



“DECISION-MAKING STYLES OF GENERATION Y CONSUMERS IN THE PURCHASE OF FASHION APPAREL IN KEMPTON PARK”

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M Tech: Marketing

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Technologiae
in the Department of Marketing, Faculty of Management Sciences, Vaal University of
Technology.

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The financial assistance of the Central Research Committee of the Vaal University of Technology towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the Central Research Committee.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following persons are acknowledged in for their support and encouragement during my studies.

I deeply appreciate the guidance and patience of Prof. M. Dhurup (Dean of the Faculty of Management Sciences), my supervisor who consistently provided me with support, understanding and strong leadership to complete my studies.

I am especially grateful to Mrs Aldine Oosthuyzen for the statistical services (North-West University).

I would like to thank Dr.S. Nayimuli and Mr. S. Sandada, my colleagues for their unconditional assistance, support and encouragement throughout my studies.

Mrs. D. Maneschijn and Mr L Ndhlovu for their expertise and advice they have given.

Prof. P. Omara-Ojungu and Ms. H. Dube for their encouragement.

My friends J. Masoka and E. Quobo for their moral support.

I would like to thank Ms. V. Shikhwivulu and Mrs. K. Venter for their contributions in typing the manuscript.

I also like to thank Mr B. Record for his contribution in editing my project for language.

I would like to thank Prof. B. Surujlal for assisting me with the reference list.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to

My mother Margaret Monqwe for her encouragement and immeasurable support in all difficulties I went through. Special thanks to my fiancée Duduzile Khumalo, for her moral and unconditional support throughout my studies.

ABSTRACT

The underlying determinants of how and why people shop has been a topic of study for many years, when typologies of shopping styles were developed. These studies have been successful in demonstrating that some shoppers display consistent shopping orientations that can be diametrically opposed, for example, the functional shopper versus the recreational shopper. This study concentrates on purchasing patterns of consumers by examining the decision-making styles of Generation Y consumers with regard to fashion apparel.

The study reports on various stages that consumers undergo when confronted with a decision situation. These stages are outlined as need recognition, information search, pre-purchase evaluation, purchase, consumption and post-consumption. The buying behaviours influencing consumers were categorised into internal and external factors. The internal factor includes perception, motivation, learning, attitudes, personalities, self-concept, lifestyle and demography. The external factors comprised the following variables, namely, cultural background, subculture, family influence, and the social factor.

The general characteristics of Generation Y were briefly discussed. Various dimensions used to measure consumer decision-making styles were reviewed in the study related to perfectionism, brand consciousness, novelty-fashion consciousness, recreational consciousness, price-and-value-for-money consciousness, impulsiveness and confusion as a result of overchoice of brands.

The study adopted quantitative approach. A structured questionnaire was used to survey 230 students who were selected using non-probability convenience sampling. Seven dimensions measuring consumer decision-making styles were found to be applicable within the Generation Y context. These consumers were profiled as being quality conscious, brand conscious, novelty-seeking, hedonistic, confused by overchoice, habitual, brand loyal and fashion conscious.

Differences were found between consumers who are confused by overchoice and younger Generation Y consumers. Younger consumers were found to be more confused by overchoice compared to their older counterparts.

It is suggested that apparel retailers should try to use communication channels which will be more understandable by Generation Y consumers, and they should provide information that assists buyers to make a rational decision in the buying process. Differences were also confirmed between habitual, brand-loyal consumers and age. It was found that younger consumers are more likely to be loyal to specific brands as compared to their older counterparts. Differences were noted between brand conscious, confused by overchoice and gender. Brand consciousness was regarded as a reflection of men's desire to use shopping as a demonstration of their superiority, as well as being beneficial because they reduce search costs. It was revealed that males were more brand conscious than their female counterparts. It also highlighted that males were more confused by overchoice than females.

The study found that the majority of Generation Y does pursue quality, even if it means paying higher prices. It is recommended that retailers should continue to emphasise their well-known brand names and set prices at levels where consumers perceive the quality of the product by its price. Retailers should focus on diverse designs, sizes and colours in their product assortment and range. The introduction of new products through the use of fashion shows, fashion magazines and advertisements may provide added advantages in terms of brand awareness.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Generation Y comprises the population of a country born between 1977 and 1994 (Neal, Quester & Hawkins, 2004:393). Its members are born during the era when countries could easily communicate with one another, especially with the emergence of direct means of communication that are underlined by a powerful convergence towards materialism (Cant, Brink & Brijball, 2006:106). Generation Y can be further divided into three sub-segments, namely: adults of 18 to 27 years old, teenagers of 13 to 17 years old and children of 8 to 12 years old (Martin & Turley, 2004:464). The members are described as realistic, “savvy”, socially and environmentally aware and open to new experiences. They have moved some of their television viewing habits to the Internet and are less likely to read the newspaper compared to their parents (Cant *et al.*, 2006:106-107). Moreover, they are generally inclined not to trust the stores that their parents shop in, for the sake of uniqueness.

Some Generation Y individuals are employed, while others are still at school, Further Education and Training (FET) colleges and universities (Martin & Turley, 2004:464). Those that are employed within the Generation Y sub-segment are financially active and they possess a high purchasing power in the economy of a country. In addition, they are well informed about any kind of fashion and tend to be independent buyers. These consumers may spend an average of R200 on every shopping trip and influence between R7 billion to R9 billion in families' purchasing expenditure per annum, with the wealthiest members between the ages of 19-24 years old (Steven, Lathrop & Bradish, 2005:255; Martin & Turley, 2004:464-465). Generation theorists propose that as the socio-environment changes, consumer needs will be more likely to change in the market and even their buying patterns of the various products will shift in order to suit their environment (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:95).

For example, if there is a novel apparel item or style introduced in a market, Generation Y is likely to purchase the product, as they aspire to be recognized and become known as fashion conscious, well informed about the external environment and become alert to whichever fashion prevails in the market.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The underlying determinants of how and why people shop has been a topic of study for many years when typologies of shopping styles were developed (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:96). However, these studies have been successful in demonstrating that some shoppers display consistent shopping orientations that can be diametrically opposed. For example, the functional shopper versus the recreational shopper (Jin & Kim, 2003:407) does not explicitly address the question of how to measure consumer decision-making styles.

Specifically, Generation Y buyers have been brought up in an era when shopping is not regarded as a simple act of purchasing (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:95). Generation Y consumers are likely to have developed a different shopping style compared to previous generations, which is extremely sensitive to changes in fashion (Ma & Niehm, 2006:621; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:95). Despite such assertions, there have been very few studies which focused on the shopping styles of Generation Y consumers which offer guidelines to marketers and retailers on how these consumers make choices. Hence, the purpose of the study is to complement existing research on consumer decision-making styles in fashion apparel.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were formulated for the study.

1.3.1 Primary objective

- The primary purpose of the study was to evaluate the purchasing decision-making styles of Generation Y consumers with regard to fashion apparel in Kempton Park.

1.3.2 Theoretical objectives

- To conduct an analysis of the consumer decision-making processes.
- To compile a synthesis of the literature on the purchase decision-making styles of Generation Y consumers.
- To conduct a literature review on Generation Y consumers.

1.3.3 Empirical objectives

- To develop a typology of the decision-making styles of Generation Y consumers.
- To establish whether there are any differences with regard to the purchasing pattern in terms of consumer demographic variables among Generation Y consumers.

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The following methods of research were undertaken:

1.4.1 Literature review

A literature review on the purchasing pattern and decision-making processes of Generation Y fashion was undertaken. The characteristics of Generation Y were also highlighted. This included textbooks, journals, magazine, newspaper articles and the Internet to develop a theoretical background.

1.4.2 The empirical design

The following were used in the design of the empirical research:

1.4.2.1 The target population

The target population was restricted to the Kempton Park area. Kempton Park is a hub for retail activities within the Ekurhuleni Municipal boundary and it was economical for the researcher to conduct research in this area. Kempton Park Mall is located in close proximity to OR Tambo Airport with easy access from the R21 and various other highways. The centre offers convenient shopping, quality merchandise and non-stop entertainment; it operates 7 days a week. For the purpose of the study, the population included both male and female, ranging between 16-27 years from the selected geographical area.

1.4.2.2 Sampling technique and sample frame

The study made use of a combination of convenience and judgment sampling techniques. This sampling technique was chosen because a sampling frame was not available where the unit of analysis could be selected to conduct the study. Often the respondents are at the right place at the right time when the sample is drawn, making it convenient for the researcher to conduct the fieldwork.

Using the historical evidence approach (compared to similar studies) the sample size was set at 250 respondents. This figure is consistent with previous studies done on Generation Y consumers (Kwan, Yeung & Au, 2008:197; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004:228).

1.4.2.3 The measuring instrument

The researcher used a quantitative research approach as elucidated by Schiffman and Kanuk (2004:35) to conduct the study. Quantitative research places emphasis on using formalised standard questions and predetermined response options in questionnaires or surveys administered to large numbers of respondents (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2000:216). A questionnaire was used to collect primary data from respondents with regard to their spending, purchasing pattern of fashion apparel in the target market.

1.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Descriptive and inferential statistics were undertaken to analyse the composition of the sample. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) Version 17.0 for Windows was used. Factor analysis was used to ascertain the underlying dimensions of decision-making styles. Pearson's correlations coefficients were computed to analyse the relationship between variables. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was undertaken to evaluate the differences between the group means. The reliability of the measurement scale was undertaken, using coefficient alpha. Finally, the validity of the scale was assessed.

1.6 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

Chapter two: Consumer decision making and the Generation Y consumers

This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the consumer decision-making process, the Generation Y sub-culture and their buying patterns.

Chapter three: Research methodology

This chapter focuses on the design and research method utilised in the study. The data collection and the sampling method are discussed. The statistical analysis used in the study is described.

Chapter four: Results and findings

This chapter deals with the findings and the interpretation of the results.

Chapter five: Conclusion and recommendation: This chapter concludes the study with recommendations emanating from the study being discussed. Limitations and implications for further research were outlined.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEYWORDS

Generation Y: These are generally defined as the population of a country who were born between 1977 and 1994 (Neal *et al.*, 2004:393).

Consumer decision-making style: This is referred to as the mental orientation or approach that a consumer has in making choices (Fan & Xiao, 1998:276).

Perception: Perception is defined as the process by which consumers select, organise, and interpret stimuli into a meaningful response and coherent picture (Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2004:8).

Culture: Culture is defined as a set of values, ideas, artefacts, and other meaningful symbols that help individuals communicate, interpret, and evaluate as members of society (Banerjee, 2008: 367).

Role models: Role models are described as people to whom an individual expression serves as a basis for self-appraisal or as a source of personal standard (Lancaster & Reynolds, 1998:45).

Motivation: Motivation is defined as the activation of internal desires, needs and concerns which energise behaviour and send the organism in a particular direction, aimed at satisfaction of the motivational issues that gives rise to the increased energy (Mallalieu, 2000:14).

Target population: Target population is defined as the aggregate of all the elements that share some common set of characteristics that comprise the universe for the purpose of the marketing research problem (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:321).

Validity: Validity is the degree to which a test or instrument measures what it purports to measure (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2278).

Reliability: Reliability is the extent to which a scale produces consistent results if repeated measurements are made (Golafshani, 2003:598).

Factor analysis: Factor analysis is a multivariate statistical technique that is used to summarise the information contained in a larger number of variables into a smaller number of subsets of factors (Hair *et al.*, 2000:590).

Correlation analysis: Correlation analysis is the simplest way to understand the association between two metric variables (Maholtra & Birks, 2007:573).

Frequency distribution: Frequency distribution is defined as a geographical or tabular representation in which values of variables are plotted against the number of times of occurrences (Terre- Blanche, Durrhein & Painter, 2007:194).

Pre-testing: Pre-testing refers to the testing of the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents to identify and eliminate potential problems (Maholtra, 2006:319).

1.8 SYNOPSIS

This chapter has laid the foundation for the study. The introduction and background to the study were briefly discussed in the chapter. It was stated in the introduction that Generation Y comprises the population of a country born between 1977 and 1994 (Neal *et al.*, 2004:393). According to Martin and Turley (2004:464) the members of Generation Y can be further divided into three sub-segments, namely: adults of 18 to 27 years old, teenagers of 13 to 17 years old and children of 8 to 12 years old.

The problem statement and the objectives of the study were also outlined in the chapter. The research design was briefly outlined namely, literature review, target population, sampling technique, sample frame and the measuring instrument. In addition the statistical analysis used to compute the data was briefly highlighted. The classification of chapters for the entire study was provided. The key words emanating from the study are described.

The next chapter will provide literature on consumer decision making.

CHAPTER TWO

CONSUMER DECISION MAKING AND GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

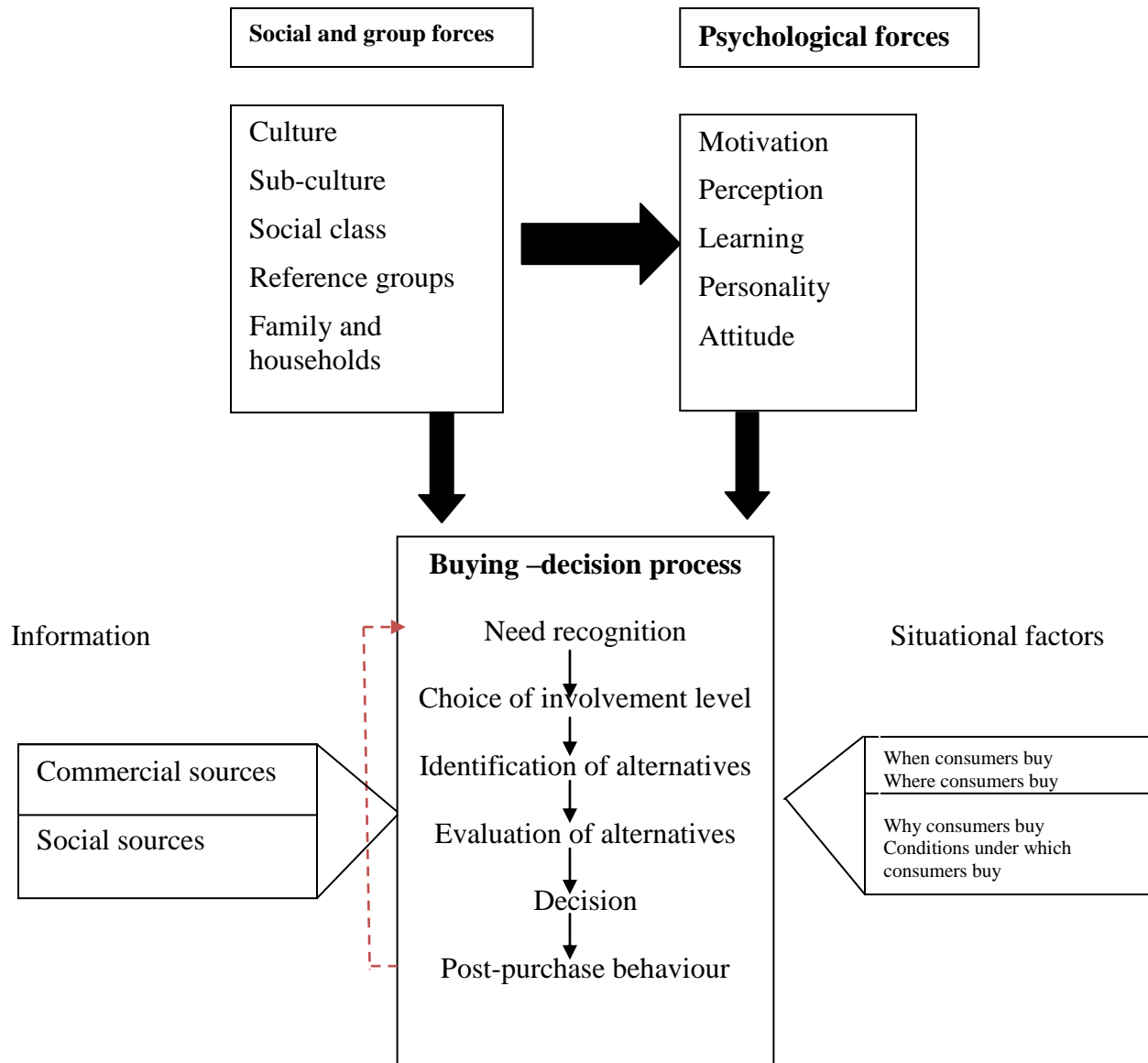
2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided background to the study. The problem statement and objectives of the study were outlined. The chapter also briefly introduced the design of the study. This chapter provides a review of the literature on the consumer decision-making process and factors influencing consumer-buying decisions. An overview is provided on the decision-making styles used by consumers using past empirical studies. Finally, the characteristics of the Generation Y consumers' segment of the market are described.

2.2 THE CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

With consumers' product preferences and buying patterns constantly changing in the market, marketers need to have a comprehensive knowledge of the consumer decision-making process and the entire buying process, rather than just the purchase decision (Schiffman & Kannuk, 2007:526). There are variations reported in the literature on the number of stages that consumers undergo in their buying-decision process. A review of the literature in the decision-making process is provided in order to facilitate comparisons in an attempt to find common ground. Whilst such demarcations or scope may not be exhaustive, they provide avenues to find generic stages in a consumer-decision process. Figure 2.1 provides an overview of the consumer decision-making process within the context of various factors that may influence the buying process. The model presented in Figure 2.1 has three major components: input, process and output. The model is designed to bring together many of the ideas on consumer decision making and consumption behaviour in the market.

Figure 2.1 Consumer decision-making process



Source: Stanton, Etzen, Walker, Abrat, Pitt and Staude (1993:134)

These broad consumer-decision processes are described in order to enhance an understanding of the stages consumers go through in the purchasing process.

Blythe (2006:5) categorised the purchasing decision process into six stages. A brief explanation of each follows.

- Need recognition - during this stage the consumer recognises a need for a product.
- Search for information - at this stage the consumer searches for information on the product.
- Pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives - the consumer considers which of the possible alternatives might be best to fulfil the need.
- Purchase -this is the action stage where the final selection is made and the item is paid for.
- Consumption - the consumer uses the product for the purpose of fulfilling a need.
- Post-consumption behaviour - the consumer considers whether the product actually satisfied the need or not and whether there were any problems arising from its purchase and consumption.

Cant *et al.* (2006:176) describe the consumer decision-making process in seven stages.

- Problem recognition - consumers recognise a difference between what they perceive as the current or actual state of affairs and the state of affairs they want.
- Search for information - customers are involved in a learning process, during which they become aware of alternative products or brands, specific stores, specific trading centres, prices of products, terms of sale and customer services.
- Evaluation of alternatives - customers evaluate alternatives by comparing among product features and assess their characteristics according to pre-established criteria.
- Buying - customers select the most desirable alternative from a set of options that they would have generated in the evaluation stage.
- Post-buying evaluation - customers, after consuming the product, will perceive the product either negatively or positively, based on their experience.
- Post-buying satisfaction - customers will reach a satisfaction level once the product's performance either meets with or exceeds their expectations.
- Post-buying dissatisfaction - consumers will experience dissatisfaction if the outcome does not match their expectations.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:532-547) examined the decision-making process using five stages.

- Need recognition - consumers discover needs that are not met.
- Pre-purchase search - consumers perceive needs that might be satisfied by the purchase and consumption of the products.
- Evaluation of alternatives - the consumers tend to use two types of information: 1. a “list” of brands or models from which they plan to make their selection (the evoked set) and, 2. the criteria they will use to evaluate each brand (or model).
- Purchase behaviour - consumers may make one of three types of purchases: trial purchases, repeat purchases, and long term commitment purchases.
- Post-purchase evaluation - consumers utilise the products, particularly during a trial purchase; they evaluate its performance in light of their expectations.

It should be noted that the buying process commences long before the actual purchase and continues long after the purchase (Armstrong & Kotler, 2007:142). From the above discussion, the consumer decision-making process may be represented by five generic steps which move from the consumer’s recognition of an unfulfilled need to the evaluation of a purchase after the event (Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2008:68). These steps are identified as need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decisions and post-purchase behaviours.

