



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

**Describing the brand wearing male consumer and his searching and
evaluating behaviour in the retail environment**

M.THOMAS

(B. CONSUMER SCIENCES)

**Mini dissertation submitted in the School of Consumer Sciences at the
North-West University, Potchefstroom, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree Magister Consumer Sciences**

Supervisor:

Dr. MD Venter

Co-supervisor:

Dr. M van der Merwe

Assistant-supervisor:

Ms. SD Visser

SUMMARY

Describing the brand wearing male consumer and his searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment

The behaviour of the male consumer in the retail environment is under-explored. Literature indicates that the market for men's clothing is growing and is becoming increasingly important to clothing retailers. It was also found that younger male consumers are more fashion conscious and shop more frequently than older males. These younger males, aged 15 to 24, are more likely to be influenced by peer pressure and have a need to conform to a social group. The social identity theory was used in this study which shows that individuals want to conform to a group containing group members with certain similarity. In this study the similarities are being male consumers who wear branded clothing. By wearing branded clothing, social identity is formed and it makes it easier for them to identify with a social reference group.

Limited research has however been done specifically in South Africa on brand wearing male consumers. In order to have a better understanding of this consumer market a qualitative exploratory study was done, examining the brand wearing male consumer's reasons for wearing branded clothing and his searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment. The three objectives of this study were: to explore why these male consumers wear branded clothing; the role of social identity when wearing branded clothing and their searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment.

Thirty individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with brand wearing male consumers in order to investigate the three objectives of this study. The first objective was to explore the reasons why male clothing consumers wear branded clothing. It was found that the male consumer believes that clothing with brand names are better quality items. Furthermore they indicated that branded clothing has certain advantages, for example, complimenting their bodies through the way it fit and giving status to the persons wearing the brand. The effect of the branded clothing on the consumers led to the second objective, namely to explore the role of social

identity in their reasons for wearing branded clothing. The participants felt that a brand name enhances the wearer's image and status and thus, not only makes the male feel better about himself, but also helps him to conform to a social group.

Thirdly, their searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment was examined. The results indicated that when the males notice an item, they tend to think about the item, they evaluate it visually and also do a physical evaluation of the item. This research can be used as the foundation for a large quantitative study to obtain more comprehensive results. Retailers can use this information to understand their target market better and to deliver a desirable shopping experience for the brand wearing male consumer, thus leading to more sales.

OPSOMMING

Om die handelsnaamdraende manlike verbruiker en sy gedrag in die kleinhandelsomgewing te verstaan.

Die gedrag van manlike verbruikers in die kleinhandelsomgewing is nog nie genoeg nagevors nie. Volgens literatuur is die kleremark vir mans besig om te groei en word dit al hoe belangriker vir kledingkleinhandelaars. Verder is bevind dat jonger manlike verbruikers meer modebewus is en ook meer aankope doen as ouer mans. Hierdie jonger mans wat gewoonlik tussen die ouderdom van 15 en 24 jaar is, is ook meer geneig om beïnvloed te word deur groepsdruk en het 'n behoefte om tot 'n sosiale groep te behoort. Die sosiale identiteit teorie word in hierdie studie gebruik en staaf dat mense aan 'n groep wil behoort wat bestaan uit groeplede met spesifieke kenmerke. In hierdie studie behels die kenmerke om manlike verbruikers te wees wat handelsmerk kledingstukke dra. Deur kledingstukke met handelsname te dra, word 'n sosiale identiteit gevorm en is dit vir hulle makliker om met 'n verwysingsgroep te identifiseer.

Daar is egter beperkte navorsing gedoen oor manlike verbruikers wat handelsmerke dra, veral in Suid-Afrika. 'n Kwalitatiewe verkennende studie is gedoen om 'n beter begrip te vorm van hierdie verbruikersmark. Hierdie studie ondersoek die rede hoekom die handelsnaamdraende manlike verbruiker verkies om handelsname te dra en beskryf ook hul gedrag in die kleinhandel-omgewing. Dertig individuele semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is met handelsnaamdraende manlike verbruikers gevoer met die doel om drie aspekte te ondersoek. Die aspekte sluit in om die rede waarom hulle handelsname dra te verken, wat die rol van hul sosiale identiteit is wanneer hulle die handelsname dra en wat hulle gedrag in 'n kleinhandelsomgewing is.

Die eerste doelwit was om die redes te verken waarom manlike kledingverbruikers handelsname dra. Daar is bevind dat die manlike verbruiker glo dat kledingstukke met handelsname oor 'n beter kwaliteit beskik. Verder het hulle getoon dat kledingstukke met handelsname sekere

voordele het, dat dit hul liggame komplementeer deur die manier waarop dit pas, asook dat dit 'n sekere status weerspieël.

Die effek van die handelsname op die verbruiker het ook gelei na die tweede doelwit, naamlik die rol wat sosiale identiteit speel in die rede waarom hulle handelsmerkkledingstukke dra. Hulle het gevoel dat handelsname 'n mens se selfbeeld, asook status, bevorder. Dit laat jou beter voel oor jouself maar, ook makliker inpas by 'n groep.

Derdens is hulle gedrag in 'n kleinhandel-omgewing ondersoek. Die resultate het aangedui dat wanneer die manlike verbruiker 'n item raaksien, hy daarvoor nadink, dit visueel evalueer, asook 'n fisiese evaluasie van die item maak.

Hierdie navorsing kan as 'n basis dien vir 'n groter kwantitatiewe studie om meer omvattende resultate te verkry. Kleinhandelaars kan hierdie inligting gebruik om hul teikenmark beter te verstaan en 'n gewenste aankoopervaring vir die handelsnaamdraende manlike verbruiker te skep wat ook tot optimale verkope sal lei.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to say thank you to my Heavenly Father for the potential, strength and mercy he gave me to complete this study

I want to thank all the personnel in the Consumer Sciences Department, especially my three study leaders. Dr. Marietjie Venter, Dr. Daleen van der Merwe and Ms Sonna Visser, thank you for your support, guidance and patience throughout the study. A special thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Kempen for helping me at the beginning of the study and also for assisting me in obtaining the necessary funds. Thanks to the NRF for financial support for the study.

To all my loved ones, family and friends, thank you for caring, encouraging and understanding during the study.

Thanks to all the participants who took part in the study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY	i
OPSOMMING.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
Chapter 1.....	1
Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background and motivation	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	5
1.3 Aim and Objectives.....	6
1.3.1 Aim	6
1.3.2 Objectives.....	6
1.4 Conceptual framework.....	7
1.4.1 Limitations of the study.....	8
1.5 Definitions of terms.....	9
1.6 Structure of the mini-dissertation	10
1.5 Author's contributions	10
1.6 References	12
CHAPTER 2	17
RESEARCH ARTICLE	17
Abstract	19
Introduction.....	20
Literature review	21
The brand wearing male consumer and branded clothing.....	21
The brand wearing male consumer and social identity.....	22
The brand wearing male consumer and the retail environment.....	24

Methodology	25
Research design.....	25
Sampling	26
Ethical considerations.....	26
Data Collection	27
Validity of semi-structured questionnaire.....	28
Data analysis	28
Trustworthiness	29
Results and Discussion	30
Objective 1 : The brand wearing male clothing consumers' reasons for wearing branded clothing	30
Objective 2 : The role of social identity in male consumers' reasons for wearing branded clothing	32
Objective 3: To describe the brand wearing male consumer's searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment.	34
Conclusion.....	38
References	40
Chapter 3.....	48
Concluding discussion.....	48
3.1 Introduction.....	48
3.2 Conclusion.....	48
3.3 Relevance of this study to science and industry	51
3.4 Comments on the research procedure	51
3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews	51
3.4.2 Data analysis	52

3.5 Limitations and recommendations	52
APPENDIX A.....	55
APPENDIX B	62
APPENDIX C.....	63

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and motivation

The male consumer's interest in clothing purchases has grown extensively in recent years (Woodruffe-Burton, 1998:301; Seo *et al.*, 2001:209; Torres *et al.*, 2001:205). Subsequently a significant increase in male clothing purchasing is influencing retailers to be more aware of this growing market (Wells & Sciuto, 1996:233; Kinley *et al.*, 2000:67; Lee, 2001:58). Torres *et al.* (2001:205) argues that it is imperative that research regarding male consumers are done. However, men's clothing shopping behaviour still remains under-explored (Kinley *et al.*, 2000:67; Otnes & McGrath, 2001:111; Lee, 2001:58).

In South Africa the menswear market grew by 4.4% in 2006 and is forecasted to increase to 19.3% by 2011 (Datamonitor, 2007b:3). The menswear market in South Africa had a 0.9% better growth in 2006 than the global menswear market which grew 3.3% in 2006 and is forecasted to grow up to 17.8% by 2011 (Datamonitor, 2007a:3). Although these statistics about the South African menswear market are available, South African male consumers' behaviour in the retail environment is not clear due to a lack of relevant literature in this regard. Even though the subject is also still under-explored internationally, compared to South African literature, there is much more information about male consumers abroad.

According to Fischer and Arnold (1994:165) and Dholakia *et al.* (1995:27), the growing menswear market is the result of various social factors. These factors include males who are single and live alone, males who live as single parents and the increasing number of women in the paid work force which lead to young men buying their own clothes due to working mothers (Fischer & Arnold, 1994:165; Dholakia *et al.*, 1995:27; Weiss, 2003:31). Therefore, more males are participating in shopping activities, leading to a reduction in

gender differences concerning shopping behaviour (Fischer & Arnold, 1994:165; Dholakia *et al.*, 1995:27).

Besides the fact that males are shopping increasingly more than in the past, it has been noted that younger male consumers are more fashion orientated than older men (Burn, 1996:31; Birtwistle & Shearer, 2001:16; Seo *et al.*, 2001:211). Retailers are aware of this fact and Seo *et al.* (2001:211) found that over 90% of clothing retailers target younger age groups of 15 to 24 year-olds who purchase their own clothing. Torres *et al.* (2001:211) continues by stating that male consumers between the ages of 18 and 24 are the drivers of apparel spending by males. Therefore, it is important for retailers to understand younger male consumers and to deliver a pleasant shopping experience, thereby increasing sales.

Younger male consumers often purchase clothing items which are similar to the items their friends wear to experience a feeling of belonging to a certain group (Burn, 1996:31; Birtwistle & Shearer, 2001:16; Seo *et al.*, 2001:211). This behaviour can be explained by the social identity theory which illustrates the assurance sought by men who want to feel that they belong to a certain group (Auty & Elliot, 1998:109; Hooper, 2001:155). The social identity theory states that people need comparisons between themselves and other people in order to feel they belong to a group and are accepted by others in the group (Ojala & Nesdale, 2004:22). Social identity is the way in which people, in this case males, identify with the social group to which they belong (Auty & Elliot, 1998:110; Hooper, 2001:155; Niens *et al.*, 2003:109; Cameron, 2004:240). For this study, male consumers who wear branded clothing are the comparison between group members.

According to Niens *et al.* (2003:109) and Ellemers *et al.* (1999:10), the social identity theory is based on the assumption that individuals strive towards a positive self-concept which can be reached through a positive social identity. If a person achieves and maintains a positive social identity, it will boost his/her self-esteem (Brown, 2000:747). Clothing is used by consumers to present themselves to other people and interact socially with others, thus

helping them to create a certain social status (Jeal, 2005:685). Therefore clothing in particular, is an attempt to improve one's self confidence (Dittmar & Drury, 1999:134) and a means through which social identity is communicated (Auty & Elliot, 1998:109). When enhancing one's self image, the person will have more confidence fitting into a social group. The enhancement of an individual's self image often plays a role in the purchasing of certain clothing items (Dittmar & Dury, 1999:110). Individuals often purchase a clothing item because they believe it will enhance their self image and give them more confidence to fit into a certain group (Dittmar & Dury, 1999:110). In addition, Lee (2001:59) stated that brand names on clothing items can also contribute to a positive social identity and give emotional satisfaction when the brand is highly recognized and delivers desirable messages about the wearer.

