

# **BLACK GENERATION Y MALE STUDENTS' FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND NEED FOR UNIQUENESS**

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(M Com)

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**Philosophiae Doctor**

in  
Marketing Management  
at the  
Vaal Triangle Campus  
of the  
North-West University

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Vanderbijlpark  
2015

## DECLARATION

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I declare that:

*“Black Generation Y Male Students’ Fashion Consciousness and Need for Uniqueness”*

is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that I have not previously submitted this thesis for a degree at any other university.

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Matebello Dieketseng Bethsheba Motale

May 2015

## LETTER FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR

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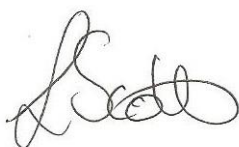
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To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the completed research of Matebello Dieketseng Bethsheba Motale for the PhD, Marketing Management thesis entitled: *Black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness and need for uniqueness*.

The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the thesis.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Scott', with a stylized, cursive script.

Linda Scott

## **DEDICATION**

---

This thesis is dedicated to my mom, Thabitha Motale.

Thank you for your unconditional love, endless support and  
for constantly encouraging me to pursue my dreams.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to the following people who enabled me to complete this thesis:

- My heavenly Father, for providing me with the strength I needed to complete my studies
- Prof. Ayesha Bevan-Dye, my study promoter, for your expert input, guidance and invaluable assistance throughout this journey
- My partner Jeffrey Jack, my daughter, Jenna, and my siblings, Teboho and Thabo Motale, for your patience and understanding during the penning of this thesis
- My best friend, Rainy Damons, for your constant support, advice and friendship
- Prof. Natasha de Klerk, my co-promoter for your additional guidance and expertise
- Ms Aldine Oosthuyzen for the statistical analysis and overall technical editing of this thesis
- Ms Linda Scott for her professionalism in the language editing
- Prof. Casper Lessing for his assistance with the bibliography list
- My colleagues from the Department of Marketing and Sport Management at the Vaal University of Technology (Vanderbijlpark Campus) for your added support
- All the students who gave their time to participate in the pilot and final study; your input is appreciated
- The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (DAAD-NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Any opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the DAAD-NRF.

M.D.B. Motale

May 2015

## ABSTRACT

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### **BLACK GENERATION Y MALE STUDENTS' FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND NEED FOR UNIQUENESS**

**Keywords:** consumer behaviour, consumer decision-making, fashion, fashion consciousness, fashion awareness, Generation Y, black South African male students, need for uniqueness

While there have been numerous studies directed at addressing the female Generation Y cohort's fashion consumption patterns, there is a dearth of published research focused on male consumer fashion conscious behaviour, especially not that of the African Generation Y (hereafter referred to as black Generation Y) males. There are global indications that contemporary males are engaging in fashion apparel shopping more frequently than ever before. Moreover, unlike past generations, today's male consumers have become increasingly fashion aware and fashion conscious, taking care of their looks and developing their own fashion style.

Born between 1986 and 2005, in 2013, black Generation Y individuals made up approximately 83 percent of South Africa's total Generation Y cohort and 38 percent of the country's 52 981 991 population. In 2013, black Generation Y males accounted for an estimated 42 percent of the South African population. As a consequence of its size, the black Generation Y male market segment represents a potentially lucrative and attractive market for apparel retailers and fashion marketers. Marketers are particularly interested in those individuals pursuing tertiary qualifications given that a higher education ultimately acts as a predictor of their higher future spending potential and an indication of their social standing and influence within a society.

The aim of this study was to determine the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour in order to model the determinants of black Generation Y male students fashion conscious behaviour. A self-administered questionnaire was administered on a single cross-sectional sample of 400 black Generation Y male students at three university campuses in the Gauteng province in 2013 – one from a comprehensive university, one from a university of technology and

one from a traditional university. From the administered questionnaires, 213 were completed and returned as usable.

The collected data was analysed by means of exploratory factor analysis, reliability and validity analysis, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. In addition, structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied to test a proposed model derived from the literature. According to the results of the SEM analysis, black Generation Y males' fashion awareness has a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness, and their fashion consciousness has a significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour. In terms of the dimensions of the need for uniqueness, unpopular choice has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness, whilst creative choice has a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness, and avoidance of similarity has a direct significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour. Furthermore, the findings suggest that their fashion consciousness is reliant on their fashion awareness, which in turn influences their fashion conscious behaviour.

Findings from this study will aid marketers' in better understanding black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour. Furthermore, the recommendations provided suggest marketing strategy guidelines tailored at effectively targeting this market segment.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

|                                          |      |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| DECLARATION.....                         | ii   |
| LETTER FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR.....     | iii  |
| DEDICATION.....                          | iv   |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....                   | v    |
| ABSTRACT .....                           | vi   |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS .....                  | viii |
| LIST OF TABLES .....                     | xv   |
| LIST OF FIGURES .....                    | xvi  |
| CHAPTER 1 .....                          | 1    |
| INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT.....  | 1    |
| 1.1 INTRODUCTION .....                   | 1    |
| 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....               | 3    |
| 1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY .....        | 4    |
| 1.3.1 Primary objective .....            | 4    |
| 1.3.2 Theoretical objectives .....       | 4    |
| 1.3.3 Empirical objectives .....         | 4    |
| 1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY..... | 6    |
| 1.4.1 Literature review .....            | 6    |
| 1.4.2 Empirical study .....              | 6    |
| 1.4.2.1 Target population.....           | 7    |
| 1.4.2.2 Sampling frame.....              | 7    |
| 1.4.2.3 Sample method .....              | 7    |

---

|                                                        |                                                                           |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1.4.2.4                                                | Sample size .....                                                         | 7         |
| 1.4.2.5                                                | Measuring instrument and data collection method .....                     | 8         |
| <b>1.4.3</b>                                           | <b>Statistical analysis .....</b>                                         | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>1.5</b>                                             | <b>CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY.....</b>                                     | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>1.6</b>                                             | <b>ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....</b>                                       | <b>10</b> |
| <b>1.7</b>                                             | <b>CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION.....</b>                                        | <b>10</b> |
| <b>1.8</b>                                             | <b>GENERAL .....</b>                                                      | <b>11</b> |
| <b>1.9</b>                                             | <b>CONCLUSION.....</b>                                                    | <b>11</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER 2</b>                                       | <b>.....</b>                                                              | <b>13</b> |
| <b>CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING</b> | <b>.....</b>                                                              | <b>13</b> |
| <b>2.1</b>                                             | <b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>                                                 | <b>13</b> |
| <b>2.2</b>                                             | <b>DISCIPLINE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR.....</b>                              | <b>14</b> |
| <b>2.2.1</b>                                           | <b>Evolution of business orientations .....</b>                           | <b>14</b> |
| 2.2.1.1                                                | Production orientation.....                                               | 14        |
| 2.2.1.2                                                | Product orientation.....                                                  | 15        |
| 2.2.1.3                                                | Sales orientation.....                                                    | 15        |
| 2.2.1.4                                                | Market orientation .....                                                  | 16        |
| <b>2.2.2</b>                                           | <b>Disciplines that have influenced the field of consumer behaviour..</b> | <b>16</b> |
| <b>2.3</b>                                             | <b>CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.....</b>                              | <b>17</b> |
| <b>2.3.1</b>                                           | <b>Stages in the consumer decision-making process .....</b>               | <b>18</b> |
| 2.3.1.1                                                | Need recognition.....                                                     | 20        |
| 2.3.1.2                                                | Pre-purchase search .....                                                 | 20        |
| 2.3.1.3                                                | Evaluation of alternatives .....                                          | 21        |
| 2.3.1.4                                                | Purchase decision.....                                                    | 21        |

|                  |                                                                            |           |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.3.1.5          | Post-purchase evaluation .....                                             | 22        |
| <b>2.4</b>       | <b>FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CONSUMER DECISION-<br/>MAKING PROCESS .....</b> | <b>22</b> |
| <b>2.4.1</b>     | <b>Organisational marketing efforts .....</b>                              | <b>22</b> |
| <b>2.4.2</b>     | <b>Psychological factors .....</b>                                         | <b>24</b> |
| 2.4.2.1          | Motivation.....                                                            | 25        |
| 2.4.2.2          | Perception .....                                                           | 27        |
| 2.4.2.3          | Learning.....                                                              | 28        |
| 2.4.2.4          | Personality .....                                                          | 28        |
| 2.4.2.5          | Attitudes.....                                                             | 29        |
| <b>2.4.3</b>     | <b>Socio-cultural factors .....</b>                                        | <b>30</b> |
| 2.4.3.1          | Reference groups .....                                                     | 30        |
| 2.4.3.2          | Family .....                                                               | 31        |
| 2.4.3.3          | Social class.....                                                          | 32        |
| 2.4.3.4          | Non-commercial influences.....                                             | 33        |
| 2.4.3.5          | Culture .....                                                              | 34        |
| 2.4.3.6          | Subculture .....                                                           | 34        |
| <b>2.5</b>       | <b>GENERATION Y DEFINED.....</b>                                           | <b>36</b> |
| <b>2.5.1</b>     | <b>Characteristics of Generation Y .....</b>                               | <b>37</b> |
| <b>2.6</b>       | <b>CONCLUSION.....</b>                                                     | <b>41</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER 3</b> | <b>.....</b>                                                               | <b>43</b> |
|                  | <b>MALE FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE NEED FOR UNIQUENESS.</b>             | <b>43</b> |
| <b>3.1</b>       | <b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>                                                  | <b>43</b> |
| <b>3.2</b>       | <b>OVERVIEW OF FASHION AND THE FASHION INDUSTRY ..</b>                     | <b>44</b> |
| <b>3.2.1</b>     | <b>Global fashion industry .....</b>                                       | <b>45</b> |

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                          |    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 3.3                                   | SOUTH AFRICAN FASHION INDUSTRY .....                                                                                                                                     | 47 |
| 3.4                                   | FASHION CONSCIOUS BEHAVIOUR .....                                                                                                                                        | 50 |
| 3.5                                   | FASHION AWARENESS AND FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS...                                                                                                                           | 51 |
| 3.6                                   | FACTORS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE EVOLUTION<br>OF MALE FASHION AWARENESS AND FASHION<br>CONSCIOUSNESS .....                                                           | 54 |
| 3.7                                   | NEED FOR UNIQUENESS THEORY .....                                                                                                                                         | 57 |
| 3.8                                   | PROPOSED MODEL OF THE CAUSAL RELATIONSHIPS<br>BETWEEN THE MALE NEED FOR UNIQUENESS, FASHION<br>AWARENESS, FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND FASHION<br>CONSCIOUS BEHAVIOUR ..... | 66 |
| 3.9                                   | CONCLUSION.....                                                                                                                                                          | 67 |
| CHAPTER 4 .....                       |                                                                                                                                                                          | 69 |
| RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY ..... |                                                                                                                                                                          | 69 |
| 4.1                                   | INTRODUCTION .....                                                                                                                                                       | 69 |
| 4.2                                   | RESEARCH DESIGN .....                                                                                                                                                    | 69 |
| 4.3                                   | SAMPLING STRATEGY .....                                                                                                                                                  | 73 |
| 4.3.1                                 | Target population.....                                                                                                                                                   | 73 |
| 4.3.2                                 | Sampling frame .....                                                                                                                                                     | 73 |
| 4.3.3                                 | Method of sampling.....                                                                                                                                                  | 74 |
| 4.3.4                                 | Sample size .....                                                                                                                                                        | 75 |
| 4.4                                   | DATA COLLECTION METHOD .....                                                                                                                                             | 76 |
| 4.4.1                                 | Questionnaire design.....                                                                                                                                                | 76 |
| 4.4.2                                 | Questionnaire content .....                                                                                                                                              | 78 |
| 4.4.3                                 | Questionnaire structure.....                                                                                                                                             | 79 |

|                                                        |                                           |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----|
| 4.4.4                                                  | Pilot testing of the questionnaire.....   | 79 |
| 4.5                                                    | ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ..... | 80 |
| 4.6                                                    | STATISTICAL ANALYSIS.....                 | 80 |
| 4.6.1                                                  | Frequency distribution .....              | 81 |
| 4.6.2                                                  | Exploratory factor analysis .....         | 81 |
| 4.6.3                                                  | Reliability .....                         | 82 |
| 4.6.4                                                  | Validity .....                            | 83 |
| 4.6.4.1                                                | Content validity .....                    | 83 |
| 4.6.4.2                                                | Criterion validity.....                   | 84 |
| 4.6.4.3                                                | Construct validity.....                   | 84 |
| 4.6.5                                                  | Descriptive statistics .....              | 85 |
| 4.6.5.1                                                | Measures of location.....                 | 85 |
| 4.6.5.2                                                | Measures of variability .....             | 85 |
| 4.6.5.3                                                | Measures of shape.....                    | 85 |
| 4.6.6                                                  | Correlation analysis .....                | 86 |
| 4.6.7                                                  | Structural equation modelling .....       | 87 |
| 4.7                                                    | CONCLUSION.....                           | 90 |
| CHAPTER 5 .....                                        |                                           | 92 |
| ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS..... |                                           | 92 |
| 5.1                                                    | INTRODUCTION .....                        | 92 |
| 5.2                                                    | RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST .....           | 92 |
| 5.3                                                    | DATA GATHERING PROCESS .....              | 94 |
| 5.4                                                    | PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS .....           | 94 |
| 5.4.1                                                  | Coding .....                              | 94 |

|                                     |                                                                |     |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5.4.2                               | Data cleaning .....                                            | 97  |
| 5.4.3                               | Tabulation .....                                               | 97  |
| 5.5                                 | MAIN SURVEY SAMPLE DESCRIPTION .....                           | 98  |
| 5.5.1                               | Sample description .....                                       | 98  |
| 5.5.2                               | Participants clothing consumption .....                        | 102 |
| 5.6                                 | EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS.....                               | 104 |
| 5.7                                 | RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS OF MAIN SURVEY<br>.....      | 106 |
| 5.8                                 | DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS .....                                   | 107 |
| 5.9                                 | CORRELATION ANALYSIS .....                                     | 109 |
| 5.10                                | HYPOTHESES TESTING .....                                       | 110 |
| 5.11                                | STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING .....                            | 111 |
| 5.11.1                              | Measurement model specification.....                           | 111 |
| 5.11.2                              | Reliability and validity tests for the measurement model ..... | 114 |
| 5.11.3                              | Structural model.....                                          | 115 |
| 5.12                                | CONCLUSION.....                                                | 119 |
| CHAPTER 6 .....                     |                                                                | 121 |
| CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... |                                                                | 121 |
| 6.1                                 | INTRODUCTION .....                                             | 121 |
| 6.2                                 | OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY.....                                     | 122 |
| 6.3                                 | MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.....                                | 125 |
| 6.4                                 | CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY.....                                 | 128 |
| 6.5                                 | RECOMMENDATIONS .....                                          | 129 |
| 6.5.1                               | Continue to innovate and update the clothing brand .....       | 130 |

|       |                                                                                  |     |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 6.5.2 | Emphasise the status and prestige of the male clothing brand .....               | 130 |
| 6.5.3 | Incorporate customisable features into the product offering.....                 | 131 |
| 6.5.4 | Use digital media platforms to reach black Generation Y males .                  | 131 |
| 6.5.5 | Use of local black celebrity endorsers to promote the metro-sexual<br>image..... | 131 |
| 6.6   | LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH.....                                             | 132 |
| 6.7   | CONCLUDING REMARKS.....                                                          | 133 |
|       | BIBLIOGRAPHY .....                                                               | 134 |
|       | ANNEXURE A.....                                                                  | 164 |
|       | QUESTIONNAIRE.....                                                               | 164 |
|       | ANNEXURE B .....                                                                 | 168 |
|       | STRUCTURAL MODELS.....                                                           | 168 |

## LIST OF TABLES

---

|             |                                                                                                      |     |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Table 2.1:  | Comparison of selected age cohorts.....                                                              | 36  |
| Table 2.2:  | Key characteristics of Generation Y .....                                                            | 38  |
| Table 3.1:  | Current trends in emerging markets .....                                                             | 46  |
| Table 3.2:  | South African annual household consumption expenditure<br>2010/2011.....                             | 48  |
| Table 3.3:  | Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving fashion<br>consciousness .....                      | 52  |
| Table 3.4:  | Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for<br>uniqueness .....                    | 59  |
| Table 5.1:  | Summary of pilot test results.....                                                                   | 93  |
| Table 5.2:  | Coding information .....                                                                             | 95  |
| Table 5.3:  | Frequency table of responses .....                                                                   | 97  |
| Table 5.3:  | Frequency table of responses (continued...).....                                                     | 98  |
| Table 5.4:  | Rotated factors: consumer fashion consciousness scale.....                                           | 105 |
| Table 5.5:  | Rotated factors: consumer need for uniqueness scale .....                                            | 106 |
| Table 5.6:  | Reliability and average inter-item correlation values.....                                           | 107 |
| Table 5.7:  | Descriptive statistics.....                                                                          | 108 |
| Table 5.8:  | Correlation matrix .....                                                                             | 109 |
| Table 5.9:  | Standardised coefficients of the measurement model .....                                             | 113 |
| Table 5.10: | Measurement model: construct reliability, average variance extracted<br>and correlation matrix ..... | 114 |

---

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

|              |                                                                                                                                                  |     |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure 2.1:  | Model of consumer decision-making (Schiffman <i>et al.</i> , 2010:36) .....                                                                      | 19  |
| Figure 2.2:  | Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Lamb <i>et al.</i> , 2010:90; Kotler <i>et al.</i> , 2013:159) .....                                                | 26  |
| Figure 3.1:  | Primary factors contributing to the evolution in male fashion awareness and consciousness (adapted from Bakewell <i>et al.</i> , 2006:172) ..... | 55  |
| Figure 3.2:  | Proposed model of male fashion conscious behaviour .....                                                                                         | 66  |
| Figure 4.1:  | Research designs: types and preparation (Strydom <i>et al.</i> , 2000:152) ..                                                                    | 70  |
| Figure 4.2:  | Descriptive research methods (adapted from Gilbert & Churchill, 2001:129) .....                                                                  | 72  |
| Figure 4.3:  | Sampling techniques (Cant <i>et al.</i> , 2008:165) .....                                                                                        | 74  |
| Figure 4.4:  | Structural equation modelling process (adapted from Malhotra, 2010:729) .....                                                                    | 88  |
| Figure 5.1:  | Participants age .....                                                                                                                           | 99  |
| Figure 5.2:  | Province where participants grew up .....                                                                                                        | 100 |
| Figure 5.3:  | Higher education institution .....                                                                                                               | 101 |
| Figure 5.4:  | Average monthly allowance .....                                                                                                                  | 101 |
| Figure 5.5:  | Number of clothing accounts .....                                                                                                                | 102 |
| Figure 5.6:  | Top three preferred clothing stores .....                                                                                                        | 103 |
| Figure 5.7:  | Top three preferred clothing brands .....                                                                                                        | 104 |
| Figure 5.8:  | Specified measurement model .....                                                                                                                | 112 |
| Figure 5.9:  | Structural Model A .....                                                                                                                         | 116 |
| Figure 5.10: | Structural Model B .....                                                                                                                         | 117 |
| Figure 5.11: | Structural Model C .....                                                                                                                         | 118 |

---

|             |                                                                                                                                                                   |     |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure 6.1: | Causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awarness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour ..... | 128 |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

---

*“Every generation laughs at the old fashions, but follows religiously the new.”*

*Henry David Thoreau*

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Consumers use fashion clothing as a conspicuous way of signalling their identity to others (Rathnayake, 2011:121), with clothing serving intrinsic, communicatory, sociological and psychological functions (Leung & Taylor, 2002:63). Fashion represents an important industry in South Africa, one that the government supports as part of their economic development programme (Grail Research, 2009:13). Globally, the apparel market was estimated to be worth US\$1.7 trillion in 2012 (Fashion United, 2013). In South Africa, the retail clothing industry was worth R29.57 billion in 2011, which was expected to increase by 14.7 percent in 2012 (PwC, 2012b:27). The increased focus on fashion clothing brands being status symbols, particularly amongst the country's young high-income males, is expected to drive much of the growth in South Africa's apparel market (Euromonitor, 2013a).

Whilst fashion consumption has traditionally been considered as being more of a female pursuit (Rathnayake, 2011:128), there is growing evidence that their male counterparts are showing a marked increase in their fashion awareness and fashion consciousness (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:170; Rathnayake, 2011:128). Nam *et al.* (2006:103) define fashion consciousness as “a person's degree of involvement with the styles or fashion of clothing”. Factors thought to have contributed to the increase in male fashion consciousness include gender role fragmentation, the use of celebrity sportsmen as fashion models, and the increased popularity of men's fashion magazines that promote the concept of the metro-sexual new man (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:172). A study conducted on the Eastern European markets revealed that young males were in fact more fashion conscious than their female counterparts were (Manrai *et al.*, 2001:274). In South Africa, the compound annual growth rate in the menswear market between

2004 and 2008 amounted to 7.8 percent in comparison to the growth rate in womenswear that amounted to 9.2 percent (Research and Markets, 2010). This indicates that not only are male consumers steadily showing an increased interest in fashion trends, they are fast approaching the level of interest exhibited by women.

Given the conspicuous nature of clothing and its value in communicating identity, another important concept linked to fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour is the need for uniqueness (Park *et al.*, 2008:246). Individuals with a low need for uniqueness are likely to select products, including clothing, that conform to the expectations of their significant others, whereas, those with a high need for uniqueness are more likely to express themselves through unique choices, including fashion clothing (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:144). In order to understand what motivates consumers' need for uniqueness, Snyder and Fromkin's (1977:510) uniqueness theory was adopted for this study. The central basis of this theory is grounded in how individuals pursue material goods to try to differentiate themselves from their peers. This consumer need may be demonstrated in three types of consumer behaviour, namely creative choice, unpopular choice and avoidance of similarity (Knight & Kim, 2007:276).

The youth market offers an important target market for fashion and apparel marketers (Cassidy & Van Schijndel, 2011:164). In marketing speak, the youth market of the twenty-first century is labelled Generation Y. Born between 1986 and 2005 (Markert, 2004:21), Generation Y (also known as echo boomers and the millennium generation) are the children of baby boomers (Martin, 2005:40) or Generation X (Herbig *et al.*, 1993:5). Schiffman *et al.* (2010:410) have divided this cohort into three sub-segments, Generation Y adults, Generation Y teens and Generation Y kids or 'tweens'. According to Azuma (2002:134) and Parker *et al.* (2004:179), Generation Y consumers generally prefer brands with a certain level of identity, based on values with which they can identify and express their individuality. Then, their own unique needs and brand knowledge, stemming from their personal experiences, drive these brand perceptions (Keller, 2001).

Working within the confines of South Africa's mid-year population count categories, Generation Y members made up approximately 38 percent of South Africa's population of 52 981 991 in 2013. The African portion of South Africa's Generation Y cohort

(hereafter referred to as black Generation Y) amounts to a significant 83 percent. The black Generation Y male segment accounts for 41.90 percent of South Africa's total Generation Y cohort, and 50.24 percent of the black Generation Y cohort (Statistics South Africa, 2013a). The size of this age and gender cohort translates into it representing an attractive market segment for marketers. Members of the black male Generation Y cohort, who have a tertiary qualification, are of special relevance to marketers, given that a higher education often predicts a higher future earning potential and a higher social standing (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2009:179), which, in turn, predicts a higher level of consumption and opinion leadership within a given cohort.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

While numerous studies focusing on female Generation Y members and older Generation Y members have been conducted internationally, with particular emphasis on their fashion consumption patterns (Hogg *et al.*, 1998:293; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003:95; Martin & Turley, 2004:464; O'Cass & Choy, 2008:341; Rahman & Azhar, 2011:91), there is a lack of published literature on male fashion consumption patterns, especially black Generation Y males' fashion consumption. To date, few academic studies regarding the consumer behaviour of the black Generation Y members have been undertaken in South Africa, and none that focus specifically on the male black Generation Y segment of the cohort. Despite black Generation Y males representing a lucrative marketing opportunity for apparel retailers and fashion marketers in South Africa, there is a dearth of published studies in this area.

There is need to gain insight into the consumer behaviour of this segment in terms of their fashion awareness, fashion consciousness, fashion behaviour and need for uniqueness in order to tailor the marketing strategies employed to target this segment. As those with a tertiary qualification are expected to have a higher earning potential and, consequently, a higher consumption potential and social influence, an understanding of the student portion of this cohort is likely to offer particularly valuable insight into the fashion consciousness and need for uniqueness of South African black Generation Y males.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following objectives were formulated for the study:

#### **1.3.1 Primary objective**

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour in order to model the determinants of black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour.

#### **1.3.2 Theoretical objectives**

In order to achieve the primary objective, the following theoretical objectives were formulated for the study:

- Provide an overview of the discipline of consumer behaviour and the consumer decision-making model.
- Conduct a review of the literature pertaining to the characteristics of members of the Generation Y cohort.
- Conduct a review of the literature pertaining to the fashion industry.
- Conduct a literature review to determine the factors affecting male fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.
- Conduct a literature study on the consumer need for uniqueness theory.

#### **1.3.3 Empirical objectives**

In accordance with the primary objective of the study, the following empirical objectives were formulated:

- Determine black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness.
- Determine black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.
- Determine black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness.

- Determine black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour.
- Determine the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

In line with the empirical objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

Ho1: Male fashion conscious behaviour is not a six-factor structure comprising fashion conscious behaviour, fashion consciousness, fashion awareness, avoidance of similarity, unpopular choice and creative choice.

Ha1: Male fashion conscious behaviour is a six-factor structure comprising fashion conscious behaviour, fashion consciousness, fashion awareness, avoidance of similarity, unpopular choice and creative choice.

Ho2: Black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness does not have a significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour.

Ha2: Black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness does have a significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour.

Ho3: Black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness does not have a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness.

Ha3: Black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness does have a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness.

Ho4: The need for uniqueness dimension of avoidance of similarity does not have a significant positive influence on Black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ha4: The need for uniqueness dimension of avoidance of similarity does have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ho5: The need for uniqueness dimension of unpopular choice does not have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ha5: The need for uniqueness dimension of unpopular choice does have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ho6: The need for uniqueness dimension of creative choice does not have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ha6: The need for uniqueness dimension of creative choice does have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

## **1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The study comprised a literature review and an empirical study. Quantitative research, using the survey method, was used for the empirical portion of the study. The research design followed was descriptive in nature. A structured questionnaire using close-ended questions on a six-point Likert scale served as the instrument for collecting data. The questionnaire was self-administered during scheduled lectures.

### **1.4.1 Literature review**

A literature review of secondary data sources was undertaken to achieve the theoretical objectives of the study. Secondary data sources included relevant textbooks, journal articles, full-text online databases, newspaper articles and the Internet. Specific emphasis was placed on literature pertaining to the Generation Y cohort's fashion consciousness and need for uniqueness.

### **1.4.2 Empirical study**

The empirical portion of this study comprised the following methodology dimensions:

#### **1.4.2.1 Target population**

The target population for this study was black Generation Y male students aged between 18-24 years, enrolled at South African registered public higher education institutions (HEIs) in 2013. Defining the HEI student portion of this cohort as aged between 18-24 years is in line with similar studies (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:169; Rathnayake, 2011:121).

#### **1.4.2.2 Sampling frame**

The sampling frame for this study consisted of black Generation Y male students enrolled at South African HEIs located in the Gauteng Province. The reason for selecting this geographic area is that the Gauteng province comprises the largest share of the South African population. Approximately 12.7 million people (24 percent) live in this province (Statistics South Africa, 2013a).

Specifically, three university campuses formed part of the sampling frame – one from a comprehensive university, one from a university of technology, and one from a traditional university. The reason for selecting these institutions was their high student enrolment figures and their ratio of black male students as compared to other HEIs (Council on Higher Education and Higher Education Quality Committee, 2012).

#### **1.4.2.3 Sample method**

From the sample frame, a non-probability convenience sample of black Generation Y male students enrolled at the three respective South African institutions was drawn. Questionnaires were distributed evenly at the respective university campuses.

#### **1.4.2.4 Sample size**

The sample size selected for the study was 400 black Generation Y male students enrolled at the three South African HEIs. This size sample is consistent with previous studies conducted on young fashion consumers such as Rathnayake (2011:121) (Sample size: 215), Phau and Cheong (2009:210) (Sample size: 603), Tian *et al.* (2001:53) (Sample size: 273), and a study on male Generation Y in the United Kingdom (UK) (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:169) (Sample size: 346).

#### **1.4.2.5 Measuring instrument and data collection method**

For the empirical portion of the study, two revised scales were adapted to suit the objectives for this study.

Gould and Stern (1989:139) developed the first scale used to measure fashion consciousness and Rukandema (2000:56) revised this scale in order to make it specifically applicable to men's fashion consumption and relevant to the 1990s. Bakewell *et al.* (2006:174) used an adapted version of the Rukandema (2000:56) scale to measure male fashion consciousness in the UK market. For this study, items from the Bakewell *et al.* (2006:174) scale were selected to reflect the dimensions of male fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

In order to measure black Generation Y males' uniqueness, a scale developed by Tian *et al.* (2001:53) and adapted by Knight and Kim (2007:275) was selected to measure three main constructs, namely avoidance of similarity, unpopular choice counter-conformity and creative choice counter-conformity. These modified scales utilised a six-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree).

In addition, the questionnaire included a section designed to elicit demographic information, and a cover letter indicating the purpose of the study and providing the necessary contact details.

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire in the South African context, the questionnaire was pilot tested at a HEI campus not included in the sampling frame.

Lecturers employed at each of the three HEI campuses were contacted and asked if they would allow a self-administered questionnaire to be distributed to their students during lectures. Once permission was gained, a structured self-administered questionnaire was administered during scheduled lectures by the study researcher. Participation in the survey was strictly on a voluntary basis.

### **1.4.3 Statistical analysis**

The captured data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS), Version 21.0 for Windows. The following statistical methods were used on the empirical data sets:

- Exploratory factor analysis
- Reliability and validity analysis
- Descriptive statistics analysis
- Correlation analysis
- Structural equation modelling.

## **1.5 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

This study is part of a larger research project at the North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus) that seeks to profile the consumer behaviour of the South African Generation Y cohort in general and that of the black Generation Y cohort in particular. Various studies have been conducted worldwide to research the fashion consumption patterns of the Generation Y cohort. Most have focused on the obvious fashion consumption patterns of female consumers. However, little research has been undertaken on Generation Y male fashion consumption specifically that of the Generation Y black male in the South African context. Despite changing consumer roles and commercial pressures for men to become more fashion conscious and the introduction of the metro-male, this market remains untapped.

This study contributes to marketers' understanding of black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour, as it models the causal relationships between their need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour. In addition, the findings of the study will provide marketing strategy guidelines tailored at effectively targeting this market segment.

## **1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Participation in the study was strictly on a voluntary basis and the participating respondents were assured that all information would be treated as confidential and their anonymity would be maintained. In addition, an assurance was given that the names of the HEIs where the participants were registered at the time of the study would not be mentioned. All results are reported in aggregate.

## **1.7 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION**

The primary objective and resulting theoretical and empirical objectives of this study were formulated to address the gap in the literature concerning Generation Y male fashion conscious behaviour in South Africa. In accordance with the primary, theoretical and empirical objectives formulated in Chapter 1, the remainder of this thesis comprises the following chapters:

Chapter 2 focuses on the discipline of consumer behaviour and the consumer decision-making process. In the chapter, the discipline of consumer behaviour is discussed, together with the consumer decision-making process, with specific reference to the model proposed by Schiffman *et al.* (2010:36). In accordance with this model, the three sets of factors that influence the consumer decision-making process, namely the organisational marketing efforts, the socio-cultural environment and the psychological environment, are discussed. Given the target population defined in this study, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the characteristics of the Generation Y cohort.

Chapter 3 concentrates on male fashion consciousness and the need for uniqueness personality trait. In this chapter, an overview of fashion and the fashion industry is provided, including the global fashion industry and the South African fashion industry. Thereafter, the literature pertaining to fashion conscious behaviour and the factors that have contributed to the evolution of male fashion consciousness is discussed. This is followed by a review of the literature on the need for uniqueness personality trait. In accordance with the literature reviewed in Chapter 3, the chapter concludes with a proposed model of the causal relationships between black Generation Y males' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

Chapter 4 outlines the theoretical background of the research methodology followed to test the model proposed in Chapter 3. In this chapter, a discussion of the research design, sampling strategy, data collection method and administration of the research instrument is provided. The chapter concludes with a description of the various statistical analysis methods employed on the data set of this study.