Various factors also have an influence on the consumer decision-making process. These factors are discussed in the next section, through research perspectives from various consumer behaviour researchers.

2.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

Research reveals that at levels of marketing theory and practice the consumer is central to all activities. It is critical for apparel marketers to have an extensive knowledge of the various factors influencing consumers’ decisions in ensuring the successful delivery of products and the retention of customers in a marketplace (Hollywood, Armstrong & Durkin, 2007:691).

According to Schiffman and Kannuk (2007:3) consumer behaviour is defined as the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs.

Consumer behaviour is an important factor to indicate the decision-making process in purchasing fashion apparel. Susilawati and Anunu (2001:2) asserted that buying behaviour is influenced by internal and external factors. The internal factors comprise perception, motivation, learning, attitudes, personalities, self-concept, lifestyle and demographics. The external factors include variables, such as cultural background, subculture, family influence and social factors. The influences of these variables are described in the sections which follow.

2.3.1 Perception as a factor that influences consumer buying decisions

Past researchers have attempted to search for critical attributes that consumers recognise mostly when observing stimuli, such as price, advertising, design or odour. Wu and Delong (2006:239) stressed that consumer perception is important and serves as a background for the understanding of consumers and a necessary approach to locate consumers in different cultures. It has been generally accepted that perception is defined as the process by which consumers select, organise, and interpret stimuli into a meaningful response and coherent picture (Lamb *et al.*, 2004:81; Assael, 1998:84; Stanton *et al.*, 1993:147). Various studies view perception differently. Kotler and Armstrong (2008:143), for example, categorised three stages of perception into exposure, attention and comprehensive stages that influence the consumer to perceive the product differently in the market.

Consumers tend to learn by the flow of information through the five senses - sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste - although, each consumer receives, organises and interprets the sensory information in an individual way (Strydom, Jooste & Cant, 2000:84). Findings of other studies on this issue are varied. For example, Gagliano and Hathcote (1994:64) found that a store's appearance, employees, atmosphere and equipment have more impact on a customer because it is their first impression of the store.

These findings in general concur with Birtwistle and Shearer (2001:14) who suggested that retail image and store positioning are factors which influence consumer loyalty and retail success.

Research undertaken by Imram (1999:226) revealed that perceptions of apparel are affected by many individual factors, such as odour, information from labelling, images, attitudes and memory from previous experience, price, prestige and brand loyalty. Birtwistle, Clarke and Freathy (1998:151-152) found that quality was the most important attribute for the respondents to purchase products.

From the findings, it can be deduced that store appearance plays a vital role when consumers observe various marketers' stimuli. In the context of perception, it can be concluded that perception is of critical importance, especially in situations where the products are sold primarily through properties of appearance rather than through packaging (Imram, 1999:226).

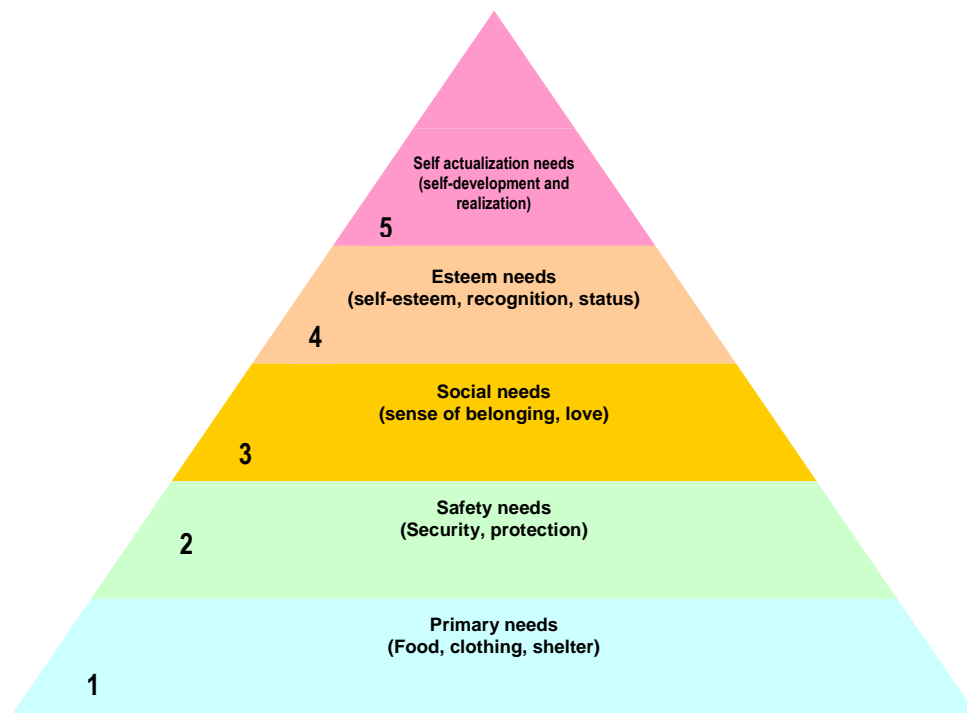
2.3.2 Motivational factors influencing consumer buying decisions

Motivation is defined as the driving force within individuals that impel them into action (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1998:63; De Klerk & Tselepis, 2007:414). Mallalieu (2000:14) defines motivation as the activation of internal desires, needs and concerns which energises behaviour and sends the organism in a particular direction which is aimed at satisfaction. Various authors expressed different views about motivation. For instance, Hollywood *et al.* (2007:692) argued that in terms of directing behaviour, motivation guides consumers across purchase decisions and persuades consumers to purchase a certain product/service as a means to satisfy their needs.

It can also assist consumers in developing criteria for evaluating products which can affect consumers' determinants of perception, attitude and thought processes. Mowen and Minor (1997:160) are of the view that for a motive to exist there must be a corresponding need. Maslow suggested that motivation can be expressed in a hierarchical format with physiological needs forming the base of the hierarchy and self-actualization as the ultimate (Blood, 2007:6). According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, in order for a human being to be truly happy, all the needs of that individual should be met. The author posited that human needs comprise physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization needs.

One of Maslow's key propositions in his theory is that human needs arrange themselves in a hierarchy of importance (Blood, 2007:7). In other words, before a higher human need can be satisfied, the primary need should be satisfied first. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 Maslow's hierarchy of needs.



Source: Schiffman and Kanuk (2008:99)

De Klerk and Tselepis (2007:414) have noted that consumers make decisions based on their own priorities in terms of the motives behind a purchase. A consumer in search for clothing may focus on durability, while for another customer the price of the product may be their focus (Henry, 2002:424). In other words, products are bought on the basis of physical objective criteria such as product features, quality and functionality (Zhang & Tang, 2006:2). This driving force is produced by a state of tension which exists as the result of an unfulfilled need.

On the other hand, other authors suggest that motivation can be categorized in terms of shopping typology. Westbrook and Black (1985:87-88) examined two shopping motivations including customers' functional and non-functional needs. Six dimensions of hedonic shopping motivations, such as adventure shopping, social shopping, gratification shopping, idea shopping, role shopping and value were proposed. Park and Sullivan (2009:184) identified two categories of shopping orientations: hedonic and utilitarian orientations. Hedonic orientation reflects the potential entertainment value of shopping and the enjoyment arising from the experience. In contrast, utilitarian orientation is concerned with efficient and timely purchasing to achieve goals with minimum irritation.

Jamal, Davies, Chudry and Al-Marri (2006:68) identified a number of shopping motives with the premise that consumers are motivated primarily by two types of psychological needs: personal and social. The personal motives include the needs for role-playing, diversion, self-gratification, physical activity and sensory stimulation. The role-playing motive reflects activities that are learned and are expected as part of a certain role or position in society. Diversion highlights shopping's ability to present opportunities to the shopper to escape from the routines of daily life and therefore represents a type of recreation and a form of escapism. Self-gratification underline shopping's potential to alleviate depression as shoppers may spend money and buy something pleasant when their mood states are down. Physical activity focuses on consumers' need for engaging in physical exercise by walking in spacious and appealing retail centres, particularly when they are living in urban and congested environments.

Sensory stimulation refers to the ability for retail institutions to provide sensory benefits to consumers while shopping by enjoying the physical sensation of handling merchandise, pleasant background music and aromas.

Social motives include the need for social experiences and communication with others during shopping trips, peer group attractions, status and authorities. The social and communication motives feature shopping's potential to provide opportunities to socialise and communicate with others with similar interests. The peer group attraction stresses consumers' desire to be with their reference group, whereas status and authority reflect shopping's ability to provide opportunities for consumers to command attention and respect from others.

Motivation may underlie the reasons to purchase a product and it could also influence a consumer to behave in a certain manner. In addition a consumer may also consider certain criteria when choosing a specific product.

2.3.3 Learning as a factor influencing consumer buying decisions

Marketing and consumer researchers over the years have tried to grasp the concept of learning as a factor influencing Generation Y consumers on fashion apparel. Van der Walt, Strydom, Marx and Jooste (1998:81) define learning as the result of a combination of motivation, attention, experience and repetition. Brassington and Pettitt (1997:103), define learning as the more or less permanent change in behaviour which occurs as a result of practice. Kinnear, Bernardt and Kotler (1995:192) stress that learning affects values, attitudes, personalities and tastes.

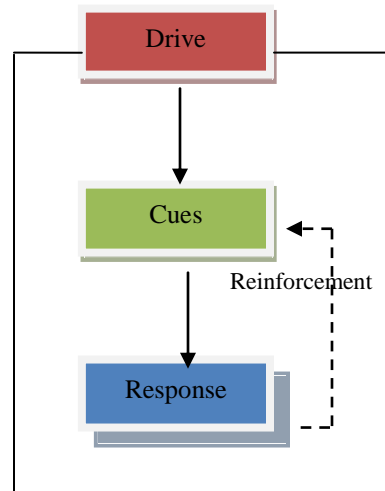
Various studies expressed the premise that learning can influence Generation Y consumers to purchase fashion apparel in numerous ways. For instance, Bovee, Houston and Thill (1995:118-119) identify behavioural learning and cognitive learning as the two main types of learning. In the first instance, consumers learn by responding to an external event that occurs around them. In the second instance, cognitive learning occurs when consumers learn by thinking about a problem and making a concerted effort in reaching a conclusion. McCarthy and Perreault (1993:208) reported that the reinforcement of the learning process occurs when the response is followed by satisfaction. Reinforcement strengthens the relationship between the cue and the response, and it may lead to a similar response the next time a drive occurs. Repeated reinforcement leads to the development of a habit, making individuals' decision process a routine.

Figure 2.3 shows the relationships of the important variables in the learning process. Consumers might learn how much they appreciate a restaurant only after trying it, or how long a piece of clothing lasts after wearing it for some time (Villa-Boas, 2004:134).

Mandell (1985:208) revealed that the process of acquiring knowledge is a feature common not only to all human behaviour but to all mammalian behaviour. The famous experiment of Ivan Pavlov showed that dogs could be made to salivate at the ringing of bell if they had previously been taught to associate this stimulus with a certain objects like food (Jobber, 1998:71-72).

Figure 2.3 illustrates the major components of learning process such as drives, cues, responses and reinforcement. It depicts an overview of the learning process.

Figure 2.3 The learning process.



Source: McCarthy and Perreault (1993:28)

According to Schiffman and Kannuk (2007:199) a drive is determined by needs and goals. A drive acts as a spur to learning. For example, men and women who want to take up riding a bicycle for fitness and recreation are motivated to learn all they can about bike riding and also to practise often. They may seek information concerning the prices, quality and characteristics of bicycles and learn which bicycles are the best for the kind of riding that they do. The authors (2007:199) are of the opinion that cues serve as the stimuli that give direction to these motives. An advertisement for an exotic trip that includes bike riding may serve as a cue for bike riders, who may suddenly recognize that they need a vacation.

McCarthy and Perreault (1993:219-220) asserted that response is an effort to satisfy a drive. The specific response chosen depends on the cues and the consumer's past experience. Kotler and Armstrong (1996:157) are of the view that reinforcement is an experience that a consumer acquires after consuming a product. Reinforcement can either be positive or negative. If one sees a vendor selling frozen yogurt (stimulus), one may buy it (response), and find the yogurt to be quite refreshing (reward). In this way the behaviour (action) has been positively reinforced. On the other hand, if one buys a new flavour of yogurt and it does not taste good (negative reinforcement), one will not buy that flavour of yogurt again.

From the above discussion it can be deduced that learning through observation may occur before a consumer could utilise the product and it will continue until the consumer has finally made a decision to purchase a product. However, the consumer's future purchase will depend on the performance of the product (Boyatzis & Kolb, 1995:3).

2.3.4 Attitude as a factor influencing consumer buying decisions

Dreezens, Martijn, Tenbult, Kok and De Vries (2005:40) define attitude as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. According to Huang, Lee and Ho (2004:600) attitude is defined as "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner toward a particular brand". It plays an important role in consumer behaviour which cannot be observed directly. Huang *et al.* (2004:600) are of the view that marketers infer the attitude of consumers towards products, because it is during these encounters when attitudes about products are formed.

An attitude consists of an organisation of several beliefs focused on a specific object or situation (Dreezens *et al.*, 2005:40). It can be argued that attitude plays a vital role in consumption patterns for fashion apparel. Wu (2003:37-38) acknowledges that attitude may serve as the bridge between consumers' background characteristics and the consumption that satisfies their needs. A study by Park, Macinnis and Priester (2006:4) revealed that attitudes will be favourable and strong when they are strongly linked to behaviour.

In addition, Kim and Park (2003:107) revealed that attitude towards a behaviour is based on an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a relevant behaviour and is composed of his/her salient beliefs regarding the perceived consequences of performing behaviour. Park *et al.* (2006:05) argued that consumers often have conflict associations linked to a particular object and the attitude that they may reflect at a time and it is governed by the circumstances.

Schiffman and Kannuk (2007:241-243) propose that the cognitive component, affective component and conative component are regarded as the three components of consumer's attitude.

The cognitive component is the knowledge and perceptions that are acquired by a combination of direct experience with the attitude object and related information from various sources. The affective component is referred to as consumers' emotions or feelings about a particular product or brand. Lastly, the conative component is concerned with the likelihood or tendency that an individual will undertake a specific action or behave in a particular way with regard to the attitude object.

It can be concluded that attitude can be regarded as a negative or positive feeling towards a particular object. Furthermore, the consumer's evaluation of the object determines whether the attitude towards the object will be favourable or unfavourable.

2.3.5 Personality factors influencing consumer decision

Stanton *et al.* (1993:149) define personality as an individual's pattern of traits that influence behavioural responses. Personality can be useful in analysing consumer behaviour for certain product/ brand choices (Kotler & Armstrong, 1997:150). Kotler (2000:167) states that personality can be viewed as those inner psychological characteristics that determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment. In shopping for fashion apparel, people make decisions that will directly affect their appearance (Akturan & Tezcan, 2007:3). The clothes they select become a means for communicating and enhancing personality, attractiveness and social roles (Akturan & Tezcan, 2007:3). Furthermore, Assael (1998:268) indicates that personality variables are those characteristics that reflect consistent, enduring patterns of behaviour, which are compulsive, aggressive or compliant behaviour that reflects deeper-seated predispositions formed during childhood.

Past researchers have long been interested in the underlying personality traits of Generation Y consumers. For instance, Freling and Forbes (2005:405) identified five human personality traits. The first trait is sincerity which includes wholesomeness, being down-to-earth and honest. The second trait is excitement, which includes daring, being imaginative and excited. The third trait is competence that entails being intelligent, secure and confident. The fourth sophistication encompasses being glamorous, smooth and charming. The fifth trait is ruggedness, typifying a person as strong and masculine.

Research undertaken by Goldsmith (2002:305) classified personal traits into: mental alertness, sociability, athleticism, being carefree and stubbornness. Rajagopal (2006:59) observed five stable personality dimensions, also called the “Big Five” human personality dimensions, which are extroversion, agreeableness, consciousness, emotional ability and culture. According to Cherry (2005) the big human personality dimensions are described as follows: extraversion which includes characteristics such as excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and a high amount of emotional expressiveness; agreeableness which encompasses aspects such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection and other prosocial behaviours; consciousness which includes attributes for high levels of thoughtfulness, with good impulse control and goal-directed behaviours. Alberts (2007:80) defines emotions as the expression or moving of feeling. McDaniel, Lamb and Hair (2010:177) define culture as the essential character of a society that distinguishes it from other societal groups.

Personality could operate in different ways or influence consumer preferences for different reasons. Goldsmith (2002:305) noted that for personality traits to be useful the traits selected should be relevant to the product category of interest. Empirical findings by Goldsmith (2002:304-305) revealed that personality characteristics play a dominant role compared to lifestyle and demographic variables in differentiating heavy users from light users of certain products. For example, coffee makers have discovered that heavy coffee drinkers tend to be high on sociability. From the foregoing discussions, personality can be viewed as unique traits that each individual holds in life. In addition, it is an individual’s personality that distinguishes one individual from another (Assael, 1998:268).

2.3.6 Self-concept as a factor influencing consumer buying decision

Sirgy (1982:287) defines self-concept as the totality of the individual’s thoughts and feelings, having reference to themselves as objects. Self-concept has been investigated in a number of areas, such as product perception, advertising perception, implicit behaviour patterns, specific behaviour, advertising effectiveness and symbolic interactions (Mishra, 2007:597).

Heath and Scott (1998:1110) suggest that self-concept is significant and relevant to the study of consumer behaviour, as many purchases made by consumers are directly influenced by the image individuals have of themselves. An understanding of the self-concept's influence on behaviour may enable marketers to develop effective methods of appealing to various target markets by targeting different self-concepts.

Consumers may stop buying a product at a particular store if they feel that these actions do not reflect their own images (Heath & Scott, 1998:1110). Self-concept has been treated from various points of view. According to Mishra (2007:598), behavioural theory views the self as a bundle of conditioned responses. The organismic theory regards the self in a holistic form; cognitive theory suggests that the self is treated as a conceptual system, processing information about the self, and symbolic interactions treats the self as a function of interpersonal interactions. Schiffman and Kannuk (1997:137) state that self-concept can be divided into four categories such as actual self-image, social self-image and ideal self image. Actual self-image is viewed as the way consumers in fact see themselves; the ideal self image is how consumers would like to see themselves; the social self-image suggests how consumers feel others see them; and ideal social image is the way consumers would like others to see them.

Ostgard-Ybrandt (2004:1) notes that in order to understand individual inner concepts of self, one has to consider the social, cultural, and historical context of these interpersonal influences. Murcia, Gimeno, Vera- Lacarcel and Ruiz- Perez (2007:1) argued that self-identity is influenced by those personal meanings that each individual ascribes to their perceptions of their experiences.

Smith, Tigen and Waller (2004:4) found that consumers' self-identity could be influenced by individuals that surround them such as family, friends, school mates and colleagues. Phau and Lo (2004:402) argue that clothing may be seen as an important symbolic meaning for consumers to construct and express their self-identity. Empirical findings suggest that consumers tend to select products and stores that correspond with their self-concept and they use products to promote their own self-concept (Oh & Fiorito, 2002:208).

From the preceding discussion it may be inferred that consumers prefer a product with a product-user image that is consistent with their self-concept. In other words, consumers prefer a specific product because they see themselves as similar to the kind of consumers that are generally thought to use that product (Govers & Schoormans, 2005:190).

2.3.7 Lifestyle factors influencing a consumer buying decision

Kotler and Keller (2006:183) define lifestyle as a person's pattern of living in the world as expressed in activities, interest, and opinion, and it portrays the "whole person" interacting with his/ her environment. Assael (1998:584) defined lifestyle as a mode of living that is identified by how people spend their time (activities), what they consider important in their environment (interest) and what they think of themselves and the world around them. According to Todd, Lawson and Faris (1996:30) lifestyle refers to the goals that people share and the means they use to reach them. Oh and Fiorito (2002:208) report that lifestyle can be influenced by consumers' personality and consumer references.

