intention: A study of Indian food retail brands” by Das (2014:291), and finally, satisfaction was adopted from a study completed on “Predictors of customer loyalty to mobile service provider in South Africa” by Chinomona and Sandada (2013:1644). As the foregoing argument shows, previous researchers have tested and confirmed the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments. Therefore the researcher was expected to perform confirmatory factor analysis in order to confirm the reliability and validity of the same

measuring instruments, using the collected data. Modifications will be made to the scales to fit the context and purpose of the current study.

For the purpose of this study, data will be collected through a pre-tested questionnaire comprising the following sections:

- Section A - Biographical variables: The first section of the questionnaire will focus on obtaining biographic variables such as frequency of footwear purchases and amount of money spent on shoes. It is necessary to obtain this general information, as it will have a bearing on the results of the survey.
- Section B - This section will measure footwear extrinsic cues.
- Section C - This section will measure footwear intrinsic cues.
- Section D - This section will measure the perceived quality.
- Section E – This section will measure consumer satisfaction.

Section A is the background information that consumers indicate by writing an X in the selected option. Section B, C, D and E will be measured using a seven-point Likert scale, with anchors strongly disagree=1 and strongly agree=7. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003:253) maintain that the Likert scale allows for objective responses. The measuring instrument in this study included the pertinent questions related to the topic, the problem statement and the objectives. Each questionnaire contained a letter explaining the ethical considerations involved, notably that it was a voluntary exercise but that participation in its completion would be appreciated (Annexure A).

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the statements on a scale of 1 to 7, as follows:

Table 4.1 Likert-scale measurement

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree
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On this scale, 1 would indicate that they strongly disagreed and 7 that they strongly agreed with the statement provided. The intervals 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 were to be regarded as

equal intervals between 1 and 7. The questions were presented in such a way that they would not elicit more than one answer. Kindly refer to Appendix B.

4.6.1 Pre- testing

The questionnaire was adapted from measuring instruments used by previous researchers; however, not all of these instruments have been applied in the fashion industry or in the context of South Africa. Therefore pre-testing of this instrument was necessary and was done on 30 participants from the Generation Y cohort in River Square mall before data were collected on large scale. The results of the pre-test questionnaire were satisfactory, and therefore, there were no amendments made to the questionnaire.

There was a 100% response rate on the pre-test SPSS software was used to check the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments. Chronbach alpha was used to indicate the reliability of the instruments, whereas corrected items to total and constant correlation matrix were used to assess both the convergent and discriminant validity respectively. The cronbach alpha for all the variables ranged between 0. 6 and 0.8 which is regarded as acceptable by Nully & Bernstein (1994:43). The item-to-total correlation values for all the constructs were above 0. 5, hence indicating that each instrument explained measures more than 50% of what it was supposed to measure. The correlation value amongst the research variables in the correlation matrix were all less than 0. 6, as recommended by Cronbach (2004:410), Seaker and Waller (1994:149). This also confirms the existence of discriminant validity among the research variables. After the reliability and validity of measurement instruments was confirmed in the pre-test, a full study was conducted.

4.7 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

This study made use of questionnaires in order to collect data from respondents. Questionnaires were distributed by hand to the respondents, filled in by the respondents and collected immediately. In order to maximise return rates, questionnaires were designed to be short, simple and as clear as possible.

A structured questionnaire was administered to 550 respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to Generation Y respondents at River Square mall, Vereeniging. According to Maree (2007:48), face-to-face, postal, telephone, group and computer-assisted survey methods can be used to collect data. Sharma (1995:137) reveals that the personal method of data collection has numerous advantages. The highest response rate can be attained from the personal method of data collection, which means this is the most precise method. The personal method of data collection was practical for this study because it is cost-effective. In this study, a structured close-ended questionnaire (Annexure A) was used to collect the primary data.

4.8 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD QUESTIONNAIRE

Willemse (2009:115) recommends that a good questionnaire has three sections, namely: an administrative part, a classification part, and subject matter of inquiry. Thus, the questionnaire for this study was developed to cater for the administrative part, the classification part and the inquiry (Section A, B, C and D). According to Maree (2007:108), the characteristics of any standardised measuring instrument must be reliable, legitimate, objective, suitable and practical. Cohen *et al.* (2003:257) state that the order and layout of the questionnaire set the tone for the empirical research. Bourque and Fielder (2003:17) stress the importance of a short questionnaire. The questionnaire must include mostly close-ended questions and must stand alone, meaning that all the information pertaining to the study has to be included in the questionnaire. All the above factors were considered when developing the close-ended structured questionnaire for this study.

4.9 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Five hundred and twenty three out of five hundred and fifty target respondents returned questionnaires to the researcher. However, upon scrutiny it was discovered that one respondent did not answer the majority of questions, and therefore this questionnaire was discarded. In the remaining twenty-seven questionnaires, some of the respondents left one or two questions blank. Sekaran (2003:303) described these as item non-response, and these blank responses were left out of the statistical analysis deliberately, which varied for each question. Thus, this represented an average response rate of nine percent, since only five hundred responses were deemed

reasonably acceptable to perform structural equation modelling using AMOS 21. The remaining twenty-seven questionnaires were surplus.

4.10 DATA ANALYSIS

4.10.1 Structural equation modelling (SEM)

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used in the current study for analysing data. SEM has recently become a respected statistical technique to test theory in a number of fields of knowledge (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black 1998:98; Schumacker & Lomax 2004:35; Nusair & Hua 2010:318). SEM is useful when examining the hypothesised relationship in the research model (Liao & Hsieh 2013:411). Qureshi & Kang (2014:171) described SEM as a multivariate statistical technique essentially engaged for understanding relationships between latent variables or constructs and observed variables that constitute a model.

SEM is a technique of multivariate statistical analysis with the aptitude to measure the underlying latent constructs recognised by factor analysis and evaluating the paths of the hypothesised relationships between the constructs (Klem 2000:237). According to Hair *et al.* (1998:12), SEM can extend explanatory power and statistical efficiency for model examination with one complete model and can include latent constructs in the analysis while accounting for measurement errors in the estimation process. SEM is identified as similar to regression analysis but superior in that it evaluates the causal relationships among constructs while at the same time taking into account measurement error. The advantages of SEM are that it firstly allows for the estimate of a series, but independent, multiple regression equations simultaneously (Nusair & Hua 2010:39) and secondly, it has the ability to incorporate latent variables into the analysis and accounts for measurement errors in the approximation process), and lastly, SEM is a statistical approach that sets up measurement models and structural models to tackle intricate behavioural relationships (Nusair & Hua 2010:32).

4.10.2 Data analysis approach

Data analysis is defined as a statistical process in which raw data are arranged and structured so that valuable information can be extracted from it (Ullah 2010:765). To

begin with, the collected data will be coded in an Excel spread sheet before analysis. To gain understanding of the attributes of each variable, descriptive statistics analysis will be utilised, which will be indicated by the mean and standard deviation of each factor. The researcher will be accountable for analysing the data. Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) were used to analyse the data. SPSS was used for descriptive statistics and AMOS was used to conduct confirmatory factor analysis and path modelling in order to verify reliability and validity of the data, as well as model fit of the data.

4.10.3 Data processing and analysis

Trochim (2000:38) states that most social research involves the data analysis, which occurs in three main stages and is typically carried out in the following order:

- Cleaning and sorting out the data for analysis (data preparation).
- Describing the data (descriptive statistics)
- Testing hypotheses and models (inferential statistics).
- Structural equation modelling
 - Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)
 - Path modelling (PM)

4.10.4 Data cleaning and coding

Before the data collected for this study could be analysed, specific confirmation of the legitimacy of the data had to be carried out and the researcher had to take this into consideration so that incorrect data that was entered on the excel spread sheet could be removed. Trochim (2000:256) states that as soon as the collected data is received the researcher must screen for accuracy. This will permit the researcher to spot any errors that the sample might have. In addition, Trochim (2000:257) suggests that the following questions have to be asked by the researcher in order to check for discrepancies and inconsistencies:

- Are the answers written clearly?
- Did the participants answer important questions?
- Did the participants complete the questionnaire?

- Does the questionnaire contain all the relevant relative information such as data, date, place and the researcher's details?

4.10.5 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive information is also understood as demographic profile. Trochim (2000:270) depicts descriptive statistics as information that is used to explain the basic characteristics of the data in the study. Descriptive statistics create behavioural patterns of participants in general. Descriptive statistics consist of simple summaries about the samples and the dimensions of the data. The descriptive statistics could take the form of pie charts or tables that show the basic data of the main components of the study, for instance, the demographic or biographical data. In this study, descriptive statistics investigate the demographic characteristics of the research data. The total number of participants was declared and division of gender, age, marital status, occupation and purchasing behaviour of participants was also explored.

4.10.6 Reliability and validity

Both reliability and validity measure the logic and accuracy of the test (Wilckens 2010:992). Reliability is defined as the consistency of a measuring instrument; therefore, high reliability is obtained when the instrument will yield the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample (Maree 2007:147). Reliability requires better comparable experiments, whereas validity asks the question if the experiment is tailored to fittingly answer the questions being asked, that is if the experiment is valid in logical terms (Wilckens 2010:997).

Reliability approximations are used to evaluate the consistency of measures directed at different times to the same standard (i.e., test–retest reliability). They can also be used to evaluate the association between a set of items that come from the same test (i.e., internal consistency) (Chinomona 2014:48). Occasionally, different observers may score an event or behaviour by means of a similar instrument. Consequently, if this is the case, the scores of the observers should add up to a similar result in order to claim the reliability of scores.

Reliability coefficients should range between 0 and 1, with higher values signifying higher reliability levels. When an item or entity generates stable scores, then such an item is considered to be a good measure. According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002:376), reliability does not require an instrument to be valid but validity necessitates that the instrument ought to be reliable. The two main types of reliability coefficients include:

- Cronbach's Alpha value – which has a minimum threshold of ≥ 0.7
- Composite Reliability value – which has a minimum threshold of ≥ 0.6

Factor analysis was carried out to check the validity of the measurement items and the internal uniformity of the research constructs. Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure in a consistent and accurate manner (Babbie 2010:153; Maree 2007:147). In the case of this study, the validity evaluates whether the survey questionnaire captures and measures footwear quality cues on perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. There are numerous kinds of construct validity, namely: convergent validity, discriminant validity and nomological validity (Zait & Berteau 2011:222). This study used discriminant validity, which is based on the idea that, because each construct is measuring one variable, the items should hence be more highly correlated with each other than with items from other constructs (Lucas, Diener & Suh 1996:557).

The application of an inter-construct correlation matrix verifies the extent to which the constructs are discriminant from one another and are not measuring the same variable (Lucas *et al.* 1996:558). This entails plotting constructs against one another to observe the strength of their relationships with one another.

The correlation coefficients start from negative infinity to positive 1, with lesser absolute values representing a lesser degree of correlation and consequently more discriminant construct validity (Krommenhoek & Galpin 2013:834). Negative coefficients signify negative correlations while positive coefficients signify positive correlations between constructs. The recommended upper limit is 0.7 (Zait & Berteau 2011:232) as coefficients closer to 1 propose that the correlated constructs may be measuring the same variable.

Construct validity was achieved through restricting the questions to the conceptualisation of the variables and ensuring that the indicators of each variable fell within the same construct. The purpose of this was to ensure that each measure adequately assessed the construct it was purported to assess.

In this study, discriminant validity was assessed for the constructs using an inter-construct correlation matrix. Convergent and discriminate validity of the construct were confirmed by checking the inter-correlations between the research constructs, as well as by comparing the average variance extracted (AVE) and shared variance. Concerning convergent validity, the item total correlation values, item loading and average variance extracted were used as indicators.

According to Maree (2010:217), face validity cannot be quantified or tested, although any instrument should be scrutinised by experts in the field to guarantee a high degree of face validity. Additionally Maree (2010:217) states that, to ensure content validity of an instrument, the researcher typically presents a questionnaire draft to experts in the field for their remarks before finalising the instrument. Furthermore, content validity and face validity are usually found to be very necessary in the event where the researcher designs the questionnaire. In the case of this study, the author adapted the questionnaire measurement instruments from researchers that designed the instrument and both the content and face validity. Since the questionnaire was adapted, it is highly recommended that in the research methodology literature that, rather than content and face validity, convergent and discriminant validity are assessed instead.

With respect to content validity, the questionnaire was formulated and operationalised as per the study variables to warrant the adequacy and representativeness of the items in each variable in relation to the purpose and objectives of the study. Further, content validity was verified through expert opinions from supervisors and practitioners. The questionnaire used also borrowed heavily from those used by Morris and Kuratko (2002:213) and Antoncic and Hisrich (2001:525) in measuring corporate entrepreneurship in manufacturing firms.

As regards face validity, the questionnaire was subjected to expert analysis and opinions from two external experts who thoroughly checked the representativeness of the research instrument at face value, reaching the verdict that it was a good instrument.

4.10.7 Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis is an analytical tool that permits the researcher to explore hypotheses about what constructs the test in question is measuring, and provides an empirical basis for clinical interpretation (Burton, Ray, Axelrold, Schellenberger & Richards 2003:630). It involves the separation of a large number of variables into a smaller number of factors within which all variables are related to each other. The purpose of factor analysis is to investigate the underlying variance structure of a set of correlation coefficients. A confirmatory factor analysis will be performed to obtain the standard regression weights. Model fit indicators, such as chi-square/degrees of freedom, goodness-of-fit index (GFI), normed fit index (NFI), incremental fit index (IFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI), composite fit index (CFI) and the random measure of standard error approximation (RMSEA), will be used to assess the model fit.

4.10.8 Research model fit assessment

Confirmatory factor analysis and path modelling were assessed in order to establish the model fit, as well as to obtain the standard regression weights. Model fit is a sign that reveals whether the data fit into the conceptualised research model. The chi-squared tests are employed as goodness-of-fit tests (Galpin 2011:154). The Chi-Square value is the customary measure for evaluating overall model fit as it assesses the extent of discrepancy between the sample and fitted covariance matrices. A good model fit would give an insignificant result at a 0.05 threshold (Barrett 2007:763). Model fit indicators such as chi-square/degrees of freedom, goodness-of-fit index (GFI), normative fit index (NFI), increment fit index (IFI), augmented goodness-of-fit (AGFI), composite fit index (CFI), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) will be presented in this study.

4.10.9 Path modelling

Path modelling denotes the relationships between observed or measured variables and theoretical constructs and it evaluates the structural paths of the conceptualised research model (Roche, Duffield & White 2011:1476). Once the model fit has been confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), this study will proceed to perform path modelling using AMOS 21.0 software package. The structural equation modelling (SEM) technique demonstrates and tests the theoretical underpinnings of a proposed study and the significance of the relationships between the model constructs. SEM stipulates a technique where separate relationships are permissible for each set of dependent variables and presents an estimation technique for a series of separate multiple regression equations to be predicted simultaneously. It further contains two mechanisms, namely the structural model, which is the path where independent and dependent variables are linked, and the measurement model, which allowed this study to use several indicators for a single independent variable. In this study, several attributes were recognised as having an effect on performance. The multi-item scales for each construct could be developed, therefore, by appraising each relationship concurrently rather than separately by incorporating all the multi-scale items to account for measurement errors with each scale.