Chapter 5 reports on the statistical analysis and interpretation of the study's empirical findings. The chapter includes a description of the results of the pilot study, the data gathering process and the preliminary data analysis process. This is followed by a description of the participants that made up the sample in the main survey. Thereafter, the findings of the exploratory factor analysis and the reliability and validity of the factors that emerged are discussed. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis, together with the correlation analysis are then outlined. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings that emerged following the application of structural equation modelling (SEM).

Chapter 6 represents the culmination of the study. The chapter begins with an overview of the study, which is followed by a discussion concerning the main findings of the study and the contribution made by these findings. In accordance with the findings of the study, the chapter includes several recommendations. The chapter concludes with an outline of the main limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

## **1.8 GENERAL**

- The referencing is based on the 2012 North-West University referencing guide, Harvard style.
- Where no sources have been indicated for tables and figures, it denotes own work.
- Annexures are placed at the back of the thesis.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

The objective of Chapter 1 was to introduce and provide background concerning the topic under investigation. In the chapter, it was established that fashion represents an important industry globally, as well as in South Africa, where it is supported by

government as part of their economic development plan. The statistics referred to in the chapter indicate that sales in the retail clothing industry have been steadily increasing since 2011. Much of this growth in sales in the fashion apparel industry is attributed to the country's young high-income males' heightened interest in branded clothing as a way of conveying their status. Given that higher education often acts as a predictor of higher future earning and social standing, Generation Y, specifically black Generation Y male students who are studying towards tertiary qualifications at selected HEIs, were selected as the target population of the study.

In the following chapter, Chapter 2, the discipline of consumer behaviour and the consumer decision-making process are discussed, together with the characteristics of the Generation Y cohort.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND CONSUMER DECISION- MAKING

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*“I dress for the image. Not for myself, not for the public, not for fashion, not for men.”*

*Calvin Klein*

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is rooted in the theoretical framework of consumer behaviour, with a specific focus on the consumer behaviour of male Generation Y consumers. As such, Chapter 2 is dedicated to reviewing the consumer decision-making process and the factors that influence this process, as well as the characteristics of the Generation Y cohort.

The analysis of consumer behaviour entails the application of behavioural principle in order to interpret human economic consumption (Foxall, 2001:165). Consumer behaviour refers to the process by which individuals decide on what, when and where to purchase market offerings, together with how they use and finally discard those purchased market offerings (Kardes *et al.*, 2010:8; Lamb *et al.*, 2010:75). It refers to the psychological and social processes that individuals experience in acquiring, using and disposing of products, services, ideas and practices (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2002:1). Similarly, consumer behaviour is described as the demeanour that individuals exhibit when “searching, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of goods and services” that they anticipate will fulfil their needs (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:23; Joubert, 2010:1).

Therefore, the field of consumer behaviour focuses on consumption activities. Typically, consumer behaviour is studied from the viewpoint of marketing or, from the viewpoint of basic or applied behavioural and social sciences (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2002:1). For the purpose of this study, consumer behaviour will be considered more from the marketing perspective. In explaining this concept from a marketing perspective, East (1997:3) describes consumer behaviour as being about human reactions to the commercial world, and adds that it involves how and why individuals purchase and

consume products, and their responses to variables such as price, advertising and other promotional mediums that aid or impede their consumption behaviour.

Chapter 2 focuses on addressing the first two theoretical objectives indicated in Section 1.3.2. In accordance with these objectives, the chapter commences with a discussion of the literature of the discipline of consumer behaviour, which is followed by a description of the consumer decision-making process, with particular reference to the factors that influence that process. Thereafter, the characteristics of the Generation Y cohort are discussed.

## **2.2 DISCIPLINE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**

In tracing the origins of the study of consumer behaviour, it is important to explain the historical background that gave rise to this discipline. The marketing literature suggests that the field of consumer behaviour is closely rooted in the marketing concept (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:26), which is regarded as a business orientation that gained popularity in the mid- to late-1950s (Bell & Emory, 1971:37) through the evolution of various other approaches, including the production orientation, the product orientation and the sales orientation (Levitt, 1960:45). Organisations that operate according to the principles of the marketing concept are following the market-oriented approach to business (Walker & Mullins, 2011:11).

### **2.2.1 Evolution of business orientations**

The following section considers the different business orientations that preceded the market-oriented business philosophy in accordance with four-eras theory of the history of marketing practice, as proposed by Keith (1960).

#### **2.2.1.1 Production orientation**

The production orientation was one of the first business orientations to be followed by organisations in managing their product offerings (Keith, 1960:36). The premise driving this philosophy was that consumers are interested in product availability and low prices (Kotler *et al.*, 2010:23). Hence, many organisations selected to ignore consumer needs and rather focus on their inner production and/or manufacturing capabilities (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:10). Whilst such a strategy may be

successful in developing economies and/or newly emerging industries, it is unlikely to be successful in the long-term as markets mature and competitive conditions change (Walker & Mullins, 2011:15).

#### **2.2.1.2 Product orientation**

At the opposite end of the spectrum to the production-oriented approach is the product-oriented approach. In contrast to production orientation, the product-orientation approach involves organisations concentrating their resources on developing superior products to rival those of their competitors (Grönroos, 1996:7). Following this approach, organisations operate under the assumption that they will be successful if they create superior, good quality products with innovative features (Kotler *et al.*, 2010:23). Despite these good intentions, this approach typically fails in that it neglects to take into consideration what the consumer desires from a market offering, leading to what Levitt (1960:45) refers to as “marketing myopia”.

#### **2.2.1.3 Sales orientation**

Another business orientation that gained in popularity from the 1930s to mid-1950s was the sales-orientation approach, which entailed organisations implementing aggressive selling and promotional techniques in an effort to rid themselves of unwanted stock (Kotler *et al.*, 2010:24; Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:26). As was the case with the other business orientations, the sales-orientation approach also proved to be unsuccessful in that it failed to take into account the voice of the actual consumer (Keith, 1960:36; Lamb *et al.*, 2013:5). Another weakness of this approach is that it is unlikely to create any sustainable competitive advantage given that aggressive sales tactics are easily replicated by competitors (Walker & Mullins, 2011:15).

Earlier marketing texts (see Clark & Clark, 1942:570) advocated against adopting a strong customer centric focus, arguing that consumer desires are subjective, fickle and typically poorly formulated and expressed, a notion, according to Walker and Mullins (2011:12), to which some marketers still subscribe. However, the clear picture that emerges here is that being organisational centric at the expense of being customer centric is not a sustainable business approach. The belief that organisations need to adopt a customer perspective and redefine themselves as customer-creating and customer-satisfying entities is the overriding message of the seminal writings of Levitt

(1960:56) and Kotler (1972:48). It is this concept of consumer-orientation that lies at the heart of the market-oriented business philosophy, as discussed next.

#### **2.2.1.4 Market orientation**

Unlike the other business orientations, the central premise of the marketing concept is that an organisation's success depends on its ability to correctly identify and understand the needs and wants of its targeted segment(s), and its ability to deliver a market offering that meets those needs and wants better than that of their competitors (Walker & Mullins, 2011:11). Market orientation translates the principles of the marketing concept, which include consumer orientation, systems orientation and long-term orientation (Turner & Spencer, 1997:110), into practice (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990:1). This approach necessitates an in-depth understanding of the consumer decision-making process and the factors influencing that process; that is, it requires consumer research – and so the field of consumer behaviour research came into existence (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:26, 27).

#### **2.2.2 Disciplines that have influenced the field of consumer behaviour**

In addition to the marketing concept that drove the development of the field of consumer behaviour research, there are several other behavioural science disciplines that played a pivotal role in shaping the field of consumer behaviour such as sociology, social psychology, psychology, anthropology, demography and economics (Mowen, 1993:12).

Sociology, as a discipline, aims to explore the social behaviour of individuals by examining the environment or society wherein they reside (Popenoe *et al.*, 1998:3). Hence, Giddens (2009:6) defines sociology as “the scientific study of human life, social groups and whole societies” that aids in predicting human beings' behaviour as social beings. The role of the family, culture and social class are just some of the variables commonly investigated within this field of study. Although sociology is concerned with the study of groups of individuals, social psychology, in contrast, focuses on how a person operates within a group (Higgins & Kruglanski, 1996; Lukinova *et al.*, 2014:310).

Psychology, in turn, looks at the cognitions and behaviours of the individual person, including their motivations, perceptions, personality and attitudes (Mowen, 1993:13) and psychologist researchers played an important role in the initial development of the field of consumer behaviour (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2002:1). Anthropology looks at how society influences that individual (Eggan, 1953:744; Ortner, 1984:129) where, from an anthropological perspective, consumption is viewed as an integral part of social cultural relationships (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2002:1). Demography, as a discipline, involves the study of human numbers and the distribution thereof, and plays an important role in market segmentation and market trend analysis (Mowen, 1993:14).

Economics, in contrast, is a social science that studies the choices that individuals, organisations, governments and entire societies make as they cope with resource scarcity, and the incentives that influence and reconcile their choices (Parkin, 2012:2). According to the economists' view of consumer behaviour, consumption choices are dictated by the rational need to maximise utility (Foxall, 2001:176).

The knowledge obtained from these diverse disciplines has collectively helped shape the field of consumer behaviour research so as to develop a rich understanding of the consumer decision-making process and the factors that influence that process.

### **2.3 CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

Whilst the literature supports that various models have been developed that are aimed at explaining the consumer decision-making process, for the most part, they embrace the same basic steps and determining factors (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:70).

The model developed by Hawkins *et al.* (1998:3) introduces peoples' experiences and acquisitions as having an impact on the external and internal influences that contribute to the consumer decision-making process. In this model, consumer awareness of their needs or desires is illustrated as being indicative of driving this entire process. In contrast, the Blackwell *et al.* (2006:70) consumer decision-making model suggests a seven-step process that encompasses need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives, purchase, consumption, post-purchase consumption evaluation and divestment. Throughout each stage, mention is made of how individual differences such as consumer resources, motivation, knowledge,

attitude, personality, values and lifestyle, together with environmental influences like culture, social class, personal experiences, family, and the situation, influence the process.

In comparison, the model developed by Hoyer and McInnis (2001:14) describes consumer decision-making as consisting of four domains that sequentially include a psychological core, the process of making decisions, variables influencing the consumers' culture and the consumers' behavioural outcomes, whereby a consumer is faced with the prospect of either adopting, resisting or diffusing an innovation.

Taking into consideration how other developed models explain this process, the Schiffman *et al.* (2010:36) model, depicted in Figure 2.1, was selected as a guide to this discussion as it furnishes the most detailed list of factors influencing the consumer decision-making process.

### **2.3.1 Stages in the consumer decision-making process**

The model depicted in Figure 2.1 depicts consumer decision-making as comprising three stages, namely the input stage, the process stage and the output stage.

The model indicates organisational marketing efforts and the factors in the socio-cultural environment as the external influencing forces on consumer decision making. The process stage is depicted as including the influence of psychological forces internal to the consumer on decision making, which, in turn, leads to consumption experience. The output stage includes all post-decision behaviours, where post-purchase evaluation contributes to the individual's consumption experience,

Sequentially, the process and the output stages are portrayed as consisting of five stages, namely need recognition, pre-purchase search, evaluation of alternatives, the purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation. Each of these stages is discussed in more detail in the following section.

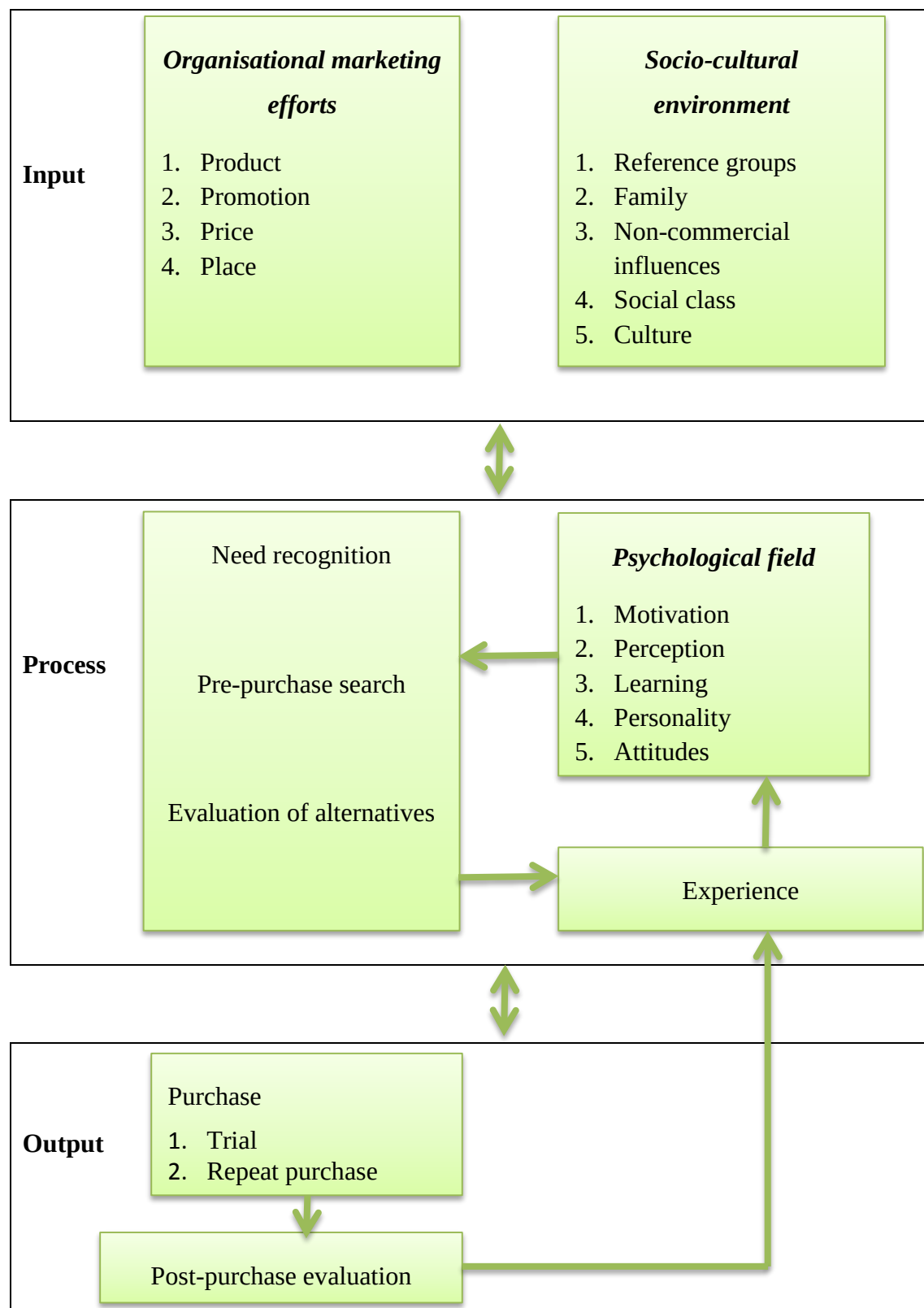


**Figure 2.1: Model of consumer decision-making** (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:36)

### **2.3.1.1 Need recognition**

Need recognition occurs when a consumer is confronted with a problem (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:484; Strydom, 2011:58). Often, this problem is identified once consumers recognise that an unrealised need exists within them (Belch & Belch, 2012:115). This problem recognition takes place once an individual becomes cognisant that there is a difference between his/her coveted state and existent state (Dibb *et al.*, 2012:152). Fashion marketers typically update fashions regularly in an effort to trigger this problem recognition (Law *et al.*, 2004:362; Belch & Belch, 2012:115).

In terms of male fashion conscious behaviour, fashion awareness would constitute a form of problem recognition. Brand awareness is an important precursor to fashion brand consciousness and the development of brand preferences (Radder & Huang, 2008:232). A long-term brand image (Evans, 1989:8), advertising (Radder & Huang, 2008:234) and social communication, in the form of opinion leadership (Goldsmith & Clark, 2008:309) are important aids in fostering awareness.

An individual's awareness of their gender influences their feelings towards fashion objects within the confines of societal norms (Gould & Stern, 1989:130). This suggests that traditionally female fashion offerings such as cosmetics and beauty treatments targeted at males should be clearly labelled as male offerings. Indeed, several cosmetic houses (see for example, Lancome, Clarins and Clinique) now have a range of beauty products that specifically target the male market.

### **2.3.1.2 Pre-purchase search**

Once problem recognition has occurred, individuals typically move to the pre-purchase stage. Herein, the consumers begin to search for specific information pertaining to the various choices available to meet their wants (Lamb *et al.*, 2013:85). In most instances, consumers will make use of their experiences as the foundation for their choices (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996:246).

In addition, in conducting a pre-purchase search, a consumer will commonly consult external sources for information, including friends and family, and commercial sources of information such as the mass media (Foxall, 2003:123; Murali *et al.*, 2005:307). The amount of effort an individual exerts in this information search stage is dependent

on a number of factors, including level of product involvement, level of perceived risk and level of experience with that product category (Ferrel & Hartline, 2008:151). Products that are hedonic and/or that are used as a way of self-expression, such as fashion tend to elicit higher levels of product involvement (Mittal, 1989:148). If carried out successfully, the information search should concede a number of alternatives, referred to as the evoked set (Dibb *et al.*, 2012:154).

#### **2.3.1.3 Evaluation of alternatives**

Once an evoked set of alternatives has been identified, consumers generally go on to select certain criteria that they will use in evaluating each alternative (Ferrel & Hartline, 2008:154). In other words, having compiled an evoked set of alternatives, consumers are able to select defining features or characteristics they are seeking to help eliminate those alternatives that do not match their needs and wants (Dibb *et al.*, 2012:154). The evaluative criteria, which may be objective or subjective, are the bundles of attributes of a market offering that consumers apply to compare competing alternatives in terms of the functional and/or psychological consequences of their purchase (Belch & Belch, 2012:126).

#### **2.3.1.4 Purchase decision**

Following the evaluation stage, consumers are confronted with the decision of whether or not to purchase their selected alternative, or to postpone the purchase to a later stage (Foxall, 2003:124). The intention to purchase does not always translate into the actual purchase in that the process may be interrupted by unforeseen situational variable such as, for example, availability of funds or credit, illness, an argument with a shop assistant, and the like.

In addition, even once a decision to purchase has been made, there are still several other decisions that need to be addressed, including when to purchase, from where to purchase, whether to purchase for cash or on credit (Belch & Belch, 2012:129). Other pertinent issues such as “price, delivery, guarantees, service agreements, installation and credit arrangements” also need to be ascertained (Dibb *et al.*, 2012:155).

### **2.3.1.5 Post-purchase evaluation**

During the post-purchase stage, consumers evaluate their purchase against their expectations. Typically, when purchasing a particular product, consumers have certain expectations or desired benefits, as identified from their evoked set. How well these expectations are met eventually determines whether the consumer is satisfied or dissatisfied with the purchase (Belch & Belch, 2012:130). Dibb *et al.* (2012:155) indicate that the level of consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction ascertains if a repeat purchase takes place or not. In the case of dissatisfaction, consumers will experience some form of uncertainty or doubt in the form of anxiety or inner tension regarding the purchase made, known as cognitive dissonance, and this may be attributed to an inconsistency between their expectations and their actual experience with the purchased alternative.

From the model, it is evident that consumers are complex individuals whose decisions are driven by organisational marketing efforts, psychological factors, and socio-cultural factors, as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

## **2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

The first set of factors that influence the consumer decision-making process are organisational marketing efforts, which include the four elements of the marketing mix.

### **2.4.1 Organisational marketing efforts**

McGee and Spiro (1988:40) emphasise that marketing is two-faceted – a business philosophy and an organisational function. As a philosophy, it is an attitude, a perspective, and a management orientation that stresses customer satisfaction, as discussed in Section 2.2.1.4. As a function, it incorporates a set of activities that are used in implementing this philosophy. Dibb *et al.* (2012:8) describe it as consisting of individual and organisational activities that facilitate and expedite satisfying exchange relationships in a dynamic environment through the creation, distribution, promotion and pricing of goods, services and ideas.

The organisational marketing efforts (hereafter referred to as the 4Ps) form part of a framework typically used by marketing managers to assist them in managing, planning, organising and sustaining control of their market offerings (Kotler, 1972:52). Located at the core of these efforts is the customer, who is conceived as their target for these efforts, many of whom have different needs (Webster & Wind, 1972:17). In specifying their target market, marketers are able to conceptualise how to convey, extradite and interchange their offerings with specific groups of customers appropriately (Elliot *et al.*, 2012:21). Therefore, it is important for marketers to consider the consumers' motivational influences when designing their marketing mix, as it will aid in facilitating their decision-making (Goi, 2009:2).

This study focuses specifically on black male Generation Y students, given that race, gender and age represent important demographic segmentation bases (Mowen, 1993:19), especially with product categories such as fashion. Hence, manufacturers should be concerned with developing the right product for their target market. In creating men's apparel to cater for the Generation Y market, manufacturers ought to ascertain if their product standards, appearance and branding meet with consumer needs and wants (Baines *et al.*, 2011:16). Next, marketers need to ensure that the product gets to the target market by means of place or distribution, a task that is normally designated to intermediaries (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1995:8). It is important to select appropriate channels whereby the clothing will be dispersed; therefore, to identify the stores that will carry the merchandise and eliminate those that do not fit the criteria for the chosen target market. This task is particularly important, seeing as it is crucial to ensure that the selected store portrays an image that compliments the product (Leigh & Gabel, 1992:14).

Promotion focuses on the marketing actions that inform the target market about the organisation's market offerings (Elliot *et al.*, 2012:23). Marketers need to ensure that they centre their resources on the correct mix of promotional mediums necessary to reach a specific target market, and do so with the correct marketing message to appeal to that target market (Goldsmith, 1999:182). Therefore, reaching the black Generation Y male cohort requires an understanding of which media platforms they use and what type of message appeal would be most persuasive in reaching this segment. Traditionally, there were four major promotional media platforms available –

newspapers, magazines, radio and television (Mangold & Faulds, 2009:360; Bruhn *et al.*, 2012:773). Of these traditional media vehicles, the rise of male magazines and the increasing use of celebrity sportsmen as fashion endorsers are considered as instrumental in fostering male fashion consciousness (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:172).

The advent of the Internet has seen the arrival of several new media platforms such as the Web, mobile telephony and social networking sites, which may be appropriate in appealing to the “techno-savvy” Generation Y demographic (Broadbridge *et al.*, 2009:408; Bolton *et al.*, 2013:248). For example, one study in the South African market found that black Generation Y students were heavy users of the Facebook social networking site, with some spending up to three hours on the site per day (Bevan-Dye, 2012:41). Therefore, it is important for marketers to investigate the use of these new digital media platforms when designing a promotional campaign strategy for reaching this demographic.

According to Belch and Belch (2012:56), marketers use the price element of the marketing mix to communicate the value positioning of their market offering to their target market. Kavkani *et al.* (2011:236) add that consumers often use price as an indicator of quality and, in conjunction with brand name, price serves as an important cue to indicate prestige and symbolic value. Given that fashion clothing is a conspicuous consumption product category this suggests that price will play an important target marketing positioning role in the marketing of apparel brands.

The following section outlines the psychological factors that influence the consumer decision-making process.

#### **2.4.2 Psychological factors**

Psychological factors are characterised as the internal processes that control a consumer’s decision-making (Martin & Del Bosque, 2008:264). In this section, the influence of motivation, perception, learning, personality and attitudes on the consumer decision-making process is discussed.

### 2.4.2.1 Motivation

From a consumer behaviour perspective, the explanation for motivation is the force that drives individuals to satisfy their physiological and psychological needs through engaging in product acquisition and consumption (Blackwell, *et al*, 2006:289). Everything that people do in life, they do for a reason, even if they are not consciously aware of the driving forces behind this reason. One such indicator that moves people is motivation, which drives their human behaviour (Joubert, 2010:65); therefore, it could be used as a tool to provide insight into why consumers conduct themselves the way they do.

The hierarchy of needs theory, which is a fusion between functionalism and holism, states that consumers need to satisfy their most basic human (physiological) needs such as the need for food, water and shelter first, as these are the most essential needs required in order to survive (Maslow, 1943:371,372). This is followed by the need for security, protection and shelter (safety needs). Since South Africa has such a high crime rate, marketers are starting to play on that emotion; they will often use advertisements to lure consumers into purchasing certain products (like luxury vehicles for example) to minimise any risk associated with this particular need. Once the two lower needs have been met, the three higher-ranking needs (social, esteem and self-actualisation) become more important to the consumer (Elliot *et al.*, 2012:128). These needs are depicted in Figure 2.2.

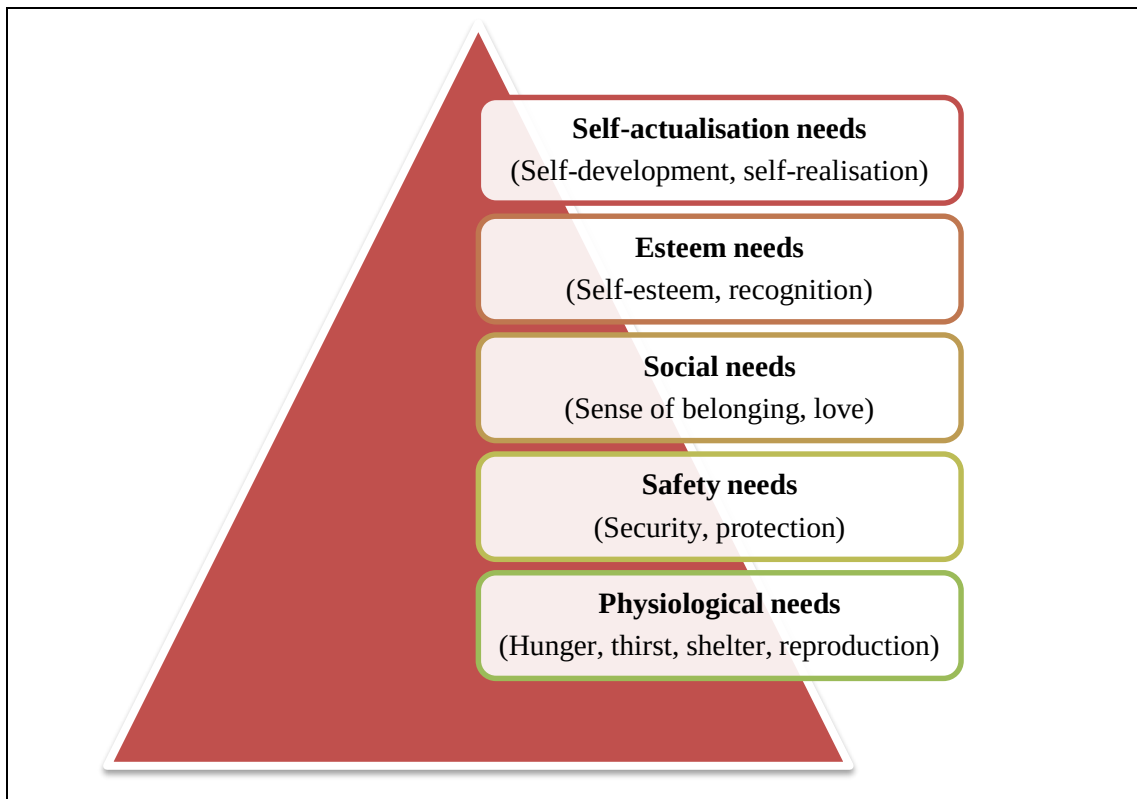


**Figure 2.2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs** (Lamb *et al.*, 2010:90; Kotler *et al.*, 2013:159)

Clothing in general serves various roles other than assisting with warmth or protection (physiological needs and safety needs) and may be used to create a sense of belonging to a particular reference group (social needs) (Kotler, 2003:196), or to articulate how significant an individual is, and convey to others the status of an individual (esteem needs) (O'Cass & Frost, 2002:68). Most luxury goods provide symbolic social status, and several studies reveal that for the youth, these goods signify their ambitions and sense of belonging, which motivates their consumption decisions (Thompson & Holt, 1997:22; Taylor & Cosenza, 2002:394; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004:253; Park *et al.*, 2008:245; Hung *et al.*, 2011:457).

It is this symbolic social status that encourages slews of consumers to purchase fashionable and expensive branded clothing in order to meet social needs and elevate their status (Radder & Huang, 2008:233), which is particularly important from a fashion marketing viewpoint. This hierarchy of needs has significant marketing value in terms of both market segmentation and positioning, and developing appropriate advertising

appeals. Typically, clothing is purchased to satisfy either social or esteem needs (Wang *et al.*, 2004:239; O’Cass & Choy, 2008:343; Meneses & Rodríguez, 2010:73).

#### **2.4.2.2 Perception**

Perception is described as the process by which people choose, coordinate and construe stimuli according to their five senses of sight, sound, smell, touch and taste; it is the means by which people interpret and give substance to the world around them (Joubert, 2010:56). As people cannot perceive every single stimulus in the environment, they make use of selective exposure to decide which stimuli to notice and which stimuli to ignore (Lamb *et al.*, 2010:86). From the minute a person wakes up, he/she is bombarded with many different stimuli, ranging from advertisements on television and radio, alarm clocks and the like. Marketers are forced, as an outcome of the number of stimuli surrounding consumers, to find new and innovative methods of attracting consumers’ attention (Williams & Page, 2011:46).

Given that consumers typically base their decisions on perceptions as opposed to objective criteria, perception has significant strategy implications for marketers. By implication, this suggests that marketers need to gain insight into the way in which their target markets select, organise and interpret stimuli (Pantano, 2011:119), as this is foundational to developing and delivering a successful unique value proposition (Knox, 2004:108).

Using a combination of the marketing mix elements to create a unique value proposition, marketers position their brands, in terms of benefits offered, in an attempt to mould consumers’ perceptions of their brands versus competing offers (Vigar-Ellis *et al.*, 2009:54,55). Therefore, positioning represents the culmination of the marketing strategy of segmentation, targeting and positioning, and signifies a crucial facet in ensuring that a target market recognises and comprehends an organisation’s distinctive market offering and image (Adcock, 2000:19).

In the case of fashion clothing, brand, price and store image are likely to be important in positioning clothing brands. Given that branded fashions such as Polo, Pringle and Billabong, are more often than not purchased for their symbolic status value, it is essential that the brand is readily identifiable, thereby allowing its wearer to signal his/her status to relevant others (O’Cass & Choy, 2008:348).

#### **2.4.2.3 Learning**

Although regarded as being a broader definition, learning is seen as a permanent process by which changes in behaviour, knowledge, feelings or attitudes occur as the result of prior experience (Statt, 1997:77). In terms of consumer behaviour, Schiffman *et al.* (2010:210) describe learning as the process by which individuals develop their buying, consumption and cognitive experiences that are enforceable on future-related behaviour. Thus, consumers tend to adopt or discover about product consumption from their predecessors such as their family, their peers and reference groups.

Learning theory stipulates that motivation, cues, response and reinforcement lie at the heart of learning (Kassarjian, 1971:410) and these basic elements of learning may be applied by marketers in building brand demand (Kotler, 2003:197).

Whilst there are several learning theories that marketers may use to create brand awareness and loyalty towards their market offering, the vicarious learning theory may offer particular relevance to marketers seeking to foster greater fashion consciousness amongst the male Generation Y cohort. Gioia and Manz (1985:528) explain this theory as the process by which an individual learns a specific mode of behaviour via his/her observation of others' behaviour, and the resulting consequences thereof, where typically the others would be admired role models. Blackwell *et al.* (2006:171) cite that it was this very use of male icons, in a process designed to encourage vicarious learning, which prompted the cultural evolution towards male fashion consciousness in the late 1980s to mid-1990s.

#### **2.4.2.4 Personality**

Hoyer and MacInnis (2001:431) describe personality as comprising distinguishable patterns of conduct, tendencies and traits that are used in differentiating one individual from the next. Similarly, Mostert and Lotz (2010:67) define personality as constituting a person's distinct psychological characteristics that are used to ascertain and contemplate how individuals react to their surroundings, considering that these mannerisms and dimensions are what distinguish one person from the next. These characteristics may be the result of genetic makeup, environmental influences or a combination thereof (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:136).

Personality represents an insightful variable for analysing the brand choices that consumers make, in that those choices often align with the consumer's own personality (Aaker, 1997:347,348). As such, prevailing marketing wisdom suggests that the majority of consumers' purchase decisions are influenced by their personality (Phau & Lau, 2000:430), especially the congruency between a consumer's personality and the perceived brand personality, which Azoulay and Kapferer (2003:144) define as a set of human-like traits exuded by a brand. This suggests that specific brands are often purchased, as consumers perceive those brands to be an extension or confirmation of their self-images, which implies that many consumers opt for brands that are aligned to their conceptualisation of self (Lin, 2010:5).