A number of researchers have attempted to investigate consumer's lifestyle that is reflected by consumers in the market in various ways (Sun, Horn & Merrit, 2004:318; Orth, McDaniel, Shellhammer & Lopetcharat, 2004:97). Kotler and Armstrong (1996:152-153) refer to the Value and Lifestyles (VALS) typology in terms of eight VALS groups: actualisers, fulfillers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiencers, makers and strugglers. The actualisers are social classes with the highest incomes and an abundance of resources that they can indulge in self-orientation. The fulfillers are matured, responsible and well-educated professionals.

The believers are conservative, predictable consumers with more modest incomes who favour established products. The achievers are successful, work-oriented, politically conservative people who get their satisfaction from the job and families. The strivers are people with values similar to those for achievers, but with fewer economic, social and psychological resources. Experiencers are consumers who spend heavily on clothes, fast food, music and other youthful favourites. The makers are people who like to affect their environment in practical ways. Finally, the strugglers are people with the lowest incomes and too few resources to be included in any consumer orientation (Kotler & Armstrong, 1996:152-153).

Wu (2003:39) argues that lifestyle is linked with the external and internal influences on consumer buying behaviour because it truly involves elements of both individual and influential factors. The study by Sun *et al.* (2004:318) on Chinese, Japanese, British and US consumers found that consumers in the individualist cultures compared with those in the collectivist cultures were more brand savvy, travel oriented, satisfied with their lives, financially satisfied and optimistic. Lifestyle may also assist to identify different purchasing patterns that could be projected by the consumers in the market, since it portrays consumers' personalities (Orth *et al.*, 2004:97).

2.3.8 Demographic factors influencing consumer buying decision

Cant *et al.* (2006:42) define demography as the study of people's vital statistics such as age, race, gender, income, ethnic or location. Among these variables, gender has been and continues to be one of the most popular forms of market segmentation for a significant proportion of product and services (Mokhlis & Salleh, 2009:574). Numerous studies have addressed the characteristics of demographic variables influencing consumers when purchasing fashion apparel (Straughan & Roberts, 1999:559; Gupta & Chintagunta, 1994:129). Gender, if significant, offers easy and efficient ways for marketers to segment the market of fashion apparel. Mokhlis and Salleh (2009:574-575) suggest that gender-based segmentation meets the requirements for successful segmentation - the segment could be easy to identify, easy to access and large enough for consumer products and services to be marketed profitably.

These characteristics can also be strongly related to consumers' buying behaviour which can serve as predictors of how the target markets will respond to specific marketing strategies (Cant *et al.*, 2006:42). Some studies however, reported inconsistent findings about the effects of gender, age, income and education attainment on fashion apparel (Kwong, Yau, Lee, Sin & Tse, 2003:227). Straughan and Roberts (1999:559-560) found that women are more likely to be more careful than men when purchasing fashion apparel. Kwong *et al.* (2003:227) found that age and education are not related to one's intention to buy apparel.

A study by Bakewell, Mitchell and Rothwell (2006:15) revealed that Generation Y males observe fashion trends and are aware of the concept of fashion as it relates to men even if they do not actively embrace it in the practice of readily adopting new styles. Baltas and Papastathopoulou (2003:498-499) state that consumer's decision on store choice as well as brand choice emphasises the use of individual variables such as demographics, socio-economic or psychological variables as primary predictors of store and brand selection. Sridhar (2007:139) suggests that demographic factors have influences on "high-involved" fashion apparel, as compared to "low-involved" fashion apparel.

2.3.9 Culture and sub-culture

According to Banerjee (2008:367-368), culture is defined as a set of values, ideas, artefacts and other meaningful symbols that help individuals to communicate, interpret, and evaluate as a member of society. Leo, Benett and Hartel (2005:34) refer to culture as the dynamic process that occurs within a given group which creates the cognitive map of beliefs, values, meaning and attitudes that drive perception, thought, reasoning, actions, responses and interactions.

Craig and Douglas (2006:323) state that culture includes all spheres of life such as knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits obtained by consumers in society. It includes factors such as religion, education and dress code. For the success of any firm intending to enter a new market or modify the existing one, it would be vital that such organisation should research the culture of the target market when conceptualising the business ideas. In similar vein, cultural beliefs and values intervene in the economic decisions of consumers (Kamaruddin & Kamaruddin, 2009:37).

Kim, Forsythe, Gu and Moon (2002:485) are of the view that consumer's needs and desires are shaped by their values which are influenced by the society they belong to. Therefore, to understand the behaviour of people, some knowledge of the influence of cultural norms and value is necessary (Kamaruddin & Kamaruddin, 2009:37). Moreover research reveals that culture is a significant determinant of a person's wants and behaviours, since human behaviour is largely learned (Livette, 2006:465).

Stoltman, Morgan and Aglin (1999:145-146) note that when consumers are confronted with disconfirmed expectations regarding various aspects of shopping situations they are flexible and adapt their behaviour to the situation. Other researchers express different views about culture. Luna and Gupta (2001:46) suggest that culture will have an influence on the way the consumer views the world and this view equates culture to collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. Researchers have also attempted to focus on subculture because they acknowledge that the market is saturated by culture of different ethnic groups, and this can also assist them to appeal to a specific market segment (Holt, 2002:71). Lamb, Hair and McDaniel (2000:159) refer to subculture as comparisons of culture and this raises the question of what units are compared. The units of comparisons include nationalities, religion, racial group and geographic regions, age, values and customs (Kotler, 2000:161).

Burgh-Woodman and Brace-Govan (2002:193) established that the presence of subculture across a variety of disciplines has been well established and subsequently investigated for many years. The authors further state that subculture endures in artistic, musical, cultural, sociological, anthropological and intellectual spheres. In the similar vein, Lamb *et al.* (2000:159) revealed that in the essence of marketing, subculture also features prominently. Peppas (2006:93) has argued that many subcultures can make up important market segments and marketers often design products and marketing programmes tailored to the consumer's needs. Earlier work on subcultures has noted that groups maintain a sense of identity and solidarity by defining themselves in opposition to some definition of the mainstream (Tocci, 2007:3). In support of this view, Schofield and Schmidt (2005:311) noted that gay and lesbian consumers constitute lucrative markets that have emerged recently.

Consumers from these markets have been found to be more brand and fashion conscious than their heterosexual peers (Schofield & Schmidt, 2005:311). Lomas (2007:82) has noted that gay and lesbian history texts have been useful in establishing the role that fashion apparel has played in sexual orientation and identity. The author further suggested that prior to the mid-twentieth century, men's dress was very rigid and prescriptive, influenced more by class and social status than sexuality.

With regard to geographical subculture, Chaudhuri and Haldar (2005:6) suggested that the characteristics of the study of consumer behaviour revolve around the notion of regional differences in consumption patterns. Furthermore, the authors hypothesised that geographic subcultures can be an important determinant of both consumption and non-consumption behaviours. It is suggested that the regional difference is due to a combination of the political traditions and social orientation manifested in the regional cultures. The study undertaken by Phau and Leng (2008:70) found that most consumers prefer foreign brands compared to domestic fashion apparel if it is more expensive, luxurious and fashionable. Johnson (1989:291) has reported that Blacks support brands, products or shopping places which are associated with Black culture.

From the above review it seems that culture may symbolize the values, ideas, attitudes and beliefs of a particular society. In addition, it may also shape the behaviour of that society, as well as the types of clothing that may be purchased. Moreover, it can also influence the decisions made by consumers in their purchases (Singh, 2006:174). In contrast, subculture can be associated with individuals who share distinct attitudes, values, beliefs and customs which are unique, relative to others. As a result, these individuals tend to have homogenous needs with regard to several products such as groceries, furniture and fashion apparel.

2.3.10 Family and household factors influencing consumer decision making

A family has been identified as an important decision-making and consumption unit due to the large quantity of products and services that form part of the everyday life of a household (Shoham & Dalakas, 2005:152). Therefore, how a family makes decisions as a consumption unit has attracted the interest of marketers and marketing research over the years.

Levy and Kwai-Choi Lee (2004:321) defined a family as a group or two of more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption and residing together as a household. Many studies examined family decision-making by looking at the relative influence of husband and wives in the different consumption decisions. Gradually, this has shifted to also include children's influence.

Among others, family, peers and media appear to have the greatest impact on children's consumer decision-making skills and behaviour (Wimalasiri, 2004:274-275). During the periods between the 1940s and 1950s children were not considered consumers in their own right but only extensions of their parents' purchasing power (Wimalasiri, 2004:274-275). However, reports in marketing literature in the past 15-20 years advised retailers to target children as a key marketing influence with child-friendly amenities, colourful and playful display and even credit cards for children (Caruana & Vasallo, 2008:55). Young people are eager to consume and are conscious of their experience (Bertha, 2005:2). The study undertaken by McNeal and Yeh (1997:45) estimates that there are currently more than 800 million children, ages 4 to 12 years, in the industrialized world who make purchases for their own needs and wants, once they have been socialised into the consumer role.

Sidin, Zawawi, Yee, Busu and Hamzah (2004:381) propose that family members may have different roles to play in making decisions within the family. They may initiate demand or contribute information and they may decide on where to buy, which brand and style to buy, how to pay for the product, how to consume the product and what benefit to expect from the product (Sidin *et al.*, 2004:381). A study by Norgaard, Bruns, Christensen and Mikkelsen, (2007:198) found that a family can have an influence on an individual's purchasing decision with regard to fashion apparel. Levy and Kwai-choi Lee (2004:321) noted that since the family is the crucial decision-making unit, the interaction between family members is likely to be more significant than those of smaller groups, such as friends or colleagues. McCarthy and Perreault (1993:213) are of the view that a husband and wife may jointly agree on many important purchases, but sometimes they may have strong personal preferences. However, such individual preferences may change if the other spouse has different priorities. Individuals who influence the purchasing decision in the family will vary from one family to another, depending on a nature of product. For example, children can influence a decision to purchase sweets, movie or toys, while a teenager can influence a decision to purchase fashion apparel and the dad or mum can influence a decision to purchase a car (Martinex & Polo, 1999:461).

Drake-Bridges and Burgess (2010:625) regard parents as the first and most important agents for consumer socialisation of children. According to Fan and Li (2010:171) consumer socialisation is defined as “processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the market place.”

The response of parents to children’s attempts at influencing family purchases, acts as reinforcements to children’s future behaviour as consumers (Caruana & Vasallo, 2003:56). Drake-Bridges and Burgess (2010:625) have revealed that children and adolescents first look to parents for social cues, then as children age, peers become more and more influential on decisions including apparel purchases.

Research evidence has also shown that children’s age is an important factor with regard to the child’s influence on family decision making (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2008:14). In support of this view Gram (2007:20) verifies this with empirical evidence by reporting that older children have more influence than young children. This may be attributed to the fact that older children have greater cognitive ability as relative to the young children (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2008:14). The study by Shoham and Dalakas (2006:345) shown that older teens have more influence than younger teens on household purchases of personal computers, cell phones, and deodorant, whereas younger teens have more influence than older teens on video games, ice cream, toys and vacation travel. In addition, the smaller number of children in families means that each child gets more attention from parents (Wut & Chou, 2009:146).

2.3.11 Social influence factors influencing consumer decisions through role models

Past research studies have investigated the influence of social class factors on consumer decision-making styles on fashion apparel. According to Lancaster and Reynolds (1998:45) role models are described as people to whom an individual looks up as a basis for self-appraisal or as a source of personal standard. Martin and Bush (2000:443) refer to a role model as anyone an individual comes into contact with, either directly or indirectly, who potentially can influence consumers’ decisions or behaviours. These definitions of role models allow a variety of individuals to be considered as role models, including teachers, peers, sibling, entertainers and athletes, while adopting their own set of self-image, lifestyle and consumption patterns (Martin & Bush, 2000:442).

According to Makgosa and Mahube (2007:65), social influence is viewed as consisting of three types of influences including informational, value expressive and utilitarian influence. Information influence is perceived as enhancing one's knowledge of the environment and/or one's ability to cope with the environment. Value expressive influence is concerned with an individual's motive to enhance his/her self-concept. Utilitarian influence is when an individual complies with the preference or expectation of others to avoid punishments or to achieve rewards.

Consumer researchers have attempted to examine the different types of role models to aid retailers to choose appropriate individuals to endorse their products. Schiffman and Kannuk (2008:321-325) outline five major types of role model appeals as follows: celebrity, expert, common-man, executive and spokes-character appeals. The celebrity is a widely-recognised or notable person who commands a high degree of public and media attention, for example movie stars, TV personalities, popular entertainers and sports icons. The expert is a person who, because of his/her occupation, special training or experience is in a unique position to help the prospective consumers to evaluate a product or service that an advertisement promotes. The common man is a reference appeal that uses satisfied consumers to testify their satisfaction about a company's offerings. The executive person, such as senior management personnel, can be used to promote the products to the consumers. Finally spokes-characters present some idealised images about products that are being promoted by the companies.

Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003:370) are of the opinion that role models provide consumers with a means of comparing and evaluating their own brand attitudes and purchasing behaviour. Lancaster and Reynolds (1998:45) state that role models affect consumer purchases because they influence the information, attitudes and aspiration levels that help set a consumer's standard. Social influences arise through the personal interaction between two or more individuals. For instance, a lecturer may influence a student to purchase fashion apparel. Sidin, Abdul-Rahman, Abdul-Rashid, Othman and Abu-Bakar (2008:7) argue that consumers appear to be influenced by outside interest in product decisions that they perceive to be of importance to them. It is evident from the above discussion that various factors influence consumer decision-making.

The consumer typologies and consumer decision-making styles are briefly undertaken through a review of research which follows in the next section.

2.4 CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING STYLES

Consumer decision-making style refers to the mental orientation or approach that a consumer has in making choices (Fan & Xiao, 1998:276; Wang, Siu & Hui, 2004:241), which involves the cognitive and affective components of a purchase process (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:96). Studies undertaken by Gonen and Ozmete (2006:27) and Fan and Xiao (1998:276) identified three ways to characterise consumer decision-making style namely psychographic/lifestyles, consumer characteristics and consumer typology. These consumer classifications that can be used to profile consumers in decision-making are described in the following section.

2.4.1 Psychographic/ lifestyle approach

The psychographic/lifestyle approach makes use of consumers' different personality characteristics, attitudes, opinions, values, activities, interests, choices in order to segment consumers in the market (Zeng, 2008:14). Vyncke (2002:446) defines market segmentation as the process of dividing the total market into several relatively homogenous groups with similar product or service interests, with similar needs and desires. The psychographic/lifestyle approach identifies characteristics related to consumer behaviour based on general needs and values associated with the consumer's general activities (Leo *et al.*, 2005:33).

In general, the focus of marketers has been on identifying the broad trends that influence how consumers live, work and play (Kucukemiroglu, 1999:473). The author further states that the psychographic/lifestyle approach allows a population to be viewed as distinct individuals with feeling and tendencies, addressed in comparable groups (segments) to enable marketers to tailor strategies to fulfil the target market needs (Kucukemiroglu, 1999:473). Orth *et al.* (2004:98) reported that consumer researchers use psychographic/lifestyle to predict the buying patterns of consumers for fashion apparel in the market.

The study by Lastovicka, Murry and Joachimsthaler (1990:11) suggests that psychographic/lifestyle segmentation can play a vital role in assisting the apparel marketers when planning the development of advertising and marketing strategies.

2.4.2 Consumer characteristics approach

The consumer characteristics approach focused on the cognitive and affective orientations towards purchasing in consumer decision-making (Leo *et al.*, 2005:34). According to Anderson and Golden (1984:7) cognitive style is customarily defined as “one’s characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling and perceiving.” Wu (2003:37) describes consumer background characteristics as the innately stable characteristics of a consumer’s life based on the consumer’s cultural background values, demographics, psychological and social attitudes. Wu (2003:39) further suggests that these are the characteristics of a consumer’s life that cannot be changed, but marketers should take them into account when devising a firm’s strategies. This approach relates to consumers’ general predisposing towards the act of shopping and describing mental orientation of consumers in their decision-making process (Kamaruddin & Kamaruddin, 2009:39).

The consumer characteristics approach has been widely acknowledged by consumer researchers as the most easily explained and powerful construct because it focuses on cognitive and affective aspects of consumer behaviour (Sproles & Kendall, 1986:268-269). However, Baltas and Argouslidis (2007:330) suggest that consumer characteristics have little power to explain what influences consumers to buy products. In support of this view, in their studies they found that consumer characteristics are not indicative of preferences for store brands or no-name brands.

2.4.3 Consumer typology approach

Consumer typology defines general consumer types, such as price-oriented shoppers, problem-solving shoppers, impulse shoppers and convenience shoppers (Zeng, 2008:14-15). Leo *et al.* (2005:33) are of the view that the consumer typology approach seeks to categorise consumers into groups or types that are related to retail patronage. The consumer typology is also associated with shopping orientation (Gehrt & Shim, 1998:35).

Shopping orientations are shoppers' style that places particular emphasis on certain activities (Gehrt & Shim, 1998:35). Shopping orientation is recognized as a complex social, cultural and economic phenomenon (Lee, 1998:2-3). Hence, the examination of a comprehensive relationship among key variables in determining shopping orientations would provide diagnostic value to retailers in determining market segmentation (Lee, 1998:3). The basic premise of shopping orientation is that shoppers with different orientations have different market behaviours, including different needs for information source and different store preferences (Gehrt & Shim, 1998:36).

The typology approach was adopted in the current study because it provides a good base for additional comparative work, as it is a robust method which can be used to compare the results for the current study with prior research studies on consumer decision-making style (Mishra, 2010:49). In addition, the typology approach was used in this study for investigation because it is a powerful technique/scale to explore consumers' mental orientation towards shopping (Hou & Lin, 2004:7). The typologies identified through research are reviewed below.

The first taxonomy of shoppers was offered by Westbrook and Black (1985:79), whose interest was in understanding the motivational-based shopper typology on adult female shoppers of department stores in Tucson and Arizona. Four typologies were identified, namely, the economic consumer, the personalising consumer, the ethical consumer and the apathetic consumer. Economic shoppers were characterised by a careful approach to shopping, giving heightened attention to merchandise assortment, price and quality. Personalising shoppers appeared to seek personal relationships with retail personnel, while ethical shoppers were willing to sacrifice lower prices and wider selections of goods in order to behave consistently with moralistic beliefs. Finally, the apathetic shopper shops largely out of necessity, with the shopping activity holding no intrinsic interest. In contrast to the foregoing typology, the structure of which was largely determined by empirical observation of consumer decision-making styles on the comparison between United States and Korean young consumers, Hafstrom, Chae and Chung (1992:148-149) examined the taxonomy of shoppers, theirs being perfectionism, value consciousness, brand consciousness, novelty-fad-fashion consciousness, shopping avoider time-saver satisfier and confused support-seeking decision maker.

Perfectionism consumers seek the very best quality products, have high standards and expectations for consumer goods and are concerned with the function and quality of products.

Value-conscious consumers are low price conscious, look for the best value for the money and are likely to be comparison shoppers. Brand-conscious consumers are oriented toward expensive and well-known national brands and feel price is an indicator of quality. Novelty-fad-fashion conscious consumers gain excitement and pleasure from seeking out new things and are conscious of the new fashions and fads. Shopping avoider-time save-satisfier consumers avoid shopping, make shopping trips rapidly and they may forego some quality for time and convenience. Finally, the confused support-seeking decision-maker finds the marketplace confusing; they view brands as alike and seek help from friends (Hafstrom *et al.*, 1992:148-149) to make decisions.

In contrast, Bae (2004:4-6) distinguished eight characteristics of shoppers typology: perfectionistic conscious, brand conscious, novelty/fashion conscious, recreational/hedonic, price conscious/value for money, impulsiveness/carelessness, confused by overchoice and habit/loyal consumers. The perfectionistic/high-quality conscious consumers are aware of the desire for high quality products and the need to make the best or perfect choice versus buying the first product or brand that is available.