4.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission to collect the data was obtained by the researcher from River Square mall management office. Owing to the nature of the study, the confidentiality of the participants or respondents was respected. Questionnaires were completed anonymously. The privacy and confidentiality of data collected was maintained. The researcher, supervisors and statistician were the only persons who saw the results of the questionnaires. The researcher had no knowledge of which scores belonged to which respondent, as aggregate scores were analysed. However, at no time was the name of the respondents or any identifying information reported in the presentation of this research. Participation in the study was voluntary for all participants. This research is granted ethical clearance by the VUT ethics committee to ensure that it complies with ethical principles; however, no ethical number was given since the new policy was not in place at the time when the proposal to this study was approved.

However, the proposal was approved by the faculty of Human Science VUT FREAK committee.

4.12 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology of the study. It commenced with an introduction, followed by a discussion of the research philosophy. The research design conversed about aspects such as the target population, sampling technique and sample size, which ended with clarification of the measurement instrument. The next section delineates the data analysis and statistical approach, which integrated the reliability and validity of measurement scales and structural equation modelling (SEM). The last section comprises the discussion of the research model fit evaluation, which explains the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and path modelling. The next chapter presents data analysis and results.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 discussed the techniques that were employed to obtain the findings that will be presented in this chapter. Chapter 5 will present and discuss the findings that were acquired through empirical investigation. In this chapter, there will be presentations of statistical analysis of data that were collected via the data collection tool (research questionnaire). To interpret the data, the statistical package for the social sciences was employed. This chapter discusses descriptive statistics; the reliability of all the constructs in the model used to design the questionnaire is also discussed. Structural Equation Modelling was also carried out where confirmatory factor analysis and path modelling were conducted. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was done to check for model fit, reliability and validity of the scales utilised in the research questionnaire. To check the validity of the scales, shared variance was weighed against an average variance extracted (AVE). Several indicators, such as the chi-square value, goodness of-fit-index (GFI), normed fit index (NFI), incremental fit index (IFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), were used to determine if the research model fit the data. PM was executed to check for model fit and to test the hypothesis of the study.

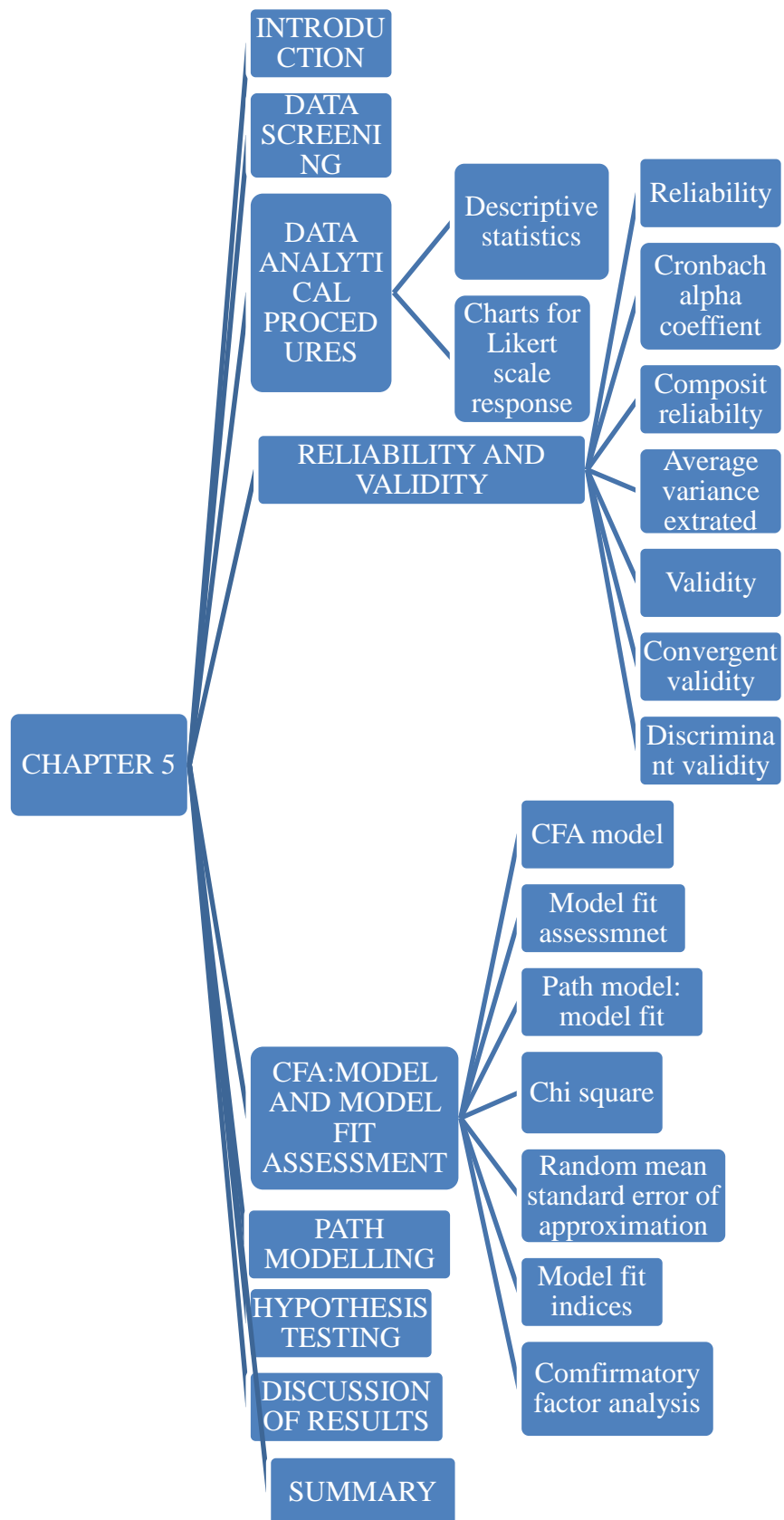


Figure 5.1 Diagrammatic representation of Chapter 5

5.2 DATA SCREENING

Following the data collection, the researcher did the data screening recommended by Malhotra (1999:160-183) and Churchill (1999:250) to ensure that the data were cleaned before conducting further statistical analysis. Screening the data is the first step towards getting hold of insights into the characteristics of the data. It is vital to ensure the accuracy of data entries and reviews before proceeding to look at summary statistics for the survey responses. The main analytical tasks in the data screening process comprise questionnaire checking, editing, coding and tabulation. Using SPSS, each data field was tested for mean and standard deviation to identify any typographical errors. Data were cleaned after errors in data entry were corrected.

5.3 DATA ANALYTICAL PROCEDURES

To analyse the empirical data, the researcher employed numerous statistical methods. Initially, coefficient alpha and adjusted item-to-total correlations were employed in assessing the internal consistency of each construct. Data were analysed using SPSS. For the appraisal of final measures, confirmatory factor analysis was performed using the AMOS 22. Statistical procedures used to authenticate measures concerned assessment of items, scale reliability, uni-dimensionality, and convergent and discriminant validity. Particulars of structural equation modelling were also analysed in this chapter, as well as the interpretation of results. Generally, a study should begin by elucidating the demographic or descriptive traits of the sampled population and presenting this in a logical way. The rationale of descriptive statistics is to search for patterns, to gather and present a set of data unfolding the characteristics of the sample in order to make comparisons. Descriptive statistics entail summaries about the samples and the dimensions of the data.

5.3.1 Demographic profile

Data collected from the questionnaires of 500 respondents have been summarised in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Table 5.1 shows the demographic profile while Table 5.2 shows responses to construct-specific items.

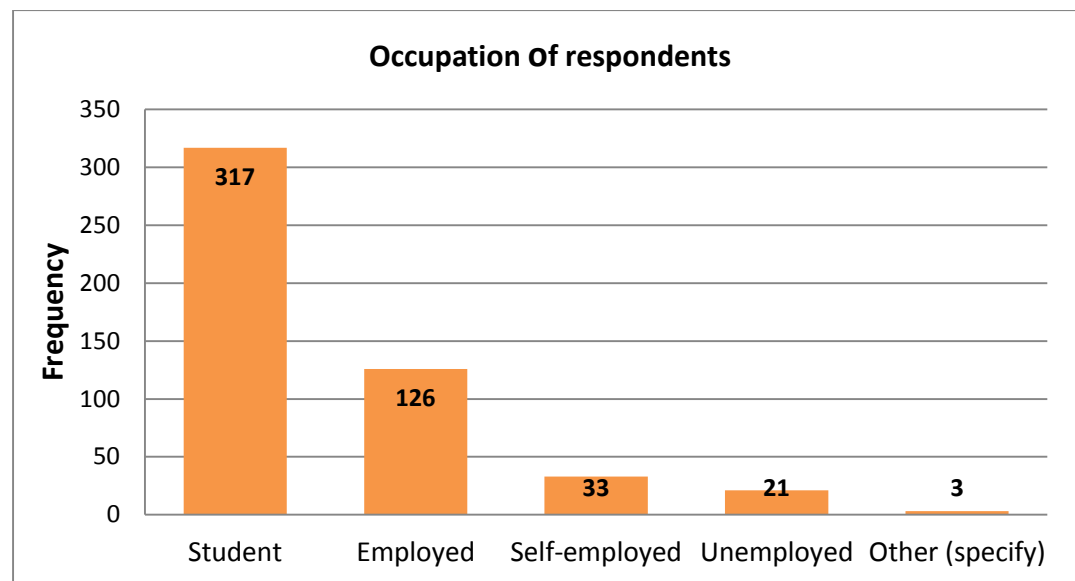
Table 5.1 Demographic profile

Characteristics		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
				Percent
Gender	Male	212	42,4	42,4
	Female	288	57,6	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	
Race	Black	324	64,8	64,8
	White	132	26,4	91,2
	Coloured	29	5,8	97,0
	Indian	13	2,6	99,6
	Other (specify)	2	0,4	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	
Marital status	Married	57	11,4	11,4
	Single	443	88,6	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	
Age group (years)	14 - 19	250	50,0	50,0
	20 - 25	167	33,4	83,4
	26 - 30	83	16,6	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	
Occupation	Student	317	63,4	63,4
	Employed	126	25,2	88,6
	Self- employed	33	6,6	95,2
	Unemploye d	21	4,2	99,4
	Other (specify)	3	0,6	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	
Frequency of purchase of footwear	Weekly	30	6,0	6,0
	Monthly	201	40,2	46,2
	Seasonally	200	40,0	86,2

	Yearly	60	12,0	98,2
	Other (specify)	9	1,8	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	
Annual spending on footwear	R500 -	212	42,4	42,4
	R1000			
	R1001 -	164	32,8	75,2
	R3000			
	R3001 -	86	17,2	92,4
	R6000			
	R6001 -	33	6,6	99,0
	R10000			
	Other (specify)	5	1,0	100,0
	Total	500	100,0	

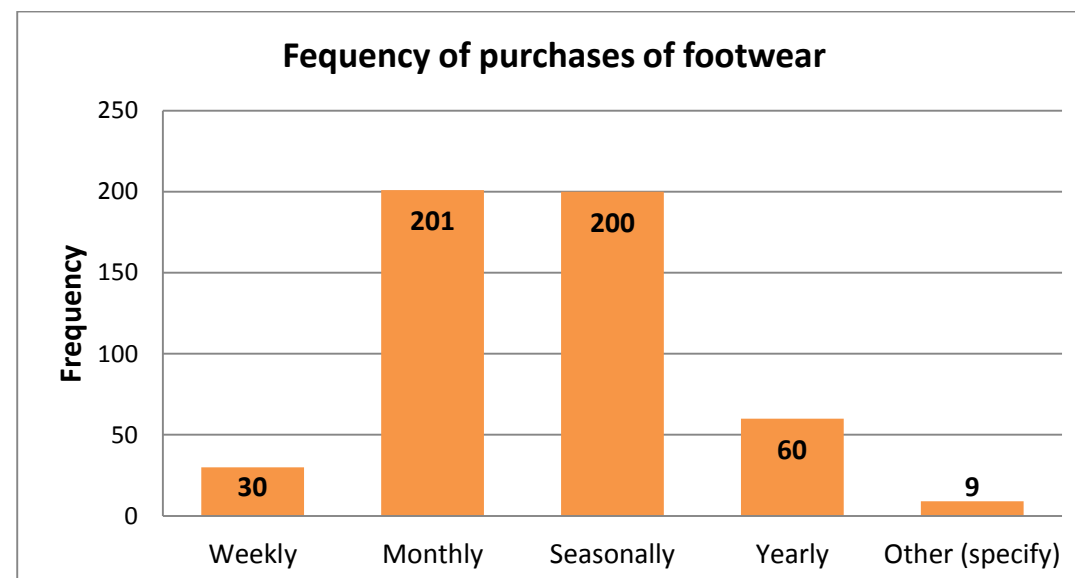
The respondent profile shows a sample of male and female, single and married respondents, within a variety of racial groups, occupations and various spending patterns in terms of how often they buy footwear and how much they spend on it. As illustrated in Table 5.1, 57.6 percent of the respondents were female, and more than two thirds of the respondents were of the black race. Respondents of the Coloured, Indian and other races account for less than 10 percent of the respondents. The majority of the respondents, or 88.6 percent, were classified as being single and half of the respondents were aged between 14 and 19 years.

Figure 5.2: Graphical representation of respondents' occupations



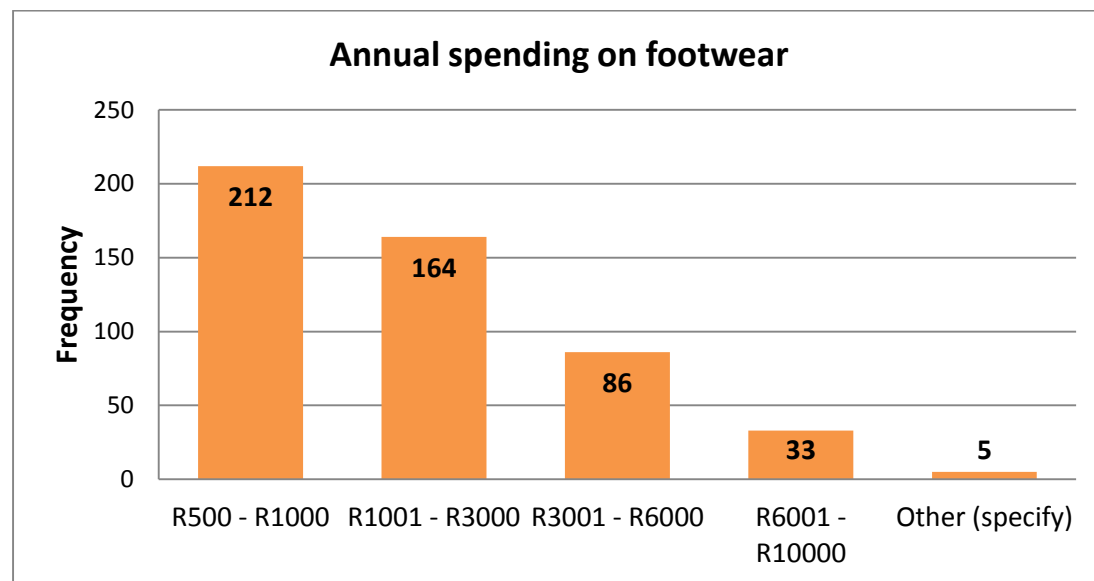
Data were collected from 317 students, who comprised more than 60 percent of the sample, followed by 126 employed, as shown in Figure 5.1 above. Out of 500 respondents, 33 were self-employed and unemployed respondents comprised 4.2 percent of the sample.