Mowen (1993:218) lists fantasy and personal vanity as important personality concepts that help explain consumer brand choices, especially in product categories such as apparel, cosmetics and cosmetic surgery, where the consumers opt for brands to enhance or alter their sense of self (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:167; Lamb *et al.*, 2013:103). One significant personality trait, and the topic of this study, is the need for uniqueness, which in consumer behaviour terms, Burns and Warren (1995:6) explain as consumers' choice of brands as a way of signalling their individualism. Imhoff and Erb (2009:316) and Latter *et al.* (2010:1) indicate that individuals with a high need for uniqueness purposely avoid conforming to the expectations or norms of others, both in terms of their appearance and their possessions.

Fashion apparel, as a primary medium of self-expression, offers individuals an important means of either conforming with the norms of relevant others, or as a means of distinguishing themselves from others and thereby signalling their singularity (Parker *et al.*, 2004:183).

#### **2.4.2.5 Attitudes**

Schiffman *et al.* (2010:246,247) define attitudes as “a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way with respect to a given object”, but indicate that this consistency element does not imply that attitudes are necessarily irreversible as they can, and do, change. From a marketing viewpoint, consumers' attitudes represent an important psychological factor in understanding their decision-making process, given that attitudes reflect their overall affective evaluations and

behavioural tendencies towards a myriad of situations and objects, including products, brands and marketing efforts (Batra & Ahtola, 1991:160; Kotler & Gertner, 2002:251).

In terms of fashion consciousness, individuals may be distinguished on the basis of their attitude towards fashion, whereby those who have a favourable attitude towards fashion are more fashion conscious and vice versa (Parker *et al.*, 2004:176). The Schiffman *et al.* (2010:246) definition of attitudes being a “learned disposition” implies that fashion awareness would precede fashion consciousness, which suggests that marketers need to use mass media to expose individuals to fashion. Indeed, mass media socialisation of males and exposure of male fashions are recognised as important drivers in creating male fashion awareness and consciousness, and changing the historical attitude of fashion consciousness and apparel consumption being a predominantly female issue (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012:1408).

The following section outlines the socio-cultural factors that influence consumer decision making.

### **2.4.3 Socio-cultural factors**

The socio-cultural factors that may influence the consumer decision-making process include the family, reference groups, non-commercial influences, social class, culture and subculture.

#### **2.4.3.1 Reference groups**

Grewal and Levy (2008:138) refer to a reference group as groups that individuals use as a basis of comparison in relation to their own beliefs, feelings and behaviour. Escalas and Bettman (2003:341) indicate that reference groups include membership groups that have a direct face-to-face influence, whether it is via a primary group’s informal influence, or the more formal influence of a secondary group, and aspirational groups to which an individual does not belong but would like to belong. According to Mowen (1993:544), aspirational groups are particularly important in influencing consumer behaviour in that they have symbolic value. McDaniel *et al.* (2013:209) describe reference groups as groups that function as figures of reference for individuals in their consumption decisions, as they are considered credible informants.

Generally, consumers will seek out those closest to them for their consumption-related choices, such as family and close friends, as they will furnish them unbiased information regarding a product, its operation, fiscal information, as well as guiding them in making socially acceptable product purchases (Joubert, 2010:24).

Reference groups also include celebrities, such as sport icons, movie stars and music stars, who serve as aspirational reference groups, and marketers often engage such people as product endorsers to influence consumer behaviour (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:522). Celebrities are categorised as being well known and easily identifiable (Belch & Belch, 2012:187). Many organisations such as sports apparel manufacturers, Nike and Adidas, for example, have elected to collaborate with celebrities in endorsement contracts aimed at promoting their products. Bakewell *et al.* (2006:172) point out how the use of football stars such as David Beckham and Johnny Wilkinson, as fashion brand endorsers, has aided in shaping men's attitude towards fashion clothing in the United Kingdom market. In South Africa, the clothes retail group Legit is renowned for collaborating with some of the most recognisable faces on local television to endorse their line of products, targeted at the youth market.

#### **2.4.3.2 Family**

Family not only plays an important role in the consumer socialisation of individuals but also represents an important segmentation base in terms of the family lifecycle (Hafstrom *et al.*, 1992:147). Hawley and Dehaan (1996:283) define a family as an atomic group that consists of individuals who live in close proximity with one another and are representative of a decision-making unit that undertakes to meet members' needs from one shared informant. Family is thought to have a strong influence on an individual's values, attitudes and buying behaviour (Gil *et al.*, 2007:188). Family is regarded as probably the most important reference group in consumer decision-making. In most instances, purchase decisions made within this institution are only those that the entire family is willing to consume (Childers & Rao, 1992:199; Pimpa, 2005:433;434).

As consumers mature, they will begin to duplicate the products or brands as they were consumed within the family structure. Typically, brand recognition occurs from an early age, which can be ascribed to the family's role in the consumer socialisation of

children (Ross & Harradine, 2004:13). As they begin to form friendship groups, they become more cognisant of brand fashion apparel and its function in increasing self-esteem and peer acceptance (Harradine & Ross, 2007:189).

In terms of the family lifecycle stages, Generation Y students would generally be classified as being in the bachelorhood stage, where there is significant spending on clothing and accessories (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:332), which is geared to the so-called mating and dating. This implies the placement of greater importance on the purchase of fashionable clothing brands in order to attract and impress the opposite sex.

### **2.4.3.3 Social class**

Social class pertains to people's social standing based on their income, occupation, educational background or material possessions (Kraus *et al.*, 2011:246). Consequently, Warner (1949) defines a social class as a group of people who are considered nearly equal in status or community esteem, who regularly socialise amongst themselves, both formally and informally, and share certain behavioural norms. According to Parumasur and Roberts-Lombard (2012:103), individuals with greater purchasing power are perceived to have greater status, and this heightened status is often signalled through consumption of conspicuous goods, including fashion brands. Often, brands associated with higher social classes are sought after by individuals in lower social classes in an attempt to create the impression of having more status – the aspirational appeal of higher social classes is a marketing appeal frequently exploited by marketers.

In South Africa, class is largely characterised by financial gain. Therefore, an individual's financial worth is seen as contributing to their social standing (Strydom, 2011:64). South Africa has a triangular-shaped social class structure, which places a limited number of people in the upper class, a little more in the middle class where the so-called Black Diamonds are found, and the vast majority fall within the lower class income group (Joubert, 2010:27). Since many consumers make purchase decisions based on their social standing, it is evident that a number of luxury clothing brands like Polo, Gucci, Guess, and Levis are aimed at the middle to upper class consumers, as opposed to the lower social classes. With that said, often consumers from one social class will purchase products such as luxury fashion apparel and automobiles that are

beyond their financial means and way above their social class in the hope of mounting the social ladder.

As a result, marketers utilise this desire to be perceived as belonging to a higher social class to their advantage. Consumers generally associate expensive brand names as an indication of superior quality (Walsh *et al.*, 2012:328). As marketers are aware of consumers' pursuit of branded high-priced goods, they often promote such products in this manner. However, whilst encouraging use of overpriced merchandise, they simultaneously provide cheaper, regular priced product offerings that are made available to accommodate other lower social groups.

#### **2.4.3.4 Non-commercial influences**

In marketing speak, commercial sources of information are categorised as anything marketing-controlled. Research suggests that when conducting an information search, typically consumers are reliant on two sources, namely internal and external sources (Baines *et al.*, 2011:84; Elliot *et al.*, 2012:137). These sources may be further categorised as marketing- or non-marketing-controlled sources. Non-marketing-controlled information sources include, for example, a consumer's personal experiences and personal sources in the form of word-of-mouth communication from friends and acquaintances (Lim & Chung, 2011:18). In addition, they may include information sources such as editorials in the print media, consumer reports, electronic word-of-mouth that makes use of online media – all of which are non-commercial sources of information (Steffes & Burgee, 2009:42; Ismail & Spinel, 2012:390).

Several authors indicate that word-of-mouth communication is a particularly persuasive non-commercial source of information (Beales *et al.*, 1981:12; Richins, 1983:69; Bone, 1992:213; McDonald & Alpert, 2007:422; Royo-Vela & Casamassima, 2011:522; Fang *et al.*, 2011:192; Warring, 2013:331). Marketers realise that satisfied customers are eager to converse and share their product or brand experiences with others, whereas disgruntled customers will ensure that they communicate their dissatisfaction with masses of potential customers (Lang, 2011:583).

Fang *et al.* (2011:191) indicate that word-of-mouth communication is likely to serve as the preferred information source when consumers are considering the purchase of an expensive item, or high risk product. Consequently, people are most likely to purchase

certain products or branded clothing such as Guess jeans and a Jeep shirt on the referral of a parent, friend, or their own past experiences, as they are under the impression that depicting the behaviour of others will result in social approval and acceptance from those surrounding them (Magnini, 2011:245).

#### **2.4.3.5 Culture**

Fan (2000:3) identifies culture as encompassing the “values, behaviours, customs and attitudes” that ascertain the personality of the society wherein a person resides. Dibb *et al.* (2012:168) indicate culture as consisting of everything in a person’s surroundings that emanate from humans. These include tangible items such “housing, clothing, food and artwork” and intangibles such as “laws, beliefs, customs, education and institutions” (Elliot *et al.*, 2012:116). Culture can influence a person’s buying behaviour. Generally, what people wear, eat, how they socialise, and what they deem as acceptable norms, are dependent on the cultural group or religious background to which they belong (Teimourpour & Hanzaee, 2011:311).

Categorically, the South African society is fragmented into many dissimilar cultural groups and subgroups (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:91), where people are characterised into four ethnic groups (for example, white, black, coloured or Indian). In addition to their racial groups, South Africans are further divided into different language groups (Zulu, Sotho, Venda, Xhosa, Afrikaans and so forth), as well as different religious groups such as Zionists, Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists and Hinduism, for example. Given these diverse cultures in the country, there is a need for South African marketers to familiarise and educate themselves about the various customs. This will enable them to be more sensitive to cultural differences (Lamb *et al.*, 2010:99), which places them in a better position to tailor their marketing efforts, including their marketing messages to address diverse cultures (Mostert & Lotz, 2010:71). Given the fragmented nature of South Africa’s culture, there is a need to understand the concept of subculture.

#### **2.4.3.6 Subculture**

Solomon (2004:472,473) refers to individuals living within a larger society as being a subculture. Subcultures are described as possessing unique beliefs, values and customs that set them apart from other members of society. Once a distinguishable subculture

has been identified, these individuals can be divided into various groups based on their demographic profile, geographic location, political affiliation, religious beliefs and ethnic background (De Burgh-Woodman & Brace-Govan, 2007:197). As indicated in Section 2.4.3.5, South Africa includes several subcultures in terms of ethnic origin, language and religion.

Much like the variables mentioned, age is considered an important defining factor for identifying a subculture (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2007:52), as it allows marketers insight into the consumer characteristics that are responsible for determining their purchasing behaviour (Solomon, 2007). By belonging to or being part of a specific age cohort, consumers share distinctive beliefs and values relative to that group that may affect their buying and consumption patterns as a sub-cultural group (Assael, 1995). Furthermore, the literature suggests that even though dissimilar age cohorts demonstrate different attitudes towards brand consumption (as depicted in Table 2.1), it is these varying attitudes that ultimately mould and incite their buying of products as a generational cohort (Dias, 2003:78; Seock & Sauls, 2008:473).

Generational theory, as identified by Meriac *et al.* (2010:316), suggests that more often than not, generational cohorts commonly share life experiences that enable them to acquire similar attitudes and beliefs. These beliefs then result in them forming distinguishable characteristics (Kupperschmidt, 2000:66) that are evident not only in their differences in age, but also in their values, tastes, attitudes and purchasing behaviour (Schewe & Meredith, 2004:51; Lamm & Meeks, 2009:615). In addition, as they form part of a specific age cohort and are shaped by events that took place when they were growing up (Schewe *et al.*, 2000:48), Eastman and Liu (2012:94) indicate that many display similar personality traits, characteristics and social experiences indicative of their generational group (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007:151; Beldona *et al.*, 2009:407).

Presently, South Africa houses a very youthful population, where the majority of the population (29.2%) are aged 15 and below (Statistics South Africa, 2013a). What is apparent is how the various consumer age groups' needs and preferences differ significantly. Table 2.1 highlights some of the differences between the various age cohorts indicated as Generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers. From the table it

is apparent that members of Generation Y in particular are perceptive, pragmatic consumers who easily embrace brands.

**Table 2.1: Comparison of selected age cohorts**

| Themes                                  | Generation Y                                                     | Generation X                                                             | Baby Boomers                                             |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Purchasing behaviours</b>            | Savvy, pragmatic                                                 | Materialistic                                                            | Narcissistic                                             |
| <b>Adoption of technology</b>           | Computer in every home                                           | Microwave in every home                                                  | TV in every home                                         |
| <b>Price-quality attitude</b>           | <u>Value orientated:</u><br>Weighing price-quality relationships | <u>Price orientated:</u><br>Concerned about the cost of individual items | <u>Conspicuous consumption:</u><br>Buying for indulgence |
| <b>Attitudes towards brands</b>         | Brand embracing                                                  | Against branding                                                         | Brand loyal                                              |
| <b>Behaviour towards advertisements</b> | Rebel against hype                                               | Rebel against hype                                                       | Respond to image-building type                           |

Source: Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:442)

Generation Y consumers form an undeniable market segment for marketers whose influence, because of their size, should not be ignored.

## 2.5 GENERATION Y DEFINED

Generation Y are defined as individuals born between 1986 and 2005 (Markert, 2004:21), they are the children of Baby Boomers (Hughes, 2008:6) and are classified as the “MTV Generation” “Echo Boomers or “Millennium Generation” (Rahman & Azhar, 2011:95). They have been known to refer to themselves as “Wannabees”, the “Feel-Good-Generation”, and the “Searching-for-an-Identity Generation” (Martin, 2005:40).

### 2.5.1 Characteristics of Generation Y

Many authors predict that Generation Y will play a significant part in an organisation's marketing and advertising strategies because of their potential income and social influence (Keating, 2000; Paul, 2001:44; Cui *et al.*, 2003:311). Unlike past generations, they have more money at their disposition than any other youth group in history (Morton, 2002; Hill & Lee, 2012:478; Colucci & Scarpi, 2013:1). Furthermore, they have been described as having a higher tendency to spend (Liu, 2002:117; Arora, 2005; McEwen, 2005) but are also inarguably concentrated on fashion and particular brands (Liu, 2002:118; Kwan *et al.*, 2003:97; McEwen *et al.*, 2006; O'Cass & Choy, 2008:341).

As consumers, they are more affected by their purchases than previous generations, as they are aware of the consequences of buying socially unacceptable brands (Darley, 1999:410; Morton, 2002; Fernandez, 2009:81). Consequently, many use material possessions, like branded clothing, as a way of expressing their individuality and emphasising their importance to others (Belk, 1985:269; Lazarevic & Petrovic-Lazarevic, 2007:2). Similarly, Generation Y has been identified as exhibiting a unique attitude towards brands (Lazarevic, 2012:47). They have been raised in a time where just about everything is branded, which is why they are more comfortable with brands (Merrill, 1999). Their marketing know-how and brand awareness ensues from maturing in a marketing and brand-concentrated surrounding (Novak *et al.*, 2006:316; Heaney, 2007:199).

In order for Generation Y to consume brands as a means of expressing themselves, there is a need for those around them to be mindful of the latest brands (Megehee *et al.*, 2003). In addition, members of this cohort are image driven – they only buy products that they envision have an image that is socially acceptable to their equals (Noble *et al.*, 2009:618; Williams & Page, 2011:8). They wear apparel not only to exhibit their image, but also as a means of divulging their social position to others (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004:216; Lee *et al.*, 2008:290).

When Generation Y consumers encounter brands that correspond to their values and bear an image that matches their self-image, they might be propelled to build a kinship with that brand (Lazarevic, 2012:49). However, unlike their predecessors, Generation

Y consumers alter their allegiances often, and rarely stay loyal to one brand for long (Stern, 2008). Therefore, it is important to recognise that members of this generation are capable of being disloyal towards brands, and extended repetitive purchases cannot be ensured (Wood, 2004:10; Lazarevic, 2012:45). What marketers need to observe is that they appreciate amusement, fervour and enjoyment in advertising, more so than previous age cohorts do, strategies that should be employed when appealing to this segment (Lamm & Meeks, 2009:617). Table 2.2 highlights some of the key characteristics of the Generation Y cohort.

**Table 2.2: Key characteristics of Generation Y**

| <b>Features</b>         | <b>Meaning</b>                                                                                |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Technology users        | Constant communication with friends via email, mobile texting, Internet and social networking |
| Online communication    | Devote much time to the enjoyment and interaction with friends through social networks        |
| Egocentric              | Have great expectations towards others and themselves                                         |
| Consumers of pleasure   | Hopeful about the future, interested in brands, luxury, status and money                      |
| Fashion influencers     | Major influencers of all generations, technology and fashion                                  |
| Concerns with the media | Demand transparency and direct communication                                                  |

**Table 2.2: Key characteristics of Generation Y (continued...)**

| Features                          | Meaning                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Social consciousness              | Prefer socially correct brands                                              |
| Averse to mass communication      | Abominate traditional advertising                                           |
| Opinion influencers               | Express their opinions through blogs                                        |
| Incur debt                        | Not afraid of debt                                                          |
| Work and personal life            | Professional and personal life balancing                                    |
| Obedients                         | Reject their parents' lives, but accept their values                        |
| Tolerants                         | Accept gay marriages, and interracial relationships                         |
| Apathetic and sometimes frivolous | Little interest in politics, war and history, show more interest in reality |

Source: Coelho and Las Casas (2013:45)

When examining the student Generation Y portion, the finding is that this is where the fashion trendsetters and followers commonly are found. They are avid television watchers who mostly spend their time in shopping malls and on social media. Where social media in this instance refers to any online platform that enables users to create and share an assortment of content, like on Facebook, for example (Bolton *et al.*, 2013:248). Ellison *et al.* (2007:1153) found that university students spend an average of between 10 to 30 minutes per day on Facebook, in comparison to 55 minutes per day reported in 2011 (Facebook, 2011). Moreover, the estimated log in time is approximately five to 10 minutes with each session (Special & Li-Barber, 2012:627).

Having grown up in a technologically and digitally advanced era, Generation Y members are amongst the highest percentage of social media users (Cabral, 2011:6; Nusair *et al.*, 2013:13). In examining the South African market, of the 5 139 240 Facebook users, 49 percent are males ranging between the ages of 18-24 (Socialbakers.com, 2012), many of whom are reliant on social media for several reasons, namely information and leisure (Park *et al.*, 2009:732), for entertainment purposes and interacting with others (Bolton *et al.*, 2013:247). For marketers dealing

with this segment, what is of particular importance is that they abominate traditional advertising, as indicated in Table 2.2. Interestingly, Generation Y members are more inclined towards brands that have a Facebook page, when compared to other generational cohorts (Barton *et al.*, 2012).

From an early age, parents give them considerable amounts of money to spend however they wish, which results in them spending money on clothing to look like their peers (Bahng *et al.*, 2013:368). In addition, Moore and Carpenter (2008:325) found that they savour shopping and appreciate the entire shopping experience, more so than previous generations.

Dickey and Sullivan (2007:10) characterise Generation Y individuals as experiencing a greater need for peer acceptance, associating with their peers, and fitting in. This need for fitting in and following the crowd has resulted in Generation Y capturing the attention of marketers; Generation Y draws the attention of marketers for a number of reasons. The combined effects of media trends and altering gender-roles/households have defined new cultural norms where fashion is presently something that Generation Y men are cognisant of, and actively involved with (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:170).

South Africa's Generation Y members amount to approximately 38 percent of the country's 52 981 991 population, of which approximately 83 percent are black African. In 2013, black Generation Y males constituted 50.24 percent of the black Generation Y cohort and 41.90 percent of the country's entire Generation Y cohort (Statistics South Africa, 2013a).

Unlike previous generational groups, black Generation Y members in South Africa have more opportunities at their disposal in terms of education, equity and transformational employment policies and wealth creation, as they are the first generation to be raised in a democratic South Africa. Of particular interest to marketers is the portion of this cohort who are tertiary students because tertiary education is generally associated with a higher future earning potential and a higher social standing in a society, which often equates to having a trend-setting capacity (Bevan-Dye, 2013:157).

As a result of this higher earning potential and higher social standing, black Generation Y students with a tertiary qualification are expected to be future Black Diamonds, which

is a label identifying South Africa's burgeoning African middle class (Jones, 2007). South Africa's Black Diamonds fall in the "Living Standards Measures 5-7" and comprised 9.3 million people in 2007, as compared to the 6.3 million reported in 2001 (Bureau of Market Research, 2008).

Black Diamonds are defined as the recently enfranchised black group of individuals who form part of South Africa's middle class (Joubert, 2010:29), which makes them the fastest-growing, affluent and influential black community, comprised of well-educated and salaried individuals (Lamb *et al.*, 2010:50). Many are characterised as being education-orientated and highly ambitious individuals (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2009:177) that marketers should monitor closely. According to Simpson and Dore (2007:4), there has been a significant growth in the size of the Black Diamond group, and this has taken place in less than 15 years. A study conducted by UCT (2008) revealed Black Diamonds as being responsible for nearly 40 percent of consumer spending, which is representative of approximately 67 percent of the aggregate black expenditure. Moreover, their economic force continues to grow at a rapid pace that is going to become more apparent in the years to come.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the concept of consumer behaviour and the consumer decision-making model in detail. This is a topic that has been researched by numerous authors, who concluded that consumer behaviour is described as the behaviour that consumers exhibit when searching, purchasing, using, evaluating, and ultimately, disposing of the products that they expect will satisfy their needs.

The chapter provided a discussion of how the field of consumer behaviour research grew out of the realisation that organisations are far more likely to create a sustainable competitive advantage if they operate in a customer centric manner by applying the principles of the marketing concept; that is, conduct their business in a market-oriented manner.

The chapter also highlighted that consumer behaviour was shaped by the influence of a number of different disciplines, including sociology, social psychology, psychology, anthropology, demography and economics.

The model selected to explain the consumer decision-making process depicted the external factors of organisational marketing efforts and the socio-cultural environment, together with the internal psychological field influencing the process of need recognition, pre-purchase search and the evaluation of alternatives. According to the model, the combination of the input and process leads to consumption experience and the decision to purchase, either on a trial basis or, in the case of a satisfactory post-purchase evaluation, repeat purchase.

The chapter concluded with an explanation of Generation Y consumers who form an integral part of this study. Generation Y are characterised as being brand conscious, having a preference for socially-acceptable brands, and use branded apparel as a way of expressing their individuality and emphasising their social standing to others.

Against this background of the theoretical framework of the discipline of consumer behaviour, the following chapter, Chapter 3, concentrates on the literature pertaining to the concepts of fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour, as well as the literature on the need for uniqueness personality trait in order to develop a model of male fashion consciousness behaviour. This is set against the background of a description of global and South African fashion industry.

## CHAPTER 3

### MALE FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE NEED FOR UNIQUENESS

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*“There has been a change in men’s attitudes toward their clothes. Men are more aware of fashion; they’re not afraid of it.”*

*Calvin Klein*

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, there has been a significant change in men’s fashion consumption patterns (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:169). Reekie (1992:192) suggests that it is probable for a male consumer to engage with fashion whilst still maintaining a sense of masculinity. Men are starting to take grooming seriously and there are indications that the market for men’s luxury fashion goods is now nearly as big as that of their female counterparts (Chen, 2013; Lee & Master, 2013). Consequently, single males generate over 20 percent of consumer total spending on fashion apparel, which represents a potentially lucrative market for fashion retailers and marketers (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:169).

Although fashion apparel shopping is traditionally viewed as a woman’s pursuit, shopping by men continues to increase (Dholakia *et al.*, 1995:27; Moore *et al.*, 2001:400; Otnes & McGarth, 2001:112; Wellington, 2010), with men making up an estimated 41 percent of purchases in 2012 as compared to the initial 35 percent reported in 1995 (D’Arpizo, 2012:2; PwC, 2012a:3). Contemporary males are engaging in fashion apparel shopping more frequently than ever before (Carpenter & Brosdahl, 2011:886). Unlike past generations, today’s male consumers have become increasingly fashion aware and fashion conscious, taking care of their looks and developing their own fashion style (Beaudoin *et al.*, 2003:24).

The main aim of this chapter is to address the last three theoretical objectives outlined in Section 1.3.2 of Chapter 1. As such, the chapter provides an overview of the global

and South African fashion industry. In addition, the concepts of fashion conscious behaviour, fashion awareness and fashion consciousness are defined, with special reference to male fashion consumers.

The chapter includes a discussion on several factors that have contributed to the evolution in male fashion consciousness. Furthermore, the personality trait of the need for uniqueness is discussed as a potential predictor of male fashion consciousness.

The chapter concludes with a proposed model of the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour, which is empirically tested in Chapter 5.

### **3.2 OVERVIEW OF FASHION AND THE FASHION INDUSTRY**

Gutman and Mills (1982:65) and Ko *et al.* (2007:632) define fashion as relating to consumer attitudes, pursuits and notions that are associated with the purchase and consumption of fashion products. The Fashion Web (2013) defines fashion as a popular trend focused on consumers' style of dress, behaviour, and/or any cultural production. Similarly, the concept of fashion is used to reflect the styles of the past versus those visible in present society, and aids in illustrating the differences thereof (Azuma & Fernie, 2003:414).

Rogerson (2006:4) describes fashion as being a vital constituent in the global apparel industry, one that is capable of yielding some form of influence. Many organisations and marketers use fashion as a tool to assist them in dictating trends, planning obsolescence and creating consumer identities through their advertising initiatives (Tokatli, 2004:229).

Although fashion aims to produce uniformity amongst individuals, it can invariably accentuate differences in social status. Therefore, fashion marketers have formulated descriptors to aid them in identifying their targeted consumer groups and highlighting consumer preferences (Priest, 2005:253). The literature asserts that contemporary fashion aims at creating uniformity among consumers while simultaneously elevating

their self-image and creating a sense of individualism on a global scale (Fernie & Azuma, 2004:791).

### **3.2.1 Global fashion industry**

In 2012, it was estimated that in global terms the apparel market was worth US\$1.7 trillion and employed in the region of 75 million people (Fashion United, 2013). France is recognised as one of the largest and most important fashion capitals in the world. Paris fashion week dates as far back as the early 1970s, and remains one of the largest fashion events held globally. In terms of fashion events, other global fashion hubs include Italy, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA) and Japan (Grail Research, 2009:6-22).

The UK designer fashion industry employs more than 25 000 people and is worth in the range of *f*2.5 to *f*2.9 billion, with exports estimated at *f*7 million (Vaizey, 2013). The UK menswear market is predicted to outperform all other UK clothing markets between 2013 and 2018 as UK males' interest in fashion clothing styles continues to increase (King, 2013). The top UK fashion brands include French Connection, Boohoo, Mulberry, YMC, Addict, Lambretta, Reiss, Jaeger, and The Affair (Magz, 2013).

In the USA, the retail sales value of fashion was US\$284 billion in 2012, with the apparel and footwear industry employing about 4 million people (Fashion United, 2013). It is estimated that, on average, Americans spend US\$250 billion on fashion apparel per year (Attire Club, 2013). As is the case in the UK, the USA is also witnessing an increase in male fashion-conscious behaviour (Euromonitor International, 2013b). Well-known USA fashion clothing brands include Ralph Lauren, Gap, Calvin Klein, Nike, Tommy Hilfiger and Levi Strauss.

While Italy is viewed as an important fashion apparel hub in terms of the number of fashion events it hosts and the influence it exerts on fashion trends, the economic recession has had a significant negative impact on the Italian fashion industry (Grail Research, 2009:8). Euromonitor International (2013c) reports that spending on apparel declined by 13 percent between 2009 and 2013.

Even though Japan is trying to encourage the uptake of its domestic brands and fashion houses, it is one of the largest markets for foreign luxury branded fashion goods in the

world (Grail Research, 2009:9). Despite this, Japan experienced a growth in the value of its apparel sales in 2012, with the trend being to purchase better quality more premium apparel brands (Euromonitor International, 2013d). The growth and demand for Japan’s fashion industry is rendered mainly by their “youth culture” or “street culture” (Grail Research, 2009:9).

Over and above these developed fashion markets, Grail Research (2009:11) identifies South Africa, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Singapore, India, Russia and Brazil as salient new emerging global fashion markets. The growth drivers in these markets include increasing government support, an increased awareness of international brands and a higher demand for fashion.

Table 3.1 highlights current trends in these emerging global fashion markets.

**Table 3.1: Current trends in emerging markets**

| Country      | Trends                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| South Africa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High profile brands such as Armani, Prada and Versace have short-listed South Africa for expansion beyond the traditional fashion capitals</li> <li>• Young South African fashion designers have been invited to the Paris Fashion Week to showcase their creations</li> </ul>                    |
| UAE          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The regional markets of Saudi Arabia and Turkey were ranked among the top 10 attractive emerging markets for apparel retailers in 2009</li> <li>• UAE consumers are increasingly purchasing brands such as Christian Dior, Giorgio Armani, Yves Saint Lauren, Armani, Chanel, and Dior</li> </ul> |

**Table 3.1: Current trends in emerging markets (continued...)**

| Country   | Trends                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Singapore | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singapore has long been the home of many international fashion brands such as Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Dolce &amp; Gabbana, and Gianni Versace</li> <li>• Prada considers Singapore as the next regional hub for the retail and luxury market</li> </ul>                                                                           |
| Russia    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Italian luxury fashion brands are eyeing emerging economies such as Russia</li> <li>• Several international brands are also expanding their presence beyond Moscow and St Petersburg to smaller Russian cities for growth opportunities</li> </ul>                                                                               |
| India     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India is considered an attractive market for luxury brands</li> <li>• About 50 premium and luxury brands, including Jimmy Choo, Gucci, Christian Dior and Chanel, have opened stores in India in recent years</li> <li>• Consumer spending on fashion brands has grown at 7.1 percent annually from 2002 through 2007</li> </ul> |
| Brazil    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Brazilian luxury market is expected to grow by 35 percent over the next five years – the highest rate for any country in the market</li> <li>• In 2008, for the second year in a row, Brazil ranked as the most attractive emerging market for apparel retailers.</li> </ul>                                                 |

Source: Grail Research (2009:19)

The following section explores the South African fashion industry.

### 3.3 SOUTH AFRICAN FASHION INDUSTRY

Since 1994, South Africa has spent an estimated US\$1 billion on modernising the country's textile, clothing and footwear industry in a bid to help this sector to compete more efficiently in the global arena (SouthAfrica.info, 2009). The literature reveals that

the combined effects of globalisation and trade liberation have influenced the South African fashion apparel industry strongly (Kaplan, 2004:638; Rogerson, 2006:10). Whereas the South African fashion apparel industry once was protected from international competition, the 1994 democratic elections saw the country joining the World Trade Organisation and a period of substantial trade liberalisation, which resulted in the local apparel industry competing against a surge of foreign imports, particularly from China (Vlok, 2006:227-228). Although the struggle to compete against low-cost Chinese apparel imports remains an issue in both South Africa (Phakathi, 2013) and Africa as a whole (Corcoran, 2013), the country experienced a strong growth in apparel sales volumes in 2012 (Euromonitor International, 2013a).

In 2012, retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear, and leather goods contributed an estimated 18 percent to the country's total retail trade sales, second only to general dealers (Statistics South Africa, 2013b). South Africa's fashion industry is the fifth largest sector in the country and generates an income of several billion Rand annually (Fashion Web, 2013). Furthermore, according to a study conducted by Grail Research (2009:13), Johannesburg, the capital city of Gauteng in South Africa, has emerged as the "Fashion District" and top global fashion capital in Africa.

In order to gain an understanding of South African consumers' spending on apparel, Table 3.2 outlines the Statistics South Africa's (2012) most recent five-yearly report on the country's income and expenditure survey (IES) conducted in 2010/2011.