The brand name is of significance due to the connotations attached to it (Grace & O'Cass, 2002:102). For instance, it can communicate everything one needs to know about the product, such as information about the quality of the product (Dodds & Monru, 1985:86). Consequently it can be argued that the brand wearer will experience a positive social identity when the brand connotations are perceived as positive. Cramp (1996:49) regards brands as status symbols which define when individuals fit into a group, therefore contributing to the fact that consumers tend to wear branded clothing to fit into a certain social group. International studies have shown that consumers tend to choose brands with a similar identity to the social identity they want to achieve (Shiffman & Kanuk, 2007:187). Furthermore, male consumers also perceive branded clothing as higher quality items (Auty & Elliot, 1998:115; Grewal *et al.*, 1998:348) and are willing to pay more for branded items (Birtwistle *et al.*, 1998:151). However, the reasons why South African male consumers wear branded clothing are still not clear.

According to Grewal *et al.* (1998:333), the fact that consumers have preferences towards certain brands shows that the brand names and merchandise selection are important for the store in order to attract consumers. It is evident that the retailer has to understand what the target consumer (in this instance, the brand wearing male clothing consumer) wants

inside a store and strive to reach the consumer's expectations of the store (Bloemer & De Ruyter, 1998:502). Although very little literature is available explaining the expectations of men inside a fashion store, a small number of researchers found some information regarding this issue. Burman *et al.* (2008:1) found that brands are crucial drivers for clothing purchases. In addition a study done by Torres *et al.* (2001:208) found that one of the most important factors male consumers use to determine the clothing store they will visit is the brand selection the store carries. They prefer a store with a variety of brand name clothing. Furthermore Birtwistle and Freathy (1998:320) argue that the correct positioning of merchandise inside the store is essential for consumers. Male consumers want to find what they are looking for immediately when entering a store (Otnes & McGrath, 2001:114). Frings (2002:335) states that visual merchandising will enhance the image of the store and show what the store has to offer to the consumer. Literature also states that when a store projects an image close to the targeted consumer's self-image, consumers will be more attracted by the store (Garton, 1995:29; Birtwistle *et al.*, 1998:147; Birtwistle & Shearer, 2001:9).

Although studies have been done about store characteristics, for example visual merchandising (Frings, 2002:335; Kerfoot *et al.*, 2003:143), store layout (Birtwistle & Shearer, 2001:12; Baker *et al.*, 2002:122; Berman & Evans, 2006:551) and store atmosphere (Davies & Ward, 2005:505; Scarpi, 2006:7) inside a clothing store, there is a lack of information concerning how the South African male clothing consumer behaves inside such a retail environment. International literature argues that male consumers under the age of 25 are most likely to enjoy shopping for apparel and while shopping in the retail environment, they will take time to take their wardrobes into consideration before purchasing clothing items (Torres *et al.*, 2001:2110). Retailing includes all the activities involved in the selling of goods and services to consumers (Berman & Evans, 2006:4). Blackwell *et al.* (2001:129) also explain retailing as the process of uniting a consumer and the marketplace, making the efforts of the supply chain to meet the consumer's needs, visible.

This study looks at the retailing environment and how the male consumer in South Africa behaves in such an environment when noticing an item. The study only entails the behaviour before purchasing an item and does not include the decision to purchase or the purchasing process. This information could serve as a base for larger quantitative studies which could be applied to help the retailers to understand this market segment better and to deliver a more desirable shopping experience for the brand wearing male consumer, leading to a satisfied consumer returning to the store.

1.2 Problem Statement

From 1.1 it is evident that the male consumer has changed and is more engaged in shopping. In the South African context, research about the brand wearing male clothing consumer is limited. However, international literature has shown that clothing is a valuable mechanism through which social identity can be attained. Furthermore, the literature indicates that branded clothing can add to the feeling of belonging which is an indication of social identity. Nevertheless, it is still a vague subject, due to a lack of research about male consumers, especially in South Africa. The feelings which brand wearing South African male consumers experience when wearing branded clothing as well as their behaviour after noticing items inside a clothing store are also unknown. This information is particularly important when a clothing store for this target market is developed. Furthermore these research results could be applied to larger quantitative studies to obtain information that would allow retailers to know their target consumers and to create a shopping environment for these male consumers that would fit their needs and enhance their shopping experience. The consumer would have a satisfying shopping experience and would return to the store. Only then will retailers succeed in optimising their sales.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

1.3.1 Aim

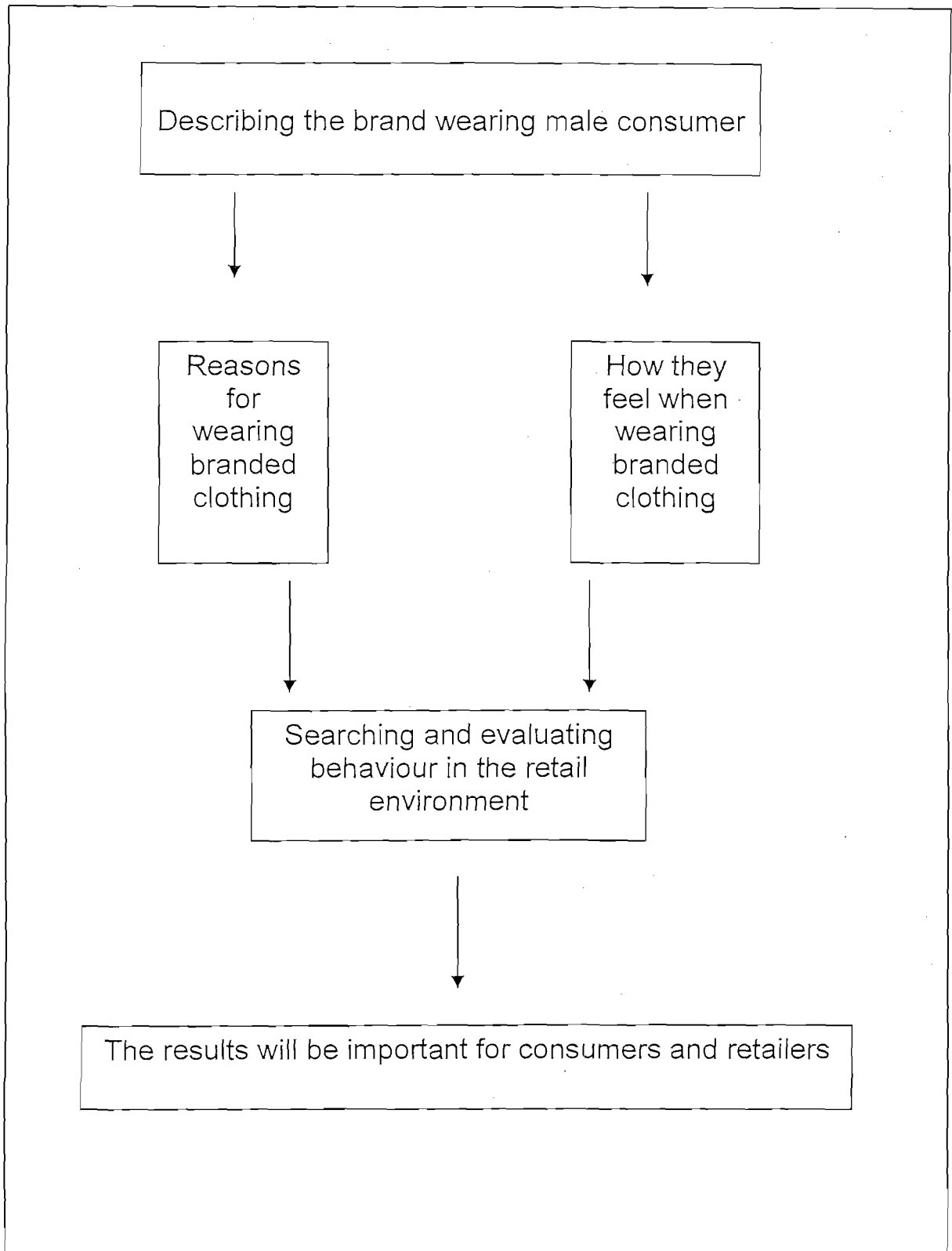
The aim of this study was to describe the brand wearing male consumer and his searching and evaluating behaviour in the clothing retail environment.

1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

- To explore the reasons why male consumers wear branded clothing.
- To explore whether social identity plays a role in the reasons why male consumers wear branded clothing.
- To describe the brand wearing male consumer's searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment.

1.4 Conceptual framework



This study was an exploratory study to describe the searching and evaluating behaviour of the brand wearing male consumer by exploring the reasons why male consumers wear branded clothing and whether social identity plays a role in the reasons they wear branded clothing. The study was done within the theoretical framework of consumer behaviour. A methodology was designed and questions for an in-depth interview were developed. A pilot study was conducted to evaluate the questions before the actual in-depth interviews began. The study leaders were present during the pilot study interviews and helped to determine whether the respondents understood the questions and whether the questions asked gathered enough information to answer the objectives. The pilot study also prepared the researcher for the final interviews. The questions were adapted to obtain more in-depth insight for the objectives (SEE APPENDIX C).

After transcribing and coding all the data collected, it was found that the information gathered were far more than expected and needed for a mini dissertation. The results of the pilot study were again examined to guide which questions answered the objectives of this study the best and then only those information were given in the results and discussion of this document.

1.4.1 Limitations of the study

Although 30 in-depth interviews were conducted, it still remains a relatively small sample group. Furthermore only men in Potchefstroom, which consisted of mainly students, were used. This is a limited and very specific study sample in a moderately small town. A broader study population and location will give more accurate information about South African males in general. However, this information can be valuable to retailers regarding male students and their purchasing of branded clothes.

1.5 Definitions of terms

Brand wearer

For the purpose of this study a brand wearer is defined as someone who wears well known brand name clothing items, for example Nike or Levi clothing brands.

Retailing

Retailing includes all the business activities during the selling of goods and services to a consumer (Berman & Evans, 2006:4).

Retail environment

A retail environment is the setting where retailing takes place. For the purpose of this study the retail environment refers to the area where clothing items are being sold to male consumers.

Consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour is the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:3).

Behaviour in the retail environment

For the purpose of this study, the behaviour in the retail environment includes the behaviour of the brand wearing male consumer when noticing different items in a clothing store before purchasing an item. In contrast with the definition for consumer behaviour, this study only includes the searching for and evaluating of products that they expect to satisfy their needs.

Social identity

Social identity explains the need of a person to feel he or she belongs to/is accepted by a social group (Hooper, 2001:155; Niens *et al.*, 2003:109; Cameron, 2004:240)

1.6 Structure of the mini-dissertation

This mini-dissertation is presented in article format. Chapter 1 provides a brief background and motivation, explaining how the male consumer has changed and how branded clothing influences the brand wearing male clothing consumer. Chapter 2 is presented in a research article format and provides a discussion of the brand wearing male consumer's behaviour and needs with regard to clothing. The methodology of how the study was conducted is also presented in this chapter, followed by the results and discussion and a conclusion of the research. Chapter 2 was written according to the editorial prescriptions of the South African Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences. Chapter 3 offers a concluding discussion of the study and also includes future research recommendations.

1.5 Author's contributions

The study detailed in this mini-dissertation was designed and completed by a team of researchers. The following table describes the contributions of each researcher to this study:

Table 1: Authors' contributions to the study

Name	Role in the study
MS. M. THOMAS	Author, responsible for literature research, the gathering and interpretation of data, descriptive analysis and the preparation of this mini-dissertation.
DR. MD VENTER	Study leader and co-author, supervising the completion of this mini-dissertation.
DR. M. VAN DER MERWE	Study leader and co-author, supervising descriptive analysis and interpretation of the data, as

	well as the completion of this mini-dissertation.
MS. SD. VISSER	Study leader and co-author, supervising descriptive analysis and interpretation of the data, as well as the completion of this mini-dissertation.