Figure 5.3: Graphical representation of respondents' frequency of purchases of footwear



In terms of the frequency of purchase of footwear, 201 respondents indicated that they purchased footwear on a monthly and seasonal basis, with 201 indicating monthly and 200 indicating seasonally. This is illustrated in the bar chart in Figure 5.2 above.

Figure 5.4: Graphical representation of respondents' annual spending on footwear



Respondents who indicated purchasing footwear yearly and weekly comprised 12 percent and 6 percent respectively of the sample. The spending pattern of respondents shows most respondents spending between R500 and R1000 on footwear, and fewer respondents spending between R6001 and R10 000 in a year, as seen in Figure 5.3 above. This downward trend sees 212 respondents (who comprise 42% of the respondents) spending from R500 to R1000 a year on footwear, followed by 164 (32% of the sample) spending from R1001 to R3000, then 86 (17% of the sample) spending R3001 to R6000, and 33 (6% of the sample) spending R6001 to R10 000 a year on footwear.

Table 5.2: Summary of item responses presented in percentages

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
EC1	9%	9%	19%	24%	17%	16%	6%	100%
EC2	3%	3%	8%	18%	16%	34%	18%	100%
EC3	4%	4%	10%	17%	21%	30%	14%	100%

EC4	4%	8%	9%	25%	16%	26%	12%	100%
IC1	4%	3%	6%	18%	12%	29%	28%	100%
IC2	3%	4%	8%	20%	20%	27%	18%	100%
IC3	1%	2%	8%	15%	25%	27%	22%	100%
IC4	3%	6%	10%	17%	16%	26%	22%	100%
PQ1	3%	5%	12%	25%	22%	25%	8%	100%
PQ2	2%	8%	13%	27%	25%	18%	7%	100%
PQ3	4%	6%	19%	26%	24%	14%	7%	100%
PQ4	3%	3%	9%	23%	22%	27%	13%	100%
CS1	3%	3%	8%	23%	22%	29%	12%	100%
CS2	1%	6%	7%	19%	25%	25%	17%	100%
CS3	3%	8%	11%	27%	27%	24%	0%	100%
CS4	6%	7%	17%	27%	16%	15%	12%	100%

Notes: EC= Extrinsic Cues; IC= Intrinsic Cues; PQ= Perceived Quality and Consumer Satisfaction= CS

Responses to the Likert-scale questions are summarised in Table 5.2 above. For questions about extrinsic cues when evaluating footwear (construct EC), 50 percent of responses tended to indicate that respondents were neutral, or slightly disagreed or agreed with the statements. This alludes to a positive effect of the extrinsic cues on the respondents. Overall, respondents tended to slightly agree, agree or strongly agree with statements asking about intrinsic cues when evaluating footwear. In terms of

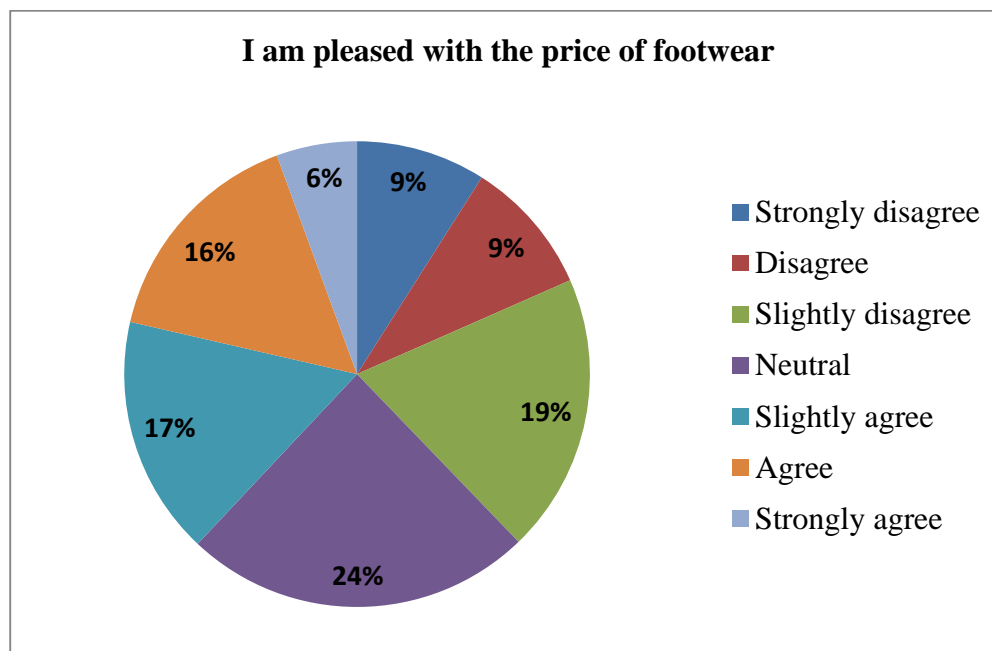
consumers' perceived quality of footwear (PQ), responses to these items tended to fall within the 'neutral' and slightly agree' options, and for consumer satisfaction (CS), responses tended to be 'slightly agree' and 'neutral'. Graphical representations of the responses to the Likert-scale questions are shown below.

5.3.2 Charts for Likert-Scale responses: Appendix B

The Likert-scale responses are divided into four groups: extrinsic, intrinsic, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction cues as follows:

5.3.2.1 Extrinsic Cues

Figure 5.5: Price of footwear (EC 1)



In Figure 5.5:

- 39% of the respondents are pleased with the price.
- 37% of the respondents are not pleased with the price.
- 24% of the respondents are neutral about the price.

Conclusion: The respondents are indecisive about the price of footwear.

Figure 5.6 Brand names (EC 2)

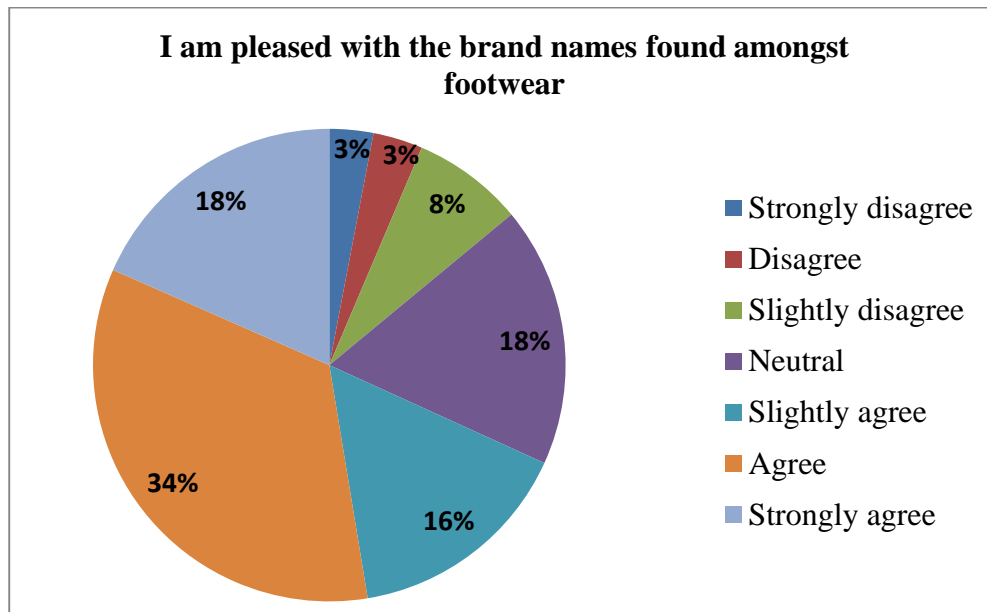


Figure 5.6:

- 68% of the respondents are pleased with the brand names.
- 18% of the respondents are neutral about the brand names.
- 14% of the respondents are not pleased with the brand names.

Conclusion: The respondents are more positive about the brand names than price.

Figure 5.7: Image of retail store (EC 3)

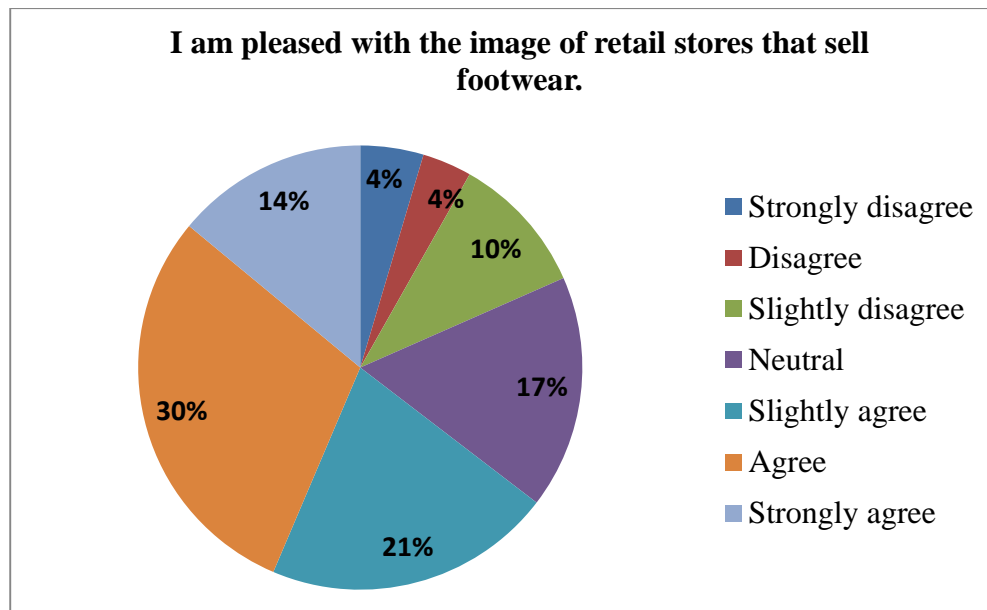


Figure 5.7:

- 65% of the respondents are positive about the image of retail stores that sell footwear.
- 18% of the respondents are slightly positive about the image of retail store that sell footwear.
- 17% of the respondents are neutral about the image of retail stores that sell footwear.

Conclusion: The respondents are more positive about retail store than the price although they are more positive about brand names when compared with retail stores of footwear.

Figure 5.8: Country of origin (EC 4)

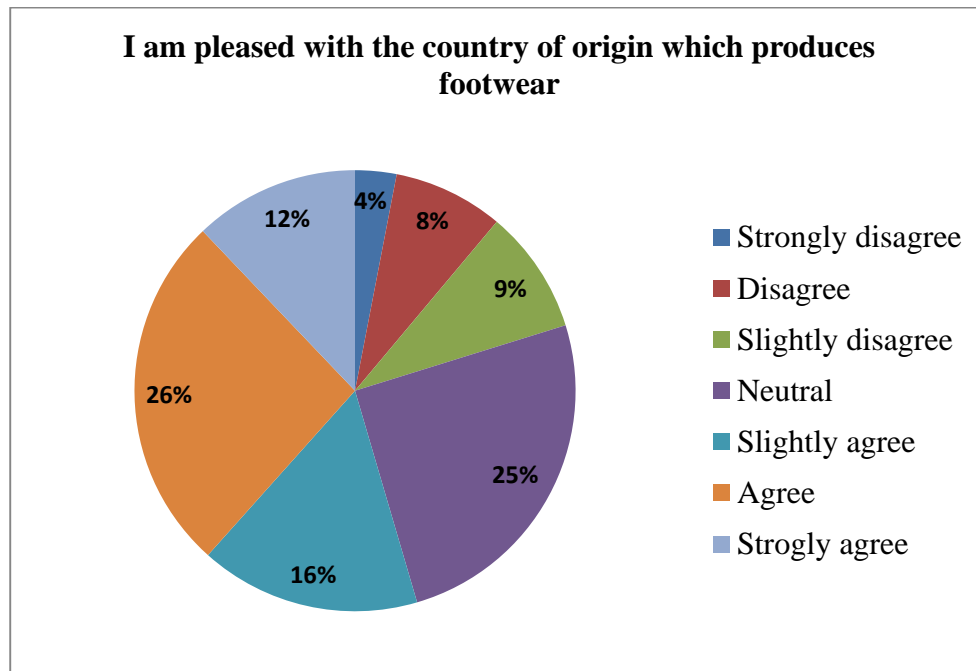


Figure 5.8:

- 54% of the respondents are pleased with the country of origin that produces footwear.
- 21% agree slightly that they are pleased with the country of origin which produces footwear of respondents.
- 25% of the respondents are neutral about the country of origin that produces footwear

Conclusion: The respondents are positive about the country of origin which produces footwear. However, they are more positive about the country of origin than price, yet less positive than they are about other extrinsic cues such as retail stores and brand names of footwear.

5.3.2.2 Intrinsic Cues

Figure 5.9: Comfort of footwear (IC 1)

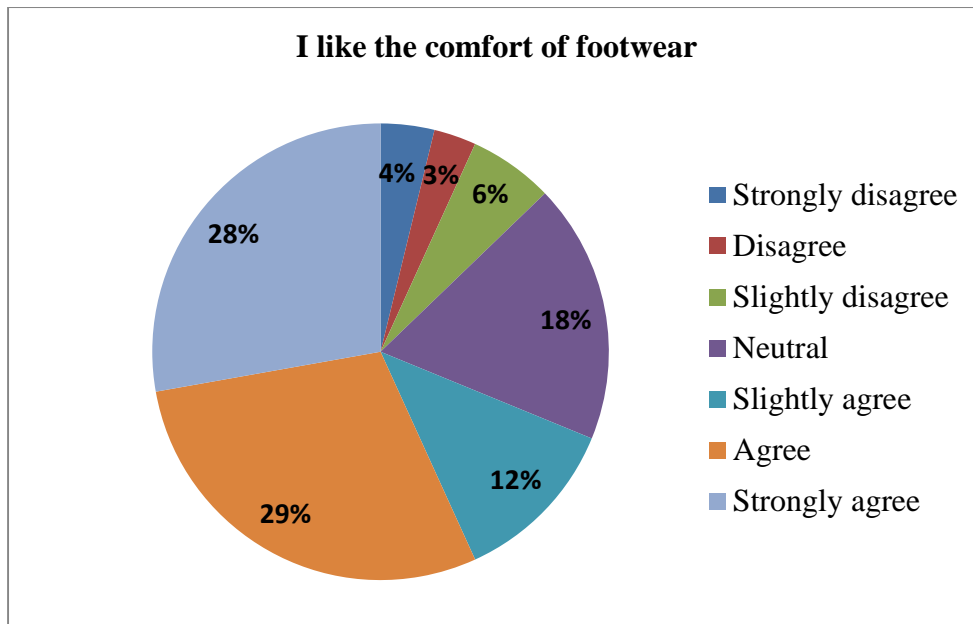


Figure 5.9:

- 69% of the respondents, the majority, indicated that they liked the comfort of their footwear.
- 13% of the respondents proved not to like the comfort of footwear.
- 18% of the respondents indicated they were neutral about the comfort of footwear.