**Table 3.2: South African annual household consumption expenditure 2010/2011**

| <b>Main expenditure groups</b>   | <b>Rands<br/>(millions)</b> | <b>Percentage<br/>(%)</b> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Food and non-alcoholic beverages | 159 973                     | 12.8                      |
| Alcoholic beverages and tobacco  | 13 697                      | 1.1                       |
| Clothing and footwear            | 56 170                      | 4.5                       |

**Table 3.2: South African annual household consumption expenditure 2010/2011 (continued...)**

| <b>Main expenditure groups</b>                                           | <b>Rands<br/>(millions)</b> | <b>Percentage<br/>(%)</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Household water, electricity, gas and other fuels                        | 399 991                     | 32.0                      |
| Furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the dwelling | 63 944                      | 5.1                       |
| Health                                                                   | 17 794                      | 1.4                       |
| Transport                                                                | 213 977                     | 17.1                      |
| Communication                                                            | 35 431                      | 2.8                       |
| Recreation and culture                                                   | 38 020                      | 3.0                       |
| Education                                                                | 33 355                      | 2.7                       |
| Restaurants and hotels                                                   | 30 332                      | 2.4                       |
| Miscellaneous goods and services                                         | 183 614                     | 14.7                      |
| Unclassified items                                                       | 1 760                       | 0.1                       |
| <b>Total</b>                                                             | <b>1 248 058</b>            | <b>100.0</b>              |

Source: Statistics South Africa (2012)

As is evident from Table 3.2, South African consumers spend more on apparel than they do on recreation and culture, communication, education, restaurants and hotels, and health.

In South Africa, the retail apparel industry is dominated by a limited number of strong national retailers such as the Edcon Group that includes the Jet and Edgars chain, Truworths, Mr Price, Pepkor, Woolworths (Euromonitor International, 2013a) and the Foschini Group (PwC, 2012b:15). In 2012, the South African retail industry contributed an estimated US\$8.9 billion to the economy, which equates to an estimated 6.4 percent compound annual growth rate between 2008 and 2012 (MarketLine, 2013). Much of

the forecasted growth in South Africa's apparel retail sales is expected to come from upper-income Generation Y males who are embracing purchasing high-end premium clothing brands as a signal of their financial and social upward mobility (Euromonitor International, 2013a).

In the following section, a review of the literature on fashion conscious behaviour is provided.

### **3.4 FASHION CONSCIOUS BEHAVIOUR**

In the context of this study, male fashion conscious behaviour is contextualised as the extent to which men engage in the activity of fashion shopping, purchase the latest styles, shop at trendy fashion outlets, keep up with fashion news via mass media such as fashion magazines, and take care in how they assemble fashion items. According to Bakewell *et al.* (2006:173), fashion conscious behaviour manifests as the motivation to consume fashion.

This concept of fashion conscious behaviour relates to enduring product involvement, which, according to Richins and Bloch (1986:280,281), refers to an individual's long-term attachment to a particular product class, such as fashion apparel, and typically manifests as extensive information search and brand knowledge that is independent of the specific purchase situation. Bertrandias and Goldsmith (2006:27) assert that individuals with an enduring product involvement exhibit an interest in that product class regardless of whether they anticipate making a purchase. This suggests that the activities of reading fashion magazines and shopping at trendy stores relate to enduring fashion involvement.

In terms of actual purchase behaviour, there has been a marked increase in the purchase of fashion menswear, which is forecasted to exceed US\$ billion in 2014 (Attire Club, 2013). In South Africa, young upper-income males who perceive premium fashion apparel brands as indicators of their financial and social success are expected to drive the demand for fashion menswear (Euromonitor International, 2013a). Many of these are likely to be black Generation Y male students who, owing to the higher potential earning power and higher social standing, typically afforded by a tertiary qualification,

are either current Black Diamonds or likely future Black Diamonds (Bevan-Dye, 2013:157).

Male fashion conscious behaviour presupposes a level of fashion awareness and fashion consciousness. These concepts are discussed in the following section.

### **3.5 FASHION AWARENESS AND FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS**

While fashion awareness and fashion consciousness typically are used interchangeably in the literature, there is a subtle difference between the two concepts. The COED (2004:91) defines awareness as “having knowledge or perception of a situation or fact.” According to LaBerg (1998), “the experience of attending to an object becomes an experience of being aware of that object.” In the context of this study, male fashion awareness is contextualised as the extent to which men perceive some fashion apparel as being more fashionable than that of others and, indeed, some men as being more fashionable than others are. For the purpose of this study, fashion awareness is defined as the level of attention an individual pays to fashion. Furthermore, the study makes the reasonable assumption that male fashion awareness is a necessary condition for male fashion consciousness.

Fashion consciousness, in contrast, relates to consumer ego involvement, which Michaelidou and Dibb (2008:85) describe as including the elements of centrality, commitment and importance. Manrai *et al.* (2001:275) define fashion consciousness as an individual’s involvement and attention to the latest fashion trends. Gutman and Mills (1982:70,71) describe fashion consciousness as having an interest in fashion, believing the importance of being fashionable, having the desire to be well-dressed, and being a fashion leader. Sproles and Kendell (1986:273) indicate that being in style and keeping up to date with the latest fashion trends are important characteristics of the fashion-conscious consumer. In the context of this study, male fashion consciousness is conceptualised as being alert to changes in fashion, perceiving oneself as being fashionable and being perceived by others as being fashionable.

Table 3.3 provides a summary of a sample of studies that have focused on fashion consciousness.

**Table 3.3: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving fashion consciousness**

| Study                                                                                                          | Constructs                                                                                | Sample                                                                                        | Main findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| An empirical investigation of fashion consciousness of young fashion consumers in Sri Lanka (Rathnayake, 2011) | Cognitive aspects of fashion, conative aspects of fashion, behavioural aspects of fashion | A convenience sample of 215 single Sri Lankan male and females under 25 years of age          | Findings indicate that males are significantly more fashion conscious than females on the cognitive, conative and behavioural dimensions                                                                                               |
| UK Generation Y male fashion consciousness (Bakewell <i>et al.</i> , 2006)                                     | Cognitive aspects of fashion, conative aspects of fashion, behavioural aspects of fashion | A mall-intercept sample of 346 males under 25 years of age in a northern city in the UK       | Findings indicate that Generation Y males are aware of fashion and have a degree of involvement in fashion but that they do not actively engage in fashion conscious behaviour                                                         |
| Fashion consciousness of Chinese, Japanese and American teenagers (Parker <i>et al.</i> , 2004)                | Fashion consciousness                                                                     | A convenience sample of 620 public and middle school students across China, Japan and the USA | Findings indicate that Japanese and American females are significantly more fashion conscious than their male counterparts, whilst there is no significant difference between Chinese female and males' level of fashion consciousness |

**Table 3.3: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving fashion consciousness (continued...)**

| <b>Study</b>                                                          | <b>Constructs</b>                                                                                 | <b>Sample</b>                                                  | <b>Main findings</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Male fashion consciousness and magazine consumption (Rukandema, 2000) | Male fashion consciousness, magazine consumption                                                  | Convenience sample of 119 of males aged 18 and older in the UK | Findings indicate that the student portion of the sample was more fashion conscious than the other participants in the sample and that there was a significant positive relationship between male fashion consciousness and magazine consumption                                                                                         |
| Gender schema and fashion consciousness (Gould & Stern, 1989)         | Gender consciousness, sex role, sexual identity, public self-consciousness, fashion consciousness | Convenience sample of 135 undergraduate students in the USA    | Results suggest that male and female consumer behaviour be researched separately<br><br>Findings show that female consumers tend to focus more on their external appearance, while fashion conscious males “focus more on what they are,” hence the positive relationship between fashion consciousness and private gender consciousness |

Source: Own work

According to Gould and Stern (1989:142), fashion conscious males tend to relate fashion apparel to their self-identity and their concept of what being a man means. Rukandema (2000) found that the males' consumption of fashion magazines was positively related to their level of fashion consciousness, which supports the notion that the upsurge in male magazines has played a significant role in fostering greater male fashion awareness, as discussed in Section 3.6.

The findings of Bakewell *et al.* (2006:175,176) indicate that Generation Y males are highly aware of male fashions, even if they do not actively engage in fashion conscious behaviour. The authors explain that this may be due to a male need to be perceived as conforming to a masculine stereotype of rejecting fashion. This explanation is in line with the findings of Gould and Stern (1989:130) who indicate that people's perceptions of themselves is influenced by their consciousness of their gender. In contrast to the other studies, Rathnayake (2011:127) found that males were more fashion conscious than females. This finding was attributed to the cultural boundaries and value system according to which Sri Lankan females live, which suggests that fashion consciousness should be measured within particular cultural settings.

Male fashion consciousness is on the increase and several factors have contributed to this evolution in male fashion awareness and consciousness, as discussed in the following section.

### **3.6 FACTORS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE EVOLUTION OF MALE FASHION AWARENESS AND FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS**

According to Bakewell *et al.* (2006:172), some of the primary factors that have contributed to the evolution in male fashion awareness and consciousness include post-modernism, gay liberation, celebrity sportsmen as fashion apparel endorsers, and an increase in the number of men's magazines.

These factors are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

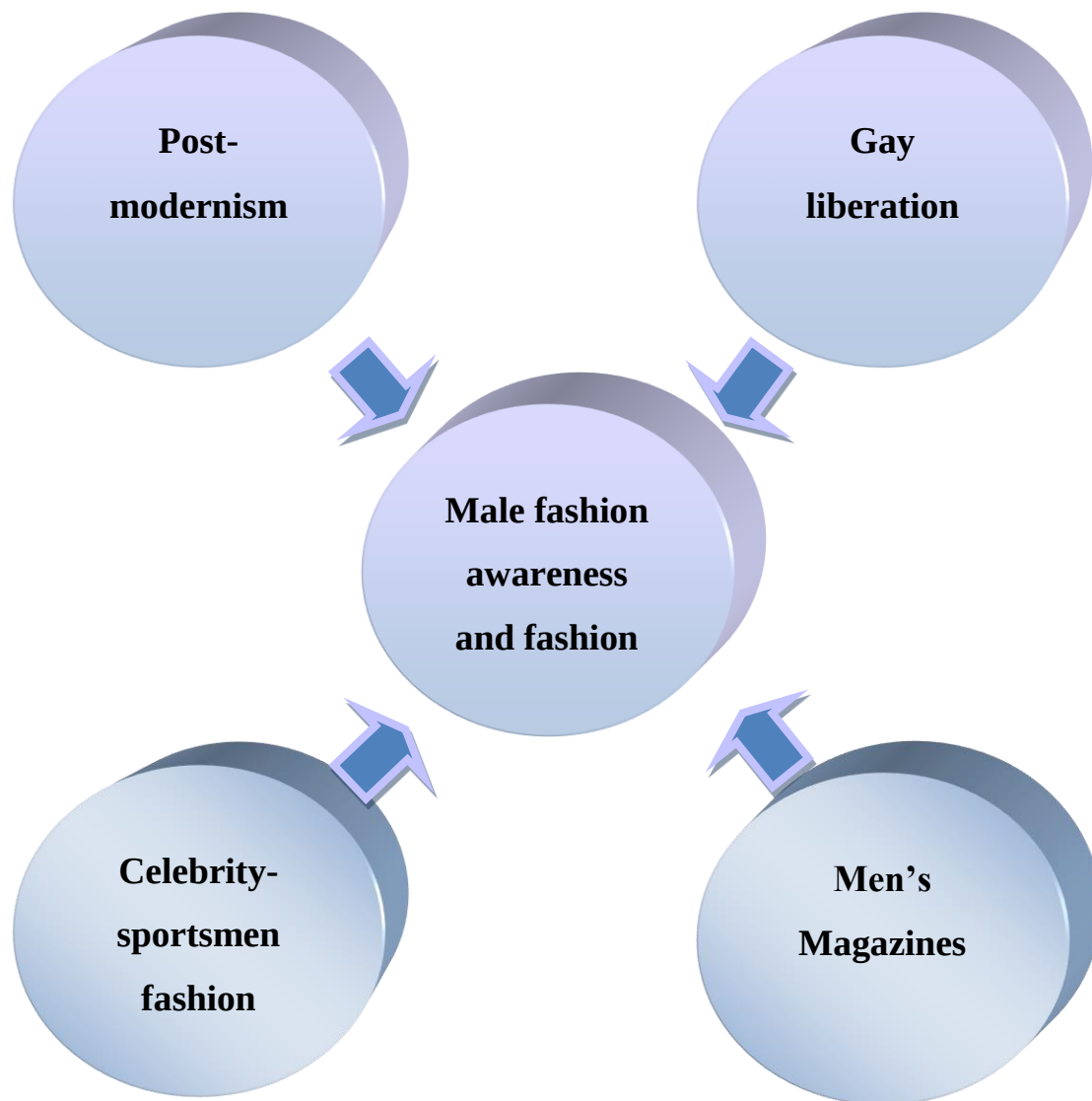


**Figure 3.1: Primary factors contributing to the evolution in male fashion awareness and consciousness** (adapted from Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:172)

Consumers raised in a post-modern era are fundamentally different to the modernists whose predictable behaviour is intemperately reliant on traditional variables such as social class, income and demographics (Burton, 2002:792). Weiss (2003:269) mentions that where collectiveness was an essential characteristic of modernism, individualism is a trademark of post-modernism. Through post-modernism, consumers are able to conceptualise and heighten their individualism and sense of identity through the display of purchased commodities such as fashionable, branded clothing (Lee *et al.*, 2005:352).

The post-modern era is also marked by the widespread gay liberation, where in many countries, including South Africa it is unconstitutional to discriminate against others based on their sexual orientation (Wigmore, 2013). From a marketing perspective, the male gay community consists of consumers of above-average educational standards, most of whom do not have children, which means they have a greater spending potential (Haslop *et al.*, 1998:318) and a propensity to spend on hedonistic lifestyle pursuits (Schofield & Schmidt, 2005:310).

Penaloza (1996:10) describes gay men as being a “dream market”, which may be attributed to their spending power. This segment of consumers has been found to be more brand- and fashion-conscious than their heterosexual peers. Gay men use clothes as symbolic markers, and a non-verbal means of communicating their personal identity (Rudd, 1996) that aids in facilitating their acceptance, differentiation and integration into specific groups (Schofield & Schmidt, 2005:311). Members of the gay community stand out as *avant-garde* trendsetters that help shape and transform fashion styles within the wider cultural environment (Haslop *et al.*, 1998:319), and, as such, have been instrumental in increasing male fashion awareness.

Another important trend that has contributed to increased male fashion consciousness is the use of iconic sportsmen as fashion apparel models and endorsers. Seeing much admired sportsmen, such as David Beckham and Johnny Wilkinson, embracing fashion apparel and personal grooming, has had a significant influence on the way in which men view fashion (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:172). The findings of a study conducted in South Africa (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2009:172) suggest that the use of local sport celebrities as product endorsers has a positive influence on black Generation Y students’ consumption-related behavioural intentions. The endorsement of skincare products by South African sport celebrities such as Tendai Mtawarira and Itumeleng Khune are attributed to encouraging the uptake of more rigorous personal grooming amongst African males (Govender, 2014:22).

Linked to the use of sport celebrities as fashion apparel endorsers is the rise in the number of men’s magazines, which reinforce male fashion awareness (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:171). Men’s magazines experienced significant increases in advertising revenues in 2013, with publishers putting this down to males being increasingly style conscious, and the trend towards the metro-sexual man (Sebastian, 2013). The metro-sexual male

is a heterosexual man who places a high importance on his appearance and spends a considerable amount of money and effort boosting his self-image and lifestyle (Souiden & Diagne, 2009:98). In South Africa, there has been a significant surge in popularity of male grooming since 2010, much of which is attributed to the growing gym culture and increasing adoption of social media in the country. Treatments such as body hair removal (manscaping), facials, laser treatments, teeth whitening, massages, Botox injections and the purchase of male skin care products are all enjoying an upsurge in the country, with men spending between R400 to R2000 a month on grooming (Govender, 2014:22).

Taken in combination, these factors have contributed to the evolution in male attitudes towards fashion apparel. Several studies in marketing and consumer behaviour literature explore the relationship between fashion involvement and the personality trait of need for uniqueness (Knight & Kim, 2007:270; Workman & Caldwell, 2007:589; Goldsmith & Clark, 2008:308). Fashion is one of the most conspicuous ways in which people signal their self- and social-image to others.

Blumer (1969:277) notes that a fashion conscious individual differs from the individual who unwittingly follows fashion simply because of what is available in retail outlets. This suggests that the fashion conscious individual has a higher need for uniqueness and uses fashion to express that need. Therefore, the need for uniqueness may have an important influence on fashion awareness, and consequent fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

### **3.7 NEED FOR UNIQUENESS THEORY**

A consumer's need for uniqueness theory is rooted in Snyder and Fromkin's (1977:519) uniqueness theory that postulates that individuals use material possessions, such as fashion for example, as a means of differentiating themselves from others. Tian *et al.* (2001:52) define consumers' need for uniqueness as "the trait of pursuing differences relative to others through the acquisition, utilisation and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one's self-esteem and social image".

Individuals pursue uniqueness as a way to elevate their identity, attract attention and enhance their self-esteem and social status (Lynn & Snyder, 2002:401). Consumers'

with a high need for uniqueness generally adopt new brands quicker than those with a low need for uniqueness, which implies that such consumers may have lower levels of brand loyalty or higher intentions to switch brands (Kao, 2013:86). In addition, individuals with a high need for uniqueness tend to show a preference for luxury brands, as a means of differentiating themselves from others (Clark *et al.*, 2007:48).

Lynn and Snyder (2002:396) indicate that as people detect similarities between themselves and others, they become increasingly motivated to reaffirm their distinctiveness, as a result, some seek solace in unique membership groups that differ from the norm. Latter *et al.* (2010:1) found since some consumers dislike similarity to others, generally they aim to differentiate themselves from others by adopting various behaviours to reinforce differentiation.

This need for uniqueness represents an important personality trait in consumer behaviour research (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:144). One of the more popular scales used to measure this personality trait in consumer behaviour research is the one developed and validated by Tian *et al.* (2001), named the Consumers' Need for Uniqueness (CNFU) scale. This scale comprises 31 items divided into the three dimensions of creative choice counter-conformity, unpopular choice counter-conformity and avoidance of similarity.

Knight and Kim (2007:272), following Tian *et al.* (2001:54), conceptualise the need for uniqueness in terms of creative choice counter-conformity, unpopular choice counter-conformity, or avoidance of similarity. Creative choice counter-conformity involves consumers purchasing goods that express their uniqueness but are still acceptable to others, and typically centres on the exclusivity and prestige of the products (Knight & Kim, 2007:272). Unpopular choice counter-conformity involves consumers opting for brands that deviate from accepted group norms. Typically, such consumers will seek out commodities and stores not frequented by their peers, while others select to dress in ways that are viewed as being socially unacceptable (McGinnis & Gentry, 2009:192). The unpopular choice dimension may also involve purchasing cutting-edge fashion before it becomes trendy.

Knight and Kim (2007:272) indicate that the avoidance of the similarity dimension involves consumers selecting brands that are unlikely to become conventional, but that

still aid in differentiating them from others and may involve customising fashion apparel using accessories and/or combining clothing items in unusual ways.

Several studies have focused on investigating the relationship between this personality trait and various aspects of consumer behaviour. Table 3.4 provides an overview of a sample of studies that investigated consumers' need for uniqueness. The table includes the constructs investigated in each of the studies, together with a description of the sample and an overview of the main findings.

**Table 3.4: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for uniqueness**

| Study                                                                                             | Constructs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Sample                                                                                                                                                      | Main findings                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Individual differences in consumer value for mass customised products (Hunt <i>et al.</i> , 2013) | Consumer need for uniqueness, centrality of visual product aesthetics, need for optimisation, involvement in symbolic benefits, involvement in functional benefits, perceived risk of customised products, perceived value of customised products | The questionnaires were administered to 240 undergraduate marketing students registered at a Midwestern university.<br><br>From the sample, 239 were usable | Results substantiated that consumers' value for mass customised products does indeed differ according to their degree for uniqueness, need for optimisation as well where visual product aesthetics are concerned |

**Table 3.4: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for uniqueness (continued...)**

| Study                                                                                                                                                                                   | Constructs                                                                                                                                   | Sample                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Main findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The impact of consumers' need for uniqueness and nationality on Generation Y retail patronage behaviours: investigating American and Taiwanese consumers (Rajamma <i>et al.</i> , 2010) | Avoidance of similarity, creative choice, unpopular choice, relationship with sales personnel, risk aversion, convenience, store familiarity | Overall 305 American and 277 Taiwanese students were selected as being representative of the sample                                                                                                                                                                                      | Findings revealed that consumers' need for uniqueness influences their retail patronage behaviour<br><br>Furthermore, results established that there were certain commonalities derived from the two cultures in striving for uniqueness |
| What motivates nonconformity? Uniqueness seeking blocks majority influence (Imhoff & Erb, 2009)                                                                                         | Need for uniqueness, social influence                                                                                                        | Participants took part in three separate studies:<br><br>Study 1 – 44 students from a German university of technology<br><br>Study 2 – 62 students from Bonn University in Germany<br><br>Study 3 – 161 students from Bonn University<br><br>Each of the students were randomly selected | Overall findings indicated that consumers with a high need for uniqueness conceded less to majority influence than those detected as low in need for uniqueness                                                                          |

**Table 3.4: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for uniqueness (continued...)**

| <b>Study</b>                                                                                                      | <b>Constructs</b>                                                                                                                                               | <b>Sample</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Main findings</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| An analysis of factors affecting fashion opinion leadership and fashion opinion seeking (Goldsmith & Clark, 2008) | Opinion leadership, opinion seeking, need for uniqueness, attention to social comparison information, status consumption, role-relaxed consumption              | A quota sample of 598 individuals in the USA aged between 18 and 83 years                                                                                                                                                                | Findings indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the need for uniqueness and fashion opinion leadership but a non-significant relationship between the need for uniqueness and fashion opinion seeking behaviour |
| Unique like everybody else? The dual role of consumers' need for uniqueness (Ruvio, 2008)                         | Consumers' need for uniqueness, social approval from friends, subjective and objective unique consumption behaviour, attention to social comparison information | Study 1: In total 220 questionnaires were distributed randomly at shopping malls and community centres. Only 140 were returned.<br>Study 2: Here 350 questionnaires were randomly distributed at a major transportation centre in Israel | From the two studies it was established that by conveying uniqueness through their consumption demeanour, consumers are able to attain their sense of existence without damaging their sense of social assimilation                         |

**Table 3.4: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for uniqueness (continued...)**

| Study                                                                                               | Constructs                                                                                                                | Sample                                                                                                                                                    | Main findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mobile data service fuels the desire for uniqueness (Hong <i>et al.</i> , 2006)                     | Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, need for uniqueness, perceived cost, adoption intention | The survey was distributed on a free public web site to 1 328 mobile data service (MDS) users between ages 15 to 66.                                      | Findings establish that the need to distinguish oneself from others, is one of the elements driving potential MDS users adoption decisions                                                                                                                    |
| Pricing of conspicuous goods: a competitive analysis of social effects (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005)      | Need for uniqueness, need for conformity, pricing                                                                         | The sample comprised 40 business students. The students were divided into two groups, of which Type A were representative of snobs and Type B conformists | From the findings, it was deduced that in the event of a duopoly, the desire for uniqueness can increase demand among some consumers as the price of a product increases. Whereas with conformists, the lower the price, the higher the demand for a product. |
| Use of the need for uniqueness scale to characterise fashion consumer groups (Workman & Kidd, 2000) | Fashion opinion leaders, fashion innovators and innovative communicators, need for uniqueness                             | A sample of 264 college students enrolled at a US university                                                                                              | Results suggest that fashion change agents (that is, fashion opinion leaders, fashion innovators and innovative communicators) have a far greater need for uniqueness than fashion followers                                                                  |

**Table 3.4: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for uniqueness (continued...)**

| Study                                                                                              | Constructs                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Sample                                                                                                                                                    | Main findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Individual differences in the pursuit of self-uniqueness through consumption (Lynn & Harris, 1997) | Self-attributed need for uniqueness, need for uniqueness, desire for scarce products, desire for customised products, preference for unique shopping venues, consumer innovativeness, consumer susceptibility to normative influence | A sample of 142 MBA students from a large urban South-western university<br><br>Participants were required to complete the booklet for extra class credit | Findings propose that the self-attributed need for uniqueness influences consumers' desire for scarce, innovative products and preference for unique shopping venues                                                                                                                                |
| Need for uniqueness: shopping mall preference and choice activity (Burns & Warren, 1995)           | Need for uniqueness                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | A sample of 327 undergraduate business students enrolled at a major commuter university. Questionnaires were administered during scheduled lectures       | Findings suggest that shopping mall selection may be used as a way for people expressing their individuality. The study shows that individuals with a high need for uniqueness are more inclined to shop at suburban regional shopping malls as opposed to those located nearest to where they live |

**Table 3.4: Overview of consumer behaviour studies involving the need for uniqueness (continued...)**

|                                                                                                                |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A cross-cultural comparison of the need for uniqueness in Malaysia and the United States (Burns & Brady, 1992) | Need for uniqueness | Questionnaires were distributed at two different institutions and comprised:<br>105 undergraduate students at a public Midwestern university<br>103 native undergraduate at a Malaysian university | According to findings, students' need for uniqueness is dependent on their cultural settings |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Source: Own work

As is evident from Table 3.4, the need for uniqueness represents a salient predictor of several consumer behaviours. Burns and Brady (1992:491,493) found that students' need for uniqueness is dependent on their cultural setting, which supports the need to conduct this study within the context of the South African market.

Rajamma *et al.* (2010:404) indicate that the need for uniqueness personality trait influences individuals' retail patronage choices. Similarly, the findings of both Lynn and Harris (1997:1875) and Burns and Warren (1995:8,9) suggest that individuals with a high need for uniqueness prefer shopping at unique shopping venues as a way of expressing their individuality. This may have important implications to the distribution strategies pursued by fashion marketers.

In addition, Lynn and Harris (1997:1874) found that individuals with a high need for uniqueness showed a preference for scarce and innovative products, and Hunt *et al.* (2013:333) indicates that such individuals have a preference for customised market offerings. Indeed, Hong *et al.* (2006:91) note that this need for uniqueness positively relates to the adoption of innovations.

Amaldoss and Jain (2005:40) found that in contrast to conformists, the relationship between price and demand was positive amongst individuals with a high need for uniqueness; that is, their demand increased as the price increased. Individuals with a high need for uniqueness are less likely to bend to social pressures (Imoff & Erb, 2009:312) and tend to use their consumption choices to signal their individuality (Ruvio, 2008:454)

Given that fashion apparel is an important self-expression mechanism, this need for uniqueness is likely to manifest as an important determinant of fashion clothing awareness and consciousness. This may be particularly true amongst Generation Y students who are in what Schiffman *et al.* (2010:332) term the bachelorhood stage of their family life-cycle, where clothing plays an important role in the ‘dating and mating’ behaviour that generally characterises this life-cycle stage.

Knight and Kim (2007:271) highlight that Generation Y consumers typically desire trendy, innovative brand names that are of a high quality. Park (2012:83) suggests that Generation Y consumers are interested in brands that project a unique look as a way of boosting their self-image to their peers. Similarly, Parker *et al.* (2004:183) assert that authenticity is one of the key characteristics that Generation Y consumers seek in products. This suggests that Generation Y consumers have an affinity for personalised products that allow for the expression of their uniqueness. Their need for uniqueness and sense of fashion, which is exemplified by their fashion consumption behaviour, is ultimately, what distinguishes this segment from preceding generations (Rajamma *et al.*, 2010:389, 390).

Workman and Caldwell (2007:594) found there is a significant positive relationship between Generation Y students’ need for uniqueness and their fashion innovativeness. Similarly, the findings of Goldsmith and Clark (2008:308) indicate that the need for uniqueness positively influences Generation Y consumers’ fashion apparel opinion-leadership. This suggests that the need for uniqueness influences fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

### 3.8 PROPOSED MODEL OF THE CAUSAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE MALE NEED FOR UNIQUENESS, FASHION AWARENESS, FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND FASHION CONSCIOUS BEHAVIOUR

In accordance with the literature reviewed in this chapter it appears that male fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour are increasing, and that the personality trait of need for uniqueness may have an important influence on this behaviour.

As such, Figure 3.2 illustrates a proposed model of the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

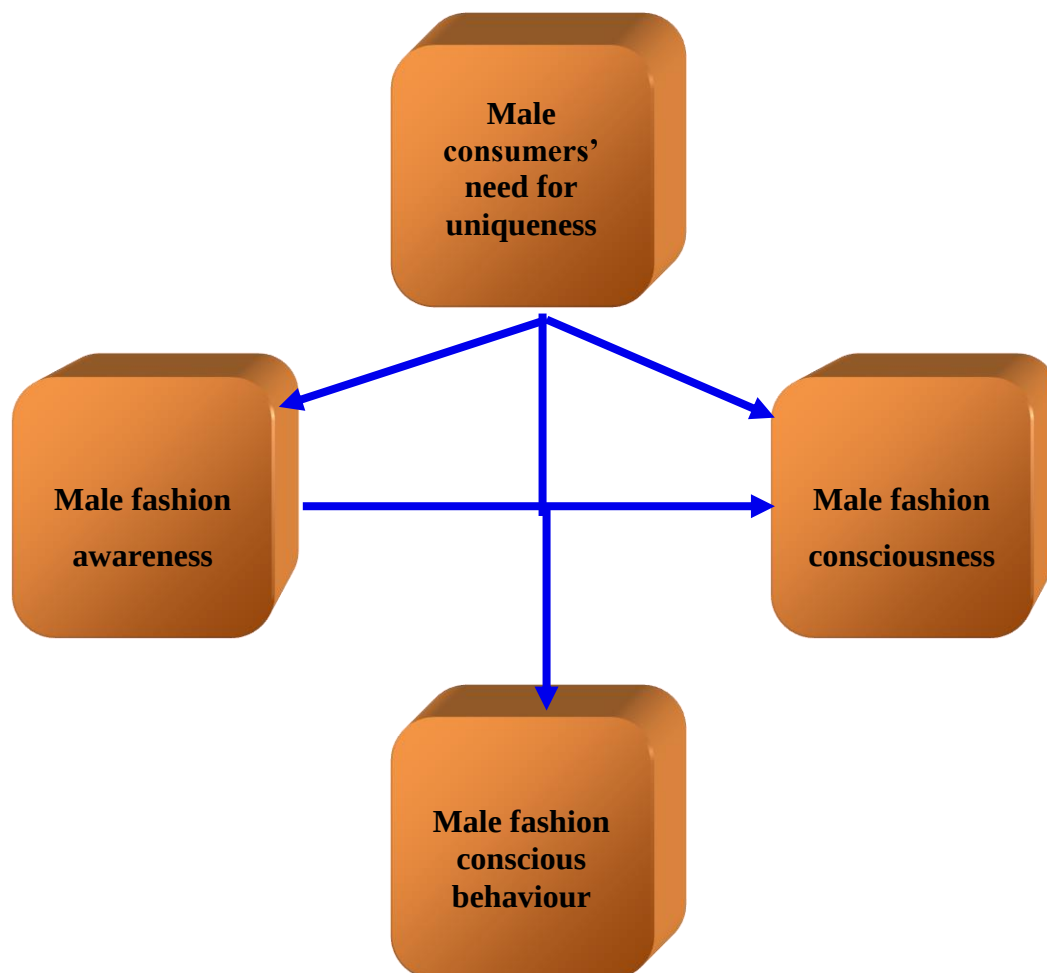


**Figure 3.2: Proposed model of male fashion conscious behaviour**

According to the proposed model presented in Figure 3.2, male consumers' need for uniqueness influences their fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour, with fashion awareness being an important predilection of fashion consciousness, and fashion awareness and fashion consciousness being salient predictors of fashion conscious behaviour. The empirical testing of this proposed model is discussed in Chapter 5.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of Chapter 3 was to provide an overview of the global and South African fashion industry and highlight the importance of the concepts relating to male fashion conscious behaviour, fashion awareness, and fashion consciousness and the need for uniqueness. The literature indicates that South Africa's fashion industry yields several billion rands annually, making it the fifth largest sector in the country. Furthermore, statistics reveal South African consumers as spending more money on apparel than other recreational activities. Much of the increase in apparel retail spending is attributed to upper-income Generation Y males who have embraced purchasing high-end premium clothing brands as an indication of their financial and social standing.

For the purpose of this study, male fashion consciousness behaviour is described as the extent to which men engage in the activities of fashion shopping, purchasing the latest styles, shopping at trendy fashion outlets, keeping up with fashion news and taking care in how they assemble fashion items. Factors that are cited as contributing to an increase in male fashion awareness and consciousness include post-modernism, gay liberation, celebrity sportsmen fashion endorsers and men's magazines.

The need for uniqueness personality trait is an important trait in predicting fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour. This personality trait is conceptualised as creative choice counter-conformity, unpopular choice counter-conformity and avoidance of similarity.