The brand conscious consumer has the desire to purchase well-known national brands, higher priced brands and/or the most advertised brands. The novelty/fashion conscious consumer can be defined as a shopper who is aware of new styles, changing fashions and attractive styling, as well as the desire to buy something exciting. The recreational/hedonic conscious consumers are as shoppers who enjoy shopping as a leisure time activity. The price conscious/consumers aspire towards the best value, buying at sale prices or the lowest price. The impulsive/careless consumers can be described as shoppers who focus on making impulsive, unplanned and careless purchases.

The confusion by overchoice consumer feels confused about product choices because of a proliferation of brands, stores and consumer information. Finally, the habitual/brand loyalty consumers are described as consumers who have favourite brands and their buying habits reveal that they consistently use the same store over time (Bae, 2004:4-6).

In summary, consumers display different decision-making styles, based upon their individual personalities and characteristics (Bae, 2004:6). They may have a unique focus when they enter a store and shop. Some consumers consider a good price and trendy fashion, while other are interested in brand names with high quality. Depending upon what they want and need, consumers customise their decision-making styles. Consumer confusion, however, often takes over when they encounter other choices immediately prior to making a specific selection.

From the above it seems that there is diversity in consumer typologies. However, this diversity appears to be a result of researchers using different bases for conceptualising shopping orientation and the diversity of the retail experience and product class researched (McDonald, 1993:57).

In the next section common general characteristics of Generation Y consumers are briefly discussed.

2.5 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GENERATION Y CONSUMERS

Ma and Niehm (2006:621) propose that retailers need to understand the characteristics of Generation Y customers in order to develop relevant marketing and service strategies aimed at building long-term relationships. Much is known about Generation Y consumers' style and brand preferences, but little is known about their desired or expected service when purchasing apparel. A review of both the popular and the available academic literature attributes a number of very specific characteristics to Generation Y buyers.

Pickren and Roy (2007:1), Shaw and Fairhurst (2008:368) asserted that Generation Y are described as diverse, individualistic, optimistic, realistic, multi-taskers, forward thinkers, “techno-savvy” and at the same time socially active, collaborative, team-oriented and used to having structure in their lives as a result of the type of parenting they have received. In support of this view Dias (2003:79) described Generation Y as happy, upbeat and confident and they are cooperative and team players. Armour (1999:01) is of the opinion that Generation Y are smart, brash and they may wear “flip-flops” to the office or listen to iPods at their desk.

Partridge and Hallam (2006:406) describe Generation Y as Echo Boomers, the Nexters, Millennials and the Nintendo Generation. The following section discusses the common attributes that are usually associated with Generation Y consumers in order to place this segment of the market in perspective.

2.5.1 Generation Y are known as Y-ers

It has been found that Generation Y have associated their life with technology since it has shaped the way the digital generation learns and the way they process information (Partridge & Hallam, 2006:405-406; Martin, 2005:41). Although the technology they grew up with has become increasingly more complex, it makes life much easier for them (Martin, 2005:41). Generation Y continually customise how they gather information and they become curious not only about one's culture, mission and goals, products, services and customers, compensation and benefits, but also about the technology used to support them (Martin, 2005:41-42). Goldenberg (2005:1) suggests that Generation Y have grown accustomed to using the Internet as their main way to get news and entertainment. Myron (2005:12) found that Generation Y have grown up in a digital world where the Internet has empowered them to become a generation of fact finders, making them fiercely independent and not brand loyal.

The research undertaken by Oblinger and Oblinger (2006:8) revealed that members of Generation Y rely on computers, the Internet, online resources, for much of the time doing anything for them, and most have never known life without the Internet. The study by Gross (2006:58) revealed that members of Generation Y consider the mobile phone as a symbol that represents the choice, flexibility, freedom, and reliance upon technology that are the hallmarks of the Gen-Y lifestyle.

2.5.2 Generation Y and education

Partridge and Hallan (2006:408) found that the majority of Generation Y, inspired by their parents, significantly value education. Generation Y recognizes that the key to success lies in advanced learning. In addition, Billings and Kowalski (2004:104) have shown that Generation Y students enjoy being mentored by the older generations.

Patridge and Hallam (2006:405-406) state that the members of Generation Y are a determined and motivated group that overwhelmingly believe that academic achievement is the ticket to acceleration in life and they see university as an opportunity for growth intellectually and spiritually. The study by Holliday and Li (2004:357) found that Generation Y are heavy users of the world wide web for class assignments and that technology is a significant factor in their education and personal lives.

The different characteristics and attitude to career development attributed to Generation Y suggest that the Generation Y learner's requirements and expectations of the learning environment are different from their predecessors (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008:369). Much of the research into this generation's learning style focuses on their experiences as university undergraduates although similar observations about Generation Y's learning preferences in the work place exist in the popular literature.

Patridge and Hallam (2006:404-406) found out that the members of Generation Y also see themselves as consumers of education and seek customisation and choice in their educational offerings. Kipnis and Childs (2004:26) add that Generation Y students require technology, entertainment and excitement in their learning and communication preferences on campus. Patridge and Hallam (2006:404) have argued that the members of Generation Y are active and visual learners who enjoy learning through social interactions, such as the social nature of Net Geners as well as their desire for experiential learning.

2.5.3 Generation Y and personality

Research undertaken by Cummings (2007:285) revealed that members of Generation Y consider themselves as special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressurised and achieving. Interestingly, Dias (2003:79) has found that members of Generation Y are one of the most watched groups by the media in recent times. Leventhal (1997:277) established that most members of Generation Y are likely to establish their own business after retirement in order to sustain their life and their families and supplement their pension funds. Jonas-Dwyer and Pospisil (2004:195) describe their characteristics as sociable, optimistic, talented, well-educated, collaborative, open-minded, influential and achievement oriented.

2.5.4 Generation Y and spending patterns

Dias (2003:78) found that Generation Y have comparatively powerful aggregate spending patterns. Further, Dias (2003:78) noted that, based on the data reported by US Census Bureau (2000). The Generation Y consumer was estimated to spend about \$25 billion of their own money, and influenced another \$187 million dollars of spending. However, the top three purchases for Gen-Y include clothing, entertainment and food (Martin & Turley, 2004:465). Furthermore, the wealthiest members of the Generation Y consumption group are those 19-25 years old, many of who are employed in either part-time or full- time jobs.

Parker, Hermans and Schaefer (2004:176) found that Generation Y value fashion more than any other age group. Generation Y consumers are very likely to spend their cash as quickly as they acquire it, usually on consumer goods and personal services (Martin & Turley, 2004:466). Grant and Stephen (2005:451) found that Generation Y have more money and wield more economic clout than their predecessors. The study by McNeal and Ji (1999:346) revealed that some younger Generation Y consumers enter the marketplace and make purchases for themselves with their own money, but which has been provided for them by their parents and relatives. Grant and Stephen (2005:452) have reported that the highest demand for clothing comes from the highly fashion conscious 9-14 year olds. The main market growth is from the fashion conscious 14 to 18 year olds, which has benefited sales of designer clothing, especially for girls.

2.5.5 Participation patterns of Generation Y consumers in sports

Lim and Turco (1998:4) have revealed that Generation Y has been experiencing a decline in overall sports participation basically due to declining participation in traditional fitness-related activities. Oblinger and Oblinger (2005:213) argue that today's youth are relatively inactive and often prefer to watch TV and surf the Internet rather than engage in physical activity. The study by Bennett and Lachowetz (2004:239) found that members of Generation Y consume action sports more than any preceding generation. They engage in individualistic and alternative sports such as skateboarding, BMX biking, surfing, street luge, wakeboarding and motor-cross.

2.6 SYNOPSIS

This chapter has provided an overview of the literature relevant to the study. The conceptual framework for the study was developed by integrating various aspects of consumer decision making and consumer decision-making styles. Consumers seem to follow certain stages when confronted with decision-making situations and it appears that they cannot move to the second or third stage before the initial stages are addressed. It also appears that individual determinants of consumer buying patterns may predict the real purchase behaviour, as described by psychological processes such as learning, perception, motivation, personality, social class, culture, subculture and attitudes, as well as family influences (Susilawati & Anunu, 2001:2). Literature suggests that consumer decision-making styles can be classified into a lifestyle approach, a consumer characteristics approach or a consumer typology approach. The most widely used approach is through a classification using the typology approach.

Consumers may however also reflect various traits or characteristics when they are shopping for fashion apparel. A significant proportion of Generation Y uses the Internet and a majority uses it for educational purposes. The Internet provides members of Generation Y with the interactivity and depth they crave. However, their participation in sports activity seems to be on the decline, save for various forms of action sport.

In the next chapter a detail description of the research design and methodology will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided a review of the literature on the consumer decision-making process. An overview of the consumer decision-making styles was also provided. The factors influencing consumer buying decisions was briefly outlined. A description of the characteristics of Generation Y consumers in the market was also undertaken.

This chapter focuses on the design and research method utilised in the study. Methodology is an essential part of research in order to find answers to the research objectives that initiate the research and therefore comprises a very important part of any study. In addition, the procedure followed to collect, capture, process, and analyse data is presented. The research approach used in the study is presented below.

3.2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES

According to Martin and Guerin (2006:170) research methods are defined as the methods of data gathering. Murphy (1995:32) is of the view that methodology is the way in which one makes sense of the object of enquiry. Weischedel, Matears and Deans (2005:66) distinguished between two research approaches, namely quantitative and qualitative studies.

Qualitative research establishes the meaning of relationships in terms of influences and actions (Murphy, 1995:32). It can be used to identify the parameters of a research question or problem and can also be used to develop in-depth information about the nature of interaction (Martin & Guerin, 2006:173). Qualitative research is a paradigm that seeks to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behaviour, how they interpret, and what their perspectives are on particular issues (Woods, 2006:4).

In quantitative approach, numbers are often what are considered (Martin & Guerin, 2006:173). These numbers are used in inferential statistics formulae to test the relationship between two or more variables. Researchers who use quantitative research employ experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypothetical generalisations which emphasise the measurement and analysis of causal relationship between variables (Golafshani, 2003:597).

The study makes use of a quantitative research approach. The research method was chosen because quantitative research allows the researcher to examine relationships and differences among variables (Golafshani, 2003:597-598).

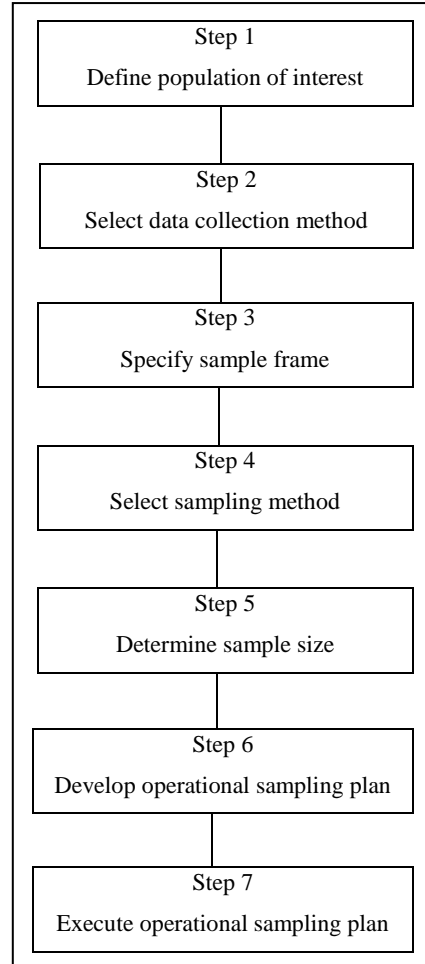
Rozina and Matveev (2002:60) identified the following advantages of quantitative study.

- The research problem is very specific.
- The independent and the dependent variables under investigation are clearly and precisely specified.
- It is easy to follow the original set of research goals, arriving at more objective conclusions, testing hypotheses, and determining the issues of causality.
- It eliminates or minimises the subjectivity of judgment.
- It allows for longitudinal measures of subsequent performance of research subjects.

The steps in the sampling design procedure are provided in Figure 3.1.

3.3 THE SAMPLING DESIGN PROCEDURE

Figure 3.1 Steps used in developing a sampling design procedure.



Source: Tustin, Ligthelm, Martin and Van Wyk (2005:339)

Each step in the sampling design procedure shown in Figure 3.1 is discussed in the section which follows.

3.3.1 The target population

According to Churchill and Iacobucci (2005:321), a target population is defined as the totality of cases that conform to some designated specifications. For the purpose of this study, the population included both males and females, ranging between 16 - 27 years, from Kempton Park.

The reason for such an inclusion in terms of age was based on international research which found that this segment of the population have a high purchasing power with approximately two thirds spent on clothing and almost ten per cent on personal care (Bakewell & Mitchell 2003:97). In addition the study undertaken by Shoham and Dalakas (2003:243) revealed that these individuals within this age category have the mental and cognitive capacities to respond to a questionnaire used.

3.3.2 The sampling frame

Tustin *et al.* (2005:342) define a sample frame as a master list of all the sample units within a population. Shopping malls and shopping centres located within Kempton Park were used as the sampling frame in the absence of a sampling frame. Moreover, the researcher achieved the representative sample by ensuring that respondents visited the store at least twice in the last two months. Research undertaken by Kim and Park (2005:111) revealed that these consumers are likely to possess a great potential in multi-channel retailing for fashion apparel, because they are heavy buyers of clothing and influence other consumers to spend more money on clothing.

3.3.3 The sampling method

A non-probability sampling procedure was used. According to Churchill and Iacobucci (2005:324) non-probability sampling relies on the personal judgement of the researcher rather than chance to select sample elements. Dillon, Madden and Firtle (1990:288) are of the view that the researcher can arbitrarily or consciously decide what elements to include in the sample.

Conversely, in probability sampling each element in the population has a known and equal probability of selection (Lamb *et al.*, 2004:152). Lamb *et al.* (2004:153) further noted that every element is selected independently of every other element and the sample is drawn by a random procedure from a sampling frame. The study used a combination of convenience and judgement sampling techniques (Dillon *et al.*, 1990:288). These sampling methods were adopted, because it was economical and less time-consuming for the researcher to collect data.

3.3.4 The sample size

The study used a sample size of 250 Generation Y consumers because this was adequate to make a good representation of consumers who shop at Kempton Park Shopping Mall. The sample size is consistent with past studies conducted among Generation Y consumers as shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Past related studies which used similar sample size

Authors	Year	Country	Sample size
Durvasula, Lysonski & Andrews	1993:57	New Zealand	210
Kim	2003:30	Korea	245
Bakewell & Mitchell	2004:228	England	245
Kwan, Yeung & Au	2008:197	China	264
Drake-Bridges & Burges	2010:627	USA	206

Source: Durvasula *et al.* (1993:57); Kim (2003:30); Bakewell & Mitchel (2004:228); Kwan, Yeung & Au (2008:197); Drake-Bridges & Burges (2010:627).

3.3.5 Data collection and measuring instrument

The study employed a self-administered survey to conduct the study. Tustin *et al.* (2005:153) revealed that a survey is more flexible and opportunities for interviewer cheating are greatly reduced. The study used structured questionnaires to collect data and the method was chosen for its versatility, as well as the accuracy of the data, since every respondent was asked the same questions (Boyd, Westfall & Stasch, 1989:212).

In addition Malhotra (2006:508-509) is of the view that the researcher, in a structured questionnaire, specifies in detail what is to be observed and how the measurements are to be recorded. A structured questionnaire reduces the potential for observer bias and enhances the reliability of the data. The questionnaire developed was based on closed-ended and Likert scales adapted from previous research studies (Leo *et al.*, 2005:45-46, Lysonski, *et al.*, 1993:13; Hafstrom *et al.*, 1992:149-150; Oh & Fiorito, 2002:213; Gutman & Mills, 1982:72-73, Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:102, Parker, Hermans & Schaefer, 2004:181, McDonald, 1993:61, Fan & Xiao, 1998:283, Sproles & Kendall, 1986:268). The questions were developed on a 5-point Likert scale, anchored with 5 denoting strongly agree, 3 denoting moderately agree and 1 denoting strongly disagree.

Section A consisted of 45 questions related to consumer decision-making styles. Section B comprised seven demographic variables namely, gender, age, marital status, shopping companion, shopping frequency, highest qualification and race.

The shoppers were interviewed after they had completed the majority of their shopping for the day so that valid measures of the time spend “could be elicited” (Dhurup, 2008:64; Da silva, Davies & Naude, 2002:1332). The survey took place at various times of the day and on various days of the week. Undergraduate third year marketing students who were trained in fieldwork interviews conducted the interviews. They were also monitored on-site by the researcher.

3.4 PRE- TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Maholtra (2006:319), pre-testing is the trial run of the questionnaires on a small sample of respondents to identify and eliminate potential problems. While preparing for a research instrument to be used to collect data, there are several mistakes that cannot be easily identified before the actual field work. Conducting a pre-testing study gives an advanced warning to the researcher about where the main research could fail, where research protocols may be followed and even whether the proposed methods or instrument are appropriate or complicated (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

Bryman and Bell (2007:273) noted that pre-testing has a role in ensuring the research instruments as a whole functions well in order to eliminate variation in respondents' understanding and interpretation of the questionnaire in terms of ambiguity. The questionnaire was pre-tested with 20 respondents. Thereafter changes were made to the questionnaire with specific reference to wording, sequence and language.

3.5 PILOT TEST

Lindsey (1999:52) defines a pilot study as a small version of the full study. The study was pilot tested with 50 respondents. The pilot study was initially undertaken to ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire. After the pilot study, changes were made to the questionnaire in order to prepare the main survey instrument.

3.6 DATA PREPARATION

Field workers were instructed on how to deal with field editing for uncompleted questionnaires while the interviews were still in progress. According to Maholtra (2006:429-430) editing is the review of the questionnaires with the objectives of increasing accuracy and precision. Tustin *et al.* (2005:457) define coding as a technical process whereby codes are assigned to the respondents' answer prior to their tabulation. The code includes an indication of the column position (field) and data record it will occupy. For example, gender of respondents may be coded as 1 for females and 2 for males.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

Martin, Loubser and Van Wyk (1996:44) state that ethics deal with the development of moral standards that can be applied to situations in which there can be actual or potential harm to an individual or a group. According to Burns and Bush (1998:38) ethics are defined as a field of inquiry into determining what behaviours are deemed appropriate under certain circumstances as prescribed by codes of behaviour that are set by society.

The following code of ethics was used by the researcher during the survey.

- The researcher requested for permission to have respondents' time to complete the questionnaire.
- The researcher informed each respondent about the purpose of the survey.
- The questionnaire did not contain any questions detrimental to the self-interest of respondents.
- The researcher did not mislead any respondent who participated in the study.
- The researcher assured the respondents of anonymity and confidentiality.
- The researcher thanked every respondent who participated in the survey.

3.8 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The following statistical analysis was used in the study in order to draw conclusions based on the empirical research findings. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the study. Descriptive statistics were used in assessing the composition of the sample and inferential statistics were employed in order to make inferences about the population.

3.8.1 Descriptive statistics

Churchill and Brown (2004:545) describe descriptive statistics as the distribution of responses on a variable, including measures of central tendency such as mean, median and mode measures of the spread or variation in the distribution such as range, variance and standard deviation. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter (2007:194), frequency distribution is defined as a graphical or tabular representation in which the values of a variable are plotted against the number of times of occurrences. Frequency distribution for categorical data is easy to produce since the numbers represent categories and the researcher has to count the number of people in each category and represent this graphically. The frequency distribution indicates how 'popular' the different values of the variable are among the unit of analysis (Tustin *et al.*, 2005:523).

Frequency distributions are used to analyse the survey data in the current study as shown in section B of the questionnaire. The data will be presented by means of pie charts, bar charts and tables. The descriptive analysis is reported in section 4.3.