The following statement from the co-authors confirms their individual roles in this study and gives their permission that the article may form part of this mini-dissertation.

I declare that I have approved the article in this mini-dissertation. My role in the study, as indicated above, is representative of my actual contribution and that I hereby give my consent that it may be published as part of the Masters' mini-dissertation of Miss M Thomas.

MS. SD. VISSER

[Signature]

[Signature]

1.6 References

- AUTY, S. & ELLIOTT, R. 1998. Fashion involvement, self-monitoring and the meaning of brands. *Journal of product and brand management*, 7(2):109-123.
- BAKER, J., PARASURAMAN, A., GREWAL, D. & VOSS, G.B. 2002. The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions. *Journal of marketing*, 55:120-141.
- BERMAN, B. & EVANS, J.R. 2006. Retail management: a strategic approach. 10th ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall. 682 p.
- BIRTWISTLE, G. & FREATHY, P. 1998. More than just a name above the shop: a comparison of the branding strategies of two UK fashion retailers. *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 26(8):318-323.
- BIRTWISTLE, G. & SHEARER, L. 2001. Consumer perception of five UK fashion retailers. *Journal of fashion marketing and management*, 5(1):9-18, Aug.
- BIRTWISTLE, G., CLARKE, I. & FREATHY, P. 1998. Customer decision making in fashion retailing: a segmentation analysis. *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 26(4):147-154.
- BLACKWELL, R.D., MINIARD, P.W. & ENGEL, J.F. 2001. Consumer behaviour. 9th ed. Orlando: Harcourt. 570 p.
- BLOEMER, J. & DE RUYTER, K. 1998. On the relationship between store image, store satisfaction and store loyalty. *European journal of marketing*, 32(5/6):499-513.
- BROWN, R. 2000. Social identity theory: past achievements, current problems and future challenges. *European journal of social psychology*. 30:745-778.

BURMANN, C., JOST-BENZ, M. & RILEY, N. 2008. Towards an identity-based brand equity model. *Journal of business research*, 10:1-18.

BURN, E. 1996. Back to school: The benefits of selling to the college market. *Direct marketing*, 58(10):30-33, Feb.

CAMERON, J.E. 2004. A Three-Factor model of social identity. Self & identity. *Psychology press*, 3:239-262.

CRAMP. B. 1996. Section 5: marketing research. *Journal of business & industrial marketing*, 11(5):49-62.

DATAMONITOR. 2007a. Global menswear. *Industry profile*, 1-21, June. Available: ScienceDirect.

DATAMONITOR. 2007b. Menswear in South Africa. *Industry profile*, 1-21, June. Available: ScienceDirect.

DAVIES, B.J. & WARD, P. 2005. Exploring the connections between visual merchandising and retail branding: an application of facet theory. *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 33(7):505–513.

DHOLAKIA, R.R., PEDERSON, B. & HIKMET, N. 1995. Married males and shopping: are they sleeping partners? *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 23(3):27-33.

DITTMAR, H. & DRURY, J. 2000. Self-image – is it in the bag? A qualitative comparison between “ordinary” and “excessive” consumers. *Journal of economic psychology*, 21:109-142.

DODDS, W.B. & MONRU, K.B. 1985. The effect of brand and price information on subjective product evaluations. *Advances in consumer research*, 12(1):85-90.

ELLEMERS, N., SPEARS, R. & DOOSJE, B. 1999. Social identity. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. 273 p.

FISCHER, E. & ARNOLD, S.J. 1994. Sex, gender identity, gender role attitudes, and consumer behaviour. *Psychology and marketing*, 11(2):163-182, March/April.

FRINGS, G.S. 2002. Fashion from concept to consumer. 7th ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall. 388 p.

GARTON, P.A. 1995. Store loyal? A view of differential congruence. *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 23(12):29-35.

GRACE, D. & O'CASS, A. 2002. Brand associations: looking through the eye of the beholder. *Qualitative market research: an international journal*, 5(2):96-111.

GREWAL, D., KRISHNAN, R., BAKER, J. & BORIN, N. 1998. The effect of store name, brand name and price discounts on consumers' evaluations and purchase intentions, *Journal of retailing*, 74(3):331-352.

HOOPER, M. 2001. The structure and measurement of social identity. *Public opinion quarterly*, 40(2):154-164, Summer.

JEAL, R.R. 2005. Clothes make the (wo)man. *Scriptura*, 90:685-699.

KERFOOT, S., DAVIES, B. & WARD, P. 2003. Visual merchandising and the creation of discernible retail brands. *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 31(3):143-152.

KINLEY, T.L., CONRAD, C.A. & BROWN, G. 2000. Personal vs. non-personal sources of information used in the purchase of men's apparel. *Journal of consumer studies and home economics*, 24(1):67-73, Mar.

LEE, L. 2001. Male consumers' behaviour in a high-priced clothing market. *Journal of Korean home economics association English edition*, 2(1):57-75, Dec.

NIENS, U., CAIRNS, E., FINCHILESCU, G., FOSTER, D. & TREDoux, C. 2003. Social identity and the authoritarian personality theory in South Africa. *South African journal of psychology*, 33(2):109-117.

OJALA, K. & NESDALE, D. 2004. Bullying and social identity: the effects of group norms and distinctiveness threat on attitudes towards bullying. *British journal of developmental psychology*, 22:19-35.

OTNES, C. & MCGRATH, M. 2001. Perceptions and realities of male shopping behaviour. *Journal of retailing*, 77(1):111-137, Spring.

SCARPI, D. 2006. Fashion stores between fun and usefulness. *Journal of fashion marketing and management*. 10(1):7-24.

SCHIFFMAN, L.G. & KANUK, L.L. 2007. Consumer behaviour. 9th ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall. 561 p.

SEO, J., HATHCOTE, J.M. & SWEANEY, A.L. 2001. Casualwear shopping behaviour of college men in Georgia, USA. *Journal of fashion marketing and management*, 5(3):208-222, Apr.

TORRES, I.M., SUMMERS, T.A. & BELLEAU, B.D. 2001. Men's shopping and store preferences. *Journal of retailing and consumer services*, 8:205-212.

WEISS, M.J. 2003. To be about to be. *American demographics*, 29-36, Sept.

WELLS, W.D. & SCIUTO, C.A. 1996. Direct observation of purchasing behaviour. *Journal of marketing research*, 3:227-233, Aug.

WOODRUFFE-BURTON, H. 1998. Private desires, public display: consumption, postmodernism and fashion's "new man". *International journal of retail and distribution management*, 26(8):301-310.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

(Written according to the editorial prescriptions of the South African Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences.)

Describing the brand wearing male consumer and his searching and evaluating behaviour in the clothing retail environment

Minnet Thomas
North-West University
Potchefstroom
018 299 4666
minnet.thomas@nwu.ac.za

Dr. Marietjie Venter
North-West University
Potchefstroom
018 299 2479
marietjie.venter@nwu.ac.za

Dr. Daleen Van der Merwe
North-West University
Potchefstroom
018 299 2476
daleen.vandermerwe@nwu.ac.za

Sonna Visser
North-West University
Potchefstroom
018 299 2474
sonna.visser@nwu.ac.za

All correspondence should be sent to:

M. Thomas
Department of Consumer Sciences
North-West University
Potchefstroom campus
P/Bag X 6001
Potchefstroom
2520

Abstract

The South African male clothing consumer is an under-explored subject as limited research has been done regarding the behaviour of these consumers in the retail environment. Therefore this study focused on the brand wearing male consumer and aimed to explore the reasons why male consumers wear branded clothing and the role of social identity when wearing branded clothing in order to describe the searching and evaluating behaviour of the brand wearing male consumer in the retail environment. A qualitative research strategy was followed, through which 30 individual semi-structured interviews with male consumers between the ages of 18 and 24 were held. Quality was found to be one of the main reasons these males wear branded clothing. Furthermore these males argue that branded clothing helps to boost their self image and gives status to the person wearing the brand. Consequently it also helps to build a positive social identity and allows the consumer to be accepted by a reference group. Similarities in the way they behave inside a retail environment were found. They showed an interest in what they were purchasing and went through a process of thinking about the products, visually evaluating items as well as physically evaluating items. These findings could serve as the foundation for a larger quantitative study with more comprehensive results which could help retailers to understand this target market better and to create a positive shopping experience for their consumers.

Keywords: Male consumer, consumer behaviour, branded clothing, retail environment, social identity

Introduction

Male consumers have become more actively involved in clothing shopping due to a growth in their interest in clothing purchases (Seo *et al*, 2001:209; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004:224). This has resulted in a noteworthy increase in the male market segment where expenditure on clothing and shopping centre attendance have become enough to warrant attention to male shopping behaviour (Dholakia *et al*, 1995:2; Wells & Sciuto, 1996:233; Kinley *et al*, 2000:67; Lee, 2001:58). A significant amount of international research has been done on consumers and their shopping behaviour (Studak & Workman, 2004:66; Scarpi, 2006:8). However, research related to male consumers has been neglected (Lee *et al*, 2005:324) especially in the South African context.

According to Lee (2001:60), the growing interest in male clothing shopping relates to the fact that males express themselves through the clothing they wear. Auty and Elliot (1998:110) state that clothing is a reliable source of information as it provides messages that can be interpreted by the observer and helps a male to express himself better. Due to the fact that male consumers evaluate branded items as high quality and more expensive, these messages provided by branded clothing usually convey socio-economic status (Auty & Elliot, 1998:112; D'Astous & Saint-Louis, 2005:307). Lee (2001:57) states that when a male consumer has enough money, he will not consider functional benefits of an item, but rather seek to find a brand with a socially, well-established image. Auty and Elliot (1998:113) indicate that a brand name with a strong image sends a message that the brand wearer is stylish, trendy or classy and provides a high financial status (Lee, 2001:59). Consequently, the connotations attached to a brand will be attached to the person wearing the brand and provide a certain image to the wearer and at the same time improve the consumer's confidence (Woodruffe-Burton, 1998:307; Del Rio *et al*., 2001:411).

Male consumers have an ideal social self-image, which can be described as the image they want others to have of them (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:137).

Since it is important for men to have an image acceptable to others, clothing, especially branded clothing, is a means through which an expression of social identity is formed (Auty & Elliot, 1998:110). Stets and Burke (2000:25) explain that social identity is seen as the belonging to a certain group where all the members have similar characteristics. In this study, the similarities include being male consumers who wear branded clothing. Social identity is the way in which males identify with the social group to which they belong (Auty & Elliot, 1998:114; Hooper, 2001:155; Niens *et al*, 2003:109; Cameron, 2004:240).

This study aimed to describe the searching and evaluating behaviour of brand wearing male consumers. In order to do this, the reasons why they wear branded clothing and whether social identity plays a role in the reason why male consumers wear branded clothing were explored. The social identity theory explains the need for individuals to conform to a certain group with similarities between members, in this case being male consumers who wear branded clothing. By using this theory, the researcher could understand the reasons for men wearing branded clothing and how it influence their social identity in order to have a better understanding of the brand wearing male consumer searching and evaluating process. Although some research about brand wearing male consumers has been done internationally, it is lacking in the South African context.

Literature review

The brand wearing male consumer and branded clothing

Literature in South Africa about male consumers and branded clothing is limited. However, some international literature concerning branded clothing and the male consumer is available. Grace and O'Cass (2002:102) explain that a brand name has certain connotations attached to it. The name immediately gives information about the brand, for example, the quality of the product (Dodds & Monru, 1985:86). This information can be helpful to males

during the purchasing process because male consumers tend to focus on the characteristics of a clothing item, for example, warmth, quality and durability (Bakewell *et al*, 2006:169). Auty and Elliot (1998:112) conclude that when an item has a good brand image it will appear as a high quality, comfortable item with a good fit.