When considering the rise in male consumers fashion awareness that is displayed in their pursuit for luxury branded fashion apparel, it is here that their fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour is demonstrated. Therefore, the chapter concludes with a proposed model of male fashion conscious behaviour. Based on the

formulated hypotheses in Chapter 1, the model proposes that male consumers' need for uniqueness influences their fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour. In addition, the model suggests that male fashion consciousness is reliant on their fashion awareness, which in turn influences their fashion conscious behaviour.

In the following chapter, Chapter 4, the research methodology and statistical methods employed for empirically testing the proposed model that is reported on in Chapter 5 are discussed.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

---

*“The novelties of one generation are only the resuscitated fashions of the generation before last”*

***George Bernard Shaw***

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research methodology followed in gathering and analysing the data for the empirical portion of this study. Malhotra (2010:39) indicates that marketing research involves the systematic and objective process of identifying the required data, gathering and analysing that data, and then disseminating and using the findings of the data analysis to address marketing problems and/or opportunities. Consumer research, which is rooted in the principles of the marketing concept, and represents an extension of the field of marketing research, involves the study of consumer behaviour (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:27,42).

In this chapter, the research design, followed by the sampling strategy, questionnaire design, data collection and the techniques employed to analyse the data are discussed. The following section reviews the three main types of research designs and indicates the one followed in this study.

#### 4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Malhotra (2010:102) describes a research design as a map or framework that serves to guide the way in which a research study is conducted in terms of specifying the details of the procedures involved in obtaining the required data. According to Luck and Rubin (1987:52), the selected research design represents the operational procedure for realising the research objectives of a research project. Baines *et al.* (2011:134) refer to a research design as the process that aids in the collection and analysis of data needed to solve an identified problem.

The study of consumer behaviour makes use of two broad research approaches, namely positivism and interpretivism (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:12). Schiffman and Kanuk (2000:15) refer to positivism as being quantitative and conclusive in nature, where the emphasis is on predicting consumer consumption behaviour; and interpretivism as being qualitative and exploratory in nature, where the emphasis is placed on understanding consumer experiences.

In line with this distinction between positivism and interpretivism, Malhotra (2010:102) indicates that research designs are classified broadly as being either exploratory or conclusive in nature, with conclusive designs being further classified as being either causal or descriptive. Figure 4.1 illustrates the different research designs, together with the research procedure steps that they guide.

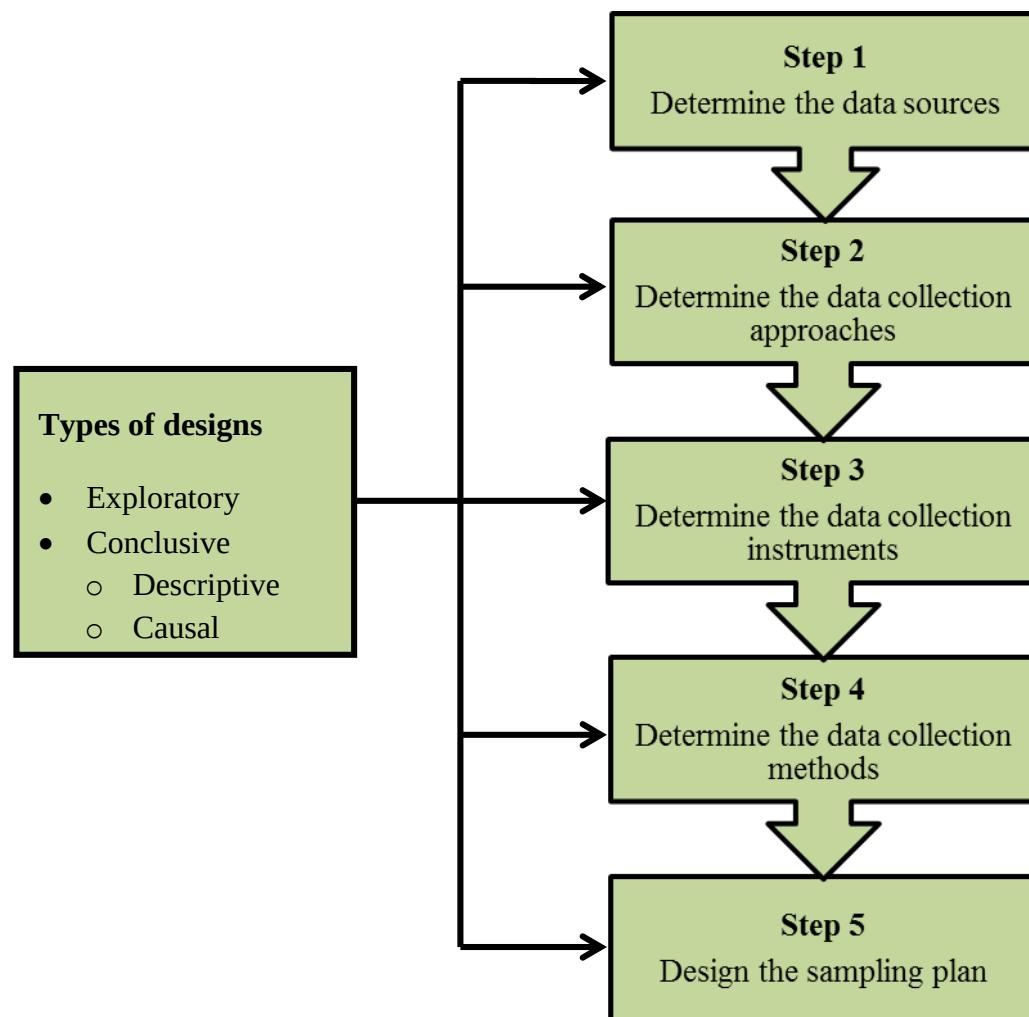


**Figure 4.1: Research designs: types and preparation** (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:152)

According to Figure 4.1, the type of research design selected will guide the determination of the data sources, the data collection approach, the data collection instrument, the data collection method and the design of the sampling plan.

Exploratory research is qualitative in nature and is utilised for providing insight into research problems through focus groups, experience groups, literature reviews (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:152) and/or projective techniques (Webb, 2003:183). Malhotra (2010:104) indicates that exploratory research may be used to “formulate or define a problem more precisely, identify alternative courses of action, develop hypotheses, isolate key variables and relationships for further examination, gain insight for developing an approach to the problem and/or establish priorities for future research”. Typically, exploratory research studies do not utilise probability sampling plans (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:95).

Causal research, which is conclusive in nature, aims to ascertain the degree that alterations in one variable can cause an influence in another (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:154; Malhotra, 2010:104). Typically, experimentation is applied to infer such causal relationships. In order to infer causal relationships using experimentation, three conditions need to be satisfied. Firstly, there needs to be concomitant variation, whereby the cause (X) and the effect (Y) need to occur or vary together in accordance with the hypothesis under consideration. Second, the time order of occurrence of variables needs to be met, which states that the cause (X) must occur before or simultaneously with the effect (Y), but not afterwards. Third, all other possible casual factors should be eliminated (Malhotra, 2010:250-252); that is, there should be an absence of any competing explanations of the observed findings of a cause-and-effect-relationship (Kotler, 2003:133). Causal research may take place in a laboratory setting (laboratory experimentation) or in the natural setting (field experimentation) (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:138).

As is the case with causal research, descriptive research utilises quantitative data and is conclusive in nature. The use of the descriptive research design enables questions such as who, what, when, where, why and how to be answered (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:28; Malhotra, 2010:106). As a result, descriptive research may be used to describe the characteristics of a target population, make predictions, determine the relationship between variables, and/or measure perceptions (Malhotra, 2010:106). There are two

types of descriptive research designs – longitudinal and cross-sectional designs. Longitudinal designs involve taking repeated measures on the same variables from a fixed sample (a panel) over a specified period, in the case with a true panel or repeated measures on different variables from subsamples of a fixed sample, in the case of the omnibus panel. In contrast, cross-sectional studies involve gathering data from a specified sample (single cross-sectional design) or specified samples (multiple cross-sectional design) only once (Cant *et al*, 2008:34,35; Malhotra, 2010:108,110). Kolb (2008:25) cites the survey as the method commonly used in a cross-sectional design. Figure 4.2 illustrates these approaches.

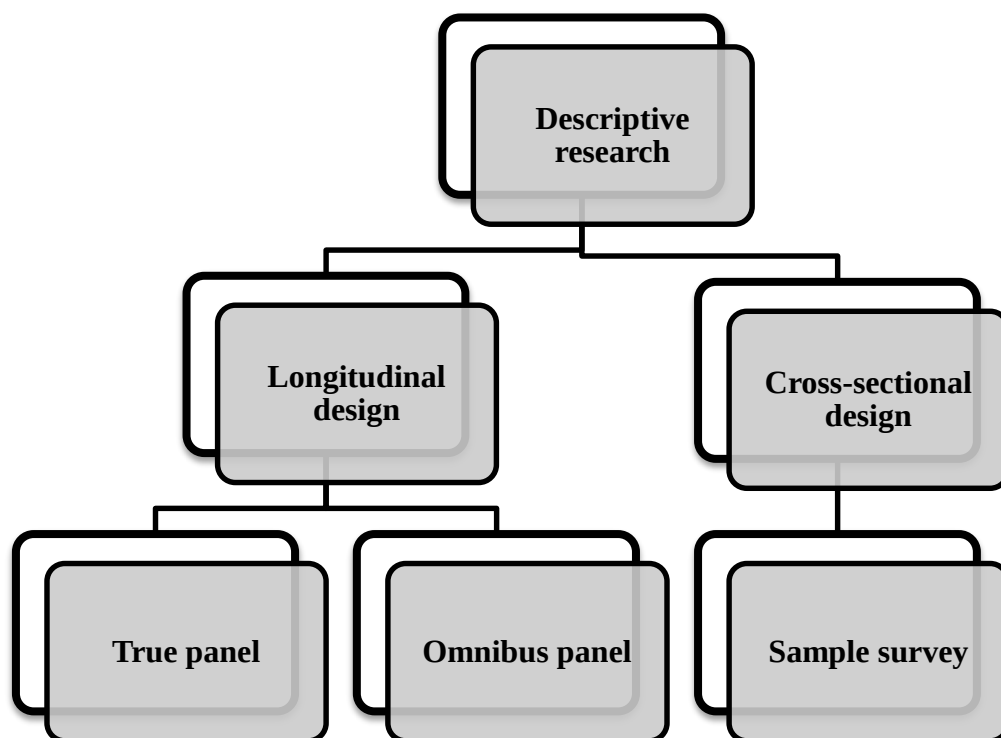


**Figure 4.2: Descriptive research methods** (adapted from Gilbert & Churchill, 2001:129)

For this study, a descriptive research design, using a single cross-sectional approach was followed.

In the following section, the sampling strategy used in the study is outlined.

### **4.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY**

When conducting consumer research, one of the pertinent issues faced is deciding which individuals to include in the study (Kolb, 2008:178). With the assistance of a sampling strategy, a directive of the sampling or target population, the sample size and the sampling procedure is provided (Webb, 2003:189).

#### **4.3.1 Target population**

Dillion *et al.* (1994:220) describe a target population as a group of individuals that possess relevant information applicable to a specific research problem. In more simple terms, Swanepoel *et al.* (2006:13) refer to a target population as a group of individuals, from which data is collected. The correct specification of a target population helps alleviate the risk of collecting incorrect information (Malhotra, 2010:372).

The target population selected for the study were undergraduate black Generation Y male students between the ages of 18 and 24 enrolled at South African registered public HEIs in 2013.

#### **4.3.2 Sampling frame**

Lancaster and Reynolds (2002:265) refer to a sampling frame as a plan that indicates how the sample will be selected. Malhotra (2010:373) suggests that where an exact sampling frame cannot be identified, accurate indications of the target population need to be provided.

The sampling frame for this study initially comprised 23 registered public higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa (Council on Higher Education and Higher Education Quality Committee, 2012). From the sample of 23 HEIs, a non-probability judgement sample was employed to select one traditional university campus, one comprehensive university and one university of technology campus, located within the Gauteng Province. The Gauteng province was selected because it is the province within which the highest number of the South African population reside (Statistics South Africa, 2013).

### 4.3.3 Method of sampling

According to Klopper *et al.* (2006:155), marketing research makes use of two types of sampling methods – probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling, also referred to as random sampling, ensures that all individuals forming part of the target population have a known and equal opportunity of being included in the sample. With non-probability sampling, there is no indication of whether or not the target population has a known or equal chance of being included in the sample (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:158). Figure 4.3 illustrates these different sampling techniques.

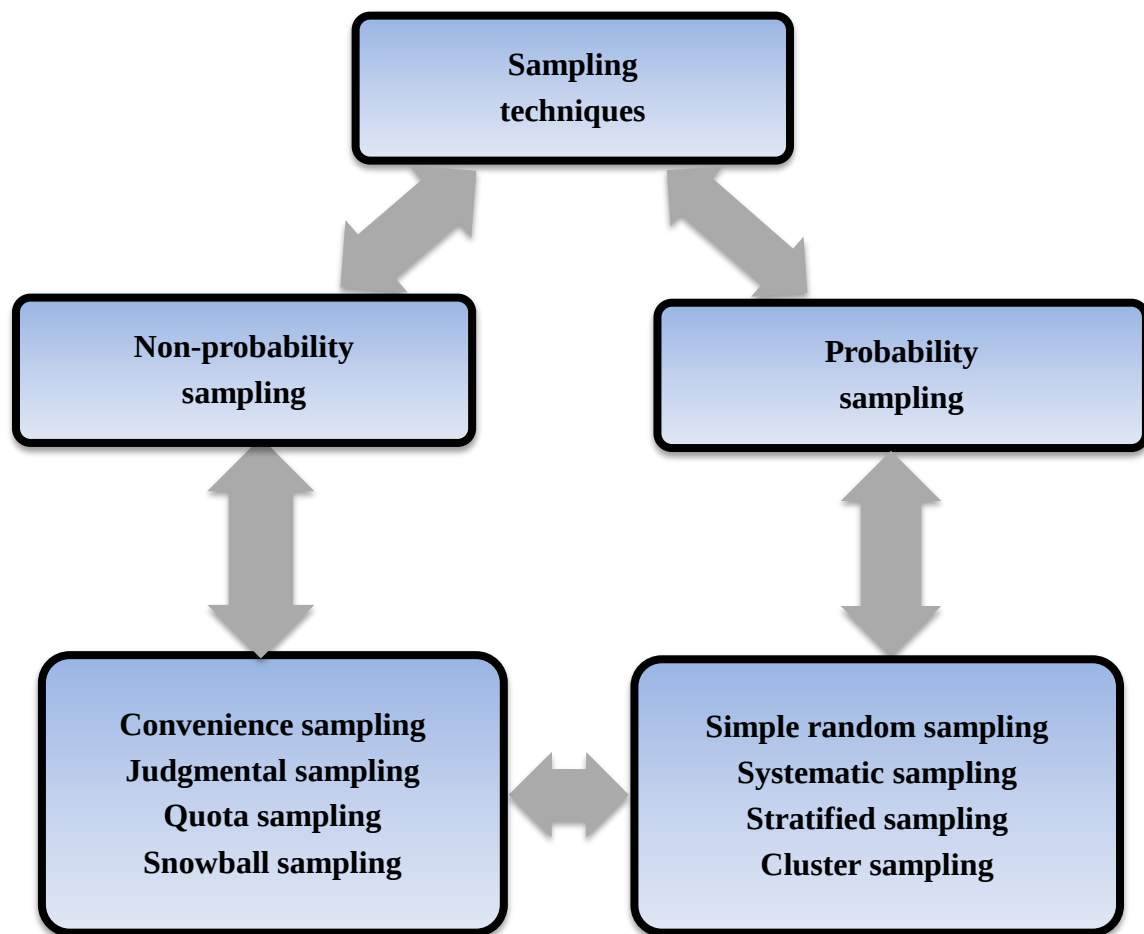


**Figure 4.3: Sampling techniques** (Cant *et al.*, 2008:165)

The literature indicates that probability sampling comprises simple random sampling, stratified sampling, systematic sampling and cluster sampling. In contrast, non-probability sampling includes convenience sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling, and judgement sampling (Klopper *et al.*, 2006:155-156).

Convenience sampling is often selected as the preferred sampling technique as it is frequently the only practical method for collecting data (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:347). In addition, it is the least expensive of the techniques and the target population is readily accessible and accommodating of this method (Welman *et al.*, 2005:70; Malhotra, 2010:377).

A non-probability convenience sample, as is consistent with studies relating to male fashion consciousness (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:173) and the need for uniqueness (Lynn & Harris, 1997:1870; Workman & Kidd, 2000:230; Ruvio, 2008:450), of undergraduate black Generation Y male students between the ages of 18 and 24 was drawn from the three selected HEIs during March 2013.

#### **4.3.4 Sample size**

Selecting the appropriate sample size is an important consideration in any research project. The determination of the sample size is influenced by a number of factors, including the research design, the average sample size used in similar studies, the number of variables and proposed methods of data analysis (Malhotra, 2010:374). A sample size refers to the number of individuals or elements that form part of the investigation. Typically, the smaller the sample size, the higher the chances of unreliable and invalid results; whereas, the larger size, the higher the possibility of bias and error (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:160).

In selecting the sample size for this study, consideration was given to the nature of the research (conclusive, descriptive research), the sample size of similar studies, the number scaled-response items in the questionnaire and the planned methods of statistical analysis.

A sample size of 400 black Generation Y male students was selected for the study. This sample size is consistent with studies conducted by various other researchers focused on young fashion consumers, such as Tian *et al.* (2001:53) (Sample size: 273), Bakewell *et al.* (2006:169) (Sample size: 346), Phau and Cheong (2009:210) (Sample size: 603), and Rathnayake (2011:121) (Sample size: 215). This sample size of 400 also adheres to the 5 to 10 number of cases per item rule for factor analysis (Hair *et al.*, 2010:102)

and the 200 to 400 number of cases rule for structural equation modelling (Malhotra, 2010:731).

As such, for this study, the sample size of 400 students was considered adequate and questionnaires were evenly distributed across each of the three HEI campuses.

#### **4.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

According to Chisnall (1992:27), data collection is regarded as the foundation surrounding all research activity within any research study. In the case of descriptive research designs, data can be collected by making use of survey questionnaires or through observations. In particular, the survey method is intended to extract responses from a large pre-selected group of respondents (Baines *et al.*, 2011:134). In contrast, the observation method, much like the name suggests, necessitates the observation of those individuals under study and is used to provide explanations concerning a particular phenomenon (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:270; Struwig & Stead 2001:41-42).

For this study, the survey questionnaire was selected as the method for collecting data. As previously indicated, this method is consistent with consumer behaviour studies researching male fashion consciousness (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006:173; Rathnayake, 2011:124) and the need for uniqueness (Knight & Kim, 2007:270). Lecturers at each of the three HEI campuses were contacted and asked if they would allow a self-administered questionnaire to be distributed to their students during their lectures. Once permission was gained, a structured self-administered questionnaire was administered during scheduled lectures by the study researcher.

##### **4.4.1 Questionnaire design**

A questionnaire is defined as a tool used to elicit the information required to address the research objectives of a study in the most efficient and effective manner possible (Parasuraman, 1991:208). Churchill (1995:432) states that the overall appearance of the questionnaire can influence a respondent's willingness to complete the questionnaire. This suggests that careful attention needs to be given to the layout and design of both the questionnaire and its accompanying cover letter. In designing the questionnaire, it is important to ensure that all questions are worded clearly and concisely, that they

address the research objectives, and that all participants understand them as intended (Lancaster & Reynolds, 2002:278-279). Therefore, the phrasing, the arrangement and succession of the questions need to be considered carefully, as well as their relevance in terms of the research objectives. The questionnaire should include “simple, unambiguous and direct” instructions indicating how the questionnaire should be completed in order to improve the response rate, and ultimately, improve the quality of the study (Strydom *et al.*, 2000:156-157).

In addition, it is vital to ensure that the title is indicated clearly on the cover page, that the questionnaire is brief, and that the terminology used can be easily interpreted. It is essential to follow these guidelines when constructing a questionnaire:

- Use simple language
- Ensure that the questions are without bias
- Avoid jargon or shorthand
- Keep questions short and specific
- Steer clear of sophisticated or uncommon words
- Avoid ambiguous words
- Avoid double-barrelled questions (those with ‘and’/ ‘or’ in the wording)
- Avoid questions with a negative in them
- Avoid leading questions
- Desensitise questions by using response bands
- Ensure that fixed responses do not overlap
- Allow for the answer of 'other' in fixed response questions
- Avoid hypothetical questions (Lancaster & Reynolds, 2002:280-281; Williams, 2003:247; Kotler & Keller, 2012:126).

For this study, all the guidelines pertaining to questionnaire design were followed. In addition, the questionnaire was examined by two experienced researchers and a

statistician to ascertain its face validity. The accompanying cover letter outlined the purpose of the study and indicated why participants had been selected to take part in the study.

#### **4.4.2 Questionnaire content**

The study made use of several scales to accommodate the empirical objectives, as given in Section 1.3.3. In order to measure black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness (four items), fashion consciousness (seven items) and fashion conscious behaviour (five items), items were selected from an adapted scale used by Bakewell *et al.* (2006:174), which was based on a scale originally developed by Gould and Stern (1989:139), and later revised by Rukandema (2000:56).

In order to measure black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, a scale adapted by Knight and Kim (2007:275), based on a scale developed by Tian *et al.* (2001:53) was used. This scale comprises three constructs related to uniqueness, namely avoidance of similarity (three items), unpopular choice counter-conformity (three items), and creative choice counter-conformity (two items).

These modified scales were anchored on a six-point Likert scale ranging from one (strongly agree) to six (strongly disagree). A Likert scale is used often for quantitative data collection (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:276) that follows the descriptive research design using a self-administered questionnaire. The reasons for the popularity of this scaling method include that its construction and subsequent administration is relatively easy (Malhotra, 2010:309). In addition, in comparison to other types of scales, the Likert scale is easier and less time consuming for participants to complete (Chisnall, 1992:170), thereby contributing to a higher response rate.

The questionnaire also included questions requesting demographic information, including participants' age, ethnicity, province of origin, university campus, and monthly allowance. These questions were included to determine how representative the sample was of the target population and to ascertain whether the sample correctly represented the defined target population. Questions in this section were measured using nominal scales. Another three questions were added to the questionnaire to

identify the participants' number of clothing accounts, preferred clothing brands and clothing stores of choice. These were measured using nominal and ordinal scales.

In the following section, the questionnaire structure is discussed.

#### **4.4.3 Questionnaire structure**

The structured questionnaire used for this study comprised three sections (refer to Annexure A). Section A included a demographic section designed to collect participants' information and identify the sample's profile. Section B included questions relating to the number of clothing accounts held, preferred clothing stores and preferred clothing brands. Sections C and D consisted of the scaled items designed to measure black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness, fashion consciousness, fashion conscious behaviour and need for uniqueness.

In addition, the questionnaire included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study.

#### **4.4.4 Pilot testing of the questionnaire**

Malhotra (2010:354) refers to pilot testing as the process carried out on a smaller scale to 'test' the validity of the questionnaire. This process is used to rectify and eliminate any errors in the construction of the questionnaire, prior to the main study being undertaken. Therefore, most pilot tests are conducted in an informal setting, as an informative exercise meant to identify any ambiguity or problems within the questionnaire (Williams, 2003:248-249). Whilst pilot testing is considered an essential part of an effective research design and can enhance the probability of a research project being successful, it cannot indicate whether or not the findings from the study will be fruitful (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

Notwithstanding this, a pilot test can indicate whether all questions are appropriately interpreted, that the instructions are clear and easily understood by the participants and that the cover letter clearly states the purpose of the study (Boyce, 2002:371). The findings of a pilot test can assist a researcher in formulating the essential amendments needed to perfect the end product (Kezar, 2000:385; Hair *et al.*, 2008:180).

The questionnaire was piloted on a convenience sample of 40 black Generation Y male students enrolled at South African HEI campus that did not form part of the final sample. Participation was strictly on a voluntary basis. This pilot test was done to ascertain the validity and reliability of the scale, as well as to determine if the questions were appropriately worded. Following the pilot, minor grammatical changes were made to the questionnaire, prior to the undertaking of the main study. A report of the pilot test results is provided in Chapter 5.

#### **4.5 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The main survey for this study was conducted in March 2013 on a sample of 400 black Generation Y male students enrolled at the three selected South African registered public HEI campuses. As the questionnaire requested information of a non-sensitive nature and given that the targeted population comprised educated individuals over the age of 18 years, lecturers were deemed as appropriate gatekeepers to the participants. The relevant lecturers of the three HEIs were contacted prior to the main survey and permission was requested to administer the questionnaires during scheduled lectures.

Once permission was gained, a structured self-administered questionnaire was administered during scheduled lectures by the study researcher. A cover letter accompanying the questionnaire explained the reason for this particular study and why it was directed specifically at black Generation Y male students. It was indicated also that participation was purely on a voluntary basis.

#### **4.6 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

The captured data were analysed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and AMOS, versions 21.0 for Microsoft Windows. The following statistical methods were applied on the empirical data sets:

- Frequencies
- Exploratory factor analysis
- Reliability and validity analysis
- Descriptive statistics analysis

- Correlation analysis
- Structural equation modelling

These methods are outlined in the next section.

#### **4.6.1 Frequency distribution**

The first stage of data analysis entails evaluating the frequency distributions of captured variables within a specified data set. Frequency distribution tables are used to illustrate the overall number of responses provided by participants for each variable (Malhotra, 2010:484; Pallant, 2010:55).

Typical examples of depicting statistical tables include, for example, graphs, maps, pie and bar charts, pictographs, schematic figures and flowcharts (Malhotra, 2010:765-767). Pie charts and frequency tables were selected as the method of illustration for this study.

#### **4.6.2 Exploratory factor analysis**

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) refers to the procedure whereby the fundamental dimensions or factors used for explaining the correlations between a set of variables are identified (Malhotra, 2010:739). It is recommended that before attempting the EFA process, the suitability of the selected sample size be ascertained. Pallant (2010:182-183) suggests that larger sample sizes are preferable. Bartlett's test of sphericity, which is used for analysing whether the hypotheses and specified variables are uncorrelated to the population, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy are two of the techniques affiliated with evaluating the appropriateness of factor analysis (Malhotra, 2010:638). Factor analysis is viewed as being suitable when Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant (that is,  $p < 0.05$ ) and a value of 0.6 or above is computed on the KMO measure (Pallant, 2010:183).

Typically, the process followed when conducting a factor analysis includes computing a correlation matrix, loading of factors, identifying the appropriate method of factor analysis, identifying the number of factors to be maintained, rotation of the factors, interpreting the factors and naming the factors in order to generate sample estimates (Hair *et al.*, 1995:369). Section 5.6 elaborates on this process.

Malhotra (2010:643) identifies common factor analysis and principle component analysis as being the two approaches commonly used in factor analysis. Reise *et al.* (2000:294) refer to common factor analysis as the extraction of as many latent variables (factors) as possible, in order to explain the correlations (common variance) among these items. The aim of principal component analysis, in contrast, is to reduce the number of variables specified as a way of indicating the minimum number of factors that will be used to account for the maximum variance. This is achieved by using prior knowledge of the number of factors to expect and then specifying that number, or by analysing the shape of the scree plot, or by retaining factors with an eigenvalue above 1.0 and disposing of those below that value (Malhotra, 2010:643).

Once extraction of the factors has taken place, it is necessary to rotate the factors as this will aid in addressing the problems experienced in interpreting and naming the factors based on their factor loadings (Pallant, 2010:184). According to Bryman and Cramer (2005:332), a commonly used orthogonal rotation technique is the varimax procedure. The varimax procedure endeavours to strip the factors individually in a factor-loading table (Churchill, 1995:974) by evenly disseminating variance amongst the factors (Stewart, 1981:59). This method of rotation was applied in this study.

In the following section, the measurement of reliability and validity are discussed.

#### **4.6.3 Reliability**

In terms of measurement and scaling of multi-item instruments, reliability refers to the consistency of results produced by a scale across repeated measurements (Malhotra, 2010:318). According to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008:2276), reliability can aid in accurately predicting the quality of a measurement instrument. The general approaches used for testing reliability include the test-retest reliability, alternative forms reliability and internal consistency reliability (Babbie, 2007:145).

Each of the methods has certain limitations. For example, with the test-retest method, there is the possibility that participants may remember the items included in the test; thus, negatively influencing the reliability of the scale (Lodico *et al.*, 2006:91). In the case of the alternative form method, not only is it expensive and laborious to construct the alternative form of the scale, it is also almost impossible to ensure that the two forms are completely equivalent in content (Malhotra, 2010:319).

Therefore, the internal consistency method, particularly the Cronbach alpha measure, is listed as the more popular approach for determining reliability (Dillion *et al.*, 1994:323). Malhotra (2010:319) indicates that the calculation of the Cronbach alpha results in a coefficient value between zero and one, where a value above 0.60 translates into acceptable scale reliability. However, Nunnally (1978:245) suggests that a Cronbach alpha of 0.70 or above is preferable. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the pilot test results. A Cronbach alpha range between 0.819 and 0.882 was reported for the two scales. This highlights that the measurement instrument is reliable.

In addition to measuring the internal-consistency reliability, the composite reliability values of the latent factors were calculated in this study. This test of reliability is elaborated on under Section 4.6.7.

#### **4.6.4 Validity**

Validity refers to the degree to which alterations in a measuring instrument produce accurate results, even when administered as a different time (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:671). Other authors describe validity as being a determinant that establishes whether variables applied within the measuring instrument assess that what they were theorised to measure (Mostert & Du Plessis, 2007:72; Bradley, 2010:60). This implies that the validity of a scale rests on the reliability of that scale; that is, an unreliable measuring instrument is likely to furnish inconsistent results; thereby, constituting it as lacking validity (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:258).

Several methods that can be used to determine validity, namely content validity, criterion validity and construct validity.

##### **4.6.4.1 Content validity**

Parasuraman (1991:442) refers to content validity or face validity as the degree to which the scale items reflect that which is being measured. Malhotra (2010:320) adds that although ascertaining content validity is a systematic process, it is regarded as a subjective form of measuring validity since it involves the input of subject experts.

In this study, two marketing academics and one statistician assessed the questionnaire to ascertain the face validity of the instrument.

#### **4.6.4.2 Criterion validity**

Welman *et al.* (2005:144) define criterion validity as the scores obtained to reflect the variables being tested or predicted. These variables are then compared with demographic or psychographic characteristics, attitudes and behavioural dispositions or scores received from other instruments (Malhotra, 2010:261). According to Churchill (1996:403), criterion validity is rarely used as a measurement of validity even though it is considered relatively easy to assess. For this study, criterion validity was not applied.

#### **4.6.4.3 Construct validity**

Unlike the other approaches, construct validity is viewed as being not only the most sophisticated test of validity, but also the most difficult to demonstrate. As such, construct validity is used to denote whether the score variances discovered from the measuring instrument will expose any significant difference in the variables under evaluation (Dillion *et al.*, 1994:324). Construct validity involves the measure of three types of validity, namely convergent, discriminant and nomological validity (Malhotra, 2010:321).

Briefly explained, convergent validity is centred on evaluating whether related constructs in a scale correlate positively with each other. Discriminant validity measures the extent to which unrelated constructs do not correlate with each other. Nomological validity involves assessing whether different but related constructs within a scale correlate in a theoretically founded way (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:262), which in this study was assessed using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. It is advised that an average inter-item correlation ranging between 0.15 and 0.50 hints at convergent and discriminant validity (Clark & Watson, 1995:316). Furthermore, as discussed under Section 4.6.7, the factor loadings, the average variance extracted and the composite reliability were used to assess convergent and discriminant validity.

In this study, the construct validity of the measurement instrument was assessed in terms of convergent, discriminant and nomological validity measures.

#### **4.6.5 Descriptive statistics**

In quantitative research, descriptive statistic methods are designed to provide a summary of the research data under investigation (Welman *et al.*, 2005:231). The techniques commonly used to provide these summary measures include measures of location, measures of variability and measures of shape.

##### **4.6.5.1 Measures of location**

The measure of location or central tendency is described as the central point of distribution or position (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2006:56). This point of location is determined by calculating the mean, the median and mode where needed (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006:214).

The mean is calculated by taking the total value of the variables within a specified data set and dividing them by the number of variables (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:410). Proctor (2000:238) describes the median as the central point of distribution where the values are placed above the middle point and the rest below that value. The mode is described as the value that occurs most frequently within a coherent set of variables (Malhotra, 2010:486).