Conclusion: The respondents are positive about the comfort of footwear

Figure 5.10: Material of footwear (IC 2)

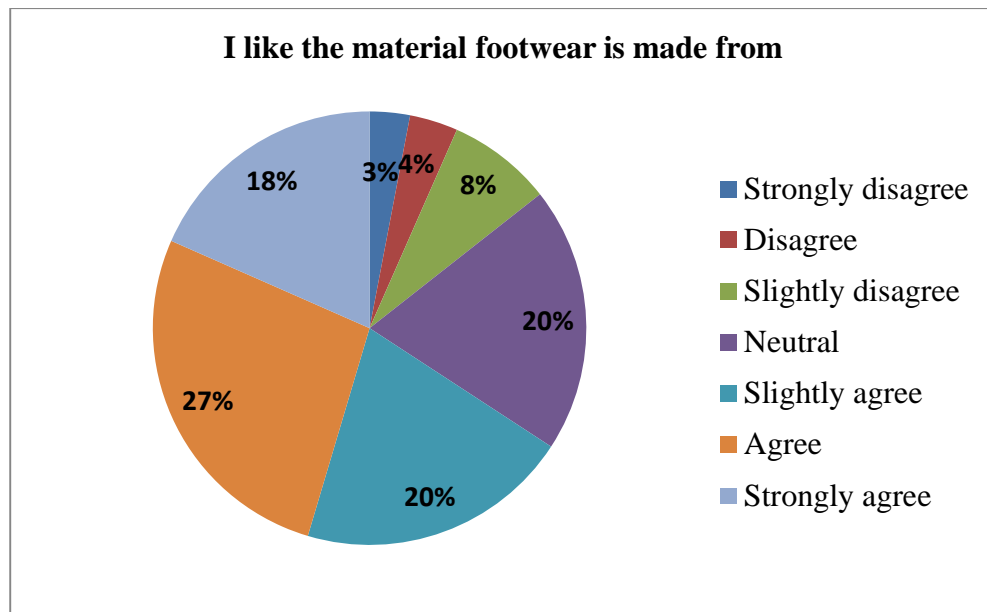


Figure 5.10:

- 65% of the respondents, which was the majority, indicated that they liked the material that their footwear was made of.
- 15% of the respondents indicated that they like the comfort of their footwear.
- 20% of the respondents are neutral about the material used to make footwear.

Conclusion: The respondents are more positive about the material that footwear is made from but less so about the comfort of footwear

Figure 5.11: Style of footwear (IC 3)

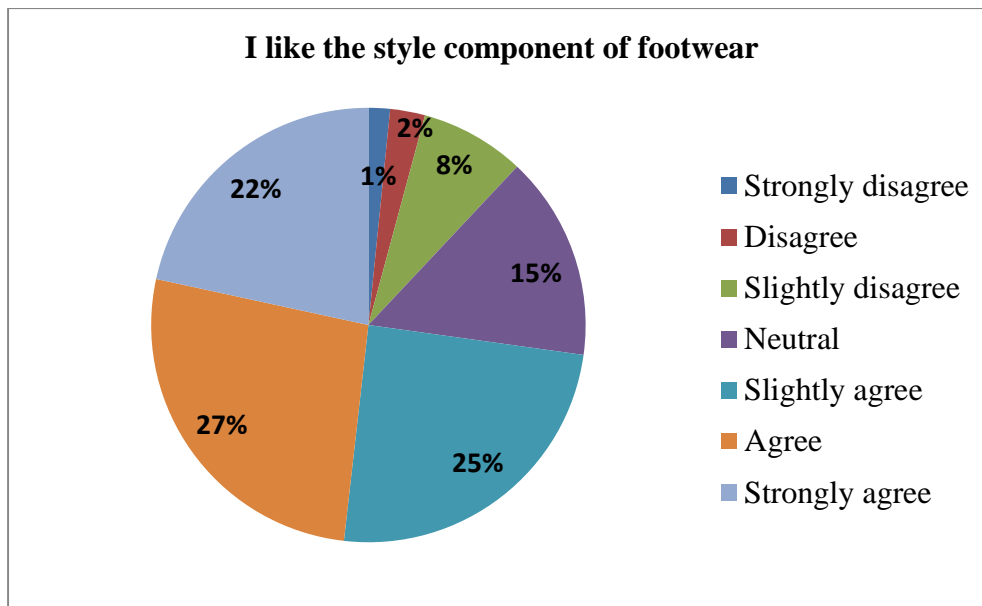


Figure 5.11:

- 74% of the respondents, the majority, liked the style element of footwear.
- 11% of the respondents did not like the style element in footwear.
- 15% of the respondents are neutral about the style element.

Conclusion: The respondents are more positive about the style component than all of the other extrinsic and intrinsic cues although they are more positive about retail stores of footwear.

Figure 5.12: Fit of footwear (IC 4)

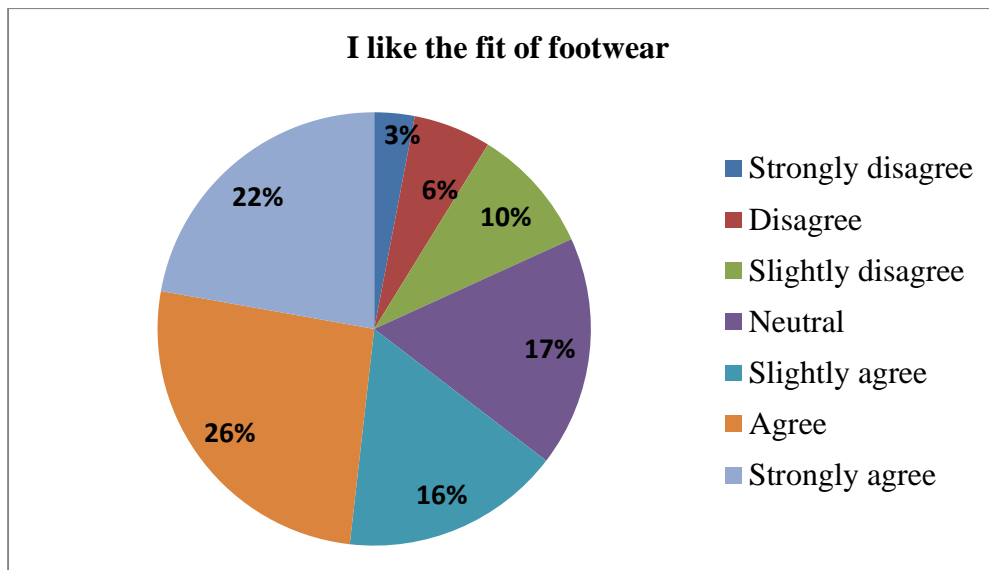


Figure 5.12:

- 64% of the respondents were content with the fit of footwear.
- 19% percent of the respondents indicated that they did not like the fit of footwear.
- 17% of the respondents were neutral about the fit of footwear.

Conclusion: The respondents are more positive about the fit of their footwear. It is also evident that respondents see fit as the least positive extrinsic cue when compared with other footwear cues.

5.3.2.3 Overall perceived quality

Figure 5.13: Overall, footwear is of good quality (PQ 1)

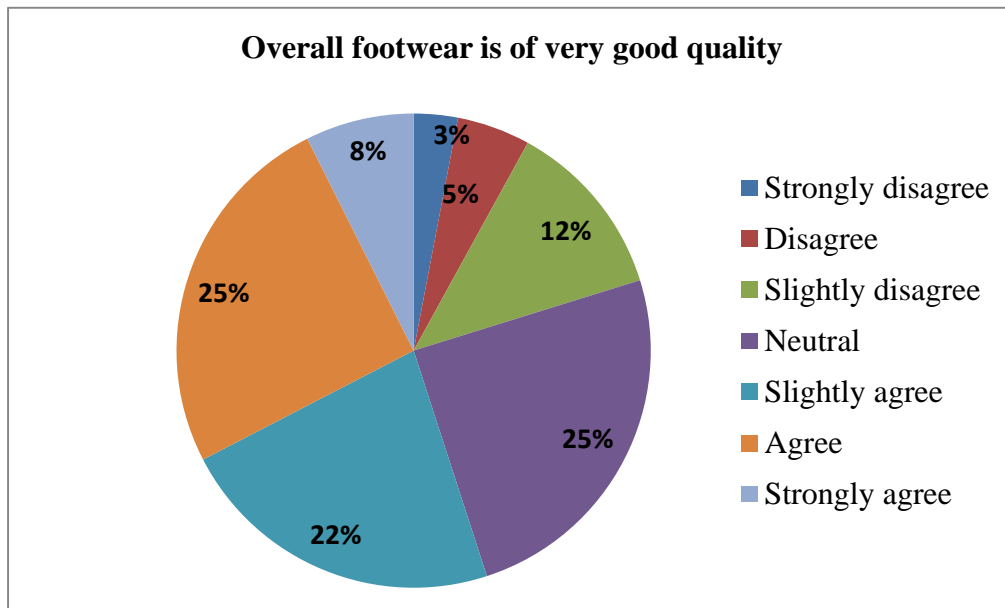


Figure 5.13:

- 55% of the respondents indicated that the overall footwear quality was good.
- 20% of the respondents disagreed that the overall quality of footwear was good.
- 25% of the respondents were neutral about the overall quality of footwear.

Conclusion: For the most part, respondents were positive about the overall quality of footwear.

Figure 5.14: Overall, footwear offers consistent quality (PQ 2)

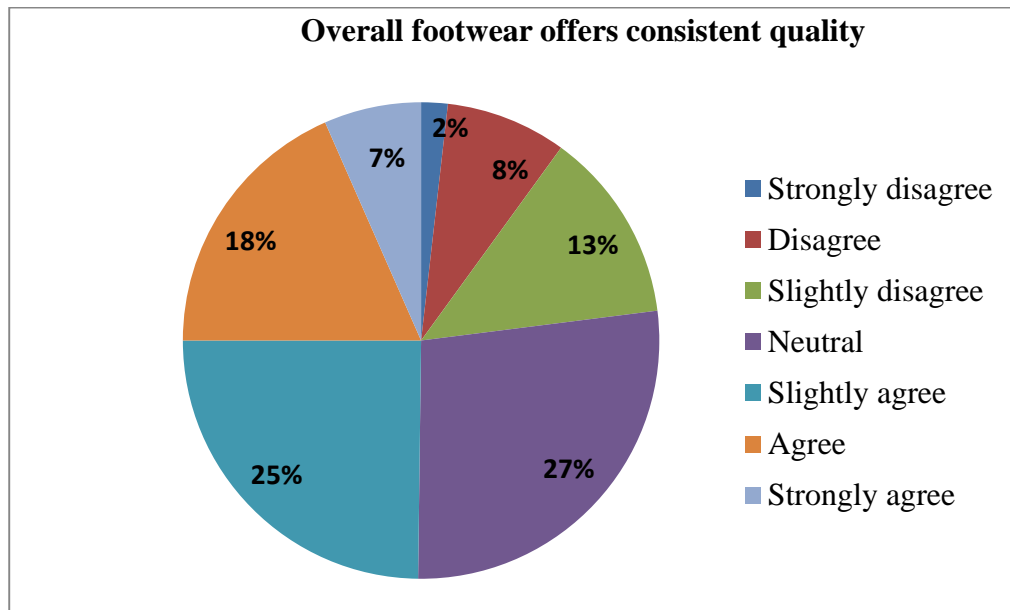


Figure 5.14:

- 50% of the respondents point out that overall footwear quality was consistent.
- 27% of the respondents indicated that they were neutral about the overall footwear quality.
- 23% of the respondents suggested that the overall footwear quality was not consistent.

Conclusion: The respondents were partially positive about the overall footwear consistency. However, when compared with overall footwear consistency, respondents were more positive about the overall footwear quality.

Figure 5.15: Overall, footwear offers reliable products (PQ 3)

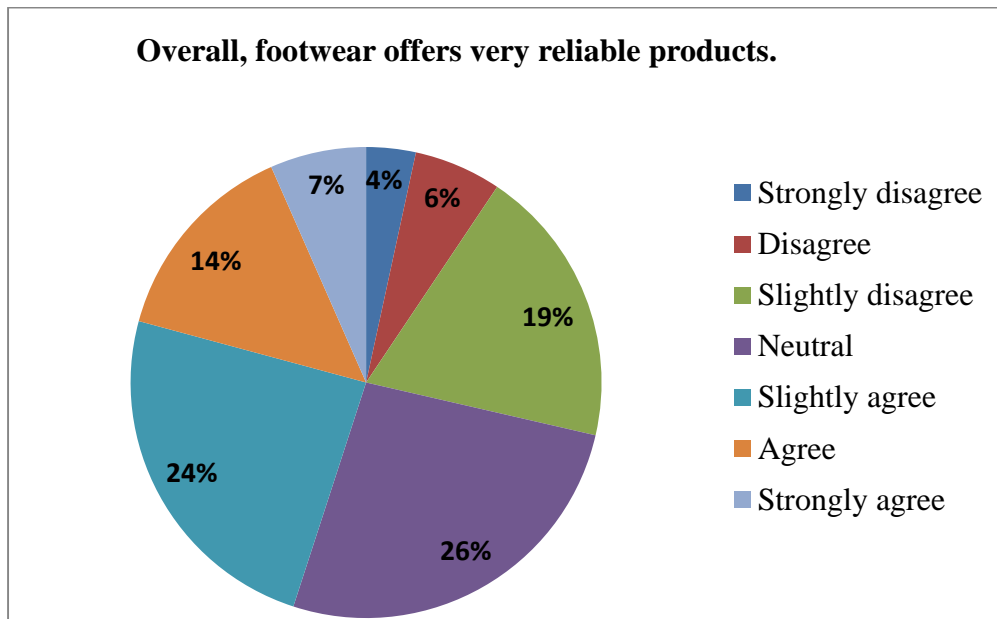


Figure 5.15:

- 45% of the respondents showed that overall footwear quality is reliable.
- 26% of the respondents replied that they were neutral about the overall reliability of the footwear.
- 29% of the respondents indicated they disagreed that overall footwear quality was reliable.

Conclusion: Some of the respondents are positive about the reliability of their footwear quality. The reliability of footwear quality has a less positive response than the overall quality and the consistency of footwear quality.