3.8.1.1 Mean

The arithmetic mean is the sum of a set of values divided by their number. It is also an approximation measure of central location for metric data (interval and ratio data) only. The means were computed for each factor which was ranked in terms of their importance. In addition, means were computed to ascertain differences between consumers who are confused by overchoice and the various age categories. The means are reported in section 4.5.

3.8.2. Correlation Analysis

According to Maholtra and Birks (2007:573) correlation is defined as the simplest way to understand the association between two metric variables. Relationship is a consistent and systematic link between two or more variables. The study adopted Pearson correlation coefficient to measure the degree of linear association of two categories. Correlation ranges from -1.00 to +1.00, and the value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while +1.00 represents a perfect positive correlation. The correlation analysis is reported in section 4.8.

3.8.3 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed variables in terms of fewer unobserved variables called factors (Martin *et al.*, 1996:369). The information gained about the interdependencies can be used later to reduce the set of variables in a dataset. Maull, Tranfield and Maull (2003:609) state that the purpose of factor analysis is for detecting underlying patterns of correlation in data, i.e., for grouping the variables and for reducing a large number of variables to a smaller number of components. For these reasons the study adopted a factor analysis technique with principal components analysis and varimax rotation (Gonen & Ozmete, 2006:28). In line with principal components analysis, the study utilised eigenvalues, scree plot and per centage of variance for extraction of factors.

Moffett and McAdam (2009:47) suggest that eigenvalues techniques imply that only those factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 are included in the model, and these variables signify factors with variance greater than one. Thus, any factor with eigenvalues less than 1.0 will not be included in the model.

A scree plot was used to determine the number of factors to be extracted. Analysis of variance was also undertaken in order to show that the cumulative per centage of variance extracted by the factors reached a satisfactory level. Malhotra and Birks (2007:654) recommend that a satisfactory level should account for at least 60% of the variance.

The next step in the process is to calculate factor loadings, presenting the significance of each variable within the factor category. Costello and Osborne (2005:05) are of the view that factor loadings value of + 0.30 is considered significant, while a factor loadings of + 0.50 is considered very significant. Therefore, within the context of this study, the factors were considered significant if the factor loadings were above the value of + 0.50.

3.8.4 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to examine the differences among means and used with one or more independent variables (Bradley 2007:336). Maholtra and Birks (2007:544-545) describe analysis of variance as a technique used to examine the differences between groups of responses that are measured on interval or ratio scales which can also be used to test hypotheses concerning means when several populations are considered in a study.

Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2006:527) asserted that this technique cannot identify which pairs of means are significantly different from each other. Moreover, Hair *et al.* (2006: 527) suggest that follow-up, such as Tukey and Bonferroni tests can be used to determine where the mean differences lie. All of these methods involve multiple comparisons or simultaneous assessment of confidence interval estimates of differences between the means, called post-hoc tests. Analysis of variance is reported in section 4.9.

3.9 RELIABILITY

According to Golafshani (2003:598) reliability refers to the extent to which a scale produces consistent results if repeated measurements are made. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:146) define coefficient alpha as a measure of the internal consistency of a measurement/test and it shows the degree to which all the items in a measurement/test measure the same attribute.

Rahman (2001:41) strongly suggests that reliability analysis on measurement instruments in empirical research is essential, because empirically validated scales can be used directly in other studies in the field for different population and for longitudinal studies.

The study made use of the Cronbach alpha technique in establishing the reliability of the instrument. A reliability benchmark value of 0.70 and above was used in the study as suggested by Santos (1999:2). Cronbach alpha statistics were also undertaken on the seven dimensions of consumer decision-making styles to ensure that there were satisfactory levels of internal consistency in terms of reliability. The Cronbach alpha reliability is reported in section 4.10.

3.10 VALIDITY

Validity is the strength of conclusions, inferences or propositions. Joppe (2000:1) defines validity as the “best available approximation to the truth or falsity of a given inferences, proposition or conclusion”. In other words, do the differences in the dependent variable found through experimental manipulations of the independent variables really reflect a cause-effect relationship? Three types of validity tests were considered in this study, namely, content, construct, and discriminant validity.

A measure has content validity if there is general consensus among researchers that the instrument includes items that cover all aspects of the variables measured (Rahman, 2001:41). It is not numerically evaluated but subjectively assessed by researchers. Cooper and Schindler (2001:211) pointed out that if the instrument contains a representative sample of the universe of subject matter of interest, then content validity is deemed to be good. In this study, the pilot study was conducted to perform content validity, after which changes were made to the questionnaire.

Malhotra (2006:286) argues that due to the subjective nature of content validity, it is not sufficient to use it alone. Therefore it is recommended to use more than one method to ensure robust validity in a study.

Construct validity addresses the question of what construct or characteristic the scale is, in fact, measuring (Maholtra 2006:286). A measure is valid when the differences of observed scores reflect true differences on the characteristic one is attempting to measure (Churchill, 1979: 65). Hair *et al.* (2006:279) stated that construct validity can be viewed as the extent to which variables under investigation are completely and accurately identified prior to hypothesizing any functional relationships. The study performed construct validity by computation of the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the scale and sub-dimensions of the scale. In addition factor analysis was also undertaken on each of the seven constructs to determine the per centage of variance that was explained by each factor.

Discriminant validity is determined when a variable does not correlate with other constructs from which it is supposed to differ (Maholtra, 2006:286). It involves demonstrating a lack of correlation among differing constructs. Within the context of this study, discriminant validity was measured by applying Pearson's correlation coefficients. (Refer to section 4.8).

3.11 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter the methodology of the empirical study was described. An appropriate and sound research methodology is essential to the reliability and validity of the conclusion drawn, and recommendations made from the results of the study. The sampling design procedures used to collect the data were briefly outlined. It also provided a brief explanation of the pre-testing, pilot test, ethical issues and data preparation of the study. The statistical methods used to analyse the data of study were also discussed. These methods are outlined as follows: descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, factor analysis and analysis of variance. To ensure validity, content, construct and discriminant validity were briefly explained. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was highlighted to ensure that scale demonstrates adequate levels of reliability.

The study made use of ANOVA and post-hoc tests to examine the relationship between the established typologies (dimensions) and age. The next chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the results. The reliability of the pilot study was ascertained followed by an analysis of the findings of the main survey.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an overview of the design and research method used in the study. The procedure followed to collect, capture, process and analyse the data were presented. Issues relating to reliability and validity were also highlighted.

This chapter concentrates on the findings of the empirical study through analysis of the results. The Statistical Packages for Social Sciences, version 17.0 for Windows, was used to analyse the data. In order to ensure internal consistency of the instrument, the reliability of the pilot study is briefly discussed. This is necessary in order to ensure that the questionnaire of the main survey is appropriately constructed and captures essential variables that are relevant to Generation Y decision-making styles. The results of the main survey findings are subsequently discussed. For the main survey a demographic description of the sample is provided. This is followed by an extraction of factors on Generation Y decision-making styles, correlations, analysis of variance, reliability and validity of the measuring instrument. A brief discussion of reliability for the pilot test is provided in the section that follows.

4.2 RELIABILITY OF THE PILOT STUDY

In establishing the reliability of the pilot questionnaire, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the scale (0.905) was computed. A reliability value of 0.70 is an acceptable reliability coefficient but lower thresholds are often reported in the literature, depending upon the nature and context of the study (Santos 1999:2). Generally, higher reliability coefficients are indicative of satisfactory reliability of a research instrument. The sample size of pilot test consisted of 50 respondents.

The initial questionnaire measuring decision-making styles comprised 53 Likert-scaled items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). On examination of the inter-item correlation and alpha of deleted columns, 11 variables from the initial questionnaire were deleted. On closer examination it was found that the variables deleted were not measuring the same construct compared to the remainder of the items in the scale. The resultant deletion of the items on the scale improved the reliability value. Although the total-correlation of items in some of the variables was low, it was decided to retain those variables in order to test the robustness of the scale over a larger sample size. The items deleted from the scale are reported in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 ITEMS DELETED FROM THE SCALE

Item	Item description
A5	I buy fashion apparel at discount prices
A12	I look carefully to find the best value for money when I buy fashion apparel
A25	I would rather wait for others to try new store selling fashion apparel than try it myself
A27	Investigating new brands of fashion apparel is generally a waste of time
A34	I avoid spending time to buy clothing
A38	I make fewer shopping trips because of the high cost of petrol
A39	I almost never buy clothing if it not on sale
A47	All the information I get on different fashion trends confuses me
A48	There is many brands to choose from that I often feel confused
A51	I am impulsive when purchasing fashion apparel
A52	I carefully watch how much I spend

The new scale comprised 45 Likert-scaled items. Three items were added on the new questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in line with previous studies conducted on consumer decision-making styles. The analysis of the main survey results are provided in the next section.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN SURVEY

Of the 250 questionnaires that were distributed, 20 potential respondents refused to participate, resulting in 230 usable questionnaires. The demographic variables are analysed in the next section.

4.3.1 Descriptive statistics of the demographic data

Figure 4.1 reports on the gender distribution in the sample which indicates that out of 230 respondents, 78 were males (34%), and 152 were females (66%).

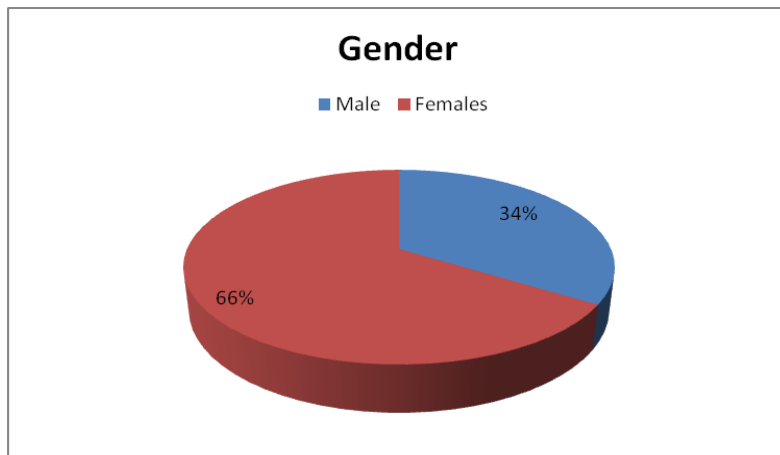


Figure 4.1 Gender

Figure 4.2 reports on the age of respondents. The age group 16-20 years comprised the highest percentage (49%), followed by the age group 21-24 years (35%) and age group 25-27 years (16%) respectively.

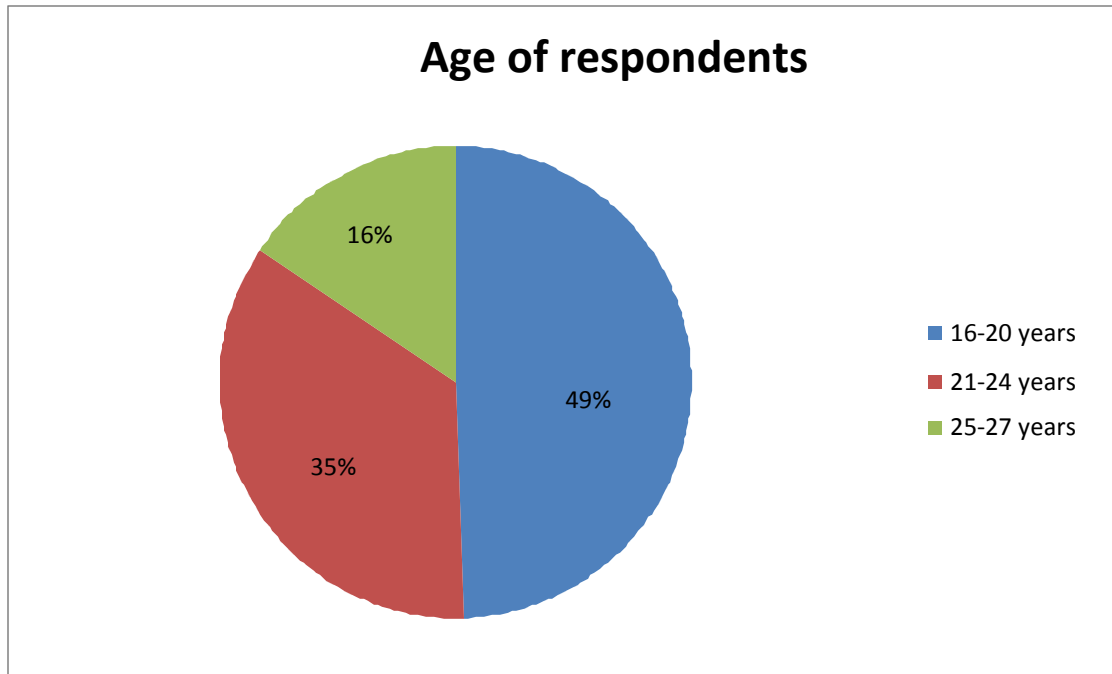


Figure 4.2 Age of respondents

Figure 4.3 reports on the marital status, indicating that the majority of respondents were not married ($n= 221$) constituting 96% of the respondents, while married ($n= 9$) constituted 4% of the sample.

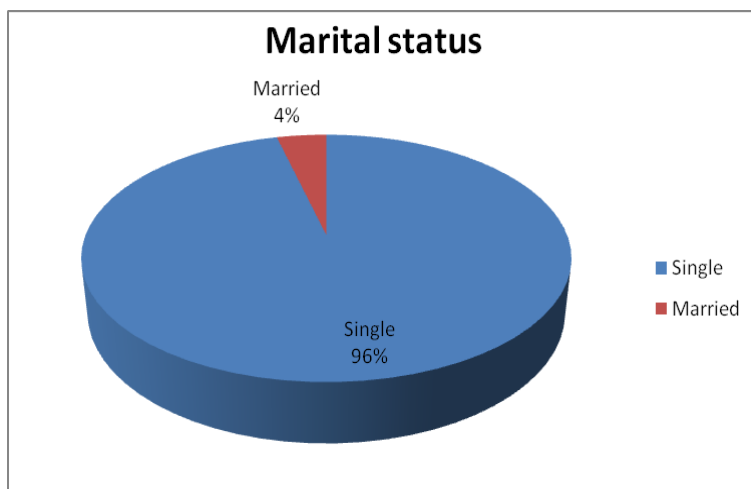


Figure 4.3 Marital status

Figure 4.4 provides an overview of individuals who accompanied respondents when shopping for fashion apparel. Approximately 22 per cent (n=52) of the respondents indicated that they were accompanied by their family members, 33 per cent (n=75) were accompanied by friends, 34 per cent (n=78) reported that they shopped alone, while 9 per cent (n=21) were accompanied by a boyfriend/ girlfriend, and 2 per cent (n=4) reported that they shopped with someone else.

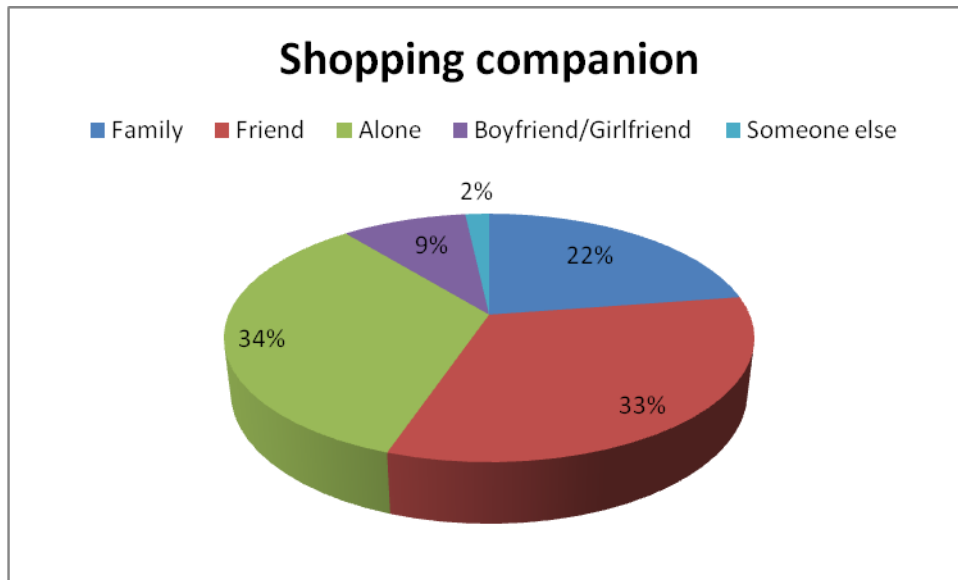


Figure 4.4 Shopping companion

Figure 4.5 reflects the shopping frequency of the respondents. Approximately 64 per cent (n=148) of the respondents shop for fashion apparel twice or less in a month, 27 per cent (n=62) shopped for fashion apparel about 3 to 4 times in a month, 9 per cent (n=20) reported that they shop for fashion apparel more than four times in a month.

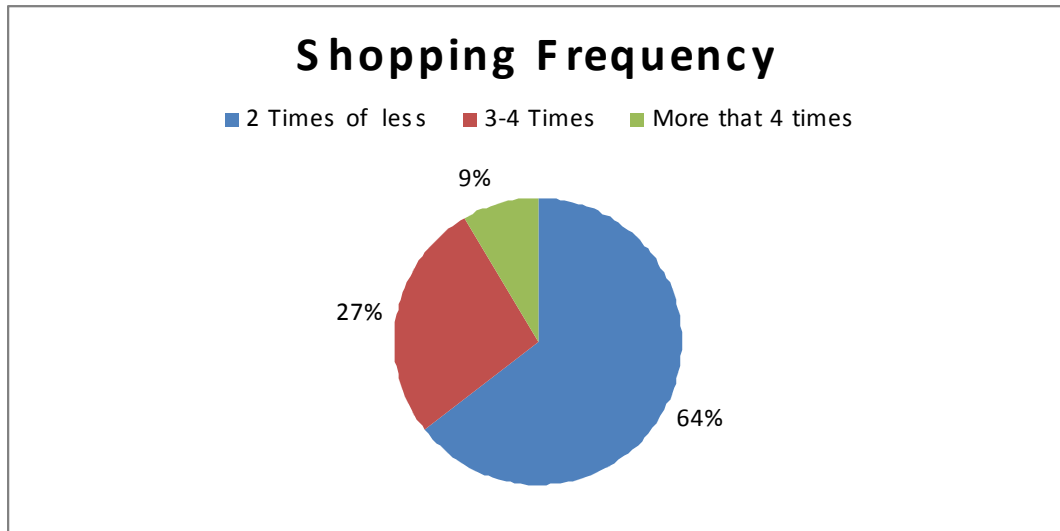


Figure 4.5 Shopping frequency

Figure 4.6 provides information about the qualification of the respondents. Approximately 80 per cent (n=183) of the respondents were in possession of a matriculation certificate, 17 per cent (n=39) were in possession of a diploma, while 1 per cent (n=3) was in possession of postgraduate qualification. Approximately 2 per cent (n=5) were in possession of trade certificates.

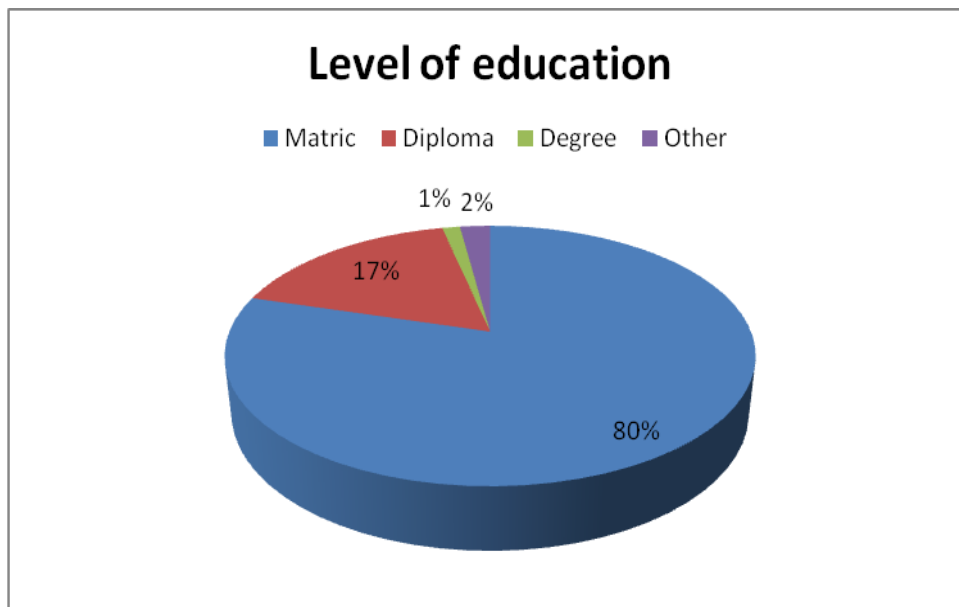


Figure 4.6 Level of education

Figure 4.7 illustrates categories of the respondent population groups. The majority of respondents were African (84%; n=195), followed by the Coloured (6%; n=13), Indian (3%; n=7), and White (6%; n=13). Other population groups constituted (1%; n=2) of the sample.