The brand image is a combination of a consumer's subjective perceptions of the product's typical characteristics (Keller, 1993:3; Porter & Claycomb, 1997:385; Del Rio *et al*, 2001:411; Grace & O'Cass, 2002:97). According to Solomon and Rabolt (2004:3), consumers often choose an item because they believe that they will retain an identical image to the brand image of the clothes they are wearing. People in a reference group usually all have a shared conception of a certain product or brand image (Elliot, 1994:13). This shared conception of a brand's image is important for male consumers because men wear the labels accepted by their reference group to avoid them from being excluded by the group (Woodruffe-Burton, 1998:308). According to Seo *et al* (2001:211), the fear of exclusion is often noticed in younger age groups who want to belong to peer groups and often buy clothing of a similar style as their friends.

Seo *et al* (2001:211) established that retailers target 15 to 24 year-olds because they are more fashion orientated and often purchase their own clothing. Since they are purchasing their own clothing and tend to have preferences towards certain brands, the brand names and merchandise selection of a store are very important for the store to attract consumers (Grewal *et al*, 1998:333). Due to the fact that there is a lack of information concerning the brand wearing male consumer, South African male consumers' behaviour inside a clothing store is unknown and therefore investigated in the present study.

The brand wearing male consumer and social identity It was mentioned in the previous section that males wear branded clothing to identify with a certain group. According to Auty and Elliot (1998:109) and Hooper

(2001:155), the belonging to a particular social group a male identifies with, will help the male to define and characterise himself. The social identity theory's purpose is to understand how individuals make sense of themselves and other people in their social environment (Korte, 2007:168) Furthermore the social identity theory is based on the assumption that individuals strive for a positive self-concept which can be reached through a positive social identity (Ellemers *et al*, 1999:10; Niens *et al*, 2003:109). Subsequently individuals may reach a positive social identity by comparing themselves or the group they identify with, with other social groups. Social identities will emphasize the stereotypical similarities shared among members of a group (Ellemers *et al*, 2002:164) for example the wearing of branded clothing.

Thus, the social identity theory was used in this study because it is a theory of group membership and it explains that individuals need to conform to a group (Korte, 2007:168) The need to be accepted by the members of a social group or reference group is important to male consumers (Kinley *et al*, 2000:68; Auty & Elliot, 2001:68). All the above authors said that a key characteristic of a reference group is the individual's desire for conformity to the group norms. Consequently, clothing is a valuable mechanism through which this belonging to a group can be attained.

Consumers purchase products or certain brands that others in their group purchase because they want to conform to their group and purchase what the other members perceive as a good product (Auty & Elliott, 2001:236). Therefore, brand names can also contribute to a positive social identity by obtaining emotional satisfaction when the brand is highly recognized and delivers desirable messages about the wearer (Lee, 2001:59). Individuals can enrich their self image and social image through the images of the brands they buy and wear (Del Rio *et al*, 2001:412; Seo *et al*, 2001:218). When the social identity is perceived as positive, the consumer will feel accepted and, therefore, emotionally satisfied. In South Africa, little is known about why male consumers wear branded clothing and how it affects their social identity. The information gained through this study will help South African retailers to

understand male consumers and enhance their shopping experience in order to obtain a satisfied consumer.

The brand wearing male consumer and the retail environment In order to generate a positive shopping experience for the consumer, the retailer must understand their target consumers' needs (in this instance, the brand wearing male clothing consumer) and strive to reach the expectations they might have of a clothing store (Bloemer & De Ruyter, 1998:502; Newman & Foxall, 2003:597). In the South African context, the expectations that brand wearing male consumers have of a clothing store are not known. Male consumers tend to know what they want before entering a store and need to find the item they are looking for quickly (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004:226). Therefore, Britwistle and Freathy (1998:320) argue that the correct positioning of merchandise inside a store is essential for males to help them find the item they are looking for. However, little scientific research was done regarding the in-store preferences and merchandise displays South African male consumers perceive as acceptable.

International research conducted by Seo *et al* (2001:2) found men to be attracted by stores with open spaces, logical layout and well marked sections in order to help them to easily locate the items they are looking for. Clothing displays are also helpful for males when shopping for clothes (Seo *et al*, 2001:209). Furthermore, locating items is made easier when brands are displayed or promoted similarly inside the store and in the media (Lea-Greenwood, 1998:327; Kerfoot *et al*, 2003:151). Visual merchandising is also used to help consumers to differentiate brands in a retail environment (Lea-Greenwood, 1998:327). All of the above methods used to sell the items to the consumer form part of the whole retailing experience (Jones *et al*, 2005:34).

Berman and Evans (2006:4) describe retailing as all the activities involved in the selling of goods and services to consumers. This study will only focus on the behaviour of the brand wearing male consumer in the retail environment prior to the decision to purchase or purchasing process, thus their searching

and evaluating behaviour. When understanding the searching and evaluating behaviour of the brand wearing male consumer, a fulfilling shopping experience can be created for this target market, obtaining a satisfying consumer and a more successful retail environment.

Methodology

Research design A qualitative study was done to explore the brand wearing male consumer's reasons for wearing branded clothing and the role of social identity in the reasons why they wear branded clothing, in order to describe his searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment. Therefore, qualitative research was an appropriate method to use, as it observes people's thoughts, experiences, feelings and behaviour (McCormack & Hill, 1997:4; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:86). Furthermore, qualitative research deals with social realities and explores the views and feelings that underlie descriptions of behaviour, events or experience (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000:7; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:150), as was done in the present study.

Due to the fact that male consumers are under-explored, an exploratory study was done. Exploratory research is undertaken when new research about a topic is done, or in the case of a new area of interest (Strydom, 2002b:214; Ruane, 2005:12), such as South African brand wearing male consumers. This method increases the understanding regarding a new research area or phenomenon (Ruane, 2005:12) and helps to conclude more refined research on a topic (Babbie, 2004:329). Furthermore, an exploratory study is a valuable method through which practical knowledge of a certain research area can be gained (Strydom, 2002b:214). Due to the fact that the social identity theory deals with the behaviour of individuals belonging to a group with specific similarities (Ojala & Nesdale, 2004:22; Korte, 2007:168), this theory was used in this study with the wearing of branded clothing by male consumers as the similarity between members.

Sampling The study was conducted in Potchefstroom in the North-West Province of South Africa. Seo *et al* (2001:211) describes 15 to 24 year old males as being the most fashion orientated male consumers, therefore the study focussed on these males. Inclusion criteria for this study were: they had to be male, be between the age of 18 and 24, do their own shopping and they had to be brand wearers, thus be in possession of branded clothing.

Seeing that it was necessary for participants to be in possession of branded clothing, purposive sampling was used to ensure the participants add to the purpose of the study (Strydom & Venter, 2002:208). In order to obtain this specific sampled group the snowball method was used (Strydom & Venter, 2002:208). A brand wearing male who was known to the researcher, was approached and asked to identify five randomly selected brand wearing male consumers in the specific age group. The five males identified were likely to know other male consumers with similar characteristics necessary for this study. Therefore, the snowballing method was suitable (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:94). The participants were interviewed and asked to identify other male consumers who fit the inclusion criteria. Thirty participants were recruited.

Ethical considerations All participants voluntarily answered the questions (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:87). They were asked permission to be included in the study and to be tape recorded. Informed consent from each participant was reached through the fact that everyone understood what the study was about and was willing to participate (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:87). The researcher made sure the participants felt safe and comfortable and relaxed in order to answer truthfully and completely (Tustin *et al*, 2005:47; Parasuraman *et al*, 2007:44). In order to achieve the above, the participants were interviewed in the privacy of their own home and assured that they would be kept anonymous (Parasuraman *et al*, 2007:44). Participants were also allowed to only answer the questions they felt comfortable with and were allowed to end the interviews or discontinue to participate in the study at any given time (Tustin *et al*, 2005:47). Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the North-West University (reference code 04K11).

Data Collection Semi-structured interviews are used to gain detailed information about a consumer's beliefs or perceptions on a particular topic (Smith, 1995:9; Greeff, 2002:296). This method was suitable for this study as it focuses on the reasons behind male consumers' behaviour. Data were collected through 30 individual semi-structured interviews. Key questions were asked (SEE APPENDIX C) in the same manner each time to probe the participants to answer all the objectives and ensure that all the needed information was gathered from each participant, as well as for trustworthiness (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:111). Only two interviews per day were held to help the researcher stay focused and address all the aspects required to answer the three objectives.

Interviews were tape-recorded in order to ensure accurate transcription of the interviews (Smith, 1995:17). The participants gave verbal permission for the interviews to take place and to be tape recorded (Strydom, 2002a:62). Each interview took approximately 40 minutes. Field notes were also taken during each interview to help the researcher remember all the observations of each participant during the interview (Strydom, 2002a:285). The interviews began after an introduction and explanation of the purpose of the study were given to each participant. The introduction contributed to making the participant comfortable with the interview as well as with the tape-recorder. The interviews were held in the privacy of each individual's home to further increase the comfort for each individual.

Before commencing with the main study, a pilot study was conducted. A brand wearing male consumer who was known to the researcher was asked to identify two males who fitted the inclusion criteria. The two males identified were furthermore asked to identify one more criteria fitting male. According to Strydom (2002b:211), a pilot study is especially important when the research field is new or unexplored, therefore it was evident for this study. In depth interviews were held with the four males identified, in the presence of the study leaders to help guide the researcher in attaining in-depth information from the participant. The pilot study was held in a private room in the

Consumer Science building were the participants could feel relaxed without any intervention. The pilot study helped to prepare the researcher for the final interviews and determined whether the questions asked would gather the information needed. After the pilot study was conducted, questions were adapted to better answer the objectives.

Validity of semi-structured questionnaire According to Fouché and Delport (2002:166) validity is defined as to what extent an instrument measures what it intends to measure. Face validity was present for the interview questionnaire. Face validity can be described as the degree to which a measuring instrument appears to measure what it is supposed to measure (Fouché & Delport, 2002:166). The questions asked were clearly what the objectives of the study wanted to explore. Questions were straight forward and clearly understood by participants to eliminate any misunderstanding of questions by participants, for it could influence the results. Through the pilot study, it was clear that the questions asked were valid and thus obtain information needed to answer the three objectives of the study.

Data analysis The tape recordings were accurately transcribed to assist in analysing of data (De Vos, 2002:343) through typing the data while listening to the recordings and revising the data again to ensure that no information was left out. Field notes made during interviews helped to explore and recall each interview (Greeff, 2002:304). All the statements in Afrikaans were translated into English, taking care to maintain the original meaning. Peer researchers evaluated the transcriptions and translations to ensure that translations were done accurately. Data saturation was thoroughly reached after 30 interviews. After a total of 147 pages of transcribed data had been collected, coding started. The purpose of coding is to minimize large numbers of individual responses to a few general concepts (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:490). Similar answers were categorised from where different themes

were identified (De Vos, 2002:348). Different concepts and sub-concepts were formed for each theme. The data analysed was found to be too much for a mini dissertation. The researcher in conjunction with the study leaders examined the data analysed and the pilot study. They decided to use only the answers to three questions. The questions were chosen upon their ability to answer the three objectives of the study. The questions included *why do you wear branded clothing?* (Objective 1); *how do you feel when wearing branded clothing?* (Objective 2) and *how do you behave in a clothing store when you notice a clothing item?* (Objective 3).

Trustworthiness Trustworthiness, also known as believability of a study, (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:64) was achieved through various methods in this study. The model described in Lincoln and Guba (1985:385) as well as the criteria of trustworthiness described by Krefting (1991:212) was used to ensure trustworthiness (Table 1).