Figure 5.16: Overall, footwear offers products with excellent features (PQ 4)

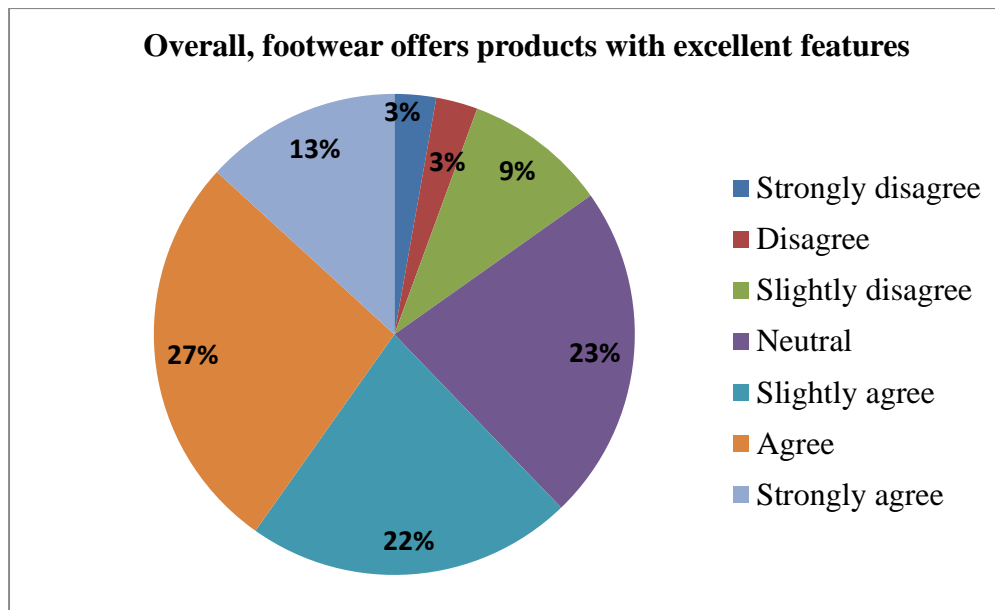


Figure 5.16:

- 62%, the majority of the respondents, suggested that they were positive about the outstanding product features offered.
- 23% of the respondents affirmed that they were neutral with respect to the excellent features offered.
- 15% of the respondents pointed out that they were negative about the overall footwear products offers with excellent features.

Conclusion: Most of the respondents are happy with the excellent features offered by footwear overall. However it does seem that respondents are more positive about the excellent features offered by the footwear, overall, when judged against other questions concerning perceived quality.

5.3.2.4 Consumer Satisfaction

Figure 5.17: Satisfaction with footwear (CS 1)

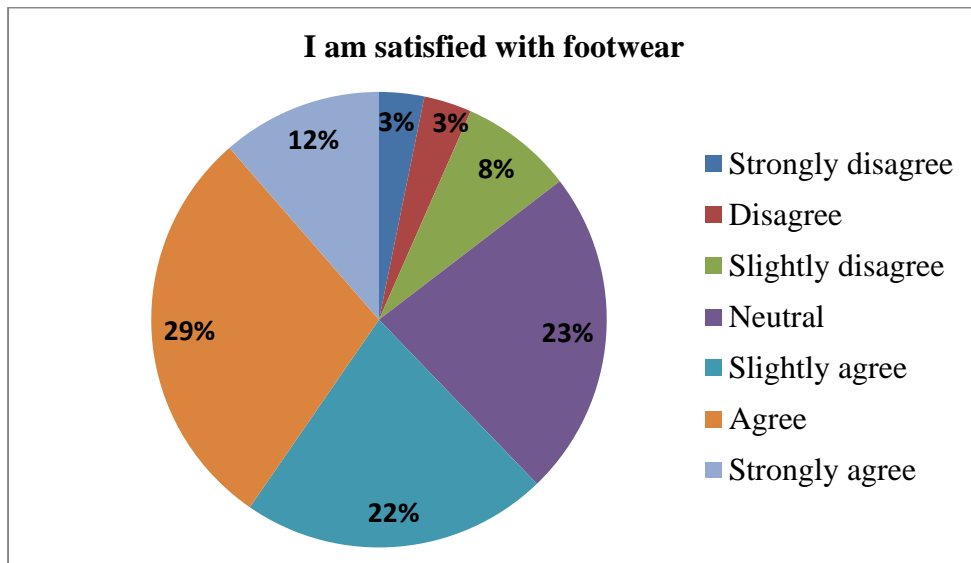


Figure 5.17:

- 63% of the respondents proved to be positive with regard to footwear.
- 23% of the respondents confirmed that they were neutral regarding footwear.
- 14% of the respondents specified that they were not satisfied with footwear.

Conclusion: For the most part, respondents are satisfied with footwear.

Figure 5.18: Satisfaction with the relationship of footwear (CS 2)

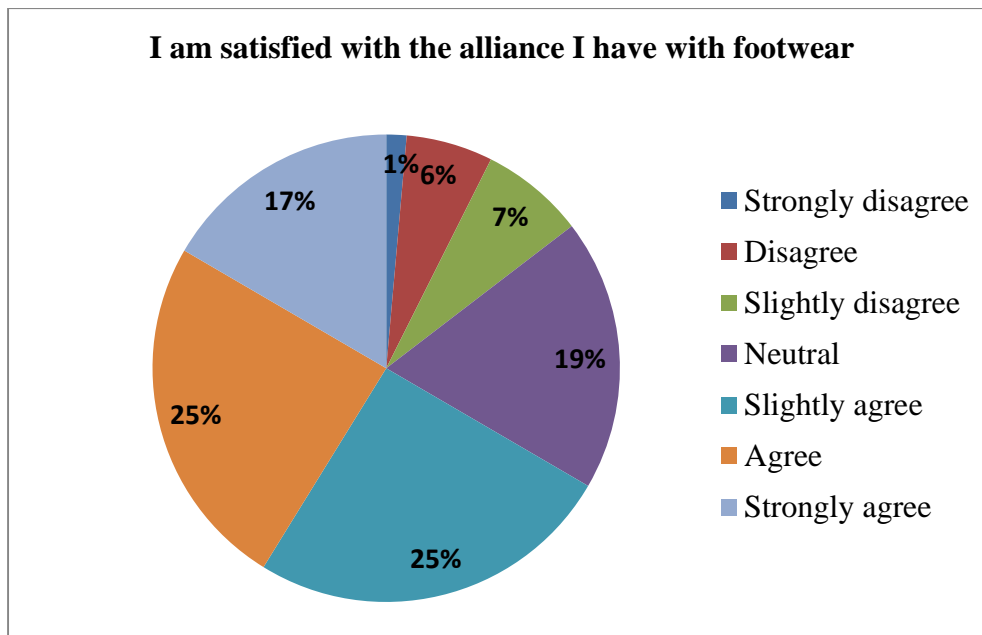


Figure 5.18:

- 67%, which is the majority of the respondents, indicated that they were satisfied with the alliance they had with footwear.
- 19% of the respondents pointed out that they were neutral about satisfaction regarding their relationship with footwear.
- 14% of the respondents demonstrated that they were neutral about the satisfaction regarding their relationship with footwear.

Conclusion: It is clear that the respondents have a positive relationship with footwear, given that the majority of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the alliance they had with footwear.

Figure 5.19: Overall satisfaction with the deal received from footwear (CS 3)

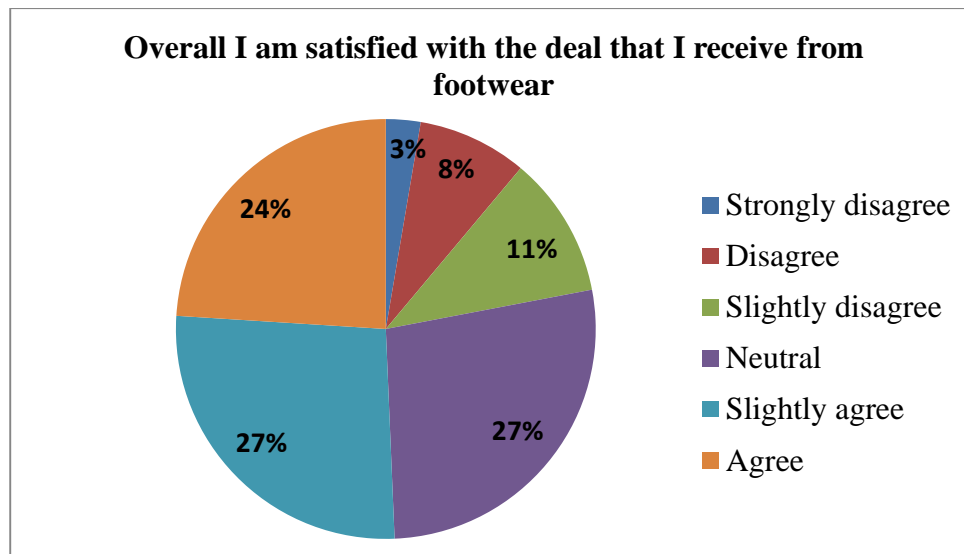


Figure 5.19:

- 51% of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the overall deal that they received from footwear.
- 27% of the respondents suggested that they were neutral about the satisfaction regarding the overall deal they receive from footwear.
- 22% of the respondents showed that they were less satisfied with the overall deal they received from footwear.

Conclusion: To a degree the respondents seem to be satisfied with the deal they receive from footwear. However, the respondents also indicated that they were less satisfied with the deal they received from footwear than the actual footwear and the deal they received from footwear.

Figure 5.20: Footwear reliability (CS 4)

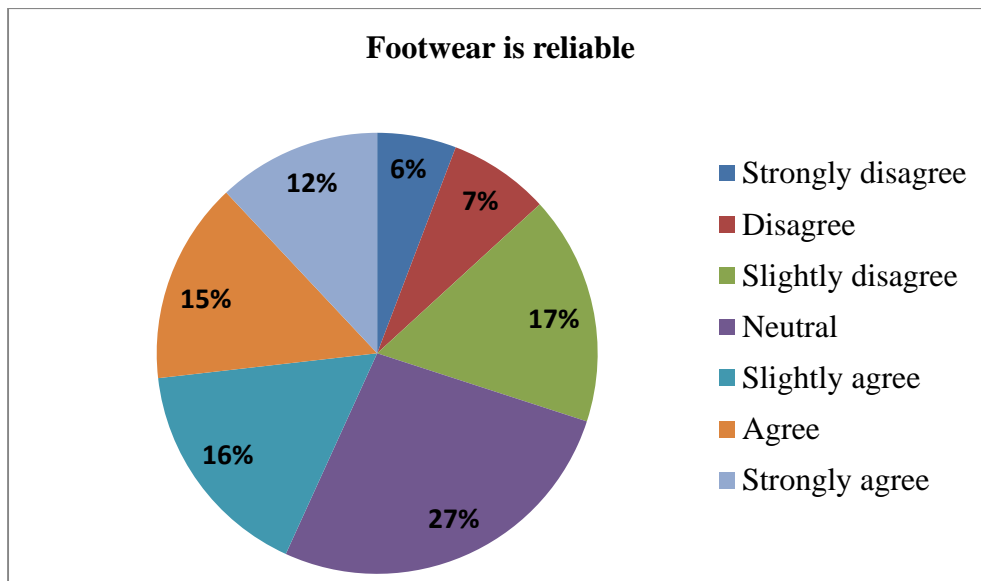


Figure 5.20:

- 43% of the respondents replied that footwear was reliable.
- 27% of the respondents indicated that they were neutral about the reliability of footwear.
- 30% of the respondents confirmed that they were negative with respect to the reliability of the footwear.

Conclusion: Some of the respondents indicated that footwear was not reliable. A similar question was asked in figure 5.14 and the respondents indicated similar results to this question.

5.4 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

5.4.1 Reliability

Table 5.3 below is an illustration of reliability test criteria, the description of each criterion and the acceptable level for each criterion.

Table 5.3: Reliability test criteria, description and acceptable level

Reliability test criteria	Description	Acceptable level	Source
Cronbach's alpha	Coefficient for determining internal consistency of items	Value must be equal to or greater than 0.6	Nunnally & Bernstein (1994:43)
Composite reliability (CR)	Method used to measure internal consistency of the measurement model	Value must be equal to or greater than 0.6	Chinomona (2011:108)
Average variance extracted (AVE)	Method used to measure reliability and validity of items	Value must be equal to or greater than 0.5	Chin (1998:14)

In this study, three tests, namely Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were conducted in order to assess the reliability of the measures. It was imperative that all three tests were carried out in order to establish the measure of reliability. The Cronbach's alpha test is used to verify whether there is reliability while CR and AVE tests seek to confirm the presence of reliability. Table 6.3 below provides the results of the tests, which will be elaborated on hereafter. The scale item column indicates the mean value regarding responses otherwise described above, as well as respective standard deviation values.

Table 5.4: Scale accuracy analysis

Items	Descriptive statistics		Reliability tests		Validity		
	Mean	Std. deviation	Cronbach's alpha	CR	Item-total correlation	AVE	Factor loading
EC1	3.998	1.639	0.639	0.646	0.395	0.496	0.500
EC2	5.158	1.525			0.487		0.653
EC3	4.910	1.578			0.428		0.581
EC4	4.684	1.603			0.379		0.500
IC1	5.300	1.618	0.673	0.673	0.458	0.500	0.582
IC2	5.056	1.524			0.527		0.642
IC3	5.248	1.424			0.332		0.500
IC4	5.050	1.643			0.491		0.606
PQ1	4.638	1.445	0.757	0.754	0.572	0.518	0.729
PQ2	4.466	1.409			0.535		0.728
PQ3	4.310	1.432			0.533		0.603
PQ4	4.920	1.451			0.481		0.569
CS1	4.896	1.452	0.760	0.758	0.666	0.511	0.748
CS2	5.010	1.468			0.585		0.691
CS3	4.650	1.485			0.604		0.680
CS5	4.330	1.649			0.508		0.522

Notes: EC= Extrinsic Cues; IC= Intrinsic Cues; PQ= Perceived Quality and Consumer Satisfaction= CS

5.4.2 Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Proceeding from the discussion of Cronbach's alpha in chapter five, literature affirms that a higher level of Cronbach's coefficient alpha indicates a higher reliability of the measurement scale (Chinomona 2011:108). From the outcome presented in Table 5.4, the Cronbach's alpha value for each research construct ranges from 0.639 to 0.760

and as these are above 0.6 as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994:43), validity is indicated. Furthermore, the item to total values ranged from 0.395 to 0.508 and were therefore, above the cut-off point of 0.3, as advised by (Cronbach 2004:410; Dunn, Seaker and Waller 1994:149). The Cronbach's alpha results indicated in Table 5.4 therefore validate the reliability of measures used in the current study.

5.4.3 Composite reliability (CR)

The composite reliability test was also implemented in order to examine the internal reliability of each research construct, as recommended by Chinomona (2011:108) and Nunnally (1967:81). The composite reliability was examined by means of the following formula:

$$CR\eta = (\sum \lambda_{yi})^2 / [(\sum \lambda_{yi})^2 + (\sum \epsilon_i)]$$

Composite reliability = (square of the summation of the factor loadings)/{(square of the summation of the factor loadings)+(summation of error variances)}

A composite reliability index that is greater than 0.6 indicates adequate internal consistency of the construct (Nunnally 1967:81). In this regard, the results of composite reliability that range from 0.646 to 0.758 in Table 5.4 confirm the existence of internal reliability for all constructs of the study.

5.4.4 Average variance extracted (AVE)

According to Chinomona (2011:109), "the average variance extracted estimate reflects the overall amount of variance in the indicators accounted for by the latent construct". The AVE was examined by means of the following formula:

$$V\eta = \sum \lambda_{yi}^2 / (\sum \lambda_{yi}^2 + \sum \epsilon_i)$$

AVE = summation of the square of factor loadings/{(summation of the square of factor loadings)+(summation of error variances)}

An excellent representation of the latent construct by the item is recognised when the variance extracted estimate is above 0.5 (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith Reams & Hair 2014:109; Fraering & Minor 2006:284). Consequently, the results of AVE that range from 0.496 to 0.511 in Table 5.4 authenticate good representation of the latent construct by the items.