##### **4.6.5.2 Measures of variability**

Malhotra (2010:487) describes the measures of variability as reflecting the degree to which data points in a distribution are scattered. Gravetter and Forzano (2012:403) advise that whilst a small variability is an indication that scores are clustered, a large variability demonstrate that scores are widely dispersed. These values can be measured by calculating the range, inter-quartile range, variance, standard deviation and coefficient variance (Malhotra, 2010:487). For this study, the standard deviation, which is the square root of the variance, was used as the measure of variability (McDaniel & Gates, 2001:412).

##### **4.6.5.3 Measures of shape**

Malhotra and Birks (2006:452) indicate that assessing the measures of shape aid in understanding the nature of distribution and involve consideration of the skewness and kurtosis of a distribution. In distinguishing between the two, Pallant (2007:56) writes

that where skewness pertains to the symmetry of distribution, kurtosis is concerned with the peakedness or flatness of distribution.

In terms of skewness, therefore, a distribution can be either positively or negatively skewed or symmetrical (Weston & Gore, 2006:735). In the case of a normal distribution, the skewness value would be zero (Blunch, 2008:96). Malhotra (2010:489) warns that high skewness scores may be problematic when using statistical methods that assume normality.

As established, kurtosis relates to the peakedness or flatness of the curve. Furthermore, these kurtosis scores can be either positive or negative. In the case of a positive kurtosis value, the dispersion is generally more peaked than that of a normal distribution. With a negative kurtosis value, the distribution is flatter than a normal distribution (Pallant, 2010:57). In the case of a normal distribution, the kurtosis value would be zero (Blunch, 2008:96). As with skewness, a very peaked or a very flat distribution may be problematic when using statistical methods that assume normality (Malhotra, 2010:448).

For the purpose of this study, the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis were calculated and used to determine whether the data were normally distributed.

#### **4.6.6 Correlation analysis**

Correlation analysis is the statistical method used to measure the strength of the relationship between two or more variables in a data set (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:720). Pearson's product moment correlation, or  $r$ , is applied when the aim is to determine the strength of the relationship between two or more metric variables (Malhotra, 2010:562). This correlation coefficient varies between -1.00 and +1.00, where  $r = -1.00$  equates to perfect negative correlation and  $r = +1.00$  to perfect positive correlation (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:734).

A correlation matrix was constructed using Pearson's correlation analysis in order to measure the strength of the relationships between the constructs and to assess the nomological validity of the proposed measurement model (Malhotra, 2010:734).

In the following section, structural equation modelling is discussed.

#### 4.6.7 Structural equation modelling

MacCullum and Austin (2000:202) refer to structural equation modelling (SEM) as “a technique used for specifying and estimating models of linear relationships among variables”, whereby the measured and latent variables are indicated. Similarly, Steenkamp and Baumgartner (2000:199) describe SEM as a process utilised to investigate the linear relationships between observed (measured) and unobserved (latent) variables or constructs.

According to Hair *et al.* (2010:629), SEM is a combination of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. Whilst SEM represents a confirmatory analysis as opposed to an exploratory analysis (Byrne, 2010:6; Hair *et al.*, 2010:642; Malhotra, 2010:726), it frequently necessitates an exploratory aspect (Malhotra, 2010:725). Unlike other methods, SEM permits the use of multiple statistical tests to demonstrate construct validity of the factors and to determine the best model fit (Weston & Gore, 2006:723).

Sequentially, SEM involves defining the individual constructs, developing and specifying the measurement model, assessing the model reliability and validity, defining the structural model, evaluating the structural model and reporting on the conclusions and recommendations drawn (Malhotra, 2010:729). This process is illustrated in Figure 4.4.

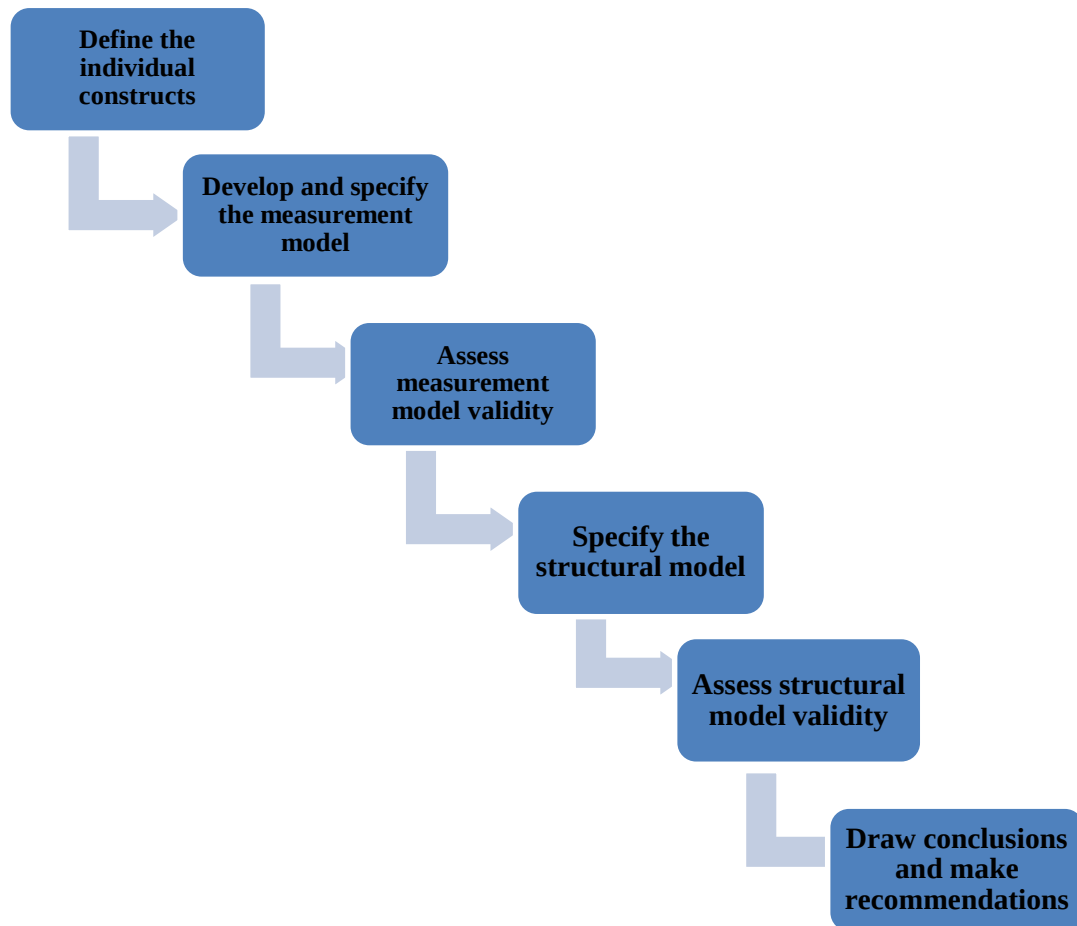


**Figure 4.4: Structural equation modelling process** (adapted from Malhotra, 2010:729)

Several authors advise that when defining the individual constructs and determining their interrelationships, it is important to ensure that these are guided by hypotheses underpinned by a strong underlying theory (Reisinger & Turner, 1999:72; Hair *et al.*, 2010:642; Malhotra, 2010:729). Once the individual constructs have been defined as per the theory and their relevant indicator variables have been measured, the measurement model can be specified.

The specification of a measurement model involves assigning the relevant measured indicator variables to each of the latent factors in the model, indicating the correlational relationships between the latent factors and assigning error terms to the indicator variables (Hair *et al.*, 2010:656). In addition, the factor loading of the first indicator

variable of each of the latent factors needs to be fixed, typically to a value of one (Malhotra, 2010:730).

In SEM, the objective is to specify an over-identified model, as opposed to an under-identified or just-identified model. An over-identified model elicits positive degrees of freedom, which allow for the rejection of the model and this then renders it scientifically useful. The formula for calculating the number of distinct sample moments is  $p(p+1)/2$ , where  $p$  refers to the number of data points. If the number of distinct sample moments less the number of distinct parameters to be estimated results in a positive degrees of freedom, the model is over-identified (Byrne, 2010:34).

Thereafter, it is necessary to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model. In order for a measurement model to exhibit validity and reliability, the standardised loading estimates of each indicator variable should be 0.50 or higher (although 0.70 or higher is preferable), the average variance extracted (AVE) should be 0.50 or higher and the composite reliability (CR) should be 0.70 or higher. In combination, these tests provide evidence of convergent validity and internal consistency. In addition, the AVE should be greater than the square of the correlation coefficients between the latent factors in order to demonstrate discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2010:695).

Yuan (2005:115) indicates that evaluating model fit is an essential component of SEM. Essentially, fit measures fall into one of three categories. Absolute fit indices include goodness-of-fit indices such as the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and adjusted-goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), and badness-of-fit indices such as the chi-square, the root mean square residual (RMR), the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (Malhotra, 2010:731). Incremental fit indices include the normed fit index (NFI), the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker Lewis index (TLI), relative fit index (RFI) and the incremental fit index (IFI) (Byrne, 2010:79). The last set of fit indices includes the parsimony goodness-of-fit index (PGFI) and the parsimony normed fit index (PNFI) (Malhotra, 2010:733).

For the purpose of this study, the chi-square, SRMR, RMSEA, IFI, CFI and TLI indices were employed for measuring model fit. Byrne (2010:77-80) maintains that values of 0.05 or less, and 0.08 for SRMR and RMSEA, respectively, suggest satisfactory model

fit, while values of 0.90 or above are an indication of good model fit for the IFI, CFI and TLI indices.

A non-significant chi-square value is also a reflection of acceptable fit (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2007:57). Whilst the chi-square statistic remains the most fundamental index of the absolute fit indices, it is highly sensitive to sample size, and although reported on, rarely provides a pragmatic approach for assessing model fit (Byrne, 2010:76).

As soon as the reliability and validity of the specified measurement model has been established, it is possible to proceed in specifying the structural model (Malhotra, 2010:735).

Whereas the measurement model represents the CFA of the latent factors and their indicator variables, the structural model represents the way in which the exogenous or independent latent factors directly and/or indirectly influence the endogenous or dependent latent factors in the model (Byrne, 2010:13). In other words, the measurement model is changed to reflect the relationships between the latent factors.

Even though the same sample data is applied in each model, the fit statistics typically change and, as such, need to be computed again (Malhotra, 2010:735). When specifying a structural model, the specification of alternative models is encouraged, even if the original model demonstrates acceptable fit. The reason for this is that comparing competing models helps to establish the superiority of a model (Hair *et al.*, 2010:675). To this end, over and above the fit indices discussed in the previous paragraphs, it is also advisable to consider Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC) and Bozdogan's consistent version of the AIS, namely the CAIC, where in both cases, the lower the value the better the fit (Byrne, 2010:82). This is expanded upon in Chapter 5.

## **4.7 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this chapter was to clarify the research methodology that was followed in obtaining and analysing the required data for the empirical portion of this study. The descriptive research approach, utilising a single cross-sectional design was selected as the most appropriate research design to follow in order to realise the research objectives formulated in Chapter 1.

For the sample, three public registered HEI campuses, namely one from a traditional university, one from a comprehensive university and one from a university of technology were selected as being representative of the demographic. The survey questionnaire was elected as the most suitable method for collecting the required data. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 400 black Generation Y male students across the three campuses. The captured data were analysed using the SPSS and AMOS programs. The statistical analysis techniques applied included frequency analysis, exploratory factor analysis, reliability and validity analysis, descriptive statistics analysis, correlation analysis and structural equation modelling.

In the following chapter the research methodology described in this chapter is applied to the data set. Chapter 5 reports on the empirical findings from the pilot and main study. Conclusions are then drawn based on the formulated hypotheses.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

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*“Fashion is something barbarous, for it produces innovation without reason and imitation without benefit.”*

***George Santayana***

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a report of the findings of the empirical study, together with an interpretation of those findings is given. The chapter begins with a discussion of the results from the pilot test, which is followed by a description of the data gathering process, the preliminary data analysis and a description of the demographic characteristics of the sample used in the main survey. Thereafter, the results of the exploratory factor analysis are discussed, as well as the results of the reliability and validity analysis of the research instrument. This is followed by a discussion on the descriptive statistical analysis and the correlation analysis of the main survey. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the results of the structural equation modelling procedure that was undertaken to test the various hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1.

The statistical programs SPSS and AMOS, version 21.0 for Microsoft Windows, were used to perform the data analysis. This data analysis consisted of two phases. The first phase discusses an analysis of the results obtained from the pilot testing of the questionnaire and the second stage provides an analysis of the findings from the main survey.

In the following section, the results of the pilot test are discussed.

#### 5.2 RESULTS OF THE PILOT TEST

In order to establish face and content validity, the questionnaire was pre-tested initially on five experienced marketing academics and a statistician. Following the pre-testing,

the questionnaire was piloted on a convenience sample of 40 black Generation Y male students enrolled at a South African HEI that did not form part of the sample in the main survey. This pilot testing was conducted in order to determine the reliability of the scales used within the questionnaire.

The reliability and validity of multi-item scales used in the questionnaire were measured by calculating the Cronbach alpha and average inter-item correlation coefficient. While Malhotra (2010:319) indicates that a Cronbach alpha exceeding 0.6 is considered a satisfactory result of reliability, Pallant (2007:98) suggests that a Cronbach alpha value of between 0.7 and 0.8 is preferable. Malhotra (2010:321) highlights that construct validity, which encompasses both convergent and discriminant validity, is a high-level measure of a measurement instrument's validity that reflects the soundness of the theory underlying the construct and how it relates to other constructs within the instrument. According to Clark and Watson (1995:316), an average inter-item correlation value of between 0.15 and 0.50 is indicative of convergent and discriminant validity. A summary of the pilot test results are given in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Summary of pilot test results**

| <b>Construct</b>            | <b>Items</b> | <b>Number of variables</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>Cronbach alpha</b> | <b>Average inter-item correlation</b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Fashion consciousness       | C1-C6, C15   | 7                          | 40       | 0.844                 | 0.441                                 |
| Fashion conscious behaviour | C7-C10, C16  | 5                          | 40       | 0.710                 | 0.332                                 |
| Fashion awareness           | C11-C14      | 4                          | 40       | 0.784                 | 0.503                                 |
| Avoidance of similarity     | D1-D3        | 3                          | 40       | 0.821                 | 0.606                                 |
| Unpopular choice            | D4-D6        | 3                          | 40       | 0.760                 | 0.514                                 |
| Creative choice             | D7-D8        | 2                          | 40       | 0.376                 | 0.256                                 |

Table 5.1 illustrates that, with the exception of the creative choice construct, Cronbach alphas above the recommended 0.700 value were computed on all constructs, thereby signalling acceptable reliability. The Cronbach alpha of 0.376 computed on the creative choice construct was well below the recommended level. However, this construct

comprises only two items, which would negatively affect its alpha value (Malhotra, 2010:319). In addition, the construct's average inter-item correlation fell well within the recommended range. Often, in cases where a construct has fewer than 10 items, it is advised to report on the average inter-item correlation value (Pallant, 2010:100). As such, the construct was retained in the main survey. In terms of the other constructs' average inter-item correlation coefficients, only the avoidance of similarity construct returned a value that was well above the recommended range. Notwithstanding this, the decision was taken to retain this construct given its acceptable level of reliability and importance in terms of the need for uniqueness theory (Knight & Kim, 2007:275).

### **5.3 DATA GATHERING PROCESS**

A self-administered questionnaire was employed for gathering the required data from the black Generation Y male students' enrolled at the three chosen campuses that formed part of the sampling frame. Lecturers at each of these university campuses were contacted and asked if they would allow questionnaires to be administered to their students during lectures. Once permission had been obtained, the questionnaires were hand delivered to the respective lecturers and distributed during the scheduled lectures. The participation of the students was strictly voluntary and they were guaranteed that all information they provided, including the name of their HEI, would be treated as confidential.

### **5.4 PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS**

Once the required data was gathered, a preliminary data analysis was carried out, which included the coding, cleaning and tabulation of the data.

#### **5.4.1 Coding**

The questionnaire for this study comprised of three sections. Section A was designed to collect the participants' demographical information and Section B was designed to collect data pertaining to their clothing consumption. In Section C, black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour was measured, while Section D focused on their need for uniqueness. Table 5.2 depicts the coding used for the questionnaire.

**Table 5.2: Coding information**

| <b>Section A: Demographical data</b>                                     |             |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Question</b>                                                          | <b>Code</b> | <b>Construct measured</b>   | <b>Value assigned to responses</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Question 1                                                               | A1          | Age                         | 18 (1), 19 (2), 20 (3), 21 (4), 22 (5), 23 (6), 24 (7)                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Question 2                                                               | A2          | Ethnic group                | Black (1), White (2), Coloured (3), Asian (4)                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Question 3                                                               | A3          | Province where you grew up  | Eastern Cape (1), Free State (2), Gauteng (3), KwaZulu-Natal (4), Limpopo (5), Mpumalanga (6), Northern Cape (7), North-West (8), Western Cape (9)                                                                                                |
| Question 4                                                               | A4          | University campus           | Traditional University (1), Comprehensive University (2), University of Technology (3)                                                                                                                                                            |
| Question 5                                                               | A5          | Average monthly allowance   | Less than R500 (1), R500 – R1000 (2), R1001 – R1500 (3), R1501 – R2000 (4), R2001 – R2500 (5), R2501 – R3000 (6), R3001 – R3500 (7), R3501 – R4000 (8), R4001 – R4500 (9), R4501 + (10)                                                           |
| <b>Section B: Black Generation Y male students' clothing consumption</b> |             |                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Question 6                                                               | B1          | Number of clothing accounts | 0 (0), 1 (1), 2 (2), 3 (3), 4 (4), More (5)                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Question 7                                                               | B2          | Top three clothing stores   | Edgars (1), Identity (2), Jet (3), Legit (4), Markhams (5), Mr Price (6), Pep (7), Sportscene (8), Totalsports (9), Truworths Man (10), Woolworths (11), Other (12)                                                                               |
| Question 8                                                               | B3          | Top three clothing brands   | Adidas (1), Billabong (2), Daniel Hechter (3), Diesel (4), DKNY (5), Gucci (6), Guess (7), Jeep (8), John Craig (9), Kurt Geiger (10), Lacoste (11), Levis (12), Nike (13), Polo (14), Puma (15), Reebok (16), Soviet (17), Uzzi (18), Other (19) |

**Table 5.2: Coding information (continued...)**

| Section C: Consumers' fashion consciousness |      |                             |                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item                                        | Code | Construct measured          | Value assigned to responses                                |
| Item 1                                      | C1   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 2                                      | C2   | Fashion consciousness       | Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly disagree (3) |
| Item 3                                      | C3   |                             | Slightly agree (4), Agree (5), Strongly agree (6)          |
| Item 4                                      | C4   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 5                                      | C5   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 6                                      | C6   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 7                                      | C15  | Fashion conscious behaviour | Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly disagree (3) |
| Item 8                                      | C7   |                             | Slightly agree (4), Agree (5), Strongly agree (6)          |
| Item 9                                      | C8   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 10                                     | C9   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 11                                     | C10  |                             |                                                            |
| Item 12                                     | C16  |                             |                                                            |
| Item 13                                     | C11  | Fashion awareness           |                                                            |
| Item 14                                     | C12  |                             | Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly disagree (3) |
| Item 15                                     | C13  |                             | Slightly agree (4), Agree (5), Strongly agree (6)          |
| Item 16                                     | C14  |                             |                                                            |
| Section D: Consumers' need for uniqueness   |      |                             |                                                            |
| Item                                        | Code | Construct measured          | Value assigned to responses                                |
| Item 17                                     | D1   | Avoidance of similarity     | Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly disagree (3) |
| Item 18                                     | D2   |                             | Slightly agree (4), Agree (5), Strongly agree (6)          |
| Item 19                                     | D3   |                             |                                                            |
| Item 20                                     | D4   | Unpopular choice            | Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly disagree (3) |
| Item 21                                     | D5   |                             | Slightly agree (4), Agree (5), Strongly agree (6)          |
| Item 23                                     | D7   | Creative choice             | Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly disagree (3) |
| Item 24                                     | D8   |                             | Slightly agree (4), Agree (5), Strongly agree (6)          |

## 5.4.2 Data cleaning

During the data-cleaning step, any questionnaires collected from participants who did not conform to the target population description specified were discarded. Furthermore, where scaled-responses within questionnaires had missing values of less than 10 percent, these were estimated based on the mode. Those with missing values exceeding 10 percent were discarded.

## 5.4.3 Tabulation

The process of tabulation involves calculating the number of individuals' responses and presenting the data into decipherable frequency tables (Aaker & Day, 1990:435; Churchill, 1995:84; Klopper *et al.*, 2006:158).

Table 5.3 provides a report on the frequency tables constructed for the scaled responses obtained from the main survey.

**Table 5.3: Frequency table of responses**

| Scale items | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| C1          | 14                | 30       | 24                | 50             | 71    | 24             |
| C2          | 21                | 35       | 40                | 57             | 47    | 13             |
| C3          | 19                | 33       | 36                | 61             | 50    | 14             |
| C4          | 16                | 33       | 37                | 51             | 53    | 23             |
| C5          | 9                 | 9        | 17                | 38             | 89    | 51             |
| C6          | 17                | 21       | 31                | 68             | 53    | 23             |
| C7          | 25                | 30       | 34                | 55             | 45    | 24             |
| C8          | 21                | 23       | 33                | 64             | 61    | 11             |
| C9          | 77                | 50       | 22                | 24             | 23    | 17             |
| C10         | 43                | 50       | 39                | 41             | 24    | 16             |
| C11         | 10                | 9        | 12                | 42             | 78    | 62             |
| C12         | 8                 | 6        | 15                | 35             | 77    | 72             |
| C13         | 7                 | 6        | 15                | 46             | 71    | 68             |
| C14         | 15                | 16       | 21                | 42             | 74    | 45             |
| C15         | 45                | 32       | 31                | 44             | 44    | 17             |
| C16         | 61                | 53       | 47                | 32             | 14    | 6              |

**Table 5.3: Frequency table of responses (continued...)**

| <b>Scale items</b> | <b>Strongly disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly disagree</b> | <b>Slightly agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Strongly agree</b> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| <b>D1</b>          | 32                       | 42              | 36                       | 37                    | 39           | 27                    |
| <b>D2</b>          | 27                       | 26              | 34                       | 36                    | 47           | 43                    |
| <b>D3</b>          | 22                       | 19              | 38                       | 40                    | 53           | 41                    |
| <b>D4</b>          | 15                       | 14              | 18                       | 36                    | 71           | 59                    |
| <b>D5</b>          | 18                       | 26              | 25                       | 51                    | 68           | 25                    |
| <b>D6</b>          | 22                       | 31              | 34                       | 49                    | 54           | 23                    |
| <b>D7</b>          | 10                       | 13              | 26                       | 31                    | 85           | 48                    |
| <b>D8</b>          | 6                        | 12              | 18                       | 45                    | 80           | 52                    |

In the following section, participants' demographical information and clothing consumption patterns collected from the study are provided.

## **5.5 MAIN SURVEY SAMPLE DESCRIPTION**

This section provides a description of the sample used in the main survey, together with the participants' choice of preferred clothing stores and fashion brands.

### **5.5.1 Sample description**

Of the 400 questionnaires administered, 277 questionnaires were returned. Questionnaires where the participants had failed to indicate their ethnic group, as well as those questionnaires where more than 10 percent of the values were missing were discarded, which resulted in 213 usable questionnaires; that is, a response rate of 53 percent. In this section, a description of this sample of 213 participants is provided. All reported percentage values have been rounded off.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the age distribution of the participants in the study.

## Age

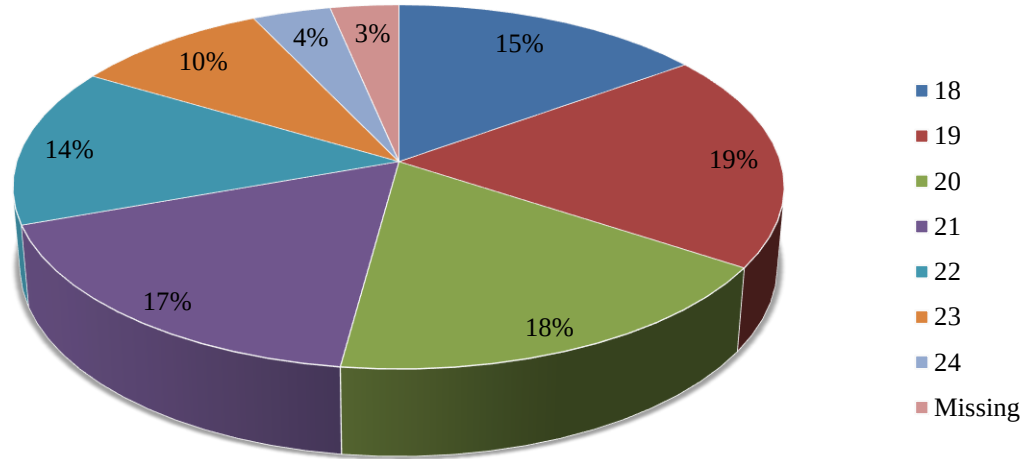


**Figure 5.1: Participants age**

As shown in Figure 5.1, of the participants 15 percent were 18 years old, 19 percent 19 years old, 18 percent 20 years old, 17 percent 21 years old, 14 percent 22 years old, 10 percent 23 years old, 4 percent 24 years old, and 3 percent did not indicate their age. Therefore, all age categories specified in Chapter 1 as the target population were represented in the sample.

Figure 5.2 illustrates the South African province of origin of the sample's participants.

## Province

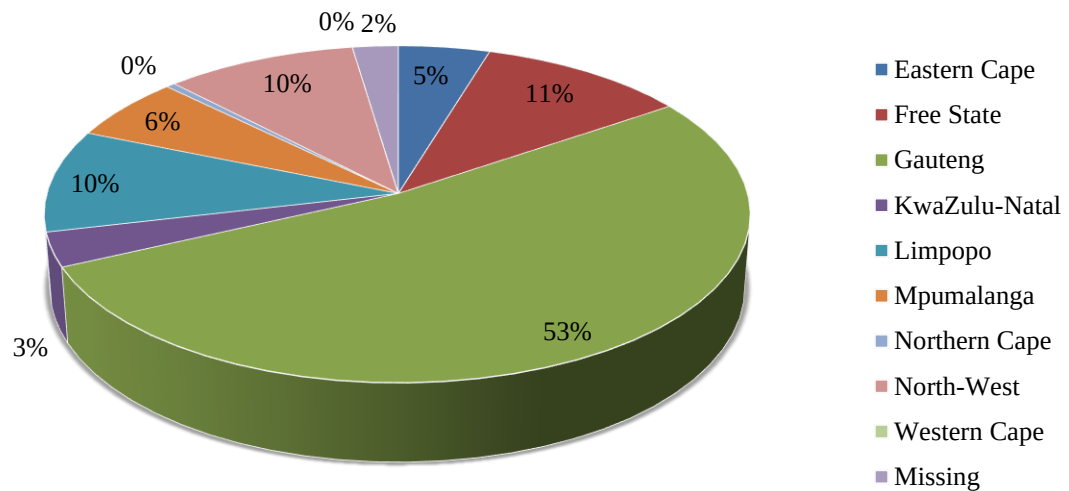


**Figure 5.2: Province where participants grew up**

In terms of the province where participants grew up, Figure 5.2 depicts that 5 percent of participants were from the Eastern Cape, 11 percent from Free State, 53 percent from Gauteng, 3 percent KwaZulu-Natal, 10 percent Limpopo, 6 percent Mpumalanga, 10 percent North-West and 2 percent of the participants did not indicate their location. There were no participants from the Northern and Western Cape.

Figure 5.3 illustrates the type of HEI where participants in the sample were registered at the time of the study.

## Institutions

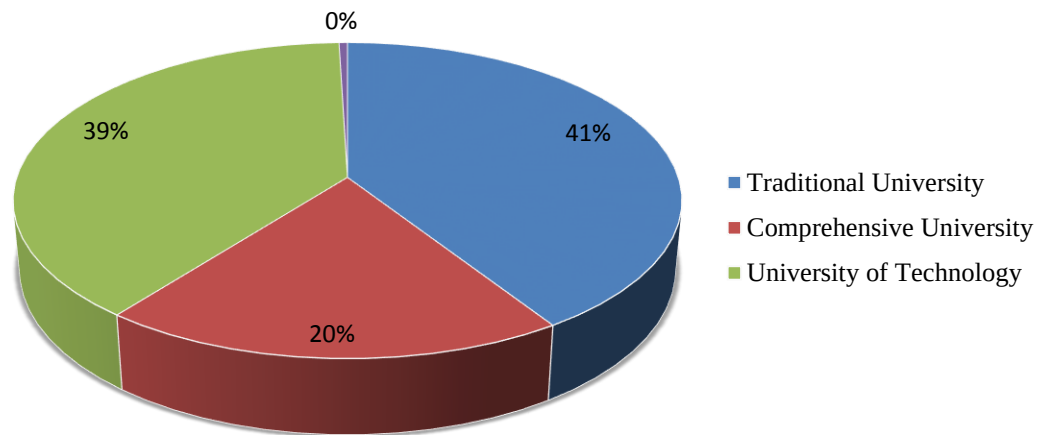


**Figure 5.3: Higher education institution**

As illustrated in Figure 5.3, 41 percent of the participants were from a traditional university, 20 percent a comprehensive university and 39 percent from a university of technology.

Figure 5.4 depicts the participants' reported average monthly allowance.

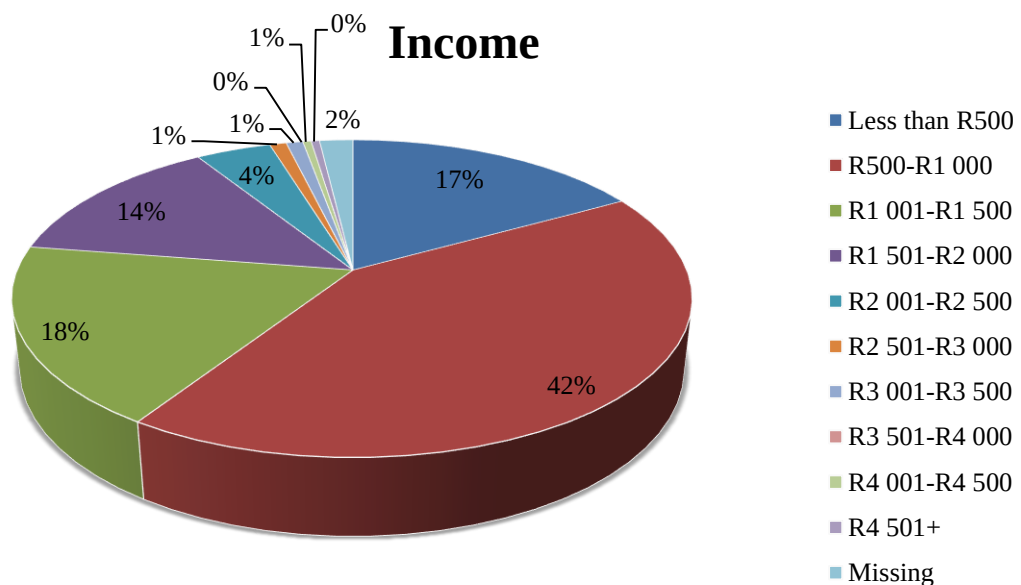


**Figure 5.4: Average monthly allowance**

According to Figure 5.4, 17 percent of participants have a reported average monthly allowance of less than R500, 42 percent between R500-R1000, 18 percent between R1001-R1500, 14 percent between R1501-R2000, 4 percent between R2001-R2500, and 2 percent did not specify their monthly allowance. This indicates that the majority of participants in the sample have an average monthly allowance of between R500 and R1000.

The following section reports on the participants' number of clothing accounts, top three preferred choice of clothing stores, and brands.

### 5.5.2 Participants clothing consumption

In addition to the demographic section, the questionnaire included three questions designed to ascertain participants' clothing consumption. The first question dealt with the number of clothing accounts that they reported having.