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGIES APPLIED TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA

Strategy	Criteria	Application
Credibility	Field experience	• A pilot study was performed to explore the research setting. • Thirty individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. • Only brand wearing male consumers were interviewed to ensure they understood the specific study subject.
	Reflexibility	• Field notes were compared to audio recordings and transcribed data. • English transcribed data were compared with the Afrikaans audio recordings to ensure that the original meanings were preserved.
	Objectivity/ Honesty	• Thirty individual semi-structured interviews were used as a data collection method. • Data collection was done by means of verbatim transcriptions and field notes in an objective manner. • Verbatim transcripts were quoted in the results. • Concepts and themes were identified objectively from the data and argued by research team. • The findings of the present study were compared to existing literature.
	Peer debriefing /review	• Raw data were analysed by a co-researcher. • Discussions with other researchers.
	Data collection techniques	• Pilot study with semi-structured interviews was done.

Transferability	Selection of sample	• Purposive sampling were used, recruiting only brand wearing male consumers
	In-depth description	• Description of methodology and results accompanied by verbatim quotations.
Dependability	Dependability audits	• Detailed analysis of themes and concepts controlled by experienced researchers.
	Triangulation	• Thirty individual semi-structured interviews were verbatim transcribed and compared to field notes.
	Peer examination	• Frequent discussions with colleagues.
	Question guide	• Each participant was interviewed according to the same question guide.
Conformability	Conformability audit	• All records and transcripts were kept.
	Reflexibility	• Field notes were made and used for data analysis.

Results and Discussion

The data gathered is presented according to the different themes formulated to answer each objective of the study. Underneath each theme, concepts were identified to explain the findings to help to form a better understanding of the brand wearing male consumer.

Objective 1 : The brand wearing male clothing consumers' reasons for wearing branded clothing

To answer this objective participants were asked their reasons for wearing branded clothing. Participants identified physical product qualities and personal product qualities as reasons for wearing branded clothing.

Theme: Physical product qualities.

It was found that the participating male consumers attached physical qualities ("quality is ensured" and "the product will last longer") to branded clothing. The physical product qualities formed the concept *brand quality*, as it was evident that consumers perceived branded clothing as high quality items. They explained that branded products last longer ("brand names tend to last

longer”), offer value for money (“something cheap is expensive in the long run”), are better quality products (“it is better quality, that is why it got a name in the first place), and offer better clothes (“branded clothing is just better”). This finding is supported by international literature where it was stated that consumers evaluate a brand name as an indicator of quality (Dawar & Parker, 1994:88; Grewal *et al*, 1998:348; Auty & Elliott, 1998:115).

Theme: Personal product qualities.

Participants also attached personal qualities (“It emphasizes my body” and “It gives you a certain status”) to branded clothing. Personal product qualities were addressed through the following concepts: *it compliments the consumer, it is preferred to other products, it gives status and it is a buying habit.*

The participants in the present study believed that branded clothing compliments them through the appearance (“looks nice”), the fit (“it emphasizes my body”, “it fits better”) and that brands always represent the latest fashion trend (“I will buy it because it is so fashionable”). As a result male consumers make certain connotations with branded clothing for instance, they believe a brand name will look and fit better than a no name item. Auty and Elliott (1998:115) support this by saying consumers evaluate brands positively by connecting qualities to brands, for example, comfort, style, a good fit and trendiness.

Other than the fact that the participants attached certain connotations to branded clothing, in general they declared to prefer buying branded items (“they produce items that I prefer”). These participants did not need a specific reason to choose a branded item, as they decided beforehand that branded items would be the items they would desire the most and seek only for brand names.

The participants of this study were of the opinion that branded clothing creates a satisfying image or status (“It creates a nice image” and “it gives you a certain status”). Lee (2001:61) confirms that male consumers have been

known to seek symbolic expressions of social status from their clothing purchases. This symbolic expression such as a certain image or status can be provided by a brand name on a clothing item (Auty & Elliott, 1998:115; Seo *et al*, 2001:218). Thus, the male participants of the study confirmed that brand names on clothing items create a certain image or status. This finding contributes to the second objective of the study which aims to discover the role social identity plays when wearing branded clothing. The fact that a brand name can give a certain image to a consumer can help male consumers to attain a positive social identity.

Some participants tended to be habitual purchasers of branded clothing ("I'm used to it" and "Since my childhood I have always bought brand X"). Wood (2004:1) also believes that habit is the main reason for consumers' choice of brands. Consumers would only purchase a different product if a retailer attempted to get their attention. Otherwise they would continue with their habitual behaviour (Wood, 2004:1). In this study, the participants who claimed to buy out of habit, bought only a specific brand out of habit and not branded clothing in general. The participants mainly bought branded clothing due to the perceived good quality of branded clothing, the fact that it compliments the consumer, they have a preference towards it, and/or they believe that it gives them a certain status.

Objective 2 : The role of social identity in male consumers' reasons for wearing branded clothing

The participants were asked to describe their feelings when wearing branded clothing which allowed the researcher to identify the role of social identity in male consumers' reason for wearing branded clothing. The participants described their feelings when wearing branded clothing by mentioning the effect that the brand has on them, as the main theme.

Theme: The effect of the brand on the brand wearing male clothing consumer.

The majority of the participants confessed that wearing branded clothing influences the way they feel about themselves. Different concepts emerged, including: *enhances self image*, *enhances confidence*, *positive personal experience* and *contributes to personal status*. A consumer can achieve emotional satisfaction when the brand he is wearing is recognized by others and delivers a desirable message about the wearer (Lee, 2001:60). In this study it was found that branded clothing can help achieve this emotional satisfaction through the effect it has on the consumer.

The participants stated that wearing branded clothing enhances one's self image ("it makes you feel better about yourself" and "it boosts your self esteem"). Del Rio *et al* (2001:412) confirms this by stating that individuals can enrich their self-image through the images of the brands they wear. Woodruffe-Burton (1998:304) interviewed men who claimed to feel good when wearing branded clothing. In the present study the branded clothing also conveyed a good feeling when worn ("you look and feel good"). Furthermore, the data showed that branded clothing gives the male consumer more confidence ("it lets you feel more confident when walking in public"). Woodruffe-Burton (1998:307) also found men to feel more confident when wearing branded clothing while appearing in public places. Through these findings it can be concluded that social identity is influenced by branded clothing because it can convey a positive social identity when the brand has a good image.

Branded clothing was seen as an image enhancer and furthermore, as it creates status for the wearer ("it does something for your image"). Lee (2001:61) found that males tend to seek symbolic expressions of social status from their clothes. Branded clothing was also worn for the good impression it tends to make on other people ("you wear it to create a good impression") and was associated with financial well being ("create an image that you are wealthy"). Lee (2001:61) confirms that men in higher positions value the symbolism of branded clothing and associate it with social and economic success. Lee argues that brands tend to have a higher price level and thus

deliver a more positive message about the wearer. However, it has been found that wearing brands over time has a "wearing off" effect. The male participants claimed to get used to the idea of wearing branded clothing ("at the beginning its all about image, but later on you get over it").

Branded items were also noted as more comfortable ("you feel more comfortable") than other clothing. The literature supports this by saying that males make associations between brands and comfort (Elliott, 1994:13; Auty & Elliott, 1998:115). This study found that branded clothing does not only give emotional satisfaction by contributing to a positive social identity, but it can also contribute to physical satisfaction by helping the consumer to look good and feel comfortable.

Only three participants argued that they have no personal experience when wearing branded clothing. They argued that brands are not required to make you feel good when having a healthy self-image ("you have a very low self image if you need clothes to make you feel good"). Nevertheless, these three males were brand wearers and preferred to buy branded clothing.

Objective 3: To describe the brand wearing male consumer's searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment.

The male participants were asked how they behave when attracted by a clothing item inside a clothing store. Three themes or processes were discussed. These themes included *thinking about the product* ("I think by myself how I would look in that outfit"), *visual evaluation of the product* ("I would take a look to see if it's good quality") and *physical evaluation of the product* ("I would touch and feel the material").

Theme: Process when noticing an item : Thinking about the product

During the analysing of the theme *thinking about the product*, three concepts became evident, including *appearance*, *fulfilment of a need* and *the level of*

quality. The participants stated that whenever they noticed something they liked, they would think about themselves wearing the specific outfit ("I think by myself how I would look in that outfit"). Furthermore, they have a tendency to consider the necessity of the item in advance ("I think to myself if this is what I really want or need"). Research done by Workman and Studak (2006:80) has a possible explanation for this behaviour. It can be due to the fact that males have a need-based approach towards clothing purchasing. Male consumers are likely to be more purchase-driven, purchasing the items they need, and intend to purchase only these items when entering the store, without making other unnecessary purchases (Otnes & McGrath, 2001:116; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004:226).

Throughout the study the importance of quality of clothing items for male consumers was revealed. Thus, the thought of quality was raised before even evaluating the product ("I think whether or not there will be flaws in this outfit"). Bakewell and Mitchell (2004:226) contribute to the above by stating that quality is important to male consumers. The fact that the male consumer in this study considers the quality before even examining the item is supported by international literature (Grace & O'Cass, 2002:97) which indicates that quality is very important to male consumers. Consequently, the brand wearing male South African consumer also sees the quality of an item as an important feature of a clothing item.

Theme: Process when noticing an item : Visual evaluation of the product

During the visual evaluation of the product, concepts emerged concerning the *visual evaluation of quality, visual evaluation of price, financial ability, willingness to pay more for branded clothing and no expense boundary*. As previously stated, quality is considered an important attribute for clothing items. It was found that the brand wearing male consumer would not only think about the quality of the clothing item, but would also visually evaluate the item to determine the quality ("I would take a look to see if it is good

quality"). Once more, the importance of quality when purchasing clothing items is seen as high priority by male consumers.

The majority of the males claimed to look at the price tag ("I would look at the price"). In addition they said that they would only buy an item when the price is acceptable ("the price is very important, there is no need to pay too much for an item") or when they have the financial ability to afford the item ("I would first look and see if I have enough money, can I afford it"). It was noted that these males are willing to pay more for a clothing item with a brand name ("if one item is a brand and the other a no-name, I would rather pay more for the better item, the brand"). Nevertheless, there were a small number of participants who felt that price is not a concern when buying clothes they desire ("price isn't an issue"). Internationally it was also found that when consumers' financial ability is strong, they do not consider the price, but rather the image of the brand and strive to obtain a high social-economic status (Lee, 2001:61).

Lesser and Hughes (1986:56) and Scarpi (2006:7) found that the majority of consumers are price conscious and make sure an item meets their price requirements before purchasing. Price serves as a reference point for many consumers, whereas if an item is more expensive, the consumer believes that the quality will be better (Lee, 2001:68; D'Astous & Saint-Louis, 2005:308). Therefore, price and brand names have been shown to have a moderately significant effect on buyers' perceptions of quality (Grewal *et al*, 1998:334). Thus, branded items are seen as better quality items (D'Astous & Saint-Louis, 2005:308) along with being higher priced (Auty & Elliot, 1998:117). Dawar and Parker (1994:88) stated that the brand name is found to be the most important indicator of quality, followed by price. The largest difference in perception of males between branded and unbranded clothing items was that a perception of expensive and high quality is connected to branded clothing (Auty & Elliot, 1998:117).

Theme: Process when noticing an item : Physical evaluation of the product.

Lastly, the physical evaluation of the product included *touching the material, taking it off the rail, seeking preference colour, seeking preference size, trying it on or not trying it on*. While evaluating a clothing item, visual evaluation of an item is not always enough to convince a consumer to purchase a product. A few participants tended to touch the material to get a better idea of the item ("I would touch and feel the material"). Another method to help with the evaluation process was to take the item off the rail to have a closer look at it ("I will take it off the rail and have a look at it"). Literature concerning this evaluating process of male consumers was not found to compare to the male consumers in this study.