5.4.5 Validity

Validity tests were conducted and convergent and discriminant validity were appraised. Both tests are explained below, and the findings discussed.

5.4.6 Convergent validity

Convergent validity examines the degree to which a construct converges in its indicators by clarifying of the items' variance (Sarstedt *et al.* 2014:108). Apart from examining the convergent validity of items by means of checking correlations in the item-total index (Nusair *et al.* 2010:43), factor loadings were also assessed in order to recognise convergent validity of measurement items, as recommended by Sarstedt *et al.* (2014:108). According to Nusair *et al.* (2010:36) items display good convergent validity when they load strongly on their common construct. The literature upholds a loading that is above 0.5 signifies convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing 1988:411). In this regard, the final items used in this study loaded well on their respective constructs with the values ranging from 0.646 to 0.758 (see Table 5.4). As a result, this indicates good convergent validity where items are elucidating more than 50 percent of their respective constructs. Additionally, since CR values are above the recommended threshold of 0.6, this authenticates the existence of convergent validity.

5.4.7 Discriminant validity

Continuing from the discussion of discriminant validity in chapter 5. Hair, Hult, Ringle and Sarstedt (2014:18) state that when determining the certainty of discriminant validity, what should be done is to check whether the observed variable exhibits a higher loading on its own construct than on any other construct included in the structural model. To check if there is discriminant validity is to evaluate if the correlation between the research constructs is less than 1.0, as recommended by Chinomona (2011:110).

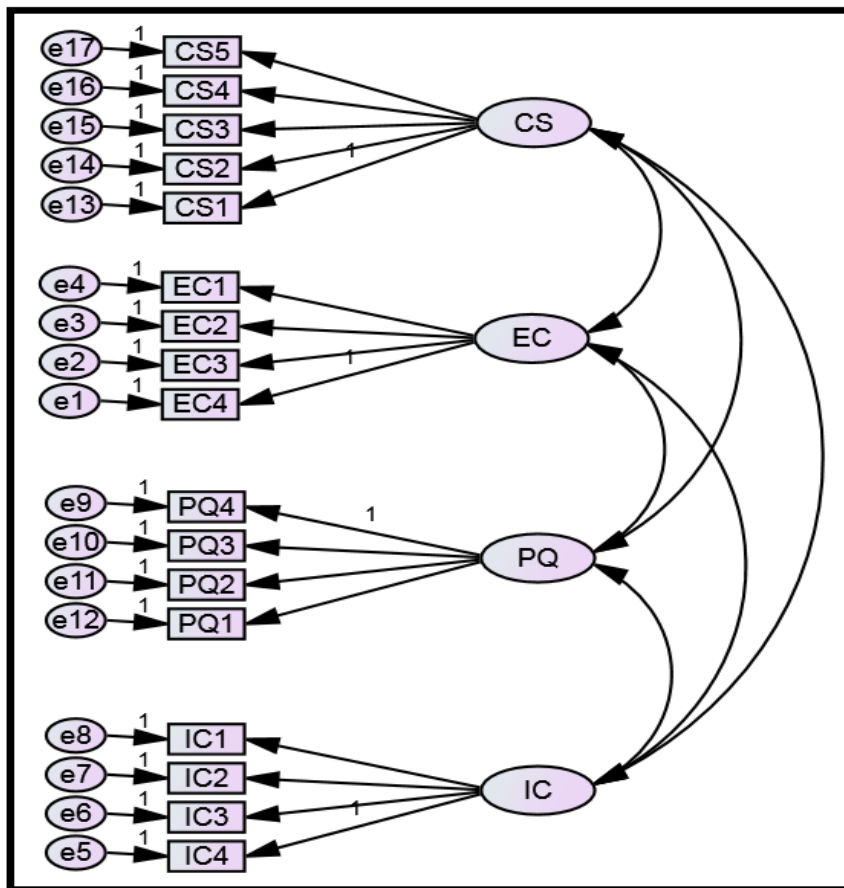
5.5 CFA: MODEL AND MODEL FIT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this section is to depict the CFA model and to bring to light the findings from model fit assessment. Below is an explanation of the model and the assessment together with the findings.

5.5.1 CFA model

The aim of this section is to portray the CFA model and to bring to light the findings from model fit assessment. Below is an elucidation of the model and the assessment together with the findings. According to the literature, the purpose of model fit assessment is to check how well the conceptual model is represented by the sampled data (Jenatabadi & Ismail 2014:27). Initially, deletion of some measurement items was performed in order to elicit acceptable fit and the resultant scale accuracy. Subsequently, model fit was inspected through examining goodness-of-fit values i.e. Chi-square/degrees of freedom (χ^2/DF), NFI, TLI, IFI, CFI and RMSEA. According to Jenatabadi & Ismail (2014:27), the goodness-of-fit values can be in use to scrutinise the overall model and the hypothesis and to determine how much the expected co-variances can be fine-tuned to the observed co-variance in the data. If the goodness-of-fit indices are acceptable, then it can be concluded that the items' targeted constructs can be measured effectively (Jenatabadi & Ismail 2014:28).

Figure 5.21: CFA model



Note: CS= Consumer Satisfaction; IC= Intrinsic Cues; EC= Extrinsic Cues; PQ= Perceived Quality; e=measurement error

5.5.2 Model fit assessment

The model fit was assessed under criteria indicated in Table 5.5 below. Indicated in the table is a description and acceptable level of each criterion (model fit indices). The assessment and findings are discussed subsequently.

Table 5.5: Model fit criteria, description and acceptable level

Model fit criteria	Description	Acceptable level	Source
Chi-square (χ^2/DF)	Method utilised to assess the general fit of the model	Value has to be below 3	Chinomona (2011:118)
Normed fit index (NFI)	Index that assesses the model by comparing the χ^2 value of the model to the	Value has to be greater than 0.9	Hooper, Coughlan and Mullen (2008:55), Bentler and Bonnet (1980:588)

	χ^2 of the null model		
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	Index that favours simpler models and is known to address the issue of sample size associated with NFI	Value has to meet or exceed 0.9	Hooper <i>et al.</i> (2008:55)
Incremental fit index (IFI)	Index generated to rectify the issue of parsimony and sample size related to NFI	Value has to exceed 0.9	Bollen (1989:82), Chinomona (2011:118)
Comparative fit index (CFI)	Index that assumes that all latent variables are uncorrelated and compares the sample covariance matrix with the null model	Value has to meet or exceed 0.9	Hu and Bentler (1999:1), Hooper <i>et al.</i> (2008:55)
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	Index that reports how well the model, with indefinite but optimally selected parameter estimates, would fit the population's covariance matrix	Value must fall below 0.05 and 0.08	Byrne (1998:26) Curran and Hussong (2002:59)

5.5.3 Path model: model fit

The importance of path model fit is useful to determine whether the hypothesised model fits the data pertaining to causality within the model. The same indicators are used in the CFA model fit assessment, and these have been summarised in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6: Model fit indicators for path modelling

Indicators	Threshold	Outcome	Decision
Chi square	less than 3	2.04	Acceptable
GFI	> 0.9	0.94	Acceptable
NFI	> 0.9	0.90	Acceptable
RFI	< 0.5	0.48	Acceptable
IFI	> 0.9	0.92	Acceptable
TLI	> 0.9	0.90	Acceptable
CFI	> 0.9	0.92	Acceptable
RMSEA	less than 0.08	0.06	Acceptable

The hypothesised model fits the data well, as assessed by chi square, GFI, IFI, TLI, CFI and RMSEA, where indicators met required threshold values. NFI and RFI are considered to be marginally acceptable. Therefore, the collected data fit the conceptual model and conclusions pertaining to intrinsic cues, extrinsic cues, perceived quality and customer satisfaction with footwear may be drawn from the data.

5.5.4 Chi square (χ^2 /DF)

Chi square tests how different the observed covariance and expected covariance are from one another (Chinomona 2011:118). Model fit is assumed when there is little or no difference between the observed and expected covariance matrices, and therefore, values close to zero are ideal. However, chi square is considered to be acceptable at values less than three. The CFA model fit shows a value of 2.04, thereby confirming model fit in this regard.

5.5.5 Random mean standard error of approximation (RMSEA)

RMSEA deals with inconsistencies between the hypothesised model and the covariance matrix of the population (Byrne 1998:26). RMSEA values closer to zero indicate fewer discrepancies, and 0.08 is considered to be an acceptable level (Curran & Hussong 2002:59). The RMSEA for the CFA model returned as 0.06, which is below the threshold, thereby indicating sufficient model fit.

5.5.6 Model fit indices (MFI)

Indices for goodness of fit (GFI), normed fit (NFI), relative fit (RFI), Tucker-Lewis (TLI) and Comparative Fit (CFI) all measure model fit by comparing the hypothesised model against another measure of model fit or a null model in which the construct would be uncorrelated. They measure the fit on a scale of zero to one, with values closer to one indicating better model fit. GFI measures how well the postulated model fits the covariance matrix observed in the data set, a value of 0.9 being ideal for model fit (Hu & Bentler 1999:1). RFI, NFI and TLI measure model fit in terms of differences between the chi squared value for the hypothesised model and that of the null (uncorrelated) model (Chinomona 2011:106). The ideal model fit value is 0.95. CFI assesses model fit in terms of any differences between the hypothesised model and the data, and values of 0.9 or greater are considered to indicate good model fit (Hooper *et al.* 2008:55).

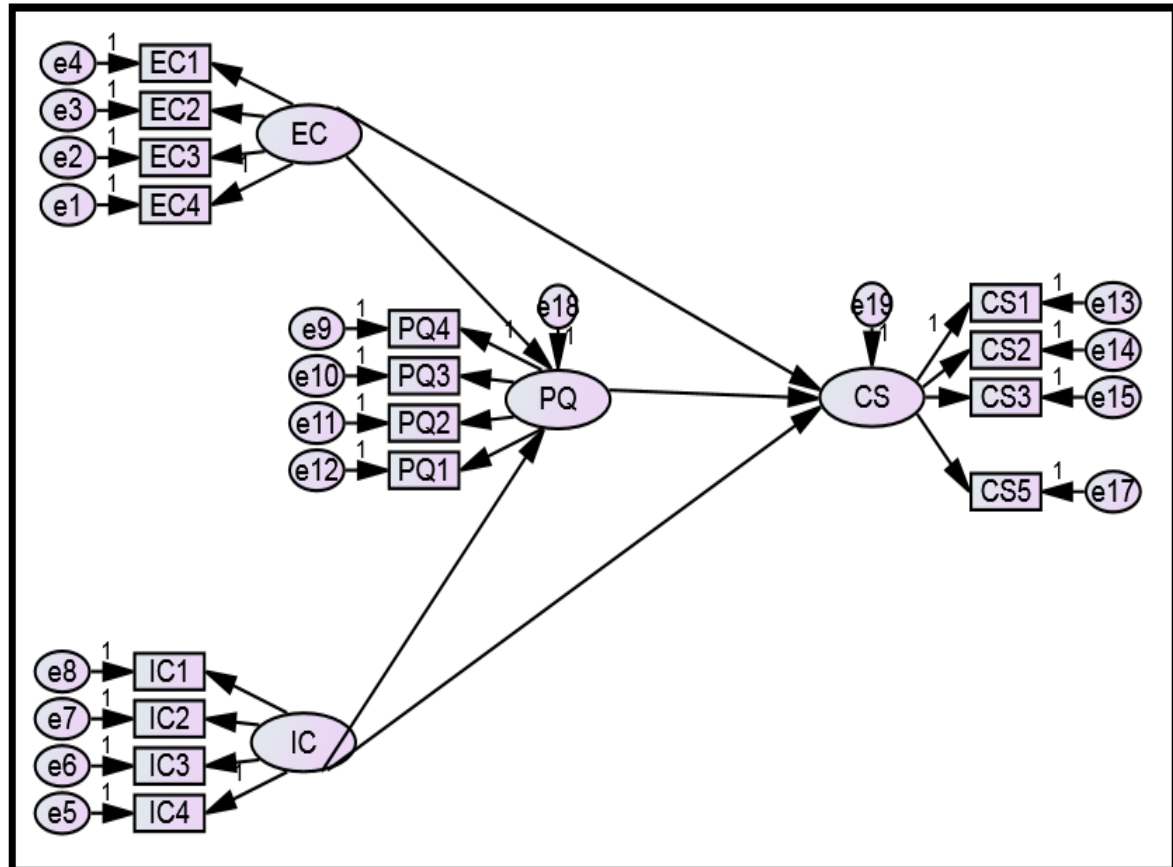
5.5.7 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory factor analysis is done to determine the extent to which the constructs in the model relate to each other before the issue of causality is considered. This is run in the AMOS and is used to determine validity of the construct variables as well. Figure 3 below is an illustration of the confirmatory factor analysis model. In the model, the circles represent the latent variables whereas the rectangles or squares represent the observed variables with their adjacent measurement errors in circular shape. The bidirectional arrows indicate the correlation between the variables. According to Jenatabadi & Ismail (2014:27), “the CFA model is a pure measurement model with ungauged covariance between each of the possible latent variable pairs”. The result of this procedure is goodness-of-fit values that improve the measurement scale levels, the observed variables, through measuring the related research constructs (Hair *et al.* 2014:112). The goodness-of-fit values are used to appraise the measurement model as recommended by (Hair *et al.* (2014:111); Joreskogn & Sorbom (1993:31). This assessment is discussed in the section below.

5.6 PATH MODELLING

Once the CFA stage has passed, the path model coefficients are calculated based on the conceptual model. Path modelling analyses the causal relations between the constructs, as hypothesised in the conceptual framework. This is depicted in Figure 5.22.

Figure 5.22: The path model was run and returned the following path analysis



Note: CS= Consumer satisfaction; IC= Intrinsic cues; EC= Extrinsic cues;

PQ=Perceived quality; e= measurement error

Table 5.7: Path analysis

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient	P-value	Decision
H1	EC --> CS	0.356	0.01	significant and acceptable
H2	EC --> PQ	0.428	0.01	significant and acceptable
H3	IC --> PQ	0.477	0.01	significant and acceptable
H4	IC --> CS	0.375	0.01	significant and acceptable
H5	PQ --> CS	0.449	0.01	significant and acceptable

The path model returned significant path coefficients showing the causal relations between the constructs at a 99 percent confidence level. All the path coefficients are significant at the 0.01 level of significance and acceptable as they concur with postulated hypotheses, that is, positive causal relations between the constructs.

5.7 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H1: Extrinsic cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

Based on the path analysis, extrinsic cues for footwear have a positive relation to customer satisfaction, as indicated by the positive 0.356 path coefficient. At the 99 percent confidence level, this causal relation is considered to be significant and acceptable. Therefore, the hypothesis postulated holds.

H2: Extrinsic cues have a positive effect on perceived quality.

The path analysis shows a path coefficient of 0.428 for the causal relation of extrinsic quality cues of footwear to consumers' perceived quality of the footwear. The path coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level of significance and is acceptable as its positive sign indicates a positive relation. The hypothesis suggests that extrinsic quality cues have a positive effect on perceived quality is, therefore, acceptable.