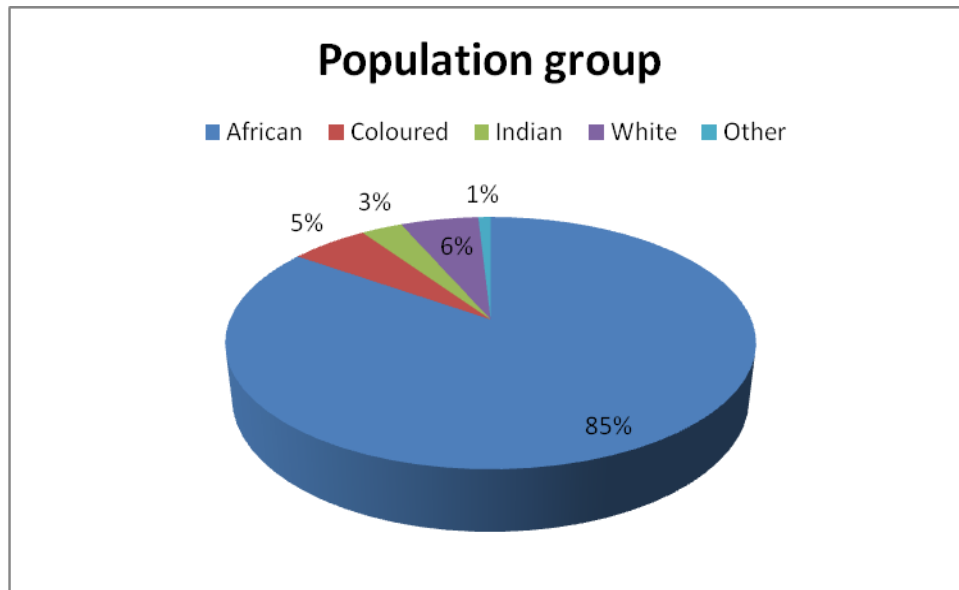


Figure 4.7 Population group

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the variables that constituted generation Y consumer decision-making styles. The exploratory factor analysis is explained below.

4.4 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA)

This section provides an overview of Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sampling adequacy, methods of extraction, naming and interpretation of factors.

4.4.1 The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sampling adequacy

According to Maholtra (2006:612), the KMO measure of sampling adequacy is an index used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. High values between 0.5 and 1.0 indicate that factor analysis is appropriate. Values below 0.5 imply that factor analysis may not be appropriate. The value of the KMO statistic was 0.894 which was also considered satisfactory for factor analysis.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is a test statistic used to examine the hypothesis to determine that the variables are uncorrelated in the population. The approximate chi-square was 6658.514 (df=820.000) at $p < 0.000$, rejecting the hypothesis that variables are uncorrelated. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is considered to be significant. Thus, factor analysis was considered appropriate for the study. Both KMO and Bartlett's tests are exhibited in Table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2 KMO AND THE BARTLETT'S TESTS

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measured of Sampling Adequacy.	0.894
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	6658.514
Degree of freedom	820.000
Significance	0.000

4.4.2 Determination of the number of factors to extract

According to Tustin *et al.* (2005:668) factor analysis is used to find latent variables or factors among observed variables. In other words, if the data contains many variables, factor analysis could be used to reduce the number of variables. Maholtra (2006:609) shows that in marketing research, there may be a large number of variables, most of which are correlated and which must be reduced to a manageable level for the purpose of composite analysis and interpretation.

For factor analysis to be appropriate, the variables must be correlated. Factor analysis with principal component method was conducted on the decision-making style scale items.

The percentage of variance explained, scree plot and eigenvalues were used to determine the number of factors to extract. Each of the above methods used is explained in the section which follows.

4.4.3 Percentage of variance

Maholtra and Birks (2007:654) asserted that percentage of variance approach implies that the number of factors extracted is determined so that the cumulative percentage of variance extracted by the factors reaches a satisfactory level and they recommend that the factors extracted should account for at least 60% of the explained variance. According to Table 4.3 the seven factors account for 70.59 per cent of the variance, which is considered acceptable.

TABLE 4.3 PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE EXPLAINED AND EIGENVALUES

Component	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	11.076	27.014	27.014
2	4.585	11.184	38.198
3	3.804	9.278	47.476
4	3.019	7.365	54.841
5	2.219	5.413	60.254
6	2.137	5.212	65.466
7	2.104	5.131	70.597
8	.732	1.784	72.381
9	.695	1.696	74.077
10	.655	1.598	75.675

4.4.4 Eigenvalues

An eigenvalue represents the amount of variance associated with the factor. Tustin *et al.* (2005: 671) recommend that only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 should be retained and the other factors with an eigenvalues less than 1 should not be included in the measurement model. Based on the values shown in Table 4.3, factors from one to seven are included, because these factors returned eigenvalues above 1.

4.4.5 Scree Plot

According to Tai (2005:194) a scree plot is defined as a plot of the eigenvalues against the number of factors in order of extraction. The shape of the plot is used to determine the number of factors. Typically the plot has a distinct break between the steep slope of factors, with large eigenvalues and a gradual trailing off associated with the rest of the factors. This gradual trailing off is referred to as the scree.

Experimental evidence indicates that the point at which the scree begins to level off denotes the true number of factors. According to Figure 4.8 the scree levels off at approximately after seven factors.

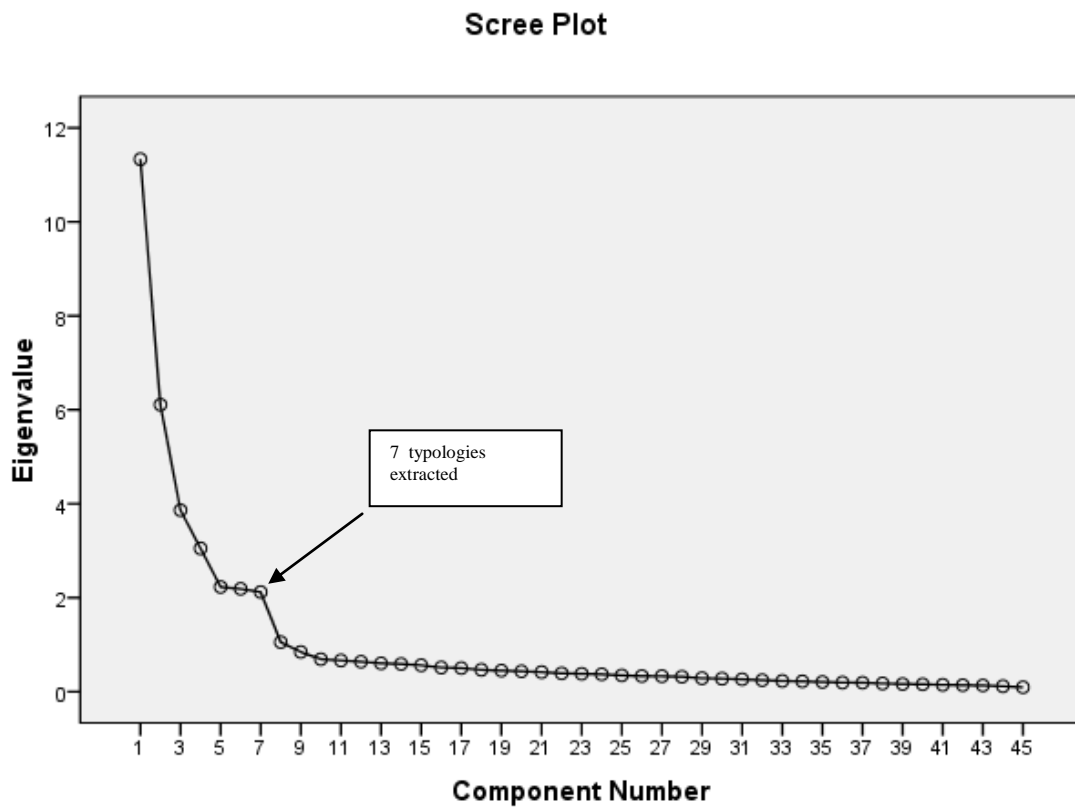


Figure 4.8 Scree plot

4.4.6 Rotation and factor loading matrix

The principal component method using varimax rotation reduced the 45 variable to seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Each factor consisted of loadings of values of 0.5 or higher.

The following items were deleted from the scale during extraction of factors:

- R4- I do shopping quickly
- R5- I don't waste my time just shopping
- R6- Shopping for clothing wastes my time, and
- R8- Shopping for clothing satisfies my sense of curiosity.

Table 4.4 lists the factors in the order in which they were extracted. The final factor structure comprised seven dimensions (typologies) with 41 variables.

TABLE 4.4 ROTATED FACTOR LOADING MATRIX

	Factors and variable descriptions	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
	FASHION CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS (Factor 1)							
F1	Fashion clothing means a lot to me	.826	.067	.139	.151	.020	.065	.023
F2	I am an experienced user of fashion clothing	.851	.048	.046	.191	.055	-.004	.070
F3	Fashion clothing is a significant part of my life	.803	.089	.104	.210	.080	-.026	.046
F4	I usually dress for fashion	.851	.121	.085	.101	.059	-.019	.067
F5	I am interested in fashion clothing	.859	.138	.101	.158	.055	.093	.032
F6	I go shopping to keep up with the trends	.776	.146	.071	.103	.017	.115	.001
F7	I am very familiar with fashion clothing	.821	.117	.063	.130	.087	.077	.092
F8	I feel I know a lot about fashion clothing	.849	.156	.073	.127	.066	.045	.114
F9	I would classify myself as an expert on fashion clothing	.831	.111	.072	.074	.052	.050	.132
F10	For me fashion clothing is an important product	.842	.138	.185	.136	.045	.108	-.012
	HEDONISTIC CONSUMERS (Factor 2)							
RC1	Shopping for clothing is not a pleasant activity for me	-.054	.750	.103	-.035	.029	.105	.088
RC2	Going shopping for clothing is one of the enjoyable activities in my life	.155	.770	.036	.083	.075	.070	-.052
RC3	I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it	.087	.727	-.034	.130	-.011	.047	-.050
RC7	I do my shopping quickly	.092	.798	.091	-.012	.017	.067	-.078
RC9	I don't waste my time just shopping	.173	.853	.028	.003	.019	.045	.045
RC10	Shopping for clothing waste my time	.123	.820	.031	.101	-.050	.056	.192
RC11	It is worth my time to shop stores	.199	.843	.012	.078	.044	-.015	.084
RC12	Shopping for clothing satisfies my sense of curiosity	.187	.851	.036	.000	.047	.014	.033
	BRAND CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS (Factor 3)							
BC1	The higher the price of clothing, the better the quality	.128	.026	.781	.028	.092	-.008	.107
BC2	Nice departments and speciality stores offer me the best clothing	.071	.017	.750	.082	.067	-.063	.188
BC3	The most advertised brands are usually very good choices	.073	.055	.786	.082	.073	.002	.034
BC4	The well-known brands of clothing are best for me	.081	.058	.771	.074	.195	.009	.003
BC5	The more expensive brands of clothing are usually purchased by choice	.130	.035	.740	.167	.046	.066	-.042
BC6	I prefer buying the best selling brands of clothing	.202	.071	.716	.169	.196	.036	-.004
	NOVELTY SEEKING CONSUMERS (factor 4)							
FC1	I keep my wardrobe, up-to-date with the changing fashion	.173	.114	.060	.826	.101	-.032	.112
FC2	Fashionable, attractive styling is very important for me	.348	.157	.098	.771	.111	.037	.082
FC3	To get variety, I shop at different stores and chose different brands	.354	.014	.154	.723	.092	.051	.017
FC4	It's fun to buy new and exciting clothing	.176	.011	.172	.816	.054	.087	.027
FC5	It's fun to buy new and exciting clothing	.181	.037	.167	.736	.096	.112	.031

QUALITY CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS (Factor 5)								
QC1	Getting very good quality is important to me	.057	-.015	.058	.038	.854	.014	-.007
QC2	When it comes to purchasing clothing, I try to get the best or perfect choice	.001	.043	.080	.047	.770	.103	.026
QC3	In general, I try to buy the best overall quality clothing	.087	-.046	.148	.073	.837	.053	-.019
QC4	I make a special effort to choose the very best quality clothing	.072	.070	.160	.123	.755	.087	.050
QC5	My standard and expectations for clothing I buy are very high	.217	.125	.288	.155	.576	.062	.157
CONSUMERS WHO ARE CONFUSED BY OVERCHOICE (Factor 6)								
CO1	There are so many brands to choose from that I often feel confused	.120	.094	-.018	-.011	.127	.829	.015
CO2	Sometimes, it's hard to choose which store to shop	.136	.048	-.008	.096	.069	.879	.007
CO3	The more I learn about clothing, the harder it seems to choose the best	.033	.048	.089	.074	.059	.867	.015
CO4	All the information I get on different products confuses	.044	.139	-.034	.054	.043	.868	.005
HABITUAL, BRAND LOYAL CONSUMERS (Factor 7)								
BL1	I have favourite brands I buy over and over	.174	.044	.111	.142	.134	.050	.801
BL2	Once I find a brand of clothing I like, I stick to it	.058	.037	.099	.084	.000	.002	.872
BL3	I go to the same stores each time I shop for clothing	.131	.081	-.009	-.009	.008	-.008	.855
Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation- varimax with Kaiser Normalisation. Loading <0.05 excluded from analysis								

After the extraction of factors, the dimensions were labelled, taking into account the appropriateness of the variable loading within each dimension. The labelling of the factors and a discussion of each factor is addressed in the following section.

4.4.7 Naming and interpretation of factors

Factor 1: Quality conscious consumers

This factor comprised ten variables and accounted for 27 % of the variance. Generation Y consumers seem to be quality conscious and scored highly on this dimension. The majority of the respondents claimed that quality was their major consideration when making purchase decisions. The high loading items on this factor are: “getting very good quality is important to me”, and “in general I try to buy the best overall clothing”.

Consumers who scored highly on this factor seek to maximise quality and to make the best choice. These consumers exhibit the perfectionist trait as espoused by Sproles and Sproles (1990:140). These consumers take time to shop carefully for the best quality or for the best value for money.

Lysonski, Durvasula and Zotos (1996:17) confirmed this dimension in studies conducted on a sample of New Zealand, Greek, U.S and Indian respondents. This factor was also consistent with the study by Hiu, Siu, Wang and Chang (2001:334) in a study of Chinese consumers. Tai's (2005:196) study on Generation Y consumers from Hong Kong and Shanghai, and Radder, Li and Pietersen's study (2006:28) among Chinese students studying in South Africa also affirm that Generation Y consumers are quality conscious. Typically, quality conscious consumers take time to shop for the best buy and purchase their favourite brands repeatedly, presumably since these represent perceived quality for them.

Factor 2: Brand-conscious consumers

This factor comprised eight variables and accounted for 11% of the variance. The highest loading item on this factor is the variable, "the higher the price of clothing, the better the quality". This dimension measures consumers' orientation toward purchasing well-known and more expensive brands. Consumers scoring highly on this factor appear to equate higher prices with better quality. Kwan *et al.* (2004:5) observed that brand-conscious consumers are more likely to purchase expensive international clothing labels which are fashionable. The study conducted by Lysonski *et al.* (1996:17) also found support for brand-conscious consumers. Studies undertaken by Leo *et al.* (2005:49) and Hanzabee and Aghasibeig (2008:528) revealed that Generation Y consumers were innovative and also brand conscious.

Factor 3: Novelty-seeking consumers

This factor comprised six variables and accounted for 9% of the variance. High loading on this dimension are: "I usually have one or more outfits of the very best newest style", "I try to get variety of fashion apparel", "I shop at different stores and choose different brands."

Item loading on this dimension indicates that consumers who scored high on this factor are likely to look for novelty in their purchase. These results are also consistent with the study of Sproles and Sproles (1990:141), where novelty and fashion-conscious consumers resemble a perfectionist consumer, but with the important exception that these types of consumers may have a passive and accepting characteristic as well. A study by Mokhlis (2009:143), conducted within a Malaysian context, indicated that consumers who scored high on this factor are likely to buy best-selling brands that are the latest in style at expensive stores.

Factor 4: Hedonistic consumers

This factor comprised five variables and accounted for 7 % of the variance. Those respondents scoring high on this dimension found shopping as an enjoyable and pleasant activity. They do not feel shopping as a waste of their time. In addition, they gain excitement from the task of shopping often by buying something new. Hedonic consumers are associated with the recreational shopping consciousness trait and agree that “going shopping for clothing is one of the enjoyable activities in their life”; “they enjoy shopping just for the fun of it”; “shopping for clothing satisfies their sense of curiosity” and “shopping is an adventure for them”.

An Australian study of consumers conducted by Leo *et al.* (2005:53) however, found no support for this dimension. The authors concluded that shopping is perceived as a task rather than leisure and consumers attribute their uninterest in shopping to being a waste of time. In contrast, Jamal *et al.* (2006:76) revealed that the primary shopping motivations, especially for apparel, was seen to be both social and utilitarian in nature.

Within a South African context among Chinese students, Radder *et al.* (2006:28) found that Chinese students viewed shopping as a fun activity and would not mind spending time shopping at a variety of stores and malls and having outfits in the latest styles.

Factor 5: Consumers who are confused by overchoice

This factor comprised five variables and accounted for 5.4 % of the variance. Respondents who scored high on this characteristic perceive that the plethora of stores and variety confuses them, proving difficult for them to arrive at the correct buying decision. In addition, product variety and product-related information available to consumers often confuses them. Generation Y's consumers are equally indecisive about which stores to shop given the number of available brands. However, a study by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003:102) revealed that the combined traits of confusion and time/money saving did not emerge as a salient dimension among consumers.

Walsh, Mitchell and Hennig-Thurau's (2001:85) study on German respondents established that respondents who scored high on this dimension are likely to experience information overload and as a consequence, may be less able to make optimal choices. Gonen and Ozmete (2006:30) reported that consumers are indecisive in terms of selecting the store to shop at and have difficulties in selecting the products to buy due to overchoice and they often indulged in careless shopping which they later regretted. Contradictory findings were reported by Leo *et al.* (2005:42) where consumers from western cultures have been shown to be more focused on specific products, compared to consumers from Eastern cultures.

Factor 6: Habitual, brand-loyal consumers

This factor comprised four variables and accounted for 5.2 % of the variance. Respondents who scored high on this dimension can be characterised as consumers who have favourite brands and stores and formed habits by choosing them repetitively. Those respondents scoring high on this dimension identified themselves as consumers with strong feelings of loyalty by attaching themselves to a favourite brand. High scores on variables such as "I have favourite brands I buy over and over"; "Once I find a brand of clothing, I like to stick to it"; and "I go to the same stores each time I shop for clothing", indicate that Generation Y consumers are habitual and brand-loyal consumers.

Sproles and Sproles (1990:142) asserted that this dimension is associated with serious learning. This suggests that habitual consumer behaviour may emerge from careful learning experiences that lead to positive outcomes, thus reinforcing a repeated buying behaviour pattern which leads to brand loyalty.