Some participants said that the first thing they do when noticing an appealing clothing item is to search for the right colour ("If I see a nice item, I would go and choose the colour I like"). Because the fitting of the item is important, some of the males preferred to firstly search for their specific size ("If an item attracts my attention I would have a look to see whether they have my size") and some tried it on before they decided to purchase the item. Through fitting the item in store, it is easier to evaluate the way it will fit the person ("I would try it on, it is very important that it fits perfectly"). However, there were participants who dislike a fitting room but still perceive the fitting of an item as an important feature. These men will not make use of a fitting room and will try it on inside the store to make sure that it fits ("I will try it on in the shop, not in the fitting room"), many do not try on clothing items inside the store ("I do not try it on, I would take it and leave"). One reason given for the latter behaviour was the fact that they believe they know their specific size and therefore do not need to try it on before they buy it ("I do not try the item on, I know my size"). Others admitted that they never try something on inside a store, except when it is something very expensive ("I usually do not try items on before I buy them, only formal clothing which is very expensive") or specific items, for example pants ("I will only go into a fitting room to try on pants, otherwise not"). Through these results it became evident that when male consumers do their clothing shopping, they do not just purchase an item, they go through a thinking and evaluating process first. It is a well-known fact that

most consumers engage in similar processes before making any decision, namely the consumer decision-making process.

According to Schiffman and Kanuk's (2007:532) model of consumer decision-making, the process would consist of three stages, namely need recognition, prepurchase search and evaluation of alternatives. Although the third objective of this study is to describe the brand wearing male consumer's searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment, their response to the question 'How do you behave in a clothing store when you notice a clothing item' revealed three processes. These brand wearing male consumers recognised a need to visit a store or to purchase branded clothing. The three processes that they engaged in, in order to fulfil this need were thinking about the product, visual evaluation of the product and physical evaluation of the product. During their 'thinking about the product' period they searched for information to fulfil their needs by picturing themselves in the clothes, determining whether the product would fulfil their need through the item itself or the quality thereof. These processes can be related to the first step of the consumer decision-making process, namely prepurchasing search. The participant's actions of "visual evaluation of the product" and "physical evaluation" of the product relate to the "evaluation of alternatives" phase of the decision-making process.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicated that brand wearing male consumers have certain reasons for wearing branded clothing. One of the main reasons was due to the fact that they evaluate branded clothing as high quality items. Consequently they believe that branded clothing will last longer and offer value for their money. Furthermore these males also believed that branded clothing compliments and fits their bodies better than unbranded clothing. As a result, wearing branded clothing has the ability to make the consumer look good and thus projects a certain status/image.

While examining the role of social identity as a reason for wearing branded clothing, it seemed that the brand wearing male consumers feel better about themselves when wearing branded clothing since they experience it to be more comfortable and it enhances their self image and confidence. Therefore it also plays a role in better acceptance by peer groups and impressing other people, thus helping them to conform to a certain group. Lastly these male consumers' behaviour in a clothing store when an item attracts their attention showed that they do not notice a clothing item and immediately buy it, but rather first think about the item and evaluate it visually and physically.

Therefore, the brand wearing male consumer's behaviour in the retail environment also gave some insight into their decision-making process regarding branded clothing. Hence, it can be recommended that a study regarding these consumers' decision-making process can be done to gain a more in-depth understanding of the brand wearing male consumer's purchasing decision. Furthermore, this study can also serve as basis for a larger study with more participants to obtain more comprehensive results for retailers in order to create an optimum shopping experience for brand wearing male consumers.

References

- AUTY, S & ELLIOTT, R. 1998. Fashion involvement, self-monitoring and the meaning of brands. *Journal of Product and Brand Management* 7(2):109-123.
- AUTY, S & ELLIOTT, R. 2001. Being like or being liked: Identity vs. approval in a social context. *Advances in Consumer Research* 28:235-241.
- BABBIE, E. 2004. *The practice of social research*. 10th Ed. Belmont. Thomson.
- BAKEWELL, C & MITCHELL, V. 2004. Male consumer decision-making styles. *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research* 14(2):223-240.
- BAKEWELL, C, MITCHELL, V & ROTHWELL, M. 2006. UK generation Y male fashion consciousness. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management* 2(2):169-180.
- BAUER, MW & GASKELL, G. 2000. *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound : A practical handbook*. London. Sage.
- BERMAN, B. & EVANS, J. R. 2006. *Retail management: A strategic approach*. 10th Ed. Upper Saddle River. Prentice-Hall.
- BIRTWISTLE, G & FREATHY, P. 1998. More than just a name above the shop: A comparison of the branding strategies of two UK fashion retailers. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 26(8):318-323.
- BLOEMER, J & DE RUYTER, K. 1998. On the relationship between store image, store satisfaction and store loyalty. *European Journal of Marketing* 32(5/6):499-513.

CAMERON, JE. 2004. A Three-factor model of social identity. *Self & identity. Psychology Press* 3:239-262.

D'ASTOUS, A & SAINT-LOUIS, O. 2005. National versus store brand effects on consumer evaluation of a garment. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management* 9(3):306-317.

DAWAR, N & PARKER, P. 1994. Marketing universals: Consumers' use of brand name, price, physical appearance, and retailer reputation as signals of product quality. *Journal of Marketing* 58:81-98.

DE VOS, AS. 2002. *Qualitative data analysis and interpretation*. In De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouchè, CB & Delport, CSL. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik.

DEL RIO, AB, VAZQUEZ, R & IGLESIAS, V. 2001. The effect of brand associations on consumer response. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 18(5):410-425.

DHOLAKIA, RR, PEDERSON, B & HIKMET, N. 1995. Married males and shopping: Are they sleeping partners? *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 23(3):27-33.

DODDS, WB & MONRU, KB. 1985. The effect of brand and price information on subjective product evaluations. *Advances in Consumer Research* 12(1):85-90.

ELLEMERS, N, SPEARS, R & DOOSJE, B. 1999. *Social Identity*. Malden. Blackwell Publishers.

ELLEMERS, N, SPEARS, R & DOOSJE, B. 2002. Self and social identity. *Annual Review of Psychology* 53:161-186.

ELLIOT, R. 1994. Exploring the symbolic meaning of brands. *British Journal of Management* 5:13-19.

FOUCHÉ, C.B. & DELPORT, C.S.L. 2002. Steps unique to the quantitative process. In De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouché, CB & Delport, CSL. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik.

GRACE, D & O'CASS, A. 2002. Brand associations: Looking through the eye of the beholder. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 5(2):96-111.

GREEFF, M. 2002. *Information collection: Interviewing*. In De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouché, CB & Delport, CSL. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik.

GREWAL, D, KRISHNAN, R, BAKER, J & BORIN, N. 1998. The effect of store name, brand name and price discounts on consumers' evaluations and purchase intentions. *Journal of Retailing* 74(3):331-352.

GUBRIUM, JF & HOLSTEIN, JA. 2002. *Handbook of interview research*. Thousand Oaks, California. Sage.

HOOPER, M. 2001. The structure and measurement of social identity. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 40(2):154-164.

JONES, P, HILLIER, D, COMFORT, D & EASTWOOD, I. 2005. Sustainable retailing and consumerism. *Management Research News* 28(1):34-44.

KELLER, K. 1993. Conceptualizing, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing* 57(1):1-22.

KERFOOT, S, DAVIES, B & WARD, P. 2003. Visual merchandising and the creation of discernible retail brands. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 31(3):143-152.

KINLEY, TL, CONRAD, CA & BROWN, G. 2000. Personal vs. non-personal sources of information used in the purchase of men's apparel. *Journal of Consumer Studies and Home Economics* 24(1):67-73.

KORTE, RF. 2007. A review of social identity theory with implications for training and development. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 31(3):166-180.

KREFTING, L. 1991. Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy* 45(3):214-222.

LEA-GREENWOOD, G. 1998. Visual merchandising: A neglected area in UK fashion marketing? *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 26(8):324-329.

LEE, L. 2001. Male consumers' behaviour in a high-priced clothing market. *Journal of Korean Home Economics Association English Edition* 2(1):57-75.

LEE, SL, IBRAHIM, MF & HSUEH-SHAN, C. 2005. Shopping-centre attributes affecting male shopping behaviour. *Journal of Retail and Leisure Property* 4(4):324-340.

LESSER, JA & HUGHES, MA. 1986. Towards a typology of shoppers. *Business Horizons* (November/December):56-62.

LINCOLN, YS & GUBA, EG. 1985. *Naturalistic enquiry*. London. Sage.

MAYKUT, P & MOREHOUSE, R. 1994. *Beginning qualitative research: A Philosophic and practical guide*. London. Falmer Press.

McCORMACK, B & HILL, E. 1997. *Conducting a survey: The SPSS workbook*. London. Thomson.

NEWMAN, AJ & FOXALL, GR. 2003. In-store customer behaviour in the fashion sector: some emerging methodological and theoretical directions. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 31(11):591-600.

NIENS, U, CAIRNS, E, FINCHILESCU, G, FOSTER, D & TREDoux, C. 2003. Social identity and the authoritarian personality theory in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology* 33(2):109-117.

OJALA, K. & NESDALE, D. 2004. Bullying and social identity: the effects of group norms and distinctiveness threat on attitudes towards bullying. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 22:19-35.

OTNES, C & MCGRATH, M. 2001. Perceptions and realities of male shopping behavior. *Journal of Retailing* 77(1):111-137.

PARASURAMAN, A, GREWAL, D & KRISHNAN, R. 2007. *Marketing research*. 2nd Ed. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company.

PORTER, SS & CLAYCOMB, C. 1997. The influence of brand recognition on retail store image. *Journal of Product and Brand Management* 6(6):373-387.

RITCHIE, J & LEWIS, J. 2003. *Qualitative research practice: A Guide for social science students and researchers*. London. Sage.

RUANE, JM. 2005. *Essentials of research methods: A Guide to social science research*. Malden. Blackwell Publishers.

SCARPI, D. 2006. Fashion stores between fun and usefulness. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management* 10(1):7-24.

SCHIFFMAN, LG & KANUK, LL. 2007. *Consumer behaviour*. 9th Ed. Upper Saddle River. Prentice-Hall.

SEO, J, HATHCOTE, JM & SWEANEY, AL. 2001. Casualwear shopping behaviour of college men in Georgia, USA. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management* 5(3):208-222.

SMITH, JA. 1995. *Rethinking methods in psychology*. London. SAGE publishers.

SOLOMON, MR & RABOLT. NJ. 2004. *Consumer behaviour in fashion*. Upper Saddle River. Prentice Hall.

STETS, JE & BURKE, PJ. 2000. Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63(3):224-237.

STRYDOM, H. 2002a. *Ethical aspects of research in the social sciences and human service professions*. In De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouchè, CB & Delport, CSL. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik.

STRYDOM, H. 2002b. *The pilot study*. In De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouchè, CB & Delport, CSL. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik.

STRYDOM, H & VENTER, L. 2002. *Sampling and sampling methods*. In De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouchè, CB & Delport, CSL. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd Ed. Pretoria. Van Schaik.

STUDAK, CM & WORKMAN, JE. 2004. Fashion groups, gender, and boredom proneness. *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 28(1):66-74.

TUSTIN, DH, LIGTHELM, AA, MARTINS, JH & VAN WYK, HJ. 2005. *Marketing research in practice*. Pretoria. Unisa Press.

WELLS, WD & SCIUTO, CA. 1996. Direct observation of purchasing behaviour. *Journal of Marketing Research* 3:227-233.

WOOD, LM. 2004. Dimensions of brand purchasing behaviour: Consumers in the 18-24 group. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 4(1):9-24.

WOODRUFFE-BURTON, H. 1998. Private desires, public display: consumption, postmodernism and fashion's "new man". *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 26(8):301-310.

WORKMAN, JE & STUDAK, M. 2006. Fashion consumers and fashion problem recognition style. *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 30(1):75-84.

ZIKMUND, WG & BABIN, BJ. 2007. *Exploring marketing research*. 9th Ed. Mason. Thomson.

CHAPTER 3

Conclusion

Chapter 3

Concluding discussion

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a conclusion of the results found in the study. Furthermore, details about the application of the study is given as well as experiences regarding the research procedure of the study concerning the way in which data were gathered and analysed. Additionally, limitations and recommendations for further studies are presented.