H3: Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on perceived quality

The path analysis shows that intrinsic footwear cues have a positive causal relation to how consumers perceive quality of the footwear. This is indicated by the positive strong path coefficient 0.5. For this reason, intrinsic quality cues have a positive

causal effect on consumer satisfaction, as indicated by the positive path coefficient 0.477. The hypothesis therefore holds true.

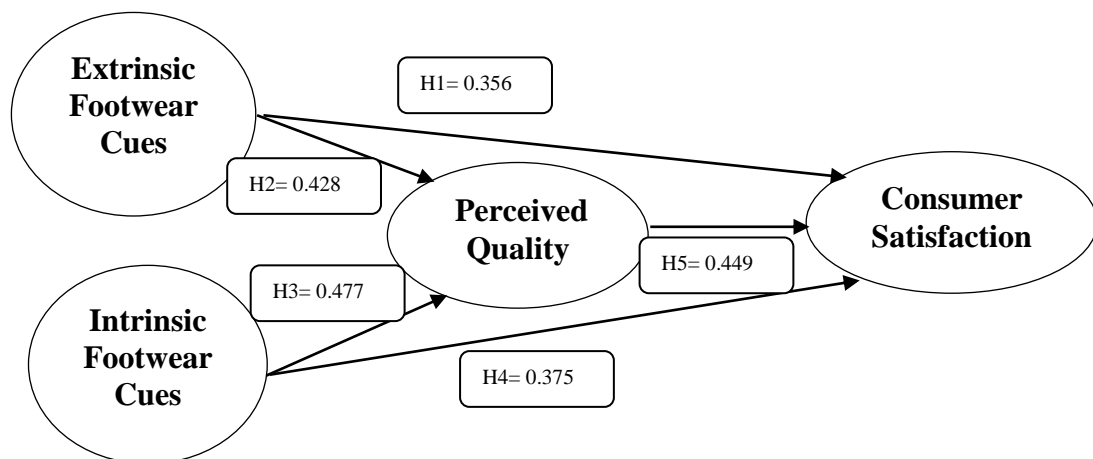
H4: Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

The path analysis is 99 percent confident that intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction. The causal effect is strong and positive at 0.375. Therefore, the hypothesis postulated is accepted.

H5: Perceived quality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction

Perceived quality is shown to have a positive causal relation to customer satisfaction, as indicated by the strong positive path coefficient 0.449. This is significant at the 0.01 level of significance. The hypothesis postulated therefore holds true.

Figure 5.23: Research model: path coefficient



5.8 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.8.1 Extrinsic footwear cues and consumer satisfaction

H1: Extrinsic cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

The results of the path analysis confirm at 99 percent confident level that extrinsic cues for footwear have significant positive effects on customer satisfaction, as indicated by the positive 0.356 path coefficient. Although positive, this is a weak relation in comparison with the rest of the path coefficients in the above model. This therefore, suggests that extrinsic footwear cues have little influence on consumer satisfaction when compared with other relationships involving consumer satisfaction within the above research model. Furthermore, the causal relationship between extrinsic cues and perceived quality is less effective than the relationship between intrinsic cues and perceived quality.

Various authors advise that these findings may possibly appear to be so because intrinsic cues generally have a higher predictive value (PV) and confidence value (CV) than extrinsic cues. This means that when evaluating footwear consumers are likely to regard intrinsic cues before looking into extrinsic cues. Cox (1967:324) discovered that consumers rely more on high CV and low PV cues than high PV and low CV cues. This implies that consumers are inclined to reduce the risk by relying more on high CV and low PV cues, because consumers' quality decisions must be based on those cues that can be exploited with some level of confidence (Chung 2006:201). In contrast, in the following findings in a study conducted by (Lee & Lou 2011:25-26), consumers with a higher level of enduring involvement with a product category, weighed against those with a lower level, relied more on extrinsic cues like brand names, price and country of origin, when evaluating products. Unlike some previous studies that confirmed that extrinsic cues have a stronger influence on appraisal of consumer satisfaction, the current study, on the contrary, revealed intrinsic cues to have a stronger influence on consumer satisfaction.

The finding of this study confirms what several preceding researchers have found, that intrinsic cues have a stronger influence on satisfaction of fashion products. As in to this current study, the results denote that intrinsic cues have a stronger influence on

consumer satisfaction because intrinsic cues are accessible during the evaluation of footwear, unlike in circumstances where intrinsic cues are not accessible; online shopping is a good example of circumstances where intrinsic cues are difficult to evaluate, since online shopping is remote selling and thus does not give consumers the opportunity to evaluate intrinsic cues whether it be by touching, fitting or smelling the product. Prior researchers have revealed that only when intrinsic product attributes are not obtainable, or when consumers are not certain about their ability to evaluate these attributes, will consumers depend more on extrinsic cues for their satisfaction (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:94; Wells *et al.* 2011:375). This means that when evaluating footwear quality with the expectation of satisfaction, consumers are likely to consider extrinsic cues only if they are not able to first evaluate the intrinsic cues of the shoe. A study conducted by Devlin (2011:1369) also concludes that in the absence of the actual inherent experience with a product, consumers consistently evaluate quality on the cues that are external to the product in order to attain the anticipated satisfaction.

According to Bredahl (2003:65-66), the effective weight of intrinsic and extrinsic cues in establishing satisfaction is decided by the amount of previous experience with the product grouping. Previous researchers suggest that consumers generally depend more on extrinsic cues when the quality of the product is assumed by consumers to be difficult to evaluate (Zeithaml 1988:7; Bredahl 2003:66). Consumers also differ in knowledge of the product and have varied feelings towards product evaluation which leads to satisfaction. Consumers who have highly developed levels of ambivalence depend on the cognition afforded by extrinsic cues as they are not motivated to understand intrinsic cues and ultimately look to speed up the decision process through extrinsic cues in order to hopefully gain the probable consumer satisfaction (Veale & Quester 2009:135-136) .

5.8.2 Extrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality

H2: Extrinsic quality cues have a positive effect on perceived quality.

The results indicate a path coefficient of 0.428 for the causal relationship between extrinsic quality cues of footwear and consumers' perceived quality of the footwear.

The path coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level of significance and is acceptable as its positive sign indicates a positive relation. However, the path coefficient for the relation between extrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality weighs less than the coefficient for the causal relation between intrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality. In addition to this particular finding, intrinsic cues have a stronger causal relationship with consumer's perception of quality when compared with the causal relationship between extrinsic cues and perceived quality. This finding is congruent with the results of a study conducted by Aranzazu, Alonso, Pablo, Gallego, Mangin (2005:19), where a relationship between tangible dimensions and perceived quality was the most significant, denoting that intrinsic attributes prevail over extrinsic attributes for perishable food products.

The verdict supports cue utilisation theory, which affirms that the relative weight of extrinsic versus intrinsic cues in quality appraisal depends on the cues' predictive value (PVs) and confidence values (CVs). Cues characterised by high CV and high PV are acknowledged to be the supreme weight in the quality appraisal process (Richardson *et al.* 1994:29). Consequently, the sample selected for this study did not recognise extrinsic cues to have the supreme weight during appraisal of footwear. Yet Brown and Rice (2001:48) affirm that extrinsic cues carry the implication of quality and influence consumer's perception of a fashion product's quality either positively or negatively. However, predictive extrinsic cues can be more influential than sensory perceptions, even when consumers experience all intrinsic product attributes via consumption (Veale & Quester 2009:135).

Wilson and Brekke (1994:1724) discovered that consumers who do not have enough time, or who are stressed, are likely to use the knowledge that an extrinsic cue gives, as they are not able to evaluate intrinsic cues appropriately. Consumers like to believe that their evaluations of product quality depend on intrinsic cues because it enables them to validate their product decisions as being rational product choices, although on a more regular basis they use extrinsic quality cues to judge the quality of the product (Schiffman & Kanuk 2007:178). Regardless of the existing body of literature that focuses on the power of extrinsic cues and their effects on consumer perception, research confirms that managers need to guarantee that market efforts are pointed

towards highlighting those attributes that are most likely to positively influence consumers' opinions concerning quality, whether they are intrinsic or extrinsic (Veale & Quester 2009:195-196).

5.8.3 Intrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality

H3: Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on perceived quality

The path analysis shows that intrinsic footwear cues have a positive causal relationship with consumers' perception of the quality of footwear. This is indicated by the positive strong path coefficient of 0.477. For this reason, intrinsic quality cues have a positive causal effect on perceived quality, as aforementioned. This path coefficient is the strongest amongst all coefficients in the above research model. This implies that consumers identify with the casual relationship between intrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality more than any other relationship in the research model.

This result is feasible because intrinsic cues are commonly greater indicators of perceived quality than extrinsic cues and this is so because intrinsic cues are more closely related to the product (Bredahl 2003:3). Intrinsic attributes would have a high degree of predictive value (PV) as intrinsic attributes are the ones that easily change the essential object of the product if they have been ruined or are not present. Intrinsic cues relating to a product category such as style, fit and fabric have also been acknowledged to have high predictive value (PV) and confidence value (CVs) (Olson 1972: 578; Olson & Jacoby 1972:177). This corresponds to a study completed by Rao and Monroe (1988:259), where it was found that moderately and highly familiar consumers demonstrate stronger positive intrinsic cue-perceived quality effects than do low-familiar consumers. Both hypotheses in this incidence were supported. Low-familiar subjects displayed a small effect (0.05): however, moderately familiar (0.18) and highly familiar subjects (0.20) displayed large and significant effects. This result is not surprising, since increased knowledge should provide a greater ability to interpret intrinsic information.

5.8.4 Intrinsic footwear cues and consumer satisfaction

H4: Intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

The path analysis is 99 percent confident that intrinsic footwear cues have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction. The causal effect is moderately strong and positive with a path coefficient of 0.375. Moreover, the results indicate that the causal relationship between intrinsic cues and satisfaction is stronger than the causal relation between extrinsic cues and satisfaction. This is probably so given that we have already discovered that intrinsic cues have a stronger causal link between quality perception and consumer satisfaction. These results are analogous to a study conducted by Espejel *et al.* (2007:689), where results indicate that the goodness of the fit of the model relating intrinsic and extrinsic cues to satisfaction are within the recommended limits and the results show the existence of a positive and significant relationship between perceived quality measured in terms of intrinsic attributes and consumer satisfaction.

To the customer, the liking of the product has more significance than the physical quality of the product. It also promises constant demand if the product worthiness exceeds the expectation and satisfaction of the customer (Shaharudin *et al.* 2010:173). Consumers expect reliable products that suit the purpose of their function (Shaharudin *et al.* 2011:8164), and therefore it is essential to pay attention to consumer's perspective of the product, that is, rather than thinking in terms of what is made or sold, understand more and think in terms of what benefits consumers (Evans *et al.* 2009:83). Bearing in mind that consumers do not buy a product, but evaluate and purchase the benefits, good perceptions of a product achieve consumers' liking, which can easily lead to consumer satisfaction (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006: 94).

5.8.5 Perceived quality and consumer satisfaction

H5: Perceived quality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction

Perceived quality shows a positive causal relationship to customer satisfaction, as indicated by the strong positive path coefficient 0.449, significant at 0.01 level. This is the second strongest path coefficient resulting from the research model. This causal relationship has been investigated extensively amongst several research studies and

the results are commonly found to be positive. This is similar to a study conducted by Teka (2012:12), where he measures customer satisfaction with the quality of the Ethiopian-made leather footwear. The researcher investigated the quality of the footwear in terms of product quality dimensions such as design, colour, aesthetic, variety/alternative and perceived quality. The overall level of customers' satisfaction as related to the quality of the Ethiopian-made leather footwear was deemed positive.

Given that consumers evaluate a product for its superior quality and whether the product is associated with good perceived quality, the consumers are usually satisfied with the product (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:94). The more consumers experience positively perceived quality, the more they will become more satisfied and loyal to specific products (Iqbal *et al.* 2013:214). Perceived quality often depends on consumers' individual liking of and belief in the product. Consequently, a product may hold quality features but it may not satisfy consumers' preferences if it does not fit with their perceptions of quality (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:91). Positive quality perception may influence consumers to purchase a product. Consumers may not have a strong influence to purchase if they hold an inferior perception of product quality, especially in cases where there are available alternatives (Idoko, Ireneus, Nkamnembe & Okoye 2013:5). Furthermore, when assessing satisfaction, consumers may want to know the extent to which their chosen product lives up to its expectations, since consumers are constantly evaluating the competence of their choice as they utilise products in their daily lives (Kardes *et al.* 2011:91).

5.9 CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY

This chapter started with an introduction followed by a discussion on data screening. Descriptive analysis results were then given, followed by the results of research variables; a discussion on reliability tests was then presented followed by hypothesis testing. Finally, the results of the study were discussed. The next chapter presents the conclusion, implications, limitations and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the findings of the study, its limitations and implications and possible future research. Chapter 6 also provides a comprehensive conclusion to the entire study. The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of selected extrinsic and intrinsic cues on perceived quality and consumer satisfaction with footwear amongst members of the Generation Y cohort at River Square shopping mall in Vereeniging. This research considers the effects of these cues as important arrays of quality indicators that consumers utilise in their evaluation process when selecting product's footwear cues influencing perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied to assess the proposed research model and hypotheses. The analytical results implied that all the proposed hypotheses were supported. It was observed that the influence of intrinsic cues (IC) on perceived quality (PQ) was the most important relationship as it had the highest factor loading of 0.47 (see Table 5.4, page 92).