#### Number of clothing accounts

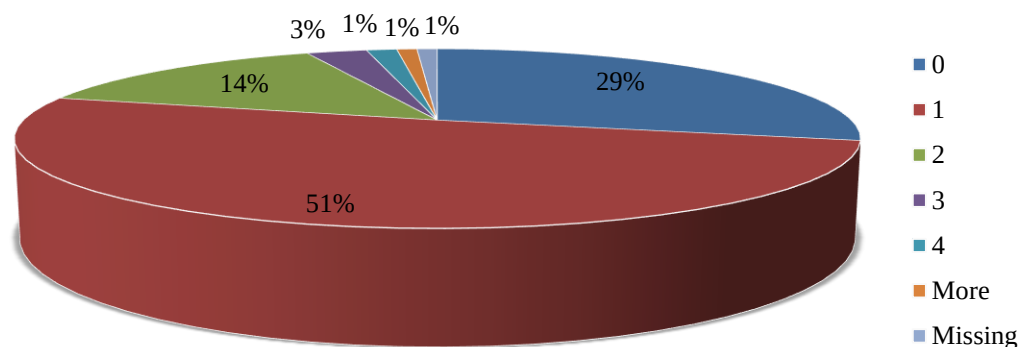


**Figure 5.5: Number of clothing accounts**

Figure 5.5 illustrates that while 29 percent of the participants indicated that they did not have any clothing accounts, 51 percent indicated having at least one clothing account. Of the participants, 14 percent indicated that they had two clothing accounts, 3 percent indicated that they had three accounts, 1 percent indicated that they had four accounts.

Only 1 percent of the participants indicated that they had more than four clothing accounts.

The second question asked participants to select their top three preferred clothing stores and these frequencies are reflected in Figure 5.6.



**Figure 5.6: Top three preferred clothing stores**

As illustrated in Figure 5.6, of the 11 South African clothing stores mentioned, 109 participants indicated their preferred clothing store as Markhams, followed by Edgars with 86 participants, Mr Price with 77, and Truworths Man with 75. These figures are particularly important considering that statistics in 2012 revealed that retailers within the textile, clothing, footwear and leather goods industry contributed approximately 18 percent to the country's total retail sales. Furthermore, the fashion industry generates several billion rands annually, as reported in Chapter 3.

The third question asked participants to select their top three preferred clothing brands and these frequencies are reflected in Figure 5.7.

## Preferred clothing brands

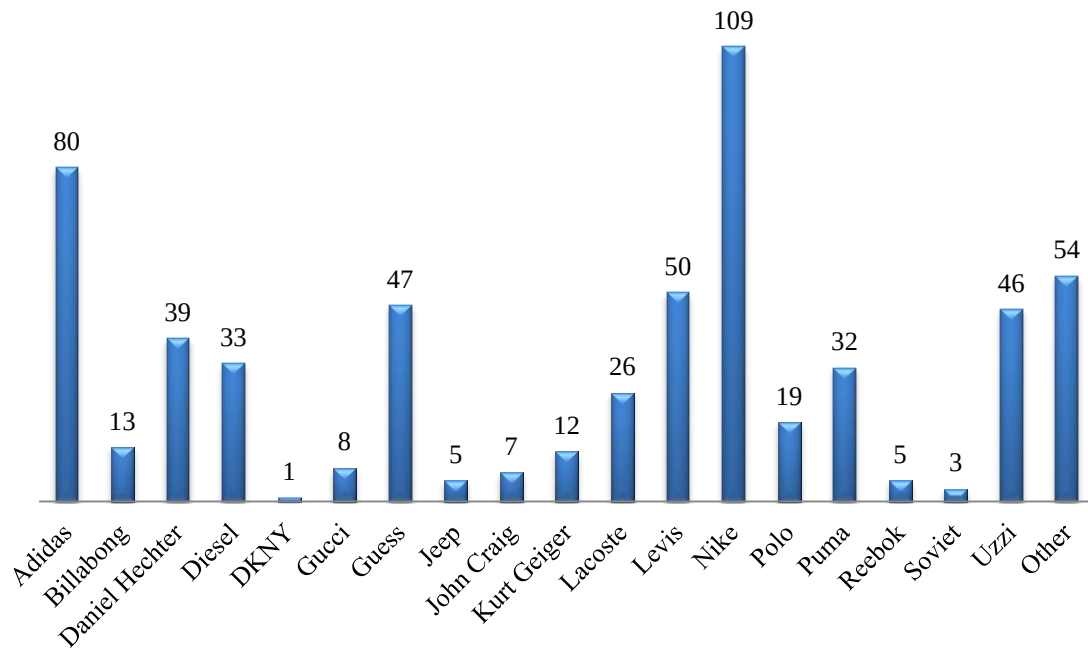


**Figure 5.7: Top three preferred clothing brands**

As illustrated in Figure 5.7, of the 18 clothing brands mentioned, 109 participants selected Nike as their preferred clothing brand, followed by Adidas with 80, Levis with 50, Guess with 47 and Uzzi with 46. Although 54 of the participants indicated ‘other’, these brands were not named as was requested on the questionnaire. As indicated in Chapter 2, Generation Y individuals are more aware of buying socially unacceptable brands than other generational cohorts. It is for this reason that in consuming branded clothing, Generation Y aim to signify their individuality.

In the following section, the exploratory factor analysis carried out on the captured data is outlined.

## 5.6 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed on all the construct-related items. Prior to undertaking the EFA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett test of sphericity were executed. The two tests yielded satisfactory results for the consumer fashion consciousness scale (KMO=0.873, chi-square Bartlett test=1490.343 (df=120),  $p=0.000<0.05$ ) and the consumer need for

uniqueness scale (KMO=0.845, chi-square Bartlett test=675.733 (df=120),  $p=0.000<0.05$ ) respectively. Thereafter, principal component analysis, using varimax rotation, was carried out on the construct-related items.

For the consumer fashion consciousness scale, three factors were extracted with eigenvalues above 1.0 that explained 58.44 percent of the total variance.

While most items loaded as expected, C15 failed to load as anticipated and had to be removed. Before removing this item, the construct was analysed to ascertain whether its deletion would modify the original conceptualisation of this construct.

Table 5.4 illustrates the rotated factors for the consumer fashion consciousness scale.

**Table 5.4: Rotated factors: consumer fashion consciousness scale**

| Items         | 1     | 2            | 3     |
|---------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| C1            | 0.547 |              |       |
| C2            | 0.757 |              |       |
| C3            | 0.750 |              |       |
| C4            | 0.669 |              |       |
| C5            | 0.665 |              |       |
| C6            | 0.809 |              |       |
| C7            |       | 0.688        |       |
| C8            |       | 0.528        |       |
| C9            |       | 0.700        |       |
| C10           |       | 0.629        |       |
| C11           |       |              | 0.810 |
| C12           |       |              | 0.821 |
| C13           |       |              | 0.881 |
| C14           |       |              | 0.611 |
| <b>*C15</b>   |       | <b>0.570</b> |       |
| C16           |       | 0.703        |       |
| *Item removed |       |              |       |

The same process was repeated on the consumer need for uniqueness scale. For the consumer need for uniqueness scale, three factors were extracted that explained 74.13 percent of the total variance.

One of the items, D4, loaded on the creative choice factor rather than on the unpopular choice factor as was the case in the original scale. However, after closer inspection, it was established that the item fit well with the creative choice factor.

Table 5.5 illustrates the rotated factors for the consumer need for uniqueness scale.

**Table 5.5: Rotated factors: consumer need for uniqueness scale**

| Items | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| D1    | 0.780 |       |       |
| D2    | 0.884 |       |       |
| D3    | 0.860 |       |       |
| D4    |       | 0.510 |       |
| D5    |       |       | 0.741 |
| D6    |       |       | 0.849 |
| D7    |       | 0.780 |       |
| D8    |       | 0.891 |       |

In the following section, the reliability and validity of these factors are outlined.

## 5.7 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS OF MAIN SURVEY

The Cronbach alpha and average inter-item correlation values calculated in accordance with the factors that emerged in Section 5.6 are provided in Table 5.6.

**Table 5.6: Reliability and average inter-item correlation values**

| Valid N | Constructs                  | Items                  | Cronbach alpha | Average inter-item correlation |
|---------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 213     | Fashion awareness           | C11, C12, C13, C14     | 0.824          | 0.553                          |
| 213     | Fashion consciousness       | C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 | 0.857          | 0.467                          |
| 213     | Fashion conscious behaviour | C7, C8, C9, C10, C16   | 0.761          | 0.391                          |
| 213     | Avoidance of similarity     | D1, D2, D3             | 0.846          | 0.648                          |
| 213     | Unpopular choice            | D5, D6                 | 0.611          | 0.440                          |
| 213     | Creative choice             | D4, D7, D8             | 0.771          | 0.535                          |

Table 5.6 illustrates that the Cronbach alpha values calculated on each construct exceeded the acceptable level of being above 0.60, with the majority exceeding the recommended value of 0.70, thereby indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability. While three of the constructs calculated average inter-item correlation values fell within the recommended range of 0.15 to 0.50, thereby indicating both convergent and discriminant validity, three had values above the range. In order to assess whether or not there is a problem with the discriminant validity of these three constructs, the average variance extracted is computed in Section 5.11.2.

The next section discusses the descriptive statistics analysis.

## 5.8 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

After determining the internal consistency reliability and construct validity on the constructs, the next step taken was to compute the summary measures of the data set, which included calculating the means, standard deviations, and skewness and kurtosis

values. These responses were measured using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree. Table 5.7 presents the descriptive statistics extracted from the study. The higher mean values indicated below are associated as reflecting greater agreement by participants.

**Table 5.7: Descriptive statistics**

| <b>Constructs</b>           | <b>Valid N</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> | <b>Skewness</b> | <b>Kurtosis</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Avoidance of similarity     | 213            | 3.74        | 1.43                      | -0.22           | -0.80           |
| Creative choice             | 213            | 4.50        | 1.14                      | -0.93           | 0.62            |
| Unpopular choice            | 213            | 3.82        | 1.27                      | -0.52           | -0.38           |
| Fashion awareness           | 213            | 4.63        | 1.07                      | -1.12           | 1.30            |
| Fashion consciousness       | 213            | 3.89        | 1.06                      | -0.58           | -0.12           |
| Fashion conscious behaviour | 213            | 3.12        | 1.07                      | 0.10            | -0.47           |

Table 5.7 illustrates that mean values above three were calculated for male fashion awareness (mean=4.63), male fashion consciousness (mean=3.89) and male fashion conscious behaviour (mean=3.12). Given the six-point scale used, this suggests that, similar to the findings of Bakewell *et al.* (2006:175), black Generation Y males are aware and conscious of fashion but, in contrast, are also actively engage in fashion conscious behaviour. These findings support the assertion in the media that African males in South Africa are taking an increased interest in personal grooming and their appearance (Govender, 2014:22). Means above 3 were also recorded on the consumer need for uniqueness constructs of creative choice (mean=4.50), unpopular choice (mean=3.82) and avoidance of similarity (mean=3.74), thereby suggesting that black Generation Y males have a high need for uniqueness. Of all the constructs pertaining to the need for uniqueness, the creative choice mean was the highest, which is in line with the findings of Knight and Kim (2007:274). This suggests that black Generation

Y males purchase brands that signal their uniqueness, while at the same time conform to what is acceptable to relevant others.

Furthermore, the data set appears to be normally distributed as none of the skewness values fall outside the -2 or +2 range. The kurtosis values suggest that the data set is relatively flat.

In the following section, the correlation analysis conducted is discussed.

## 5.9 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Constructing a matrix of construct correlations is considered useful in evaluating the nomological validity of a proposed measurement model (Hair *et al.*, 2010:710). Therefore, the Pearson correlation coefficients between each pair of constructs was computed prior to undertaking structural equation modelling. This correlation matrix is illustrated in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8: Correlation matrix**

| Constructs                  | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6 |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| Avoidance of similarity     | 1      |        |        |        |        |   |
| Creative choice             | 0.533* | 1      |        |        |        |   |
| Unpopular choice            | 0.377* | 0.558* | 1      |        |        |   |
| Fashion awareness           | 0.281* | 0.401* | 0.200* | 1      |        |   |
| Fashion consciousness       | 0.239* | 0.452* | 0.291* | 0.411* | 1      |   |
| Fashion conscious behaviour | 0.370* | 0.389* | 0.353* | 0.381* | 0.611* | 1 |

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficients presented in Table 5.8 indicate that at the  $\alpha=0.05$  level, there is a significant positive correlation between each pair of constructs. This suggests that the proposed measurement model exhibits nomological validity.

## **5.10 HYPOTHESES TESTING**

For the purpose of hypothesis testing, the significance level was set at the conventional  $\alpha=0.05$  level. In line with the relationships detected from the correlation matrix analysis, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Ho1: Male fashion conscious behaviour is not a six-factor structure comprising fashion conscious behaviour, fashion consciousness, fashion awareness, avoidance of similarity, unpopular choice and creative choice.

Ha1: Male fashion conscious behaviour is a six-factor structure comprising fashion conscious behaviour, fashion consciousness, fashion awareness, avoidance of similarity, unpopular choice and creative choice.

Ho2: Black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness does not have a significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour.

Ha2: Black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness does have a significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour.

Ho3: Black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness does not have a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness.

Ha3: Black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness does have a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness.

Ho4: The need for uniqueness dimension of avoidance of similarity does not have a significant positive influence on Black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ha4: The need for uniqueness dimension of avoidance of similarity does have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ho5: The need for uniqueness dimension of unpopular choice does not have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ha5: The need for uniqueness dimension of unpopular choice does have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ho6: The need for uniqueness dimension of creative choice does not have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

Ha6: The need for uniqueness dimension of creative choice does have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.

## **5.11 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING**

In this section, the structural equation modelling and path analysis applied for testing these hypotheses are discussed.

### **5.11.1 Measurement model specification**

In line with the constructs proposed in Chapter 3, the hypothesised measurement model (including all variables as per factor analysis) is a six-factor structure. This model includes six latent factors, namely fashion awareness (F1) (four indicators), fashion consciousness (F2) (six indicators), fashion conscious behaviour (F3) (five indicators), avoidance of similarity (F4) (three indicators), unpopular choice (F5) (three indicators) and creative choice (F6) (two indicators).

After assessing the factor loadings of the indicators, it was noted that one item, namely C14, loaded below the recommended 0.5 level. As the deletion of this item did not affect the integrity of the construct, it was eliminated, which translates into the fashion awareness (F1) latent factor having three indicators. The specified measurement model is presented in Figure 5.8.

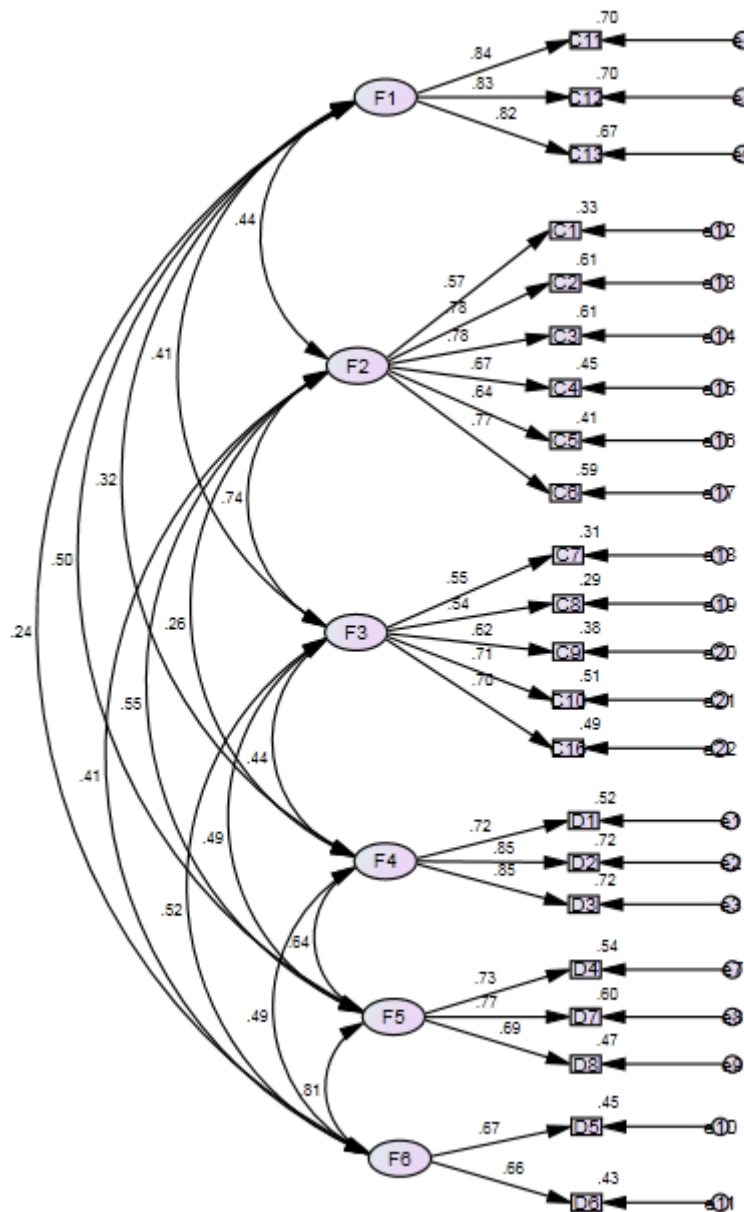


**Figure 5.8: Specified measurement model**

For model identification purposes, the first loading on each of the factors was set at 1.0. Consequently, there are 253 distinct sample moments, and 59 parameters to be estimated, resulting in 194 degrees of freedom based on an over-identified model, and a chi-square value of 294.80 with a probability level equal to 0.000.

Following the advice of Hair *et al.* (2010:706), the specified measurement model was evaluated for any problematic estimates, such as negative error variances or Heywood cases and standardised factor loadings greater than 1.0 or below -1.0. As is evident from Table 5.9, there are no problematic estimates within the specified measurement model.

**Table 5.9: Standardised coefficients of the measurement model**

| <b>Latent factors</b> | <b>Constructs</b>           | <b>Indicators</b> | <b>Factor loadings</b> | <b>Error variance</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| F1                    | Fashion awareness           | C11               | 0.84                   | + 0.70                |
|                       |                             | C12               | 0.83                   | + 0.70                |
|                       |                             | C13               | 0.82                   | + 0.67                |
| F2                    | Fashion consciousness       | C1                | 0.57                   | + 0.33                |
|                       |                             | C2                | 0.78                   | + 0.61                |
|                       |                             | C3                | 0.78                   | + 0.61                |
|                       |                             | C4                | 0.67                   | + 0.45                |
|                       |                             | C5                | 0.64                   | + 0.41                |
|                       |                             | C6                | 0.77                   | + 0.59                |
| F3                    | Fashion conscious behaviour | C7                | 0.55                   | + 0.31                |
|                       |                             | C8                | 0.54                   | + 0.29                |
|                       |                             | C9                | 0.62                   | + 0.38                |
|                       |                             | C10               | 0.71                   | + 0.51                |
|                       |                             | C16               | 0.70                   | + 0.49                |
| F4                    | Avoidance of similarity     | D1                | 0.72                   | + 0.52                |
|                       |                             | D2                | 0.85                   | + 0.72                |
|                       |                             | D3                | 0.85                   | + 0.72                |
| F5                    | Unpopular choice            | D4                | 0.73                   | + 0.54                |
|                       |                             | D7                | 0.77                   | + 0.60                |
|                       |                             | D8                | 0.69                   | + 0.47                |
| F6                    | Creative choice             | D5                | 0.67                   | + 0.45                |
|                       |                             | D6                | 0.66                   | + 0.43                |

Following this, the measurement model was assessed for model fit using the following fit indices produced by AMOS, namely the chi-square, the incremental fit index (IFI), the Tucker Lewis index (TLI), the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardised root mean residual (SRMR) and the root square error of approximation (RMSEA). Although the model's significant chi-square value of 294.50 with 194 degrees of freedom is an indication of poor fit, typically these values are sensitive to large sample sizes (Byrne, 2010:76). In addition, the other fit indices, namely IFI=0.95, TLI=0.94, CFI=0.95, SRMR=0.0536 and RMSEA=0.05, demonstrate a satisfactory fit between the measurement model and the data.

In the following section, the evaluation of the measurement model's reliability and validity is discussed.

### 5.11.2 Reliability and validity tests for the measurement model

Literature indicates that the objective of a measurement model is to investigate and ascertain whether the scale items pertaining to a specific construct are valid (Malhotra, 2010:744). Reliability was calculated by measuring the composite reliability (CR) by making use of the formula indicated below and the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the six factors. The formula below was used to compute the CR values

$$[(F_{l1}+F_{l2}+F_{l3}+...)^2 / (F_{l1}^2+F_{l2}^2+F_{l3}^2+...) + (err_1+err_2+err_3+...)]$$

The following formula was used for calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the six factors:

$$[(F_{l1}^2+F_{l2}^2+F_{l3}^2+...) / (F_{l1}^2+F_{l2}^2+F_{l3}^2+...) + (err_1+err_2+err_3+...)]$$

Table 5.10 reports on the CR and AVE values.

**Table 5.10: Measurement model: construct reliability, average variance extracted and correlation matrix**

|                             | CR   | AVE  | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---|
| Fashion awareness           | 0.75 | 0.50 | 1    |      |      |      |      |   |
| Fashion consciousness       | 0.86 | 0.50 | 0.44 | 1    |      |      |      |   |
| Fashion conscious behaviour | 0.83 | 0.50 | 0.41 | 0.74 | 1    |      |      |   |
| Avoidance of similarity     | 0.75 | 0.50 | 0.32 | 0.26 | 0.44 | 1    |      |   |
| Unpopular choice            | 0.75 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.55 | 0.49 | 0.64 | 1    |   |
| Creative choice             | 0.67 | 0.50 | 0.24 | 0.41 | 0.52 | 0.49 | 0.81 | 1 |

As is evident from Table 5.10, with the exception of the creative choice latent factor, all CR values exceed the recommended 0.7 level, thereby indicating reliability. At CR=0.67, the creative choice latent factor fell slightly short of the recommended level, which is most likely due to it having only two indicators (Hair *et al.*, 2010:698). At 0.50, each of the AVE values met the cut-off value of 0.50, thereby providing empirical proof of convergent validity. Additional evidence of convergent validity is provided in Table 5.9, where it is evident that all factor loadings exceeded the 0.5 level.

In terms of discriminant validity, with the exception of two cases, each of the correlation estimates in this study were smaller than that of the square root of the AVE ( $\sqrt{0.5}=0.71$ ), thereby suggesting discriminant validity. Owing to three of the dimensions measuring different aspects of fashion conscious behaviour and three of the dimensions measuring different aspects of the need for uniqueness trait, a certain degree of inter-correlation is to be anticipated.

Therefore, the specified measurement model exhibits acceptable reliability and validity, as well as satisfactory fit, thereby rendering it suitable for path analysis.

Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to reject Ho1, which infers that male fashion conscious behaviour is a six-factor structure.

The following section illustrates the hypothesised structural model.

### **5.11.3 Structural model**

In accordance with the hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1 and repeated in Section 5.10, Structural Model A, as illustrated in Figure 5.9, specifies that avoidance of similarity (F4), unpopular choice (F5) and creative choice (F6) directly influence fashion awareness (F1). Fashion awareness (F1), in turn, influences fashion consciousness (F2), which influences fashion conscious behaviour (F3). For visual comprehension purposes, the structural model figures presented in this chapter exclude the covariance lines, indicators and residuals. The detailed models are provided in Annexure B.

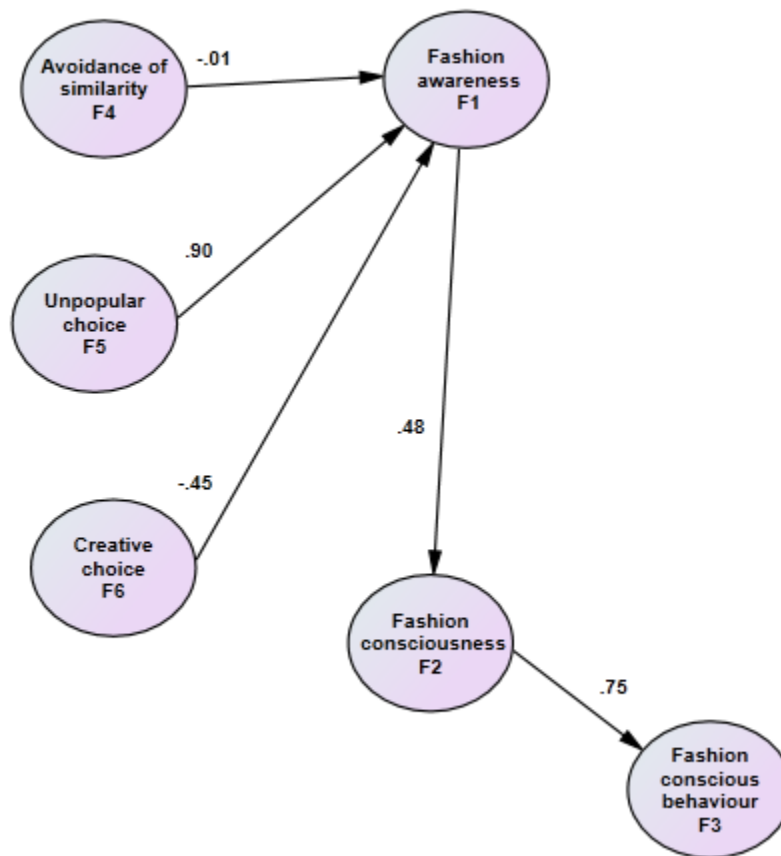


**Figure 5.9: Structural Model A**

Even though the chi-square value (344.15 (df=201)) continued to indicate poor model fit, Structural Model A yielded satisfactory fit indices in terms of IFI=.93, TLI=.92, CFI=.93, RMSEA=0.06. The SRMR=0.10 fell above the recommended level.

According to Figure 5.10, fashion awareness (F1) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2), and fashion consciousness (F2) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour (F3). Similarly, unpopular choice (F5) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness (F1). This infers that the null hypotheses Ho2, Ho3 and Ho5 be rejected and the alternative hypotheses Ha2, Ha3 and Ha5 concluded. However, avoidance of similarity (F4) ( $p=0.96>0.05$ ) and creative choice (F6) ( $p=0.09>0.05$ ) have a non-significant negative influence on fashion awareness (F1), thereby indicating that there is insufficient evidence to reject Ho4 and Ho6.

It was then decided to test an alternative model based on the initial measurement model. It is suggested that when comparing two or more models to consider the AIC and CAIC. Essentially, smaller values are indicative of better fit (Byrne, 2010:82). These values are reported as AIC=448.15 and CAIC=674.94 for Structural Model A.

Thereafter, the hypothesised model was revised to determine whether avoidance of similarity (F4) and creative choice (F6) have a direct influence on fashion consciousness (F2). Structural Model B is illustrated in Figure 5.10.

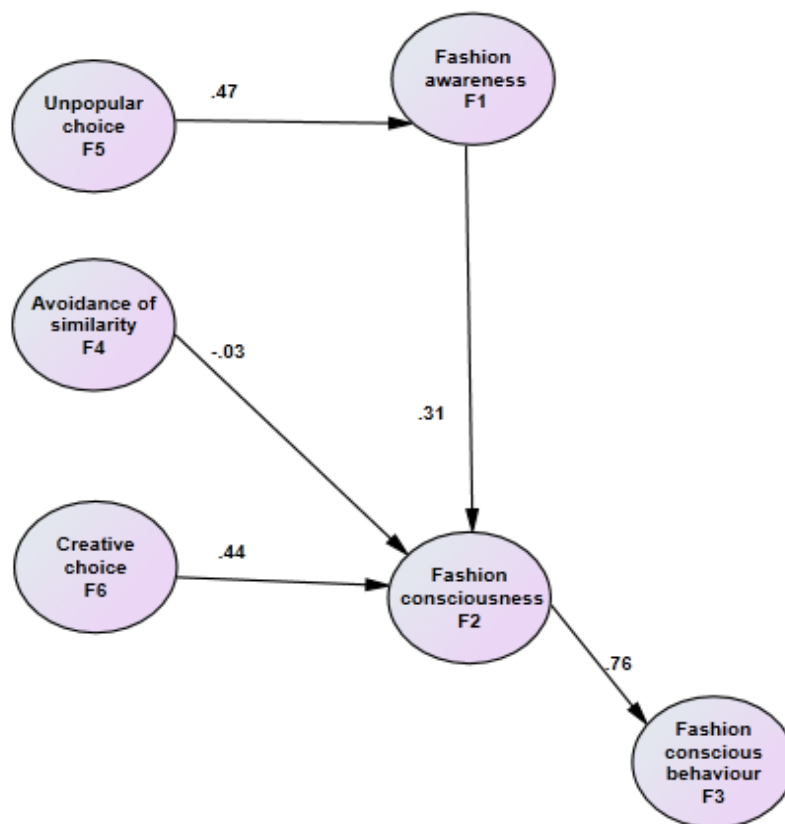


**Figure 5.10: Structural Model B**

Concerning model fit, Structural Model B exhibits a slightly better fit with chi-square=324.44 (df=201), IFI=0.94, TLI=0.93, CFI=0.94, SRMR=0.06, RMSEA=0.05, AIC=428.44 and CAIC=655.23.

As established in Structural Model A, fashion awareness (F1) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2), and fashion consciousness (F2) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on fashion conscious behaviour

(F3). In addition, unpopular choice (F5) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) continues to have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness. In contrast with Structural Model A, creative choice (F6) ( $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2) rather than on fashion awareness (F1), as initially hypothesised. However, avoidance of similarity (F4) ( $p=0.77>0.05$ ) has a non-significant negative influence to fashion consciousness (F2).

Therefore, a third model, Structural Model C was tested to determine whether avoidance of similarity (F4) directly influences fashion conscious behaviour (F3).

Structural Model C is presented in Figure 5.11.

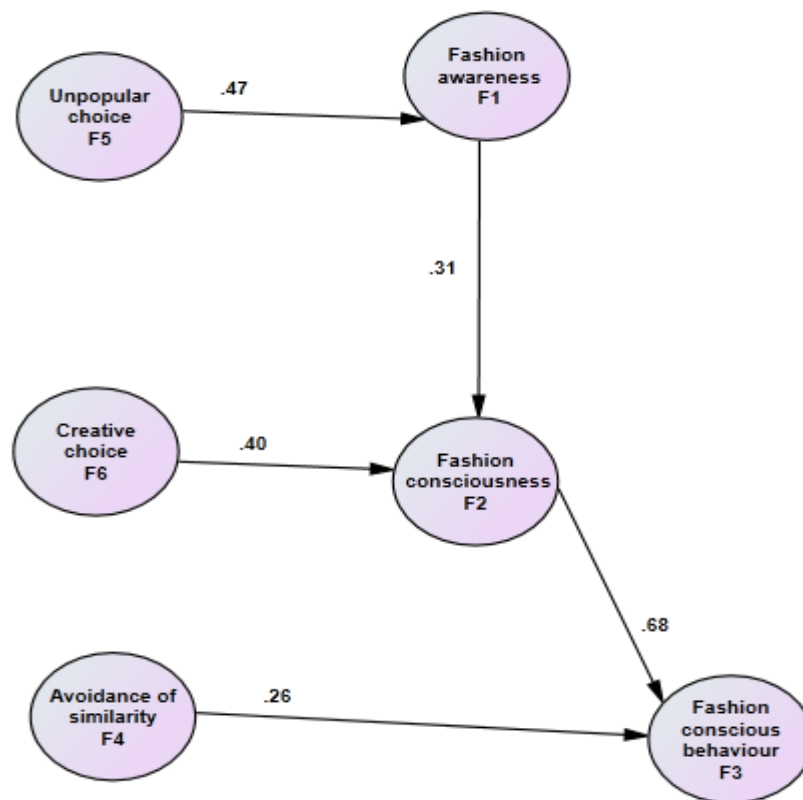


**Figure 5.11: Structural Model C**

In terms of model fit, Structural Model C presents as having significantly improved fit indices of chi-square=310.25 (df=201), IFI=0.95, TLI=0.94, CFI=0.94, SRMR=0.057, RMSEA=0.05, AIC=414.25 and CAIC=641.03.

Figure 5.11 indicates that fashion awareness (F1) (path estimate=0.31;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2) and fashion consciousness (F2) (path estimate=0.68;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on fashion conscious behaviour (F3). In addition, whilst unpopular choice (F5) (path estimates=0.47;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness (F1), creative choice (F6) (path estimate=0.40;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness (F2) and avoidance of similarity (F4) (path estimate=0.26;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ) has a direct significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour (F3).

## **5.12 CONCLUSION**

The objective of this chapter was to report on the empirical findings of the study. The results from the pilot test revealed Cronbach alphas above the recommended value, thus indicating that the measuring scale is reliable. Once the data was collected for the main survey, a preliminary data analysis was conducted for the purpose of coding, cleaning and tabulating the data, as illustrated in Table 5.3.

This was followed by a discussion of the sample description, their choice of preferred clothing stores and fashion brands. An exploratory factor analysis resulted in three factors being extracted for the fashion consciousness scale and three for the need for uniqueness scales. The internal consistency reliability and initial construct validity of these factors were assessed by computing the Cronbach alpha and average inter-item correlation values.

