

*Consumer perceptions regarding labels on clothing and
household textile products: a study in Gauteng*

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SUMMARY

Textile product labels are provided on the clothing and household textile products to assist consumers with important product information. However, the assumption cannot be made that because the label is available on these products it will be used by consumers. Consumers do not base their pre- and post-purchasing decisions on reality but rather on what they perceive to be the reality. Thus consumers' perceptions of textile product labels need to be studied as it influences their pre- and post-purchasing decisions and use of these labels. Consumers use their perceptions as a frame of reference for making purchasing decisions. This study determined consumers' perceptions, in order to form a better understanding of their textile pre- and post-purchasing decisions. However, perception is not a singular concept but an interactive process. Therefore, the present study, done in the Gauteng Province, aimed to determine consumers' perceptions of clothing and household textile labels, by focusing on the perceptual process of consumers. The first objective was to determine consumers' awareness of labels on clothing and household textile products. Secondly, it was determined whether consumers' attention is drawn to labels of clothing and household textile products. Thirdly it was determined whether labels on textile products are important to consumers and finally, whether consumers interpret labels on textile products. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used as the data collection technique. A total of 411 questionnaires were administered by trained fieldworkers. The study location was three different regions in Gauteng Province, namely: Pretoria, Vereeniging and the West Rand. Public locations were used for the recruitment of respondents selected within the three regions, which included: schools, retirement villages, parking areas and government institutions. This contributed to the probability that a diverse group of respondents participated. The study population consisted of 44.5% males and 55.5% females. The home languages most spoken among the respondents were English (20.9%), Afrikaans (21.1%) or isiZulu (16.5%). Respondents generally tended to have a positive perception regarding textile product labels. The results illustrated that respondents tended to agree to be aware of label information and that the front and back panels of the label draw their attention. However