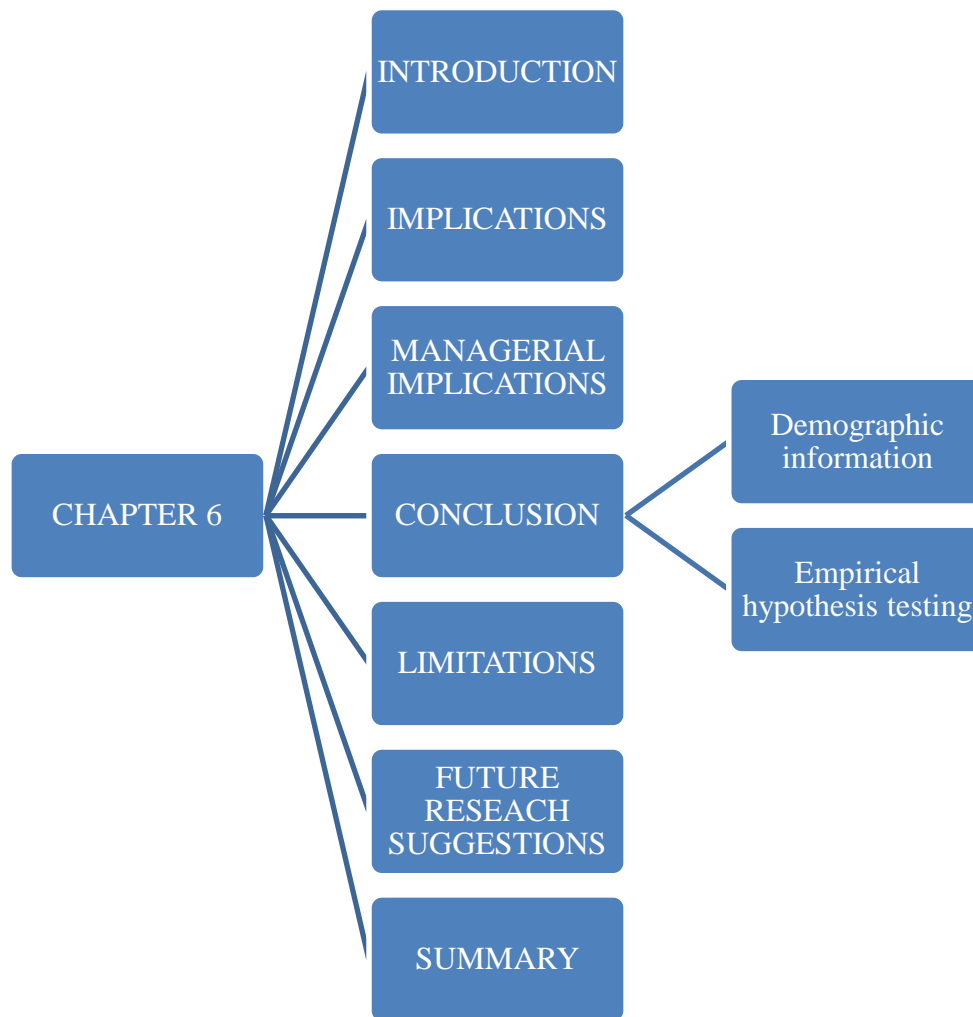


Figure 6.1 Diagrammatic representation of Chapter 6

6.2 IMPLICATIONS

The study attempted to undertake research in the neglected yet important footwear sector with regard to the fashion industry in the context of the South African economy. The findings of the empirical study are expected to provide fruitful implications for both practitioners and academicians. The implications on the academic front are that a contribution is made to the existing literature on the footwear fashion sector with regard to the relationship between:

1. Extrinsic footwear cues and consumer satisfaction.
2. Extrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality.
3. Intrinsic footwear cues and perceived quality .

4. Intrinsic footwear cues and consumer satisfaction.
5. Perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

The study should hopefully also inspire future research in order to expand the knowledge on this topic. On the practical front, the current study also has significant implications for footwear designers, retail business and marketing practitioners in South Africa. The study has demonstrated that several individual consumer characteristics give rise to differences in cue reliance. This suggests that marketers in the footwear industry should embrace the diverse cues identified by footwear consumers and apply these cues to manipulate footwear design for assorted consumer needs and preferences.

The results of the study are generally consistent with the hypotheses as well as the findings of previous studies. Perhaps the findings of this study will serve as stimuli for footwear designers and businesses to examine and identify areas of concern and improve their knowledge and attitude towards footwear consumption in relation to cues, perceived quality and satisfaction. To some extent, the knowledge of footwear cues and their relative significance in perceived quality and satisfaction will allow footwear designers to develop their product intrinsically, in line with consumers' needs and desires, and to exploit effective extrinsic cues in order to improve consumer satisfaction. The lack of these considerations may lead to the manufacturing of fashion footwear that does not meet the consumers' expectations of the quality of the product, leading to their satisfaction or possible dissatisfaction.

The results can be used to benchmark the 'expectation' against the 'perceptions' so that the differences discovered can be used for the improvement of footwear quality. Understanding which intrinsic and extrinsic cues consumers use to arrive at objective and subjective evaluations of footwear quality, as well as the relative importance of different cues, is critical for influencing footwear consumption. Quality is the best indicator of the product's durability, reliability, precision and other valued attributes. It provides added value to, and constructive perception of, a product and these influence the consumer's evaluation (Parvin & Chowdhury 2006:91).

The International Standards Organization's definition of quality states that it means, 'The totality of characteristics of a whole that has the capacity to satisfy the explicit and applied needs of consumers' (Brown & Rice 2001:37). This makes it also applicable to fashion products and it can be concluded from this research that 'quality is in the eye of the consumer'. Therefore, for consumers, the qualities of footwear products include not only the functional qualities, but also the aesthetic qualities; unlike in previous investigations, these qualities have to be included in future research on the consumer's viewpoints on the quality of fashion products.

From a theoretical point of view, fashion products are seen as having, in the first place, intrinsic physical properties (such as design, materials and construction), specifying what the item is. Secondly, behavioural properties (functional and aesthetic), which are intrinsic cues in essence, specifying what the product can achieve (Brown & Rice, 2001:38). If one assumes the viewpoint that quality is about what the product can do for the consumer in order to satisfy his/her explicit and applied needs, this means that both intrinsic and extrinsic properties should be included in research that concerns the total quality of fashion products from the consumer's point of view, as was clearly illustrated in this research. Unfortunately many previous researchers focused only on the intrinsic or extrinsic attributes independently without giving due regard to a combination of the most relevant cues as an integral part of the total quality of fashion products – particularly in the context of South Africa.

6.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

In today's competitive environment, fashion businesses are forced to cooperate closely with consumers in order to meet varied challenges, such as the requirements of low costs, high quality, better delivery, flexibility, customer service and innovation, and to do this while responding to a swiftly changing environment. The findings signify the importance of forming strategic partnerships within the footwear industry, that is, from consumer to management level. In order to create and produce high quality footwear that satisfies the consumer, management should employ the most relevant and a resourceful cues to develop footwear designs that address the expectation and satisfaction of the consumer. This will result in good benefits for all

parties involved at managerial level, as well as providing seamless products to consumers.

Footwear managers might also consider that the improvement of any quality attributes would increase customer satisfaction, and allocate higher priority to improving those quality attributes with low levels of performance. To fulfil the expectations of quality, related needs, the cues which consumers rely on when evaluating quality, have to be observed together with perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. Thus, consumer evaluation is crucial to consumer satisfaction (Choi & Sheel 2012:32). To satisfy consumers, management needs to understand the drive for acquisitions, which, in essence, are quality cues for the reason that consumers gain satisfaction from diverse cues when making decisions about their purchases.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The fashion business industry is becoming a dynamic and creative force in the global economy. In South Africa, the fashion market serves a vibrant and unique environment that changes constantly and becomes more complex and diverse. The changes in consumer demands and expectations allow for uncertainty as to which footwear cues significantly affect perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. For this reason, it was necessary to investigate the extent to which footwear cues influence perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

South Africa is a budding economy where retail consistently has to tackle the needs of a very diverse consumer population. When one considers the deficit in research studies focusing on quality cues in footwear and consumer satisfaction in the context of South Africa, it becomes more important for fashion businesses to seek an understanding of how consumers evaluate the quality of products offered, and to gain knowledge about the demographic information and personal attributes of the consumer.

6.4.1 Demographic information

With regard to the demographic information, variables such as gender, age, marital status, racial groups, occupations and diverse spending patterns were measured. The

findings reveal that 57.6 percent of the respondents were female, and more than two thirds of the respondents were of the black race. Data were collected from 317 students, who encompass more than 60 percent of the sample. Jackson and Shaw (2009:55) affirm that women commonly spend more money than men do on clothes and accessories, with young people usually spending more than older people. In South Africa, the highest value amongst university student purchases was 72 percent, which included clothing and footwear (Kornberger, Aires, Cant & Bothma 2010:2).

The majority of the respondents were classified as being single and half of the respondents were aged between 14 and 19 years. As Generation Y consumers enter the work force, they are quick to declare their well-defined taste level in the marketplace, purchasing more quality products at an early age than their predecessors in earlier generations (Keiser & Garner 2008:80). In terms of the frequency of purchase of footwear, out of 500 respondents, 401 indicated that they purchased footwear on a monthly and seasonal basis. In addition, 376 respondents are spending from R500 to R1000 and from R1001 to R3000 in a year on footwear. This finding implies that not only do consumers start spending on quality footwear at a very young age, but that they also spend regular and substantial amounts, given that the majority of the sample consists of students.

6.4.2 Empirical hypothesis testing

From the findings it is apparent that three main conclusions can be made. First, that, from a consumer's point of view, footwear cues influences perceived quality and consumer satisfaction positively. Secondly, that footwear perceived quality also has positive influences on consumer satisfaction. Finally, intrinsic cues and perceived quality had the strongest path coefficient values in the research model. It can be concluded from this research that, with regard to footwear, intrinsic and extrinsic cues, perceived quality and satisfaction have a significant and a positive impact on consumers during quality evaluation, and therefore retailers should be acquainted with these linkages.

Quality is a fundamental feature that can be the determining factor, which makes a sale at retail or makes the consumer return to buy additional products from the same

brand (Rosenau & Wilson 2007:282). There are many diverse ways of defining quality and many different viewpoints on quality. According to Hayes, McLoughlin and Cooklin (2006:174), the word 'quality' entails a degree of excellence, the nature of which is dependent on the reason for the product being purchased. Considerably the trending definition of quality is centred on consumer expectation (Rosenau & Wilson 2007:313). Consumers have refined expectations and a continually developing set of complex needs and wants which a variety of competitive alternatives can satisfy (Jackson & Shaw 2009:1).

6.5 LIMITATIONS

This study makes essential contributions to both theoretical development and to the provision of empirical evidence on the influence of footwear extrinsic cues, intrinsic cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction; it is not without its limitations, which may warrant future research. The study is confined to the respondents who constitute the sample in the specific province implicated, and therefore the findings are based only on these respondents who specific to Generation Y and cannot be generalised to the whole of South Africa.

The main purpose of the study was to test empirically the influence of both intrinsic and extrinsic cues on perceived quality of footwear and customer satisfaction. Testing the correlation between demographics variables and research variables would imply changing the purpose and objectives of the original study. However, in order to attain more comprehensive and interesting results, the researcher recommends that this limitation could be a possible avenue for future research directions.

Cost and time constraints also posed a problem, more especially during data collection as Generation Y consumers were difficult to contact at specific times of the day. The data were gathered from one specific mall in Thee Rivers, Vereeniging. The results would be more informative if data from all the provinces were collected and compared. Future studies may consider gathering data from all the provinces across South Africa for further empirical investigation. Perhaps future studies also need to identify and develop relevant quality indicators that are much more extensive, covering the complete domains of cues.

While this study focused on South Africa, expanding this study to other African countries is also another possible future research direction that might enable comparison of results with the current study findings and generate a different point of view. Overall, these suggested future studies stand to provide increased insights and, to a great extent, contribute new knowledge to the existing body of literature on the relationship between cues, perceived quality and satisfaction in South Africa and other African countries. Limitations and recommendation for future research could therefore be made.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, consumers look for their idea of quality when purchasing fashion products. If quality is in the eye of the consumer and aesthetics is the lens through which quality is evaluated, then surely quality attributes that incite consumers ought to be an integral part of the retailer or e-tailer's fashion merchandising strategy. Consumers should be able to 'see' quality from their point of view, even before they enter retail stores. It should be well-known that, in the case of fashion products, the evaluating process, in many cases, falls in the domain of symbolic consumption (Lindquist & Sirgy 2003:133). This is the process through which consumers, on the basis of symbols, purchase, consume and dispose of products.

Symbols are the most powerful of signs, because they can be used to elicit certain states of mind or feelings within the consumer. Qualities of the outside and inside of the store, as well as the store layout and visual merchandising, should clearly reveal to the consumer the various dimensions (sensory, symbolic and emotional) of the visual experience that the consumer would experience as part of the quality of the fashion products that are available in that specific store.

Poloian (2003:304) points to the fact that responses to stimuli may be deep in the sub-conscious. Price, style, comfort, store image and textures may conjure up past experiences and urge the consumer to buy. Consequently, it is important that the consumer's attention be drawn to the relation between the cue compilation of the product and the behavioural qualities. These relationships could be an inherent part of

the marketing strategies and should certainly be part of the on-line information that e-tailers afford their consumers who are not in a position to handle the product and, therefore, are unable to comprehend.

6.7 CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY

The study has been established as being beneficial in developing a different view of insightful information. Knowledge that could be used to enhance and to understand the topic has been studied. This chapter addressed this through the discussion and the conclusions drawn from this study, as well as the implications and the limitations of the study; lastly, it offered recommendations for further future research.

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Date: May 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a post graduate student at the Vaal University of Technology undertaking a Master of Technology (M.Tech) in Fashion Design. The topic of my research is “Investigating footwear cues influencing perceived quality and consumer satisfaction amongst Generation Y consumers at Rivers Square mall, Vereeniging”.

In order to accomplish my research objectives, a questionnaire has been prepared to gather information regarding footwear cues, perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

I kindly request you to complete the attached questionnaire. Your response will be of great value to the research.

Please be advised that your identity and feedback will be kept in utmost confidentiality.

YOUR VIEWS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO ME!

Yours Sincerely

Thobeka Mbambonduna

STUDY SUPERVISOR

Prof. R. Chinomona

(011) 717 8284

CO SUPERVISOR

Mis. A. Sooful

(016) 9509469

Please answer the following questions by marking the appropriate answer(s) with an X.
This questionnaire is strictly for research purpose only.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

The section is requests your background information. Please indicate your answer by writing (X) in the appropriate box.

A1 Please indicate your gender

Male	
Female	

A2 Please indicate your race.

Black	
White	
Coloured	
Indian	
Other (specify)	

A3 Please indicate your marital status.

Married		Single	
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A4 Please indicate your age group.

14-19		20-25		26-30	
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A5 Please indicate your occupation.

Student	
Employed	
Self-employed	

Unemployed	
Other (specify)	

A6 Please indicate how often do you purchase footwear.

Weekly	
Monthly	
Seasonally	
Yearly	
Other (specify)	

A7 Please indicate the amount of money you spent on footwear purchase in a year.

R500 – R1000	
R 1001 – R3000	
R3001 – R6000	
R6001 - R10000	
Other (specify)	

The questions below are all based on your opinion of footwear.

Below are statements about **Extrinsic, Intrinsic, Quality Perception and Consumer Satisfaction**. You can indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement by ticking the corresponding number in the 7 point scale below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

SECTION B: EXTRINSIC CUES

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement regarding Extrinsic Cues when evaluating footwear.								
		Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	neutral	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree
1	I am pleased with the price of footwear.							
2	I am pleased with the brand names found amongst footwear.							
3	I am pleased with the image of retail stores that sell footwear.							
4	I am pleased with the country origin which produces footwear.							

SECTION C: INTRINSIC CUES

Please indicate to what extent you agree/disagree with each statement as it relates to Intrinsic Cues when evaluating footwear.								
		Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	neutral	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree
1	I like the comfort of footwear.							
2	I like the material footwear is made from.							
3	I like the style component of footwear.							
4	I like the fit of footwear.							

SECTION D: OVERALL PERCEIVED QUALITY

Please indicate to what extent you agree/disagree with the following statements regarding Perceived Quality when evaluating footwear.		Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Overall footwear is of very good quality.							
2	Overall footwear offers consistent quality.							
3	Overall footwear offers very reliable products.							
4	Overall footwear offers products with excellent features.							

SECTION E: CONSUMER SATISFACTION

Please indicate to what extent you agree/disagree with the following statements regarding your Satisfaction when evaluating footwear.		Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	neutral	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree
1	I am satisfied with footwear.							
2	I am satisfied with the relationship I have with footwear.							
3	Overall I am satisfied with the deal that I receive from footwear.							
4	I have experienced some sort of problems with footwear, but the problems are always overcome promptly.							
5	Footwear is reliable.							

Thank You