Computation of the descriptive statistics revealed means above 3 on the six-point Likert scale, which suggests that black Generation Y male students are fashion aware, fashion conscious and engage in fashion conscious behaviour. Moreover, they appear to have a strong need for uniqueness as reflected by the means returned on the avoidance of similarity, creative choice and unpopular choice constructs of this personality trait. Pearson's Product-Moment correlation analysis was carried out to ascertain that there were significant relationships between the constructs in the fashion consciousness scale and those in the need for uniqueness scale. Once it had been established that the proposed measurement model exhibited nomological validity, a measurement model comprising six latent factors was specified. The measurement model returned

satisfactory composite reliability, construct validity and goodness-of-fit values, thereby inferring that male fashion conscious behaviour is a six-factor structure. Having established that the specified model was suitable for path analysis, the initial structural model was specified, which led to the null hypotheses Ho2, Ho3 and Ho5 being rejected and their alternatives being concluded. Following the specification of subsequent competing models, Structural Model C offered the best fit with the data. The findings from Structural Model C suggest that unpopular choice influences black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness, while creative choice influences their fashion consciousness and the avoidance of similarity influences their actual fashion consciousness behaviour. In turn, fashion awareness influences their fashion consciousness, which influences their fashion conscious behaviour.

The findings reported on in this chapter offer interesting insights into male fashion conscious behaviour and the influence that the need for uniqueness personality trait has on that behaviour. These findings, together with the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 inform the conclusions and recommendations presented in the following chapter, Chapter 6.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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*“Clothes don’t make a man, but clothes have got man a man a good job.”*

***Herbert Harold Vreeland***

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated in Chapter 1, consumers use fashion clothing as a conspicuous way of signalling their identity to others, with fashion clothing serving intrinsic, communicatory, sociological and psychological functions. Working within the confines of South Africa’s economy, fashion represents an important industry, one that the government supports as part of their economic development programme. It is anticipated that as the fashion apparel industry continues to grow, much of this growth will be driven by the country’s Generation Y high-income males who, due to changes in gender roles and the introduction of the metro-male role model, have become more fashion conscious.

In 2013, South Africa’s black Generation Y males accounted for an estimated 42 percent of the country’s population. As a consequence of its size, the black Generation Y male market segment represents a potentially lucrative and attractive market for fashion apparel retailers and marketers. In this regard, those black Generation Y males pursuing tertiary qualifications are of particular interest given that a higher education frequently serves as a predictor of higher future earning and spending potential, as well as an indication of a higher social standing within a society.

Owing to the men’s increased fashion consciousness, coupled with the marketing opportunity that the significantly sized black Generation Y male segment represents in the South African market, a need was identified to propose and empirically test a model of possible determinants of black Generation Y male students’ fashion conscious behaviour. In the previous chapter, Chapter 5, the influence of the need for uniqueness personality trait, along with fashion awareness and fashion consciousness on black

Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour were tested by comparing alternative models.

Chapter 6 begins with an overview of the study. This is followed by a discussion on the main findings derived from the study, which is set out in accordance with the empirical objectives formulated in Chapter 1. Thereafter, a model of the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour is discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion of the limitations of the study, together with recommendations concerning further research and the concluding remarks of the study.

## **6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

The primary objective of this study, as indicated in Section 1.3.1, was to explore the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour in order to model the determinants of their fashion conscious behaviour. In line with this objective, the following concepts were examined in the literature:

- The discipline of consumer behaviour and the consumer decision-making model
- Characteristics of the Generation Y cohort
- Overview of the global and South African fashion industry
- Male fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour
- Consumers' need for uniqueness

Chapter 1 gave a background on the study and indicated in the problem statement (Section 1.2) that there was a need to determine the influence of the need for uniqueness, fashion awareness and fashion consciousness on black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour in the South African context. Following on from the problem statement, the primary objective of the study, together with the necessary theoretical objectives for addressing the primary objective were formulated in Sections 1.3.1 and 1.3.2. In line with the primary objective, five empirical objectives were formulated in Section 1.3.3. These five empirical objectives were then converted into

six sets of hypotheses, as presented in Section 1.3.3. This was followed by a brief outline of the proposed research design and methodology in Section 1.4 that was to be followed in order to achieve the study's objectives. The chapter included a discussion of the value of the findings of the study, together with the ethical considerations pertaining to the study.

Chapter 2 focused on reviewing the literature relating to the field of consumer research, with particular reference to the consumer decision-making process and the factors that influence this process. The chapter commenced with a discussion on the discipline of consumer behaviour (Section 2.2) to illustrate how the development of the marketing concept, together with the knowledge obtained from diverse disciplines has collectively helped shape the field of consumer behaviour research. Thereafter, the stages involved in the consumer decision-making process (Section 2.3.1) were discussed, which aided in demonstrating that consumers are complex individuals whose decisions are driven by organisational marketing efforts, psychological factors, and socio-cultural factors (Section 2.4). In addition, the chapter included a discussion on the target population of the study, namely the Generation Y cohort in Section 2.5. This section provided a definition of the Generation Y cohort (Section 2.5) and the characteristics of this demographic (Section 2.5.1). Interesting points that emerged in this section included Generation Y being listed as having more money at their disposal than any other youth group in history. Furthermore, the section highlighted that, as a generational cohort, members of the Generation Y cohort are more affected by their purchases and aware of the consequences of buying socially unacceptable brands.

Chapter 3 discussed the concept of fashion (Section 3.2) and provided an overview of the global (Section 3.2.1) and South African fashion industry (Section 3.3). A review of the literature revealed that South Africans as consumers are spending more money on apparel than any other recreational activities. This increase in apparel retail spending is attributed to upper-income Generation Y males who have embraced purchasing high-end premium clothing brands as an indication of their financial and social standing.

Thereafter, fashion conscious behaviour was reviewed (Section 3.4). This was followed by a discussion on fashion awareness and fashion consciousness (Section 3.5). In the context of this study, male fashion consciousness behaviour is described as the extent to which men engage in the activities of fashion shopping, purchasing the latest styles,

shopping at trendy fashion outlets, keeping up with fashion news and taking care in how they assemble fashion items. Several factors are cited as contributing to an increase in male fashion awareness and consciousness, namely post-modernism, gay liberation, celebrity sportsmen fashion endorsers and men's magazines (Section 3.6).

The need for uniqueness (Section 3.6) represents an important personality trait in consumer behaviour research that aids in predicting consumers fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour. In line with the hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1, the chapter concludes with a proposed model of the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour in Section 3.8. The model proposes that male consumers' need for uniqueness influences their fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour. In addition, the model suggests that male fashion consciousness is reliant on their fashion awareness, which in turn influences their fashion conscious behaviour.

Chapter 4 outlined the research methodology followed in order to achieve the empirical objectives formulated for the study. For this study, a descriptive research design (Section 4.2) was followed. Black Generation Y male students between the ages of 18 and 24 enrolled at South African registered public HEIs in 2013 were selected as the target population for the study (Section 4.3.1). From the initial sampling frame of 23 South African registered public HEIs in 2013, non-probability judgement sampling was utilised to narrow the sampling frame down to a more manageable sampling frame of three HEI campuses situated within the Gauteng province. This sampling frame included one traditional university campus, one comprehensive university campus and one university of technology campus (Section 4.3.2). Thereafter, as indicated in Section 4.3.4, a non-probability convenience sample of 400 students, which is consistent with previous studies, was taken and questionnaires were evenly administered across the three selected university campuses (Section 4.3.4). Lecturers at each of the three HEI campuses were approached and asked if they would allow a self-administered questionnaire to be distributed to their students during their lectures. Once permission had been obtained, a structured self-administered questionnaire was administered during scheduled lectures by the study researcher (Section 4.4).

The chapter concludes with a discussion on the statistical methods used for analysing the data. These methods included frequency distribution (Section 4.6.1), exploratory factor analysis (Section 4.6.2), reliability (Section 4.6.3) and validity analysis (Section 4.6.4), descriptive statistics (Section 4.6.5), correlation analysis (Section 4.6.6) and structural equation modelling (Section 4.6.7).

Chapter 5 provided a report on the empirical results of the study. The main findings of this study are summarised in the following section and are arranged in accordance with the empirical objectives formulated in Section 1.3.3 and repeated in Section 6.3.

### **6.3 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The following empirical objectives were formulated for the study in order to achieve the primary objectives. The findings are based on these objectives:

- Determine black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness.
- Determine black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness.
- Determine black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness.
- Determine black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour.
- Determine the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour.

According to the literature reviewed in Chapter 3, it appears that male students' fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour have increased and that the personality trait of need for uniqueness may have an instrumental influence on this behaviour. Following an exploratory factor analysis in Section 5.6, three factors were extracted for the consumer fashion consciousness scale with eigenvalues greater than 1.00 that explained 58 percent of the total variance. This analysis was repeated on the need for uniqueness scale and resulted in the extraction of three factors, which explained 74 percent of the total variance. Section 5.7 reports on the reliability and validity of the extracted factors in each of the scales.

In order to address the first four empirical objectives, descriptive statistics were computed on the gathered data. Section 5.8 reports on the means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis values calculated on each of the constructs in the two scales. With means above three being recorded for each of the constructs in both scales, it appears that black Generation Y male students have a need for uniqueness, are fashion aware and fashion conscious and engage in fashion conscious behaviour.

Prior to undertaking structural equation modelling, a correlation analysis (Section 5.9) was undertaken. This analysis revealed that there is a significant positive correlation between each of the constructs in the two scales. In order to test the hypotheses formulated in Section 1.3.3, SEM was conducted. The SEM procedure involved a confirmatory factor analysis by means of specifying the measurement model (Section 5.11.1), assessment of the reliability and validity of the measurement model (Section 5.11.2), followed by the specification of the structural model (Section 5.11.3). The measurement model and the competing structural models were all assessed using the goodness-of-fit indices provided by AMOS.

Initially, the measurement model comprised six latent factors, namely fashion awareness (F1) (four indicators), fashion consciousness (F2) (six indicators), fashion conscious behaviour (F3) (five indicators), avoidance of similarity (F4) (three indicators), unpopular choice (F5) (three indicators) and creative choice (F6) (two indicators). However, after the factor loadings were assessed, it was noted that one item, namely C14, loaded below the recommended 0.5 level. Once it was established that the removal of this variable did not compromise the effectiveness of the construct, this indicator was eliminated from the measurement model, leaving fashion awareness (F1) with three indicator variables. The measurement model was then assessed for model fit using the chi-square, IFI, TLI, CFI, SRMR and RMSEA fit indices. With the exception of the model's chi-square value, which is typically sensitive to large sample sizes, the other fit indices demonstrated satisfactory fit between the measurement model and the data. In addition, the CR and AVE values suggested that the model was both reliable and valid.

In order to address the last empirical objective, competing structural models were specified to determine the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion

conscious behaviour. Structural Model A (Section 5.11.3) revealed that fashion awareness (F1) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2), and fashion consciousness (F2), in turn, has a significant positive influence on fashion conscious behaviour (F3). Unpopular choice (F5) has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness (F1). However, avoidance of similarity (F4) and creative choice (F6) showed a non-significant negative influence on their fashion awareness (F1).

The model was revised to determine whether avoidance of similarity (F4) and creative choice (F6) have a direct influence on fashion consciousness (F2). Structural Model B infers that creative choice (F6) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2) rather than on fashion awareness (F1), as initially hypothesised. Once again, avoidance of similarity (F4) had a non-significant negative influence to fashion consciousness (F2). A third model, Structural Model C, was tested to determine whether avoidance of similarity (F4) directly influences fashion conscious behaviour (F3). Findings indicated that fashion awareness (F1) has a significant positive influence on fashion consciousness (F2) and that fashion consciousness (F2) has a significant positive influence on fashion conscious behaviour (F3). In addition, unpopular choice (F5) has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness (F1), while creative choice (F6) has a significant positive influence on their fashion consciousness (F2) and avoidance of similarity (F4) has a direct significant positive influence on their fashion conscious behaviour (F3).

Figure 6.1 presents the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour as inferred by the findings of this study.

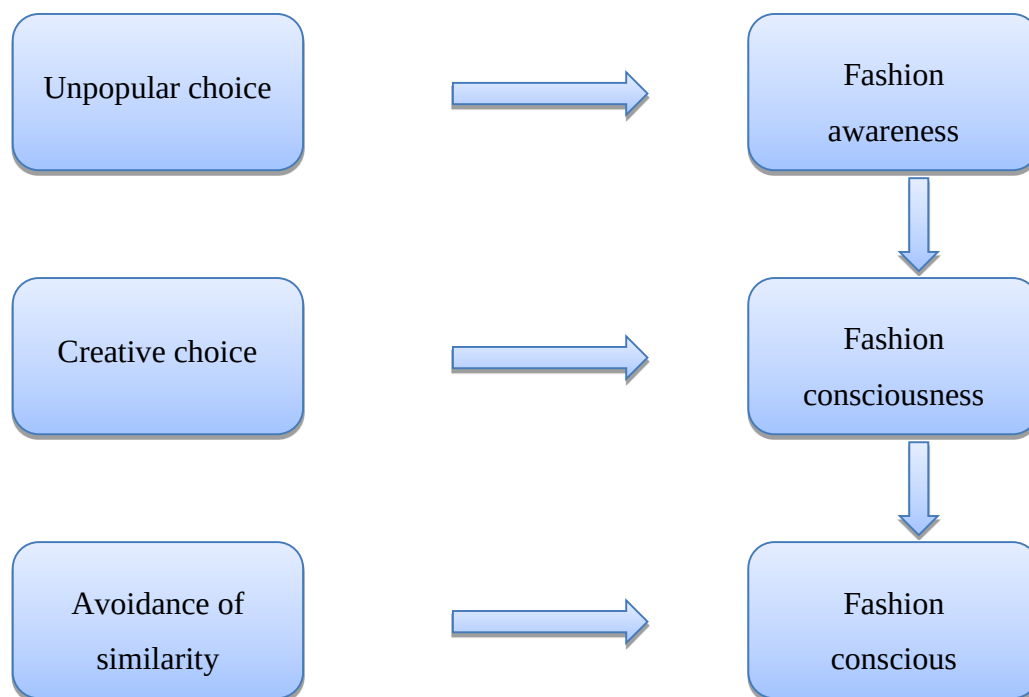


**Figure 6.1: Causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour**

In the following section, the contribution made by the findings of this study is discussed before moving on to describing the recommendations emanating from the findings.

#### 6.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The fashion apparel industry represents an important sector in the South African economy, and much of the forecasted growth in South Africa's apparel retail sales is expected to come from upper-income Generation Y males who are embracing purchasing high-end premium clothing brands as a signal of their financial and social upward mobility (Section 3.3). In 2013, black Generation Y males constituted 50.24 percent of the black Generation Y cohort and 41.90 percent of the country's entire Generation Y cohort (Section 2.5.1). As such, black Generation Y males constitute a potentially lucrative marketing opportunity for South African apparel retailers and fashion marketers.

Owing to the higher future earning potential and higher social standing typically associated with having a tertiary qualification, black Generation Y male students are

likely to act as trendsetters who are capable of influencing the consumption patterns of their peers. In addition, they are likely to possess significant future buying power. Therefore, it is important that marketers understand the determinants that drive this demographics' fashion consumption behaviour. There is a dearth of published studies that focus on male fashion consciousness and none that could be identified during the review of the literature that consider the influence of the need for uniqueness personality trait on male fashion consciousness. The findings of this study contribute to fashion marketing literature by adding clarity to the influence of this important personality trait on male fashion conscious behaviour. These findings will also aid fashion marketers targeting this black Generation Y male cohort in the South African market.

The empirically tested model depicts the causal relationships between black Generation Y male students' need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour. Based on the findings, it is proposed that black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour is a six-structure model that suggests that unpopular choice influences fashion awareness, creative choice influences fashion consciousness and avoidance of similarity influences fashion conscious behaviour. Furthermore, black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness behaviour is influenced by their fashion consciousness, which in turn, is influenced by their fashion awareness. This notion is supported by the literature in Chapter 3 that signalled the rise in the number of men's magazines being one of the determinants to have contributed to male fashion awareness and consciousness.

In line with these causal relationships, this study provides marketing strategy guidelines that fashion marketers can utilise in order to effectively tailor and customise marketing strategies that target this market segment.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following section provides recommendations to assist fashion marketers' efforts in targeting black Generation Y males effectively. These are aligned to the study objectives.

### **6.5.1 Continue to innovate and update the clothing brand**

According to Figure 5.12, the unpopular choice dimension of the need for uniqueness has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion awareness. In the fashion clothing sense, this need for uniqueness dimension relates to using fashion apparel as a way of signalling non-conformity (Section 3.6), which infers the need to be on the cutting edge of fashion. Ensuring that advertisements for male clothing brands portray the brand to be the height of fashion, and using a maverick-type appeal, will aid in fostering fashion awareness amongst this target segment.

### **6.5.2 Emphasise the status and prestige of the male clothing brand**

South African Generation Y male consumers appear motivated to purchase luxury branded clothing as a way to meet social needs and elevate their status. Typically, it is how they vocalise their social ranking and emphasise their uniqueness from others (Section 3.3). This is supported by the findings of this study, which found that despite participants indicating only having an average monthly allowance of between R500 and R1000 (Figure 5.4), the majority indicated having at least one clothing store account (Figure 5.5) and showed a preference towards expensive status-endowed clothing brand names (Figure 5.7).

In this study, the creative choice dimension of the need for uniqueness was found to have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion consciousness (Figure 5.12). This need for uniqueness dimension relates to the prestige and/or exclusivity of a product offering (Section 3.6). In order to appeal to this need, advertisements for clothing brands targeted at the black Generation Y males should emphasise the status features and benefits of their brand. The use of male models that are attractive and appear successful in such advertisements will help reinforce the status appeal. In addition, the brand symbol or distinguishing features should be clearly visible on the clothing in order to allow the wearer to signal to others their social standing. Furthermore, a selective rather than intensive distribution strategy is advised in order to maintain the exclusivity of the brand name.

### **6.5.3 Incorporate customisable features into the product offering**

The avoidance of similarity dimension of the need for uniqueness was found to have a significant positive influence on black Generation Y male students' fashion conscious behaviour (Figure 5.12). In the fashion clothing sense, this need for uniqueness dimension relates to using fashion apparel as a way of avoiding looking like everyone else (Section 3.6). This suggests that the use of clothing brands to create a distinctive personal image is an important trigger to this cohort's fashion conscious behaviour and may involve combining fashion clothing items in unusual ways. As such, fashion marketers are advised to consider ways of adding customisable features and or accessories to their brand offerings. Possible examples include trouser legs that can be worn down or rolled up, and extending the product line to include accessories such as belts, scarves, hats and ties that can be used to create a distinctive personal image.

### **6.5.4 Use digital media platforms to reach black Generation Y males**

Having grown up in households where the Internet is easily accessible, members of the Generation Y cohort are technologically well informed and devote much of their leisure time to online communication and social media interaction (Section 2.5.1). For marketers targeting the black Generation Y cohort, traditional media platforms may be ineffective or insufficient in reaching this segment. In order to be successful in reaching this cohort, fashion marketers are advised to turn their attention to including new digital media platforms like Facebook, for example, as potential advertising vehicles when designing their promotional campaign strategies. Such media vehicles, along with the use of the traditional male magazines, may be used to foster greater fashion awareness, consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour amongst the male members of this cohort.

### **6.5.5 Use of local black celebrity endorsers to promote the metro-sexual image**

The rise in the metro-sexual male is considered an important driver to male fashion conscious behaviour and celebrity endorsers, especially sports celebrities, are viewed as having played an important role in this regard (Section 3.6). The use of local black celebrity male endorsers, particularly those who have earned their celebrity status on

the sports field, is likely to increase the acceptability of male fashion conscious behaviour. In addition, as much as members of the Generation Y cohort value uniqueness, they are also easily influenced by others and much of their consumption behaviour is either emulated or adopted from respective reference groups. These reference groups often include well-known and easily identifiable celebrities. Findings from a previous study indicate that the use of local sport celebrities as product endorsers has a significant positive influence on black Generation Y students' consumption-related behavioural intentions (Section 3.5).

## **6.6 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

While adequate measures were taken to ensure fair representation of the sample in line with the target population's demographic profile, the study made use of non-probability sampling, which means that care should be taken in generalising the results of the sample to the entire black Generation Y male student cohort. In addition, even though graduates are expected to have a role model influence on the wider black Generation Y male cohort, there is scope for a study that measures the need for uniqueness, fashion awareness, fashion consciousness and fashion conscious behaviour amongst non-students.

Furthermore, while the sample in this study represented eight of South Africa's nine provinces, the study only focused on students enrolled at three HEIs located within the Gauteng province. A study that draws a sample of students from HEI campuses nationally may offer deeper insights into the need for uniqueness and fashion consciousness.

Another limitation that is worth noting is that of the 400 questionnaires distributed in the study, only 213 usable questionnaires were returned. This low response rate of 53 percent is mainly due to strictly following a rule of voluntary participation and discarding any questionnaire where the participants had failed to indicate their ethnic group or where more than 10 percent of the values were missing. Despite this relatively low response rate, the final sample size still meets the 5 to 10 number of cases per item rule for factor analysis (Hair *et al.*, 2010:102) and the 200 to 400 number of cases rule for SEM (Malhotra, 2010:731).

This study also was confined to quantitative analysis, whereas future research applying the mixed-mode research design that incorporates qualitative data from focus groups may provide valuable input into the research problem addressed in this study.

## **6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Fashion marketers who currently target, or who are planning to target, the black Generation Y male cohort need to familiarise themselves with this market. This segment appears to use fashion clothing as an important way of signalling their self-image. In this regard, not only does it articulate their status but also serves as a form of self-expression that allows them to distinguish themselves as individuals. In order to target black Generation Y males successfully, fashion marketers need to appeal to their need for uniqueness and prestige.

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**ANNEXURE A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

---



## Questionnaire: GENERATION Y MALE STUDENTS' FASHION CONSCIOUSNESS AND NEED FOR UNIQUENESS

Dear Student

My name is Manti Motale, a PhD student enrolled at the North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus) studying under the supervision of Prof. A.L. Bevan-Dye. The purpose of this questionnaire is to research the fashion consciousness of Generation Y male students' and their need to strive for uniqueness. Generation Y refers to people born between 1986 and 2005. From a marketing perspective, the male segment of Generation Y has been largely under researched, despite them representing a very lucrative an attractive marketing segment.

This questionnaire seeks to gain insight into the consumption patterns and consumer behaviour of South African male Generation Y students' enrolled at higher education institutions.

The questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please ensure that you complete all the questions in the questionnaire. All information, including the name of your university, will be treated as confidential. The collected data will only be used for academic and research purposes.

Thank you for your contribution to this study.

Manti Motale

(PhD student at the North-West University – Vaal Triangle Campus)

Lecturer: Department of Marketing and Sport Management

Vaal University of Technology

016 950 6890

### SECTION A

In this section, we would like to find out more about your demographic profile. Please mark the most appropriate with a cross (X).

|    |                                                                 |            |               |                          |             |             |                          |             |             |        |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------|
| A1 | Please indicate your age at your last birthday:                 |            |               |                          |             |             |                          |             |             |        |
| A2 | Please indicate which South African ethnic group you belong to: |            |               |                          |             |             |                          |             |             |        |
|    | Black                                                           |            | White         |                          | Coloured    |             | Asian                    |             |             |        |
| A3 | Please indicate the province where you grew up:                 |            |               |                          |             |             |                          |             |             |        |
|    | Eastern Cape                                                    |            | Free State    |                          | Gauteng     |             | KwaZulu-Natal            |             | Limpopo     |        |
|    | Mpumalanga                                                      |            | Northern Cape |                          | North-West  |             | Western Cape             |             |             |        |
| A4 | Please indicate at which university campus you are studying:    |            |               |                          |             |             |                          |             |             |        |
|    | Traditional University                                          |            |               | Comprehensive University |             |             | University of Technology |             |             |        |
| A5 | Please indicate your average monthly allowance:                 |            |               |                          |             |             |                          |             |             |        |
|    | Less than R500                                                  | R500–R1000 | R1001–R1500   | R1501–R2000              | R2001–R2500 | R2501–R3000 | R3001–R3500              | R3501–R4000 | R4001–R4500 | R4501+ |

## SECTION B

|    |                                         |   |   |   |   |      |
|----|-----------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|------|
| B1 | How many clothing accounts do you have? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | More |
|----|-----------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|------|

B2 Please indicate your top three clothing stores

|        |            |             |               |            |          |
|--------|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|----------|
| Edgars | Identity   | Jet         | Legit         | Markhams   | Mr Price |
| Pep    | Sportscene | Totalsports | Truworths Man | Woolworths | Other    |

If you indicated other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

B3 Please indicate your top three clothing brands

|        |           |                |             |         |       |
|--------|-----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Adidas | Billabong | Daniel Hechter | Diesel      | DKNY    | Gucci |
| Guess  | Jeep      | John Craig     | Kurt Geiger | Lacoste | Levis |
| Nike   | Polo      | Puma           | Reebok      | Soviet  | Uzzi  |
| Other  |           |                |             |         |       |

If you indicated other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION C

**This section aims to determine your fashion consciousness. Please indicate using a cross (X) the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements**

|     |                                                              | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| C1  | I'm very alert to changes in men's fashion/trends            | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C2  | I am more fashionable/style conscious than the average man   | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C3  | I would say I am very fashion conscious                      | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C4  | Other people think I am fashionable/trendy                   | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C5  | I know which type of men's clothes are fashionable           | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C6  | I think I am fashionable/trendy                              | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C7  | I take a long time to decide about the clothes I wear        | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C8  | I usually shop in trendy stores                              | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C9  | I read magazines that have fashion/style pages               | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C10 | I am always shopping for new clothes                         | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C11 | I am aware that some shirts are more fashionable than others | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |

|     |                                                                            | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| C12 | I am very aware that some shoe styles are more fashionable than others     | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C13 | I am very aware that some clothes for men are more fashionable than others | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C14 | I usually notice that some men are more fashionable                        | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C15 | Other people ask me what is fashionable/trendy                             | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| C16 | I am usually the first to buy the latest styles                            | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |

## SECTION D

Please indicate using a cross (X) the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements

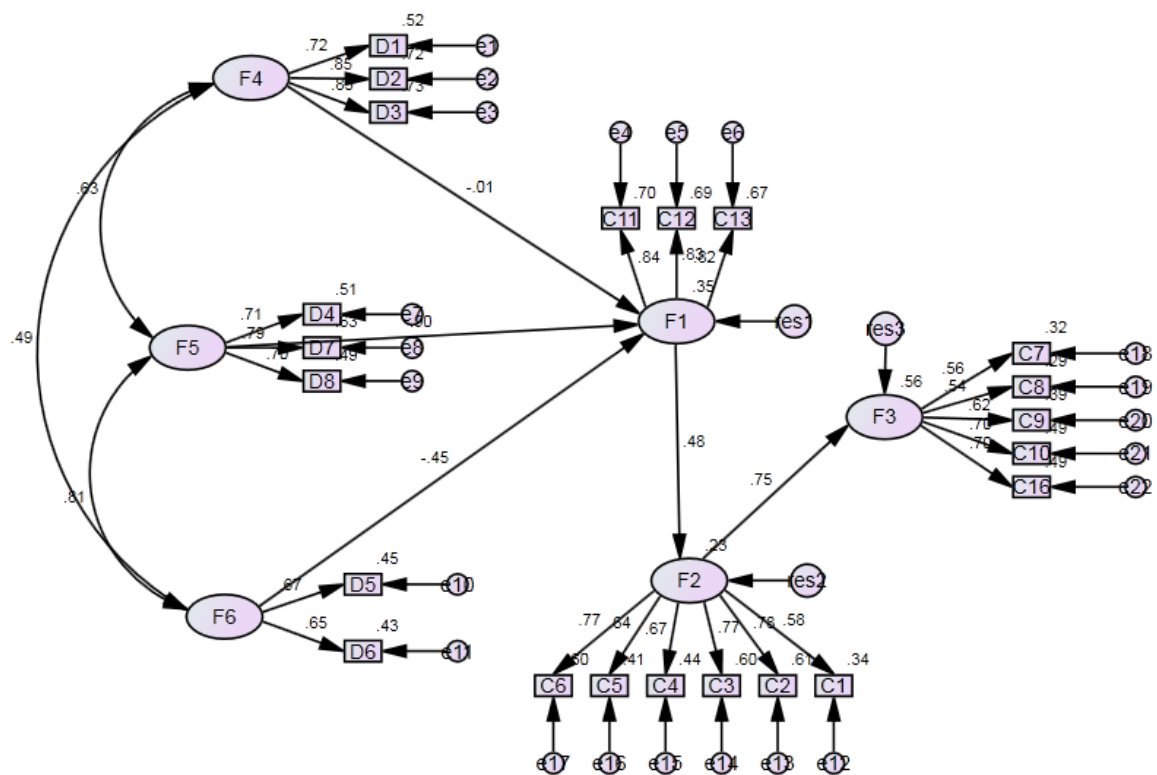
|    |                                                                          | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| D1 | I stop wearing fashions when they become popular with the general public | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D2 | I dislike brands bought by everyone                                      | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D3 | When a clothing brand becomes too popular, I wear it less                | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D4 | I look for one-of-a-kind products to create my own style                 | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D5 | The things that I buy shape a more unusual personal image                | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D6 | I buy unusual brands to create a more distinctive personal image         | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D7 | An important goal is to find a brand that communicates my uniqueness     | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |
| D8 | The brands that I like best are the ones that express my individuality   | 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4              | 5     | 6              |

*Thank you*

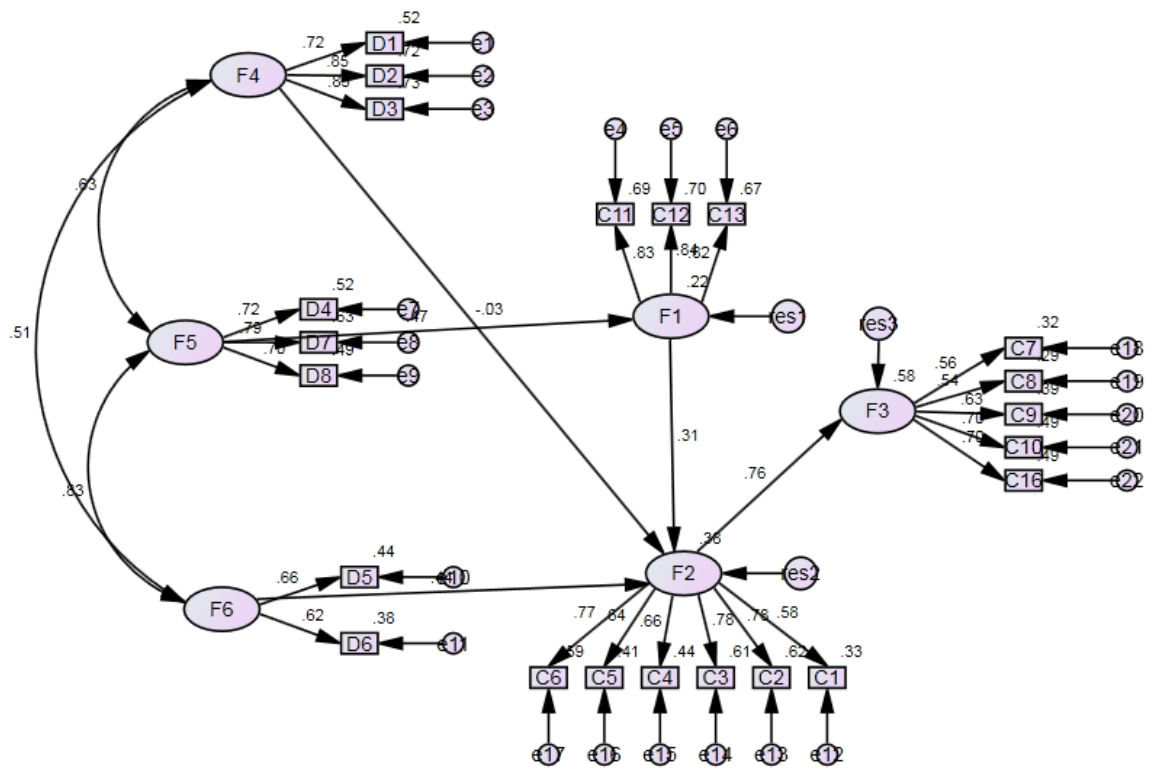
# ANNEXURE B

## STRUCTURAL MODELS

STRUCTURAL MODEL A



## STRUCTURAL MODEL B



## STRUCTURAL MODEL C