Factor 7: Fashion-conscious consumers

This factor comprised three variables and accounted for 5.1 % of the variance. This dimension reflects an inclination towards innovative products and a motivation to keep up-to-date with new styles and fashion trends. Bakewell *et al.* (2006:175) reported that Generation Y consumers are in general very fashionable; they like to buy new and fashionable goods to make them visibly fashionable.

Generation Y consumers are aware of fashion and show a degree of involvement as evidenced by high loading on the following variables: “Fashion clothing means a lot to me”, “I am an experienced user of fashion clothing”, “ I usually dress for fashion” and “ I go shopping to keep up with the trends”.

Bakewell and Mitchell’s (2003:103) study among UK consumers found that both adult and younger female Generation Y buyers appeared to be interested in fashion. In addition, they have a desire to bolster their self-esteem through having a ‘cool’ look by being fashionable. The study conducted by Hou and Lin (2006:6) on Taiwanese female consumers also demonstrates similar attitudes where it was reported that Taiwanese working females are in general very fashionable; they like to buy new and fashionable goods to make them appear outwardly, more fashionable.

Having established the dimension of Generation Y decision-making styles, the analysis was extended to an examination of the overall means of each factor.

4.5 OVERALL MEANS OF THE SEVEN FACTORS

Table 4.5 provides an overview of the summated mean scores of each of the dimensions. The summated means for each factor were ranked from the highest to the lowest mean.

TABLE 4.5 OVERALL MEANS OF SEVEN FACTORS

Descriptive	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Confused by overchoice consumers	230	1	5	4.26
Novelty seeking fashion-conscious consumers	230	1	5	3.67
Hedonistic consumers	230	1	5	3.52
Fashion-conscious consumers	230	1	5	3.34
Habitual, brand-loyal consumers	230	1	5	3.33
Quality-conscious consumers	230	1	5	3.16
Brand-conscious consumers	230	1	5	3.10
Valid N (listwise)	230			

All the means were above 3 on the Likert scale (5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3=moderate agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree) indicating that consumers are either in agreement or moderately in agreement that these characteristics are inherent among these categories of consumers. The dimension confused by overchoice is ranked the highest (mean=4.26) among Generation Y consumers, followed by novelty-seeking consumers (mean = 3.67).

According to Bakewell and Mitchell (2003:102) one of the principal reasons why young consumers may be more confused relates to attempts by marketing practitioners to meet consumer needs by providing depth in variety and assortment of products in an increasingly competitive world. Research indicates that young consumers may be more confused due to the number of products, channels and information that they are exposed to (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:102).

4.6 SUMMARY OF A DESCRIPTION OF CONSUMER TYPOLOGIES

Table 4.6 provides a summary of consumer typologies used to profile consumers. These typologies are in congruence with the consumer styles inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986:267).

Table 4.6 Description of consumer decision-making style typology

	Decision-making styles	Description
1	Quality-conscious	A characteristic measuring the degree to which a consumer searches carefully and systematically for the best quality in products.
2	Brand-conscious	Measuring a consumer's orientation to buying the more expensive, well-known brands.
3	Novelty-seeking consumers	A characteristic identifying consumers who appear to like new and innovative products and gain excitement from seeking new things.
4	Hedonistic consumers	A characteristic measuring the degree to which a consumer finds shopping activity and shops for the fun of it.
5	Consumers who are confused by overchoice	A characteristic identifying those consumers who perceive too many brands and stores from which to choose, experiencing information overload in the market.
6	Habitual, brand-loyal consumers	A characteristic indicating consumers who have favourite brands and stores, who have formed habits in choosing these respectively.
7	Fashion-conscious consumers	A characteristic representing a consumer who is motivated to keep up-to-date with styles and fashion trends.

4.7 COMPARISON OF THE CURRENT STUDY WITH OTHER STUDIES

The results of the current study were compared with the previous studies. The comparison is as illustrated in Table 4.7 (Sproles and Kendall, 1986:271-273; Hafstrom *et al.*, 1992:151-152; Fan and Xiao, 1998:283; Mitchell and Bates, 1998:213-214; Hiu, Siu, Wang & Chang, 2001:355; Leo *et al.*, 2005:45-46; Radder *et al.*, 2006:22-23). The current study seems to be in line with the typologies developed in previous studies as most of the typologies were also identified in previous studies.

TABLE 4.7 COMPARISION OF PREVIOUS STUDIES WITH THE CURRENT STUDY

Sproles & Sproles (1986:271-273)	Hafstrom, Chae & Chung (1992:151-152)	Fan & Xio (1998:283)	Mitchell & Bates (1998:213-214)	Hiu, Siu, Wang & Chang (2001:355)	Leo, Bennet & Hartel (2005:45-46)	Radder, Li & Pietersen (2006:22-23)	Present study
Perfectionist	✓ Brand conscious	✓ Brand consciousness	✓ Recreational, hedonism	✓ Perfectionist	✓ Quality conscious	✓ Perfectionist shopper	✓ Quality conscious
Brand-conscious consumers	✓ Perfectionist	✓ Time consciousness	X Perfectionism , high quality conscious	✓ Brand conscious	✓ Brand conscious	✓ Brand conscious	✓ Brand-conscious consumers
Novelty-fashion conscious consumers	✓ Recreational Consumers	✓ Quality consciousness	✓ Novelty-fashion conscious	✓ Novelty-fashion conscious consumers	✓ Innovative in shopping	x Fashion conscious shopper	✓ Novelty-conscious consumers
Recreational , hedonistic consumers	✓ Confused by overchoice	✓ Price consciousness	X Confused by overchoice	✓ Recreational, hedonistic consumers	✓ Recreational conscious	✓ Hedonistic shopper	✓ Hedonic consumers
Price and value for money conscious	x Time-energy conserving consumers	x Information utilisation	X Time-energy conserving	x Price conscious consumers	x Price conscious	x Price conscious	x Confused by overchoice consumers
Impulsive, careless consumers	x Impulsive, careless consumers	x	Brand conscious	✓ Confused by overchoice consumers	✓ Impulsive buying style	x Impulsive shopper	x Habitual, brand-loyal consumers
Confused by overchoice consumers	✓ Habitual, brand loyal consumer	✓	Price-value conscious	x Habitual, brand-loyal consumers	✓ Confused by overchoice	✓ Confused by overchoice	✓ Fashion conscious
Habitual, brand-loyal consumers	✓ Price-value conscious consumers	x	Impulsive	x	Brand-loyal consumers	✓ Habitual shopper	✓
			Store loyalty	x			
			Brand loyalty	✓			

Source: Mokhlis and Salleh (2009:580)

In the next section correlation analysis using Pearson correlation coefficients between the seven dimensions of decision-making styles and demographic variables is discussed.

4.8 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to measure the degree of linear association of two categories. The seven dimensions of decision-making styles, namely, quality conscious, brand conscious, novelty seekers, hedonic consumers, confused by overchoice, brand-loyal conscious and fashion-conscious consumers are correlated with gender (B1), age (B2), marital status (B3), shopping companion (B4), shopping frequency (B5), qualification (B6) and race (B7). Table 4.8 reflects that the marked correlations are either significant at $p \leq 0.01$ or $p \leq 0.05$.

Table 4.8 Correlation analysis

	Gender	Age	Marital status	Shopping companion	Shopping frequency	Qualification	Race
Quality-conscious consumers	.067	.026	.062	.011	.289**	.098	.067
Brand-conscious consumers	.005	.113	-.141*	-0.041	.067	.136	-.047
Novelty-seeking fashion conscious consumer	-.183**	-.028	-.024	-.008	.103	-.004	-.004
Hedonistic consumer	.066	-.033	-.063	-.095	.163*	-.013	.063
Confused by overchoice consumer	-.101	-.121	-.204**	-.011	.068	-.018	.067
Habitual, brand-loyal consumer	.049	.045	-.006	-.002	-.052	-.019	.076
Fashion-conscious consumer	-.107	-.066	-.044	.039	-.012	.089	-.044
Correlations significant at $p < 0.01$ or correlations significant at $p < 0.05$							

Table 4.9 were used to establish the strength of the relationship between the variables (Willemse, 2009: 119).

TABLE 4.9 STRENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIABLES

Size of r	Interpretation
$\pm (0.9) \text{ to } (1.0)$	Very strong relationship
$\pm (0.8 \text{ to } 0.9)$	Strong relationship
$\pm (0.6 \text{ to } 0.8)$	Moderate relationship
$\pm (0.2 \text{ to } 0.6)$	Weak relationship
$\pm (0.0 \text{ to } 0.2)$	Very weak or no relationship

▪ **Correlations – quality-conscious dimension and demographic variables**

Table 4.8 reflects that the quality-conscious dimension showed either weak or no relationship with the following demographic variables, gender ($r=0.067$), age ($r=0.026$), marital status ($r=0.062$), shopping companion ($r=0.011$), qualification ($r=0.09$) shopping frequency ($r=0.289$), and race ($r=0.067$).

▪ **Correlations – brand-conscious dimension and demographic variables**

Table 4.8 reflects that brand-conscious dimension showed either weak or no relationship with the following demographic variables, gender ($r=0.005$), age ($r=.113$), marital status ($r=-0.141$), shopping companion ($r=0.041$), shopping frequency ($r=0.067$), and race ($r=-0.047$), and qualification ($r=0.136$).

▪ **Correlations - novelty-seeking dimension and demographic variables**

Novelty-seeking dimension showed either weak or no relationship with the following demographic variables, gender ($r=-0.183$), age ($r=-0.028$), marital status ($r=-0.024$), shopping companion ($r=-0.008$), qualification ($r=-0.004$), race ($r=-0.004$) and shopping frequency ($r=0.103$).

- **Correlations - hedonic dimension and demographic variables**

The hedonic dimension showed either weak or no relationship with the following demographic variables, gender ($r=0.066$), age ($r=-0.033$), marital status ($r=-0.063$), shopping companion ($r=-0.095$), qualification ($r=-0.013$), race ($r=0.063$) and shopping frequency ($r=0.163$).

- **Correlations - consumers who are confused by overchoice dimension and demographic variables.**

The dimension consumers who are confused by overchoice showed either weak or no relationship with the following variables, gender ($r=-0.101$), age ($r=-0.121$), marital status ($r=-0.204$), shopping companion ($r=-0.011$), shopping frequency ($r=0.068$), qualification ($r=-0.018$) and race ($r=0.067$).

- **Correlations - habitual, brand-loyal consumers and demographic variables.**

The dimension habitual, brand-loyal consumers showed either weak or no relationship with the following demographic variables, gender ($r=0.049$), age ($r=0.045$), marital status ($r=-0.006$), shopping companion ($r=-0.002$) shopping frequency ($r=-0.052$), qualification ($r=-0.019$) and race ($r=0.076$).

- **Correlations – fashion-conscious consumers and demographic variables**

The dimension fashion conscious consumers showed either weak or no relationship with the following demographic variables: gender ($r=-0.107$), age ($r=-0.066$), marital status ($r=-0.44$), shopping companion ($r=0.039$), shopping frequency ($r=-0.12$), qualification ($r=0.089$), race (-0.044).

In summary, it therefore seems that the seven consumer decision-making styles are uncorrelated with the demographic variables under study.

In addition to correlations, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to determine the mean differences on seven factors and demographic variables. The analysis of variance is discussed in the next section.

4.9 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE BETWEEN CONSUMERS WHO ARE CONFUSED BY OVERCHOICE AND AGE (B2)

Only age showed significant differences with consumers who are confused by overchoice. The analysis of variance showed no significant differences between the remaining six factors and other demographic variables, such as qualifications, gender, marital status, shopping companion and race. These results are not reported here for the sake of brevity. Hence, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was undertaken to examine the influence of age differences on fashion apparel with consumers who are confused by overchoice.

In ANOVA, the F-test as illustrated in Table 4.10 is used statistically to evaluate the differences between the group means. Significant differences were noted between the factor 5, confused by overchoice ($F=5.18$, $p=0.006$) and age of respondents.

Table 4.10 ANOVA-Confused by overchoice and age

		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
(Factor 1) Quality-conscious consumers	Between groups	167	2	.083	.076	.927
	Within groups	249.031	227	1.097		
(Factor 2) Brand-conscious consumers	Between groups	3.840	2	1.920	2.205	.113
	Within groups	197.627	227	.871		
(Factor 3) Novelty-seeking consumers	Between groups	.492	2	.246	.351	.704
	Within groups	158.996	227	.700		
(Factor 4) Hedonic consumers	Between groups	.618	2	.309	.328	.721
	Within groups	214.204	127	.944		
(Factor 5) Confused by overchoice consumers	Between groups	4.945	2	2.473	5.180	.006*
	Within groups	108.356	227	.477		
(Factor 6) Habitual, brand-loyal consumers	Between groups	7.599	2	3.800	3.123	.056
	Within groups	276.199	227	1.217		
(Factor 7) Fashion-conscious consumers	Between groups	1.187	2	.594	.501	.606
	Within groups	268.885	227	1.181		

As a result of these differences, multiple post hoc comparisons were undertaken to establish between which age groups there were differences. Both Tukey HSD and Bonferroni tests were used to determine group differences. The multiple hoc comparisons are reported in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Multiple post hoc comparisons – confused by overchoice and age

Dependent Variable	I B2 (age)	J B2 (age)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Factor 5 (confused by over choice)	1 (16-20 years) (\bar{x} = 4.28)	3 (25-27 years) (\bar{x} =3.94)	.3488*	.1321	.024
	2 (21-24 years) (\bar{x} = 4.38)	3 (25-27 years) (\bar{x} =3.94)	.4411	.1387	.005

Post-hoc results revealed differences exist between factor 5 (confused by overchoice) and the following age categories: 16-20 years and 25-27 years; 21-24 years and 25-27 years. Those consumers who were in age category 16-20 years (\bar{x} = 4.28) were more confused by overchoice than those in the age group 25-27 years (\bar{x} =3.94). In addition, those respondents who were in the age category 21-24 years were more confused by overchoice (\bar{x} =4.38) compared to those respondents who were in the age category, 25-27 years (\bar{x} =3.94).

In summary, it therefore seems that younger generation Y consumers are more confused by overchoice compared to those consumers that are relatively older. Previous research studies support the notion that younger consumers tend to experience confusion as a result of information overload (Leo *et al.*, 2005:42; Bakewell and Bakewell, 2003:102). Leo *et al.* (2005: 42) reported that consumers tend to be more confused, because they are less likely to avoid uncertainty and more open to innovation, change and they are likely to consider a greater range of product information and alternatives.

To test the reliability of the 45 questionnaire items, Cronbach alpha was computed. The reliability test of the study is discussed in the next section.

4.10 RELIABILITY

The Cronbach alpha statistic was undertaken to assess the internal consistency of the instrument (Leo *et al.*, 2005:47). Reliability tests were conducted on all 45 items. The items that had low or negative inter-item correlation were deleted. Table 4.13 reports on the Cronbach alpha values for the seven dimensions on Generation Y decision-making styles.

The Cronbach alpha coefficients for factor 1, factor 2, factor 3, factor 4, factor 5, factor 6 and factor 7 ranged from 0.836 to 0.961, indicating satisfactory levels of internal consistency in terms of reliability. The seven factors reflected the reliability values above the accepted benchmark of 0.70, which according to Santos (1999:2) is regarded as satisfactory. In addition, the reliability of the overall scale was 0.891, which was also considered as satisfactory.

TABLE 4.12 ITEM RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Factor	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardised items	No of items
Habitual conscious consumers	0.836	3
Quality-conscious consumers	0.849	5
Brand-conscious consumers	0.875	6
Novelty-seeking consumers	0.892	5
Confused by overchoice consumers	0.898	4
Hedonic consumers	0.928	8
Fashion-conscious consumers	0.961	10
Overall Cronbach alpha	0.891	

Content, discriminant and construct validity were used to measure the validity of the instrument. These validity tests are explained in the following section.

4.11 VALIDITY ISSUES

Validity can be defined as the degree to which a test or instrument measures what it purports to measure and can be categorised as construct, content, criterion and convergent (Bae 2004:37).

Of the above types of validity test, **content validity** was conducted in the pilot study. To test for content validity, 50 respondents were chosen to participate in the pilot study. The inter-item correlation was examined in order to identify low or negative correlations among variables that measured decision-making styles. Subsequently, changes were made to the questionnaire where several items were deleted, added or re-worded in order to capture the essence of consumer decision-making within the context of apparel retailing.

Discriminant validity was also performed for statistical significance by computing the Pearson's correlation coefficients. The seven factors influencing consumer decision-making styles, namely, quality conscious, brand-conscious consumers, novelty-seeking fashion consumers, hedonic consumers, consumers who are confused by overchoice, habitual brand-loyal consumers, and fashion-conscious consumers were correlated with the following demographic variables: gender (B1), age (B2), marital status (B3), shopping companion (B4), qualification (B6) and race (B7). Table 4.8 revealed that majority of the correlation between the seven dimensions and demographic variables either showed insignificant or negative correlation, thus providing evidence of discriminant validity.

Construct validity of the scale was assessed by the computation of the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the scale and sub-dimensions of the scale, which was acceptable and an indication of construct validity (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988:28). In addition, factor analysis was performed on each of the seven constructs to determine the percentage of variance that is explained by each factor. The results indicate (refer to table 4.3) that the seven factors accounted for approximately 71% of the variance explained, thus inferring construct validity.

4.12 SYNOPSIS

The research framework proved adequate to address the objectives of the study. Its implementation provided valuable bases for future research and contributes to the development of useful theoretical bases to establish consumer decision-making styles. The study employed a pilot test to test its reliability. Out of the 53 items on the initial questionnaire, 11 items were deleted and 42 items were retained.

In addition three items were added on the new questionnaire which was used for the main survey. Furthermore, a descriptive analysis on the demographic variables, namely; gender, age, marital status, shopping companion, shopping frequency, qualification and race was reported. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's sphericity were performed to determine the appropriateness of factor analysis. The scree plot, percentage of variance, and the eigenvalue criterion guided the number of factors to be extracted.

Through a factor analysis approach the seven factors that emerged were: quality-conscious consumers, brand-conscious consumers, novelty-seeking fashion-conscious consumers, hedonic consumers, consumers who are confused by overchoice, habitual brand-loyal consumers and fashion-conscious consumers.

Pearson correlation coefficients were undertaken for measuring the degree of linear association between the seven dimensions of decision-making styles and demographic variables. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also performed to determine the differences between group means. Post hoc tests were undertaken to determine which groups had significant differences. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument.

Content, discriminant and construct validity were applied to measure the degree of validity of the instrument. In the final chapter conclusions, limitations, recommendations and implications for future research emanating from the study are discussed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reported on the results and discussions of empirical findings. The extraction of factors, correlations and analysis of variance were undertaken. The reliability for the pilot test and main survey were established. This chapter provides an overview of the study and evaluates the major findings, from which conclusions are drawn. This chapter concludes by highlighting the recommendations, limitations, value and implications for future research.

5.2 GENERAL REVIEW

In chapter 1, the problem statement was addressed in order to emphasise the importance of the study. From the problem statement it was revealed that the underlying determinants of how and why people shop has been a topic of study for many years, where typologies and shopping styles were discussed (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:96). Whilst various studies have been successful in demonstrating that some shoppers display consistent shopping orientations that can be diametrically opposed, for example, the functional shopper versus the recreational shopper (Jin & Kim, 2003:407), they do not explicitly address the question of how to measure consumer decision-making styles with specific reference to fashion apparel.

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the purchasing decision-making styles of Generation Y with regard to fashion apparel in Kempton Park. The theoretical and empirical objectives are revisited in the next section in order to evaluate the attainment of the objectives within the framework of the study.

5.2.1 Theoretical objectives

The theoretical objectives for this study were achieved through analysis of relevant literature. These objectives were formulated at the beginning of the study (refer to Section 1.3.2).