3.2 Conclusion

The literature shows that the male clothing consumer has changed and is now shopping more than ever. In this study all the male consumers supported this by saying they do shop frequently in order to find the clothes they require. The study aimed to explore the brand wearing male clothing consumer and the role of social identity when wearing branded clothing in order to describe his searching and evaluating behaviour inside a clothing retail environment in the South African context.

The first objective was to explore the reasons why male consumers wear branded clothing. This study revealed that males have definite reasons for purchasing branded clothing. The brand wearing male consumer believes that branded clothing is a better quality product. The majority of the participants claimed that when an item has a brand name, the product would be of high quality which indicates that it would last longer and offer value for money. This perception was shown throughout the study and it is clear that males feel strongly about this aspect of branded clothing.

The fact that the product is seen as high quality is not the only influence for buying branded clothing. Male consumers also wear these clothes due to the

fact that the product compliments them. They felt that branded clothing always fits them better than unbranded clothing. Therefore, they would look good when wearing it. Additionally it also gives them a certain status/image which helps them to look good. Thus the two main reasons for buying branded clothing were the fact that it is perceived as a high quality product and that it has the ability to make the consumer look good. These attributes of branded clothing were also found to be relevant to male consumers in international literature.

The fact that male consumers think they look better in branded clothing also relates to the second objective, concerning the role of social identity, as the reason why they wear branded clothing. It was clear that brand wearing male consumers felt better about themselves when wearing branded clothes. The participants felt that wearing branded clothing enhanced their self image and thus enhanced their confidence. They admitted to feeling more comfortable when wearing branded clothing and because they perceive it as an image enhancer, they believe they make good impressions on other people. These impressions can also lead to a feeling of being accepted by others, thus conforming to a group, and is an indicator that social identity does play a role in the reason why male consumers wear branded clothing.

The third and last objective was to describe the searching and evaluating behaviour of brand wearing male consumers in the retail environment. During the interviews, participants were asked how they behave in a clothing store when an item attracted their attention. It was interesting to find that they think about the item, evaluate it visually and sometimes make a physical evaluation of the item. In the literature, it was found that men tend to have a need-based approach to purchasing clothing. This behaviour was also witnessed in this study where the male consumers decide whether they really need the item before they even consider purchasing it. They will also think about how they will appear in it. Because quality is found to be very important to brand wearing male consumers, they also think about the quality of the product. In the visual evaluation of the product, the quality aspect was also addressed. The participants visually evaluate a product to determine whether it is of good

quality. In the case of a branded item, they would instantly evaluate it as a good quality product.

Price was also found to be important to these male consumers. All of them said they look at the price tag and when it is acceptable and they have the financial ability to afford it, they will buy it. Yet again, if the item has a brand name, they are willing to pay more for it than for an unbranded product.

The participants were also likely to make a physical evaluation of a clothing item. They would take it off the rail and touch the material to get a better idea of the product. Some of them will try the item on to make sure it fits. It was clear that these males evaluate a clothing product before deciding to purchase. An interesting finding of this study was that the participants' behaviour when they noticed an item, related to the decision-making process of the consumer. Although this process was not part of the present study, information about the brand wearing male consumers' decision-making process regarding clothing, were revealed. This could assist the retailer in better understanding their decisions in order to cater for their needs. This information can also serve as a basis for future studies regarding male consumer's decision-making process.

Through this information it is evident that although male clothing consumers have certain items in mind before entering a store, they do not simply purchase the item and leave the store. Male consumers of this study were actively involved when purchasing clothing, thinking the process through and evaluating each item before making a purchasing decision. This is important for retailers and it is also important that retailers understand these brand wearing male consumers in order to be able to better satisfy their needs. This study could be the foundation of a larger quantitative study with more comprehensive results to assist the retailer in creating a better shopping experience for male consumers.

3.3 Relevance of this study to science and industry

By understanding the brand wearing male consumer better, retailers will be able to create a more positive in-store experience for their customers. This will lead to optimum sales as well as loyal customers. Due to the fact that the literature indicated many males to be brand orientated, it is important for retailers to keep branded clothing in mind when designing a store.

The wearing of branded clothing has much to do with social identity and brands can be seen as an image enhancer for the consumer, helping them to be accepted by members of a group. Retailers can keep this in mind when creating an in-store atmosphere by using the specific images of a brand to attract male consumers. Furthermore the fact that these males are thinking about how the item will fit on a human body, evaluating the item by touching it, looking at prices, colours and their sizes can also be taken into consideration when designing a clothing store. The retailer can fulfil all those needs by providing all the information about the items. These male consumers evaluate and gain knowledge about the item before purchasing it. Therefore, by making more detailed information available to consumers about each item they could help to educate the consumer and help them to make better purchasing decisions in the future. It will also ensure that their decision is based on complete information, ensuring that they will obtain value for money and be fully satisfied with the purchase.

3.4 Comments on the research procedure

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

The study made use of semi-structured interviews (SEE APPENDIX C). The method suited the study and in depth information about the opinions of the male consumers was gathered. The questions were only used as a guideline and to probe the participants to answer all the objectives of the study. The participants were allowed to give their opinions without being limited to certain aspects or ideas. Thus it was necessary to keep the interviews semi-

structured to prevent participants from giving too much irrelevant information. To ensure that each interview was done accurately, no more than two interviews were conducted per day. This helped the researcher to concentrate and to make sure no important aspects were left unaddressed.

Because aspects like image, identity and status were discussed, an individual interview in a comfortable quiet place where the participant felt at ease was suitable. It helped the participants to relax and think about all the questions without feeling rushed for time or self-conscious about their responses. Although the participants had to adhere to similar inclusion criteria, the snowball sampling technique helped to attain a wide variety of participants in one area, where they had only their age and the fact that they wear branded clothing in common.

3.4.2 Data analysis

The data analysis and transcription was done by the researcher under supervision of three study leaders who helped the researcher to comprehend each interview and be better informed about all the findings of the study. After each interview transcribing of the data was done. In this way it was easier to determine when data saturation was reached. The study leaders helped to structure the concepts and sub-concepts to make sure that the study was objective and to ensure trustworthiness of the data. After the transcription and analysing of the data, the data were found to be far more than needed to answer the objectives of the study. The researchers examined the results of the pilot study and determined which questions answered the objectives the best. Only those questions were used in the results and discussion of this study.

3.5 Limitations and recommendations

This study was done in the North-West Province, Potchefstroom. Only male participants between 18 and 25 years of age were included. Data saturation

was reached after 30 interviews and because many residents of Potchefstroom belonging to this age group are students, most of the participants tended to be students. Therefore, the study cannot be an indication for the general searching and evaluating behaviour of South African men of different age groups or those who are not students. The study could be applied to more men, age groups, provinces and different cultures to ensure that the research can be seen as a general view of South African men.

The brand wearing male consumer and his searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment was studied. The research only focused on the behaviour before purchasing and did not include the decisions to purchase or the purchasing process. A study including the purchasing process and the decision-making process could be done to gain an overall understanding of the brand wearing male consumer's behaviour in a retail environment. Such information could also help to understand the general male consumer better and to know what they expect from a clothing store.

It would also be interesting to compare the purchasing behaviour of the brand wearing male consumer with the unbranded clothing wearing male consumer. Such research would assist the retailer in creating an optimum shopping environment for the specific retailer's market segment. Due to the fact that males evaluate the clothes before purchasing, a survey regarding their knowledge about clothing qualities and label information could help to determine what these males already know about clothes and to educate them further in this regard. It was clear from the data that these males believe branded clothing to be of better quality, but the fact is that they believe it is better because of the brand name and because it is more expensive. This leads the researcher to believe that they are not educated enough concerning clothing purchasing and need to be educated about how to recognise a good quality product on means other than the brand name and teach about labelling, fibre content, sizing and caring for specific garments.

APPENDIX A

Data reflecting the understanding of the brand wearing male consumer
and his searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment

Objective 1 : The brand wearing male clothing consumers' reasons for wearing branded clothing

Concept	Sub-concept	
Theme : Physical product qualities		
Brand quality		The first reason will be the quality, I know what the level of quality will be
	The product will last longer	It seems to me that brand names tend to last longer.
	Value for your money	Something cheap is expensive in the long run
	Product quality associated with the brand name	It is better quality, that is why it got a name in the first place
	Better clothes	Branded clothing is just better
Theme: Personal product qualities		
Compliments the Consumer	Appearance	...looks nice
	Fitting	It emphasizes my body, compliments me.. branded clothes are more comfortable The brand name is more fitted, it fits better on me I like it, it fits better...I think it is more stylish
	Latest fashion trend	I like to be in fashion I will buy it because it is so fashionable
Preference to other products	Prefer brands	I like beautiful things and it is usually the brands that have beautiful clothes Its just my taste, usually the things that I like are something with a brand name Don't know, I just fancy the clothes I know the brand and know they produce items that I prefer

Gives Status		It gives you a certain status, it is like an image Status, its an image, in my world you have to have an image, You must sell yourself to your clients and you use the best brands to look good It creates a nice image
Buying habit		I'm used to it It's a habit, you have been wearing it for so long, you wouldn't Think of buying something else Since my childhood I have always bought Adidas

Objective 2 : The role of social identity in male consumers' reasons for wearing branded clothing

Concept	Sub-concept	
Theme : The effect of the brand on the brand wearing male clothing consumer.		
Enhance self image	Feeling good	In a way, it makes you feel better about yourself You feel different, you almost feel better about yourself If you are dressed in nice clothes, it boosts your self esteem You feel good in the clothes you are wearing and if they are expensive When I'm wearing nice clothes, and brands are usually nice, then I feel good
Enhance confidence		Clothes give you confidence It lets you feel more confident when walking in public, you have more confidence...
Contribute to personal Status	Image enhancer	It does something to your image Its all about status, people seem to think it creates higher status
	To make good impressions on others	Its all about the impression people get, they can see you are wearing nice brands and it looks good You wear it to create a good image or impression

	Association of financial well being	It creates an image that you are wealthy
	Creates brand loyal image	It creates an image that you are...brand loyal
	Waying off effect of brand image over time	At the beginning, when I first started to wear branded clothing, I thought I was cool and everybody was noticing it, but now its not an issue because I'm not in school anymore In the beginning its all about the image, but later on you get over it
Positive personal experience	Feeling comfortable	I feel more comfortable in branded clothes, for example, a branded jean You feel more comfortable
No personal experience	Healthy self-image	A man who wears clothes to make him feel better about himself doesn't believe in himself, you have a very low self image if you need clothes to make you feel good

Objective 3 :Describing the brand wearing male consumer's searching and evaluating behaviour in the retail environment.

Concepts

Sub-Concepts

Theme: Process when noticing an item : thinking about the product		
Appearance		I think to myself what I would look like in that outfit I wonder how I would look in it
Fulfill a need		I think to myself if this is what I really want or need If I see a nice shirt but only need pants, I would only try on the pants

The level of quality		I wonder whether or not there will be flaws in this outfit I wonder whether or not it is a good quality item
Theme: Process when noticing an item : Visual evaluation of the product		
Visual evaluation of quality		I would have a look at the item to see whether it is good quality I would take a look to see if its good quality
Visual evaluation of price		I would take a look at the price The first thing I usually do is look at the price tag I would look at the price
	Acceptable price	If its price is acceptable, I will buy it The price is very important, there is no need to pay too much for an item I would buy it at the right price, but you do not have to pay R500 for a plain T-shirt I would look to see whether the price is acceptable or not, you do not have to pay too much
	Financial ability	I will have a look at the price and if I have enough money to buy it, I will If I have the funds, I will buy it I would first look and see if I have enough money, can I afford it If I looked at the price and can afford it I will buy it if it is a nice product
	Willingness to pay more for branded clothing	If one item is a brand item and the other a no-name, I would rather pay more for the better item, the brand name
	No expense boundary	Price isn't an issue, it mustn't be a ridiculous price, but if it is a nice item, I will buy it If it is something I really like, then price doesn't matter. If I really like it, I will buy it, although it is expensive

Theme: Process when noticing an item : Physical evaluation of the product		
Touching the material		I would touch and feel the material
Taking it off the rail		I will take it off the rail and have a look at it I will take it off the rail
Try it on	Good fitting	I would definitely try it on because it is very important that it fits perfectly I would go to the fitting room and try it on, if it fits and is comfortable I would buy it I would try it on, its very important that it fits perfect I would try it on and have a look in the mirror
	Do not make use of the fitting room	I'm not always in the mood for the fitting room, then I quickly throw it over my clothes and see whether it fits I will try it on in the shop, not in the fitting room, There is always a weird atmosphere in the fitting rooms, an uncomfortable presence
Seek preference colour		If I see a nice item, I would go and choose the colour I like
Seek preference size		If I see something I like, I would go and find my size If something interests me, I would get my size first If an item attracts my attention I would have a look to see whether they have my size If I see something nice, I search for my correct size, if something doesn't fit me perfectly, I would rather leave it
Do not try it on		I do not try it on, I would take it and leave I never try something on, I would just buy it
	Make use of sizing	I do not try the item on, I know my sizes I hate trying items on, I look for my size and buy it

	Consider expensive clothing for fitting	I usually do not try items on before I buy them, only formal clothing which is very expensive
	Only take specific clothing item for fitting	I will only go into a fitting room to try on pants, otherwise not I will fit pants, otherwise I would never try something on, I know my sizes

APPENDIX B

Editorial prescriptions of the South African Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences

Preparation and technical detail of manuscripts

Components of a manuscript

Each separate part of the manuscript begins on a new page. Arrange the different parts as follows:

- ♦ Title page
- ♦ Substantive summary ($\pm$ 600 words) in Afrikaans if the article is in English, and vice versa. (This abstract will form part of the final article.)
- ♦ Abstract of 200 words in English. (This abstract will form part of the home page of the article.)
- ♦ Five to ten search words in English. (Please consult your librarian for suitable descriptors.)
- ♦ Text
- ♦ References
- ♦ Tables
- ♦ Figures.

1. Title page

The manuscript is sent anonymously to the reviewers, but all identifying information should appear on the title page:

- ♦ Concise title that reflects the contents of the article. (Avoid study, effect and new and use terms that are useful for information retrieval.)
- ♦ Name, current address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address of each author. (Male authors may give only their initials if they prefer.) However, it is customary for female authors to write one first name in full. The same initials and/or name should be consistently used for publications in the JFECS to facilitate indexing.)
- ♦ Information on support the author/s received, financial or otherwise, whether the manuscript forms part of a larger project, and other relevant information
- ♦ a colour photo of all authors in .jpg or .gif format must accompany the manuscript; or they may be e-mailed to seugnet@iburst.co.za when the final manuscript is presented by the editor for publication.

2. Summary

The second page of the manuscript – numbered Page 1 – contains the title of the article and a summary of the article in Afrikaans if the article is in English, and vice versa. In a research article this abstract should present a summary of the background, purpose, design and methods (including dates of data collection, sampling, methods of data collection and analysis), results and conclusions.

For a review or other article it should cover the context of the review, the main aims/questions addressed, design and methods. The main elements of the argument, theory or model being proposed in relation to the stated aims/questions, and the main conclusions should be briefly described.

3. Abstracts and search words

An abstract, of not more than 200 words in English, that will be used on the home page of the article on the JFECS web site. Please supply five to ten search words in English that are compatible with literature database descriptors. Please consult your librarian.

4. Text

The text begins on a separate page. Manuscripts should be typed in 1,5 or double spacing on A4 paper. Leave 30 mm margins on both sides, an extra space between paragraphs and between subheadings. Number every paragraph in the left-hand margin to facilitate the task of the reviewers. Headings and subheadings: No more than three heading and subheading levels should be used. Headings and subheadings are not underlined. The three levels are dealt with as follows:

HEADING

First-level headings are typed in the upper case bold. Two spaces (three manual line breaks) are left above and two below the heading.

Second-level subheading

This subheading is typed in lower case bold. A space (two manual line breaks) is left above and below the subheading.

Third-level subheading A space (two manual line breaks) is left above the subheading. The first sentence begins on the same line, with five spaces between the subheading and the start of the sentence.

5. Writing style

Authors should use correct technical terminology and avoid unnecessary repetition and circumlocution. All numbers from one to twelve are to be written in full, except fractions, units of measurement, statistical data and symbols. When a number is inevitable at the beginning of a sentence it must be written in full. Only acknowledged abbreviations and symbols should be used. Less well-known abbreviations have to be explained. The symbols % and °C are typed next to the figure without a space (25% and 40°C). Metric terminology and symbols have to comply with the recommendations of the Metrication Department of the SABS.

6. References

The Journal uses a user-friendly adaptation of the Harvard system:

References in the text:

- ♦ Literature cited in the text are arranged unnumbered and alphabetically according to author on a separate page.
- ♦ Quotations and references to literature in the text are accompanied by the author's surname, the year of publication and the page number, in brackets (Smit, 1987:12).
- ♦ Facts or arguments that are not those of the author are supported by a source reference. When the source is an article, the author's name and the date are required. When the source is a book, the page/s are also required.
- ♦ References to literature with three or more authors require the first author's name only, followed by *et al* (Louw *et al*, 1986:34).
- ♦ Different publications by an author in the same year are indicated by a, b, etc: Brown (1998a & 1998b) found that ...
- ♦ References to different publications of the same author are made with the dates in chronological order: (Du Plessis, 1987, 1988, 1995a, 1995b & 1999).

- ♦ References to an anonymous source require the title of the publication in the place of the author's name (Fur and fur-like fabrics, 1971:15).

List of references:

References that are frequently used by authors who publish in the JFECS are illustrated below. Please note the use of punctuation marks, spaces, italics and capitals.

Books, government publications, proceedings and theses:

KINGDON, J. 1997. *The Kingdon field guide to African mammals*. San Diego. Williams. [Book with one author.]

GIBSON, R. 1997. *Prisoner of power: the Greg Blank story*. Johannesburg. Clarke. [Book with subtitle.]

ESCHLEMAN, JR. 1993. *The family. An introduction*. 7th ed. London. Allyn & Bacon. [Book with several editions.]

SWART, PJ & BLACK, JP. 1999. *A tour of South Africa*. Johannesburg. Haigen. [Book by two authors.]

LONGENECKER, JG, MOORE, CW & PETTY, JW. 1994. *Small business management: An entrepreneurial emphasis*. 9th ed. Cincinnati. South-Western.

South African Association of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences. 2000. *Home economics in South Africa*. Pretoria. [A book published by an organisation, association or institution.]

South Africa. Department of Constitutional Development. 1993. *Negotiating a democratic South Africa*. Pretoria. Government Printer. [A government publication.]

Fifth National Congress of the South African Association for Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences. Potchefstroom. 2000. *Proceedings*. Pretoria. South African Association for Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences. [Proceedings of conferences, congresses.]

NYE, FI & BERARDO, FM (eds). 1966. *Emerging conceptual frameworks in family analysis*. 1966. London. Collier-MacMillan. [Book with an editor or compiler as author.]

McINTYRE, J. 1966. *The structure-functional approach to family study*. In Nye, FI & Berardo, FM. 1966. *Emerging conceptual frameworks in family analysis*. London. Collier-MacMillan. [Chapter by an author in a book edited by another person.]

SCHÖNFELDT, HC. 1997. *Effect of age on beef quality*. PhD thesis. Pretoria. University of Pretoria.

Articles in journals and newspapers:

ERASMUS, AC. 1998. A suggested approach to educating consumers on the purchase of electrical household appliances. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences* 26(2):145-151. [Article by one author.]

VILJOEN, AT & GERICKE, GJ. 1998. Methodology for the collection and application of information on food habits and food preferences in menu planning of heterogeneous groups. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences* 26(2):89-102. [Article by two authors.]

BOSMAN, MJC, VORSTER, HH & STEYN, HS. 1998. The effect of storage on the characteristics of high-fibre muffins with different levels of a protein-based fat substitute. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences* 26(2):131-144. [Article by three or more authors.]

KOTZE, NJ. 1999. The influence of residential desegregation on property prices in South Africa: the Pietersburg case study. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences* 27(1):48-54.

Administration of technical information groups. 1959. *Canadian Journal of Chemistry* 30(1):7-14. [Article by unknown author.]

NGWEZI, P. 2000. Flood victims near city get a helping hand. *Pretoria News* 16 February:1. [Article or news item under author's name.]

Crime down within 3 years, says Selebi. 2000. *Pretoria News* 16 February 2000:2. [Anonymous article or news item.]

Jonassen, DH. *Technology as cognitive tools: learners as designers*. Available on line. URL: <http://itech1.coe.uga.edu/itforum/paper1/paper1.html>. Accessed 15 April 1999. [Article on the Internet.]

7. Tables

Well-planned tables contribute to the value of an article. Only essential information should be included in support of the text:

- ♦ Each table has to be typed on a separate page and in single spacing.
- ♦ Tables have to be numbered and given headings that reflect the content:

TABLE 1: RANKING OF THE FIVE MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOME ECONOMISTS

- ♦ Each column should have a heading and should contain measurements of the same unit.
- ♦ No full stops are used after headings.
- ♦ Note the use of a decimal comma.
- ♦ Abbreviations (explained in a footnote under the table) may be used as space is limited.
- ♦ In the text a table is referred to by its number: Table 1 or (Table 1).
- ♦ Indicate placement of the table in the text as follows:

Place Table 1 here

8. Figures and other graphical material

Carefully selected graphs, sketches or other graphic material could facilitate understanding of the text. Bear in mind that figures have to fit into one or two columns of the Journal. Detail may be lost in the process of scaling down graphic material to fit into one or two columns:

- ♦ Design the graphics with the width of a column (75 mm) or page (170 mm) in mind. The largest size graphics is 225 mm x 170 mm.

- ◆ Text-based figures should be constructed in Microsoft Office PowerPoint XP/2003 and saved as a PowerPoint Presentation (.ppt format).
- ◆ Use Arial type-face as the base font for all text-based figures.
- ◆ Charts should be constructed in Microsoft Office Excel XP/2003 and saved as an Excel spreadsheet (.xls format).
- ◆ Use Arial type-face as the base font for all text in charts.
- ◆ Graphical material accompanying the text should be in a format that is ready for typographical processing. Additional fees will be charged for editing of incorrect graphical material.
- ◆ Photographs or maps should be clear, with sufficient contrast, but keep the pixel size of the photograph as low as possible for easy downloading from the Internet.
- ◆ Submit photographs electronically in a .jpg format.
- ◆ All photographs and graphic material are referred to as figures.
- ◆ Most of the conventions for tables apply to figures as well, except that figures have subscripts:

FIGURE 1: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE FORMATION OF HABITUAL EATING HABITS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

- ◆ In the text figures are referred to by their numbers: Figure 1 or (Figure 1).
- ◆ Indicate placement of the figure in the text as follows:

Place Figure 1 here

APPENDIX C

Semi-structured interview guide

Interview guide: Semi-structured interviews

Why do you wear branded clothing?

How do you feel when wearing brand name clothing?

Will you visit stores which do not sell brand name clothes?

Which of our clothing items do you prefer to be brand names?

Describe what you do when you enter a clothing store.

When you are looking for a specific item, will you browse through all the clothing, or only the brand name items?

What is your feelings/opinion towards signage inside a clothing store pointing out brand names?

When you enter a clothing store and do not notice the brand names you prefer, what will you do?

Describe your perfect clothing store

Decision making process:

What motivates you to visit clothing stores?

What attracts your attention when entering a clothing store?

How do you behave in a clothing store when you notice a clothing item?

When noticing a similar item, how do you choose between the two?

How do you feel after your shopping is done?