- To conduct a literature review on Generation Y.
- To analyse the consumer decision-making processes.
- To conduct a literature synthesis on decision-making styles.
- To conduct a literature review on factors influencing consumer decision-making styles.

Theoretical objective 1 was achieved in section 2.5 of this study. The researcher made use of journal articles and textbooks in order to consolidate the information on Generation Y. The characteristics of Generation Y that were discussed under this section mainly focused on Generation Y and education, Generation Y and personality, Generation Y and spending patterns, and Generation Y in sports participation and spending patterns.

With reference to **theoretical objectives 2**, various models of consumer decision-making process were discussed in section 2.2. The steps discussed in the consumer decision-making process are as follows: need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives, purchase, consumption and post -purchase behaviour.

Theoretical objectives 3 which relate to the purchasing decision-making styles were addressed in section 2.4 of the study. Typologies of shoppers that were discussed are the dependent shopper, the compulsive shopper, the individualistic shopper, the indecisive shopper and the independent shopper, the perfectionist, the value-conscious shopper, brand-conscious shopper, novelty-fad fashion-conscious shopper, support-seeking decision maker shopper, recreational or hedonistic shopper, impulsive shopper, habitual or brand-loyal and time/energy conserving shopper. These typologies were addressed from a general perspective of decision-making styles.

Theoretical objective 4, on the factors influencing consumer decision making, was addressed under section 2.3 of the study. These factors influencing consumer decision were categorized into internal and external factors. The internal factors are outlined as follows: perception, motivation, learning, attitudes, personalities, self-concept, lifestyle and demographics. External factors prevalent to the study, like culture and subculture, family influence and social factors were also discussed.

5.2.2 Empirical objectives

The following empirical objectives were formulated at the beginning of the study (refer to section 1.3.3 of the study).

- To determine the decision-making styles of the Generation Y in the purchase of fashion apparel.
- To establish whether there are any differences with regard to the purchasing pattern in terms of consumer demographic variables among Generation Y consumers.

With reference to **empirical objective 1**, conclusions were drawn based on statistical findings under sections 4.4 and 4.8 of this study. Factor analysis was used to establish the shoppers' typologies. The results revealed seven dimensions (refer to Table 4.4) which capture Generation Y consumers' decision-making styles within the ambit of fashion apparel.

In terms of the factor extraction that was undertaken, it may be suggested that (factor 1) quality-conscious consumers, (factor 2) brand-conscious consumers, (factor 3) novelty-seeking consumers, (factor 4) hedonistic consumers, (factor 5) consumers who are confused by overchoice, (factor 6) habitual consumers, brand-loyal consumers and (factor 7) fashion-conscious consumers are salient determinants of consumer decision-making styles among generation Y consumers with regard to fashion apparel purchases.

These seven dimensions of consumer decision making styles are described as follows:

- **Quality-conscious consumers** are perceived to have an awareness of and desire for high quality products, and the need to make the best or perfect choice versus buying the first product available. This dimension scored highly in the study with (mean = 3.16).
- **Brand-conscious consumers** are perceived to have the need or desire to purchase well-known national brands, higher-priced brands and/or the most advertised brands. The results demonstrate that Generation Y consumers tend to be brand conscious. For instance Generation Y consumers tend to purchase well-known brand names such as Daniel Hector, Cavella and Levis from departmental stores, to get the best value for money, watch their spending and set a high standard of expectation for products (Moskhlis, 2009:144). Generation Y consumers may purchase expensive brands that are well known in the market, because they may want to attain status and be admired by their peers.
- **Novelty-seeking consumers** are perceived to have an awareness of new styles, changing fashions, and attractive styling, as well as the desire to buy something exciting and trendy. This represents the consumer's relationship with design and style. This implies that generation Y consumers may purchase the latest on fashion apparel in order to create a sense of uniqueness. They are also well-informed about the fashion trends which may be largely due to extensive huge media coverage.
- **Hedonistic consumers** are of the view that the enjoyment of shopping is a leisure-time activity, which includes browsing in stores and shopping for fun. Hedonic consumers portray such characteristics because of the recreational element that the shopping trip involves. This can be attributed to the fact that shopping malls in general have facilities that create a total shopping experience for consumers with an abundance of recreational facilities, such as a movie theatre. Generation Y consumers view these facilities as an opportunity to meet for appointments and also as a way to relieve their stress.

- **Consumers who are confused by overchoice** experience a feeling of confusion about product choices because of the proliferation of brands, stores and consumer information that they are exposed to. Consumers who are confused by overchoice emerged as the most influential dimension of consumer decision-making styles among Generation Y consumers in this study. According to Bakewell and Mitchell (2003:102) one of the principle reasons why young consumers may be more confused relates to attempts by marketing practitioners to meet consumer's needs by providing depth in variety and assortment of products. This can be attributed to the fact that in South Africa, especially in the shopping malls, there are many and various retailers offering fashion apparel and the market is also sophisticated, with an array of fashion apparel to choose from.
- **Habitual, brand-loyal consumers** are those consumers who have favourite brands, stick with a brand and consistently use the same store. The Generation Y consumers may purchase the same brands simply because those retailers offering fashion apparel provide them with the best quality; as a result they do not see any reason to switch to other brands.
- **Fashion-conscious consumers** are those consumers who gain excitement and pleasure from seeking out new things and are conscious of the new fashions and fads. Generation Y consumers are generally fashionable since they wish to keep abreast with the fashion trends as a way of expressing their self-identity.

Empirical objective 2 was achieved under section 4.9 (refer to tables 4.10, 4.11 and 4.12) where dimensions of consumer decision-making styles, such as quality-conscious consumers, brand-conscious consumers, novelty-seeking consumers, hedonic consumers, consumers who are confused by overchoice, habitual, brand-loyal consumers and fashion-conscious consumers were correlated with gender (B1), age (B2), marital status (B3), shopping companion (B4), shopping frequency (B5), qualification (B6) and race (B7). In addition, analysis of variance and post hoc tests were undertaken to establish significant differences with the established dimensions and selected demographic variables. The findings revealed that differences exist between consumers who are confused by overchoice and age.

Younger consumers were more confused by overchoice compared to those consumers who were relatively older within the generation Y category.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are offered to apparel retailers. These recommendations have been suggested for apparel retailers in order to make better informed decisions when devising strategies for their marketing and communication strategies. These recommendations are as follows.

The majority of Generation Y consumers in this study do pursue quality, even if it means higher prices. It is recommended that retailers should continue to emphasise their well-known brand names and set prices at levels where consumers perceive the quality of the product according to its price. Retailers should focus on diverse designs, sizes and colours in their product assortment and range. The introduction of new products through the use of fashion shows, fashion magazines and advertisements may provide added advantages in terms of brand awareness.

Results infer that Generation Y consumers seek novelty in their shopping trips. It is suggested that apparel retailers should keep abreast of the consumer's needs by introducing new products continually that are also fashionable and attractive in order to appeal to this segment of the market. Fashion retailers also need to be aware that the preferences of Generation Y consumers differ quite markedly. So, if they want to appeal to this segment they need to ensure that they promote the brands they carry and more regularly update their stock to make sure they have the newest fashion trends in stores.

The study confirmed shopping as a form of leisure and enjoyment for Generation Y consumers. Retailers should consider ways to improve the leisure experience for this segment of the market. Retailers should continue to find ways which induce a feeling of fun and leisure. Upmarket shopping malls and shopping centres that accommodate a variety in stores and store formats, restaurants, and leisure and entertainment facilities may enhance the hedonic aspects of shopping.

According to Bakewell and Mitchell (2003:103) some retailers have begun to experiment with cafes and beauty therapy experiences. Retailers should also change the layout of their stores from a free-form boutique layout to a loop (race-track) layout that would use the outer walls of the store to display items (using frontal merchandising and suggested outfits) and keep the middle of the store relatively clutter-free.

Significant differences were noted with regard to factor 5, confused by overchoice and age. It is therefore recommended that retailers should try to use communication channels which will be more understandable to Generation Y consumers. Retailers should also provide consumers with information that can assist them to make better-informed decisions in their purchase. Special packages and products can be distributed to aid consumers to make more informed buying decisions. Apparel retailers should design their shelves to make it easy for consumers to find the product they look for and train their sales personnel to help those consumers who seek help from them. Moreover, retailers should also try to simplify their messages in such manner that they can be easily understood by the consumers, like using bold and bright colours in their advertisements.

It is also recommended that retailers who are targeting consumers who are confused by overchoice provide Generation Y consumers with information that may assist them to make monetary judgements. They should also think about simplified store layouts, payment services and reduction in the number of product lines in order to speed up the shopping process. The findings reveal that Generation Y consumers are brand conscious and brand loyal which attests to the importance of branding. Such revelations may be attributed to the centrality of the area under study within the O.R. Tambo International airport precinct where large outdoor advertisements are in abundance and very attractive, thus creating greater brand awareness. Apparel store retailers should continue to establish effective approaches to building strong brand identity in the minds of consumers in this region. Therefore apparel retailers should strive to communicate brand messages effectively through frequent advertising. The findings also revealed that Generation Y consumers are generally fashion conscious. Apparel retailers should offer products that are fashionable in order to keep abreast with consumer needs.

Retailers should also collaborate with international fashion designers to update them with the latest trends in the market. Findings inferred that Generation Y consumers are novelty conscious. Therefore retailers should keep ongoing contact with consumers each time a new product is introduced in the store, by the use of short message system (sms) or through fashion catalogues and other forms of print media. For example Truworth sends SMSes, brochures or e-mails when new products are introduced in their stock.

Younger consumers (in the age range of 16-25) reported to be the most confused group. It is recommended that retailers should try to focus more on younger consumers, when promoting their products, in a manner that is easily understood by this age group. This can be achieved by arranging their apparel in ways so that consumers can easily differentiate products and arrive at a purchase decision.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study concentrated on Generation Y consumers who were in the age range of 16 to 27 years old in order to assess and analyse their behaviour concerning fashion apparel decision-making. Future research should accommodate other generation cohorts so that valuable information could be obtained to segment markets and to develop appropriate marketing communication strategies.

The study made use of a quantitative research design. Future research may consider both a qualitative and quantitative analysis using triangulation methodology, whereby a qualitative design could be used to analyse the personality of Generation Y consumers and their buying behaviour. Future researchers could replicate the study in other provinces in order to test the relevance and reliability of the scale.

It is suggested that future research examine the applicability of the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) across different cultures in order to generate more robust support within the South African context. More research studies focusing on consumer decision-making styles representing other ethnic cultures from different provinces of South Africa might produce interesting findings.

The study concentrated on fashion apparel. Researchers could also extend their studies to other product types which require extended decision-making, especially with very expensive products such as real estate or motor vehicles.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The selection of mall and shopping centre contexts and the size of the sample is a limitation of the study in terms of generalisation of the results to other regions. Whilst the dimensions that were extracted on consumer decision-making styles were in congruence with studies undertaken in western countries, taking into account that South Africa consists of different sub-markets, each with distinct characteristics, it would be unrealistic to generalise the findings revealed in the study in other shopping malls and other areas in the country.

The study employed a non-probability (judgement and convenient) sampling method to select the respondents since it was difficult to obtain a sample frame of Generation Y to participate in the study. Therefore, one should be careful when generalising about the results of this study over the entire population.

Fieldworkers experienced problems with regard to rejections from respondents because potential respondents were not willing to participate in the survey. Future research endeavours should try to provide incentives for respondents for their time taken to participate in the study.

5.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY

The findings may add value to the retailers in the Kempton Park Mall and shopping centre precincts by assisting them to better understand the Generation Y decision-making styles and their characteristics. Subsequently, retail managers may be able to develop the marketing strategies appealing to the Generation Y consumers in this region.

The seven typologies of decision-making can be utilised by apparel store marketers to better understand this segment of the market and use these dimensions to segment markets and develop tailor-made communication strategies.

5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study focused on decision-making styles of Generation Y with regard to fashion apparel in a Kempton Park precinct. Discussions in this chapter have centred on the key objectives of the study and their attainment.

The pertinent dimensions that characterise consumer decision-making styles of the Generation Y cohort that emerged in this study indicate that consumers are quality conscious, brand conscious, novelty seekers, hedonistic, confused by overchoice, habitual, brand loyal and fashion conscious.

Several recommendations were developed based on results. The results of the study will assist retailers as well as future researchers to understand the purchasing behaviour of Generation Y consumers. Limitations of the study were also addressed within the context of the study. Understanding the consumer decision-making styles of Generation Y consumers and the implications presents a challenge to researchers within this field of study. The most important findings are that younger consumers are more confused than the older consumers. The study also revealed that younger consumers are more likely to be loyal to particular brands as compared to their older counterparts.

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ANNEXURE A

Questionnaire

DECISION MAKING STYLES OF GENERATION Y CONSUMERS REGARDING FASHION APPAREL

We would like to find out about your decision making styles on fashion apparel. Below are a number of descriptors influencing decision making. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by encircling the corresponding number between 1 (Strongly disagree); 3 (moderately agree) and 5 (strongly agree).

CIRCLE ONLY ONE NUMBER FOR EACH STATEMENT

SECTION A

Getting very good quality is important to me	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
When it comes to purchasing clothing, I try to get the best or perfect choice	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
In general, I try to buy the best overall quality clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I make a special effort to choose the very best quality clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
My standard and expectations for clothing I buy are very high	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
The higher the price of clothing, the better the quality	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Nice departments and speciality stores offer me the best clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
The most advertised brands are usually very good choices	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
The well-known brands of clothing are best for me	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
The more expensive brands of clothing are usually purchased by choice	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I prefer buying the best selling brands of clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree

I usually have one or more outfits of the very newest style	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I keep my wardrobe, up-to-date with the changing fashion	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Fashionable, attractive styling is very important for me	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
To get variety, I shop at different stores and chose different brands	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
It's fun to buy new and exciting clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Shopping for clothing is not a pleasant activity for me	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Going shopping for clothing is one of the enjoyable activities in my life	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I do my shopping quickly	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I don't waste my time just shopping	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Shopping for clothing waste my time	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
It is worth my time to shop stores	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Shopping for clothing satisfies my sense of curiosity	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Shopping for clothing offers new experiences	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I feel like I am exploring new worlds when I shop	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
To me shopping is an adventure	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Shopping gives me pleasure	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
There are so many brands to choose from that I often feel confused	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree

Sometimes, it's hard to choose which store to shop	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
The more I learn about clothing, the harder it seems to choose the best	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
All the information I get on different products confuses	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I have favourite brands I buy over and over	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Once I find a brand of clothing I like, I stick to it	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I go to the same stores each time I shop for clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Fashion clothing means a lot to me	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I am an experienced user of fashion clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
Fashion clothing is a significant part of my life	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I usually dress for fashion	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I am interested in fashion clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I go shopping to keep up with the trends	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I am very familiar with fashion clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I feel I know a lot about fashion clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
I would classify myself as an expert on fashion clothing	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree
For me fashion clothing is an important product	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree

SECTION B

In this section we would like to find out a little more about the characteristics of consumers who purchase fashion apparel. Please place a cross (x) in the appropriate block.

B1	Your gender	Male	Female
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B2	Age category	16-20 years	21-24 years	25-27 years
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B3	Marital status	Single	Married
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B4	Who accompanied you for the shopping trip?	Family	Friend	Alone	Boy-/girlfriend	Someone else
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B5	Frequency of shopping for apparel during a month	2 times or less	3-4 times	More than 4 times
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B6	Highest qualification	Matric	Diploma	Degree	Other Specify	
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B7	Race	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Other
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Thank you for time and your cooperation. Your views are much appreciated.

ANNEXURE B

DECLARATION OF DATA SCORING AND ANALYSIS



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To whom it may concern

9 March 2010

This letter is to confirm that I did the scoring and data analysis for the research done by Lawrence Mandhlazi.

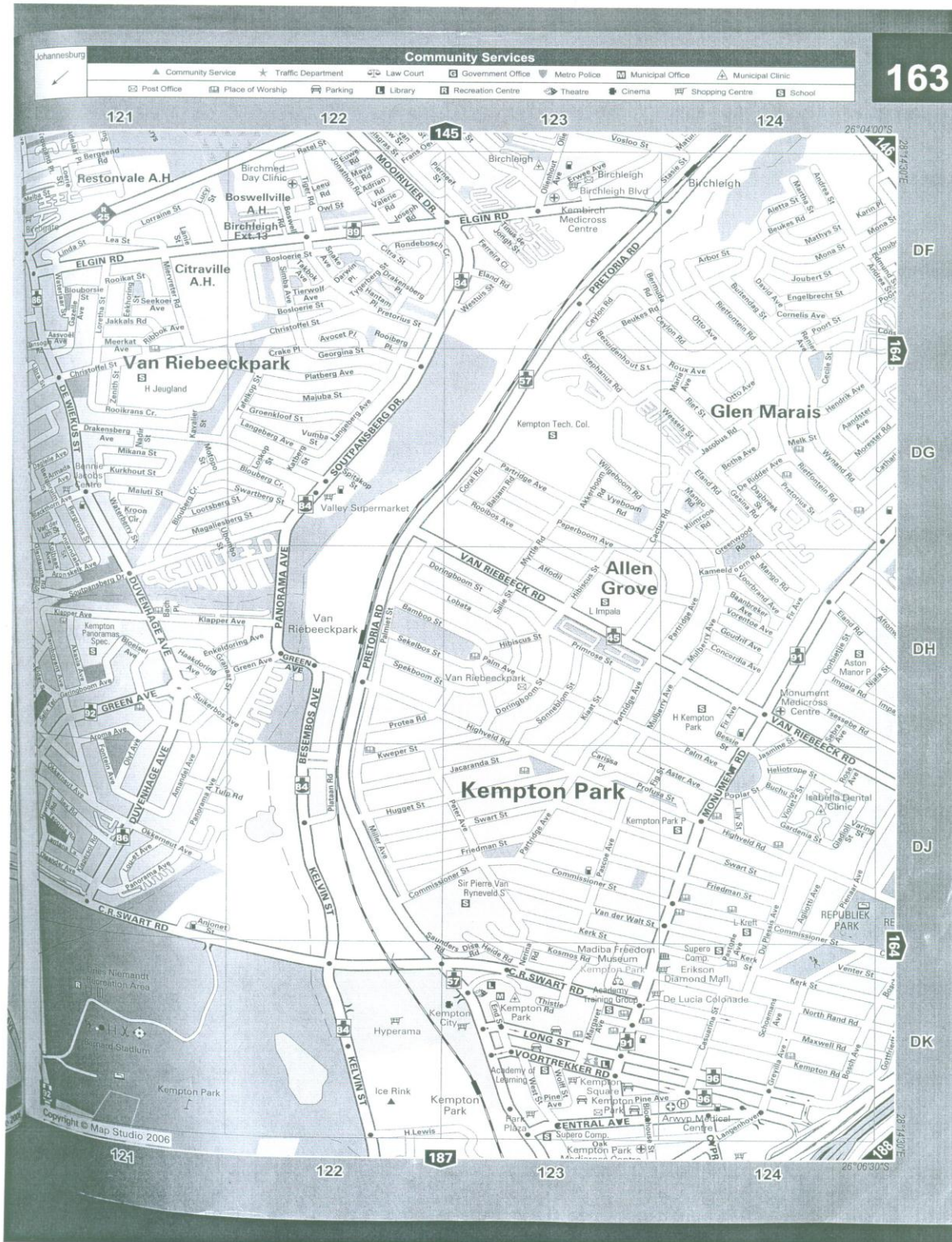
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aldine Oosthuyzen'.

Aldine Oosthuyzen
MSc (Statistics and Operational Research)

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ANNEXURE C



ANNEXURE D

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CERTIFIED STATEMENT OF EDITING AND TRANSLATION

It is hereby certified that the Master's Tech (Marketing) dissertation:

**DECISION-MAKING STYLES OF GENERATION Y IN THE PURCHASE
OF FASHION APPAREL IN KEMPTON PARK**

by

LAWRENCE MANDHLAZI

has been edited by me.

Date: 22nd July 2011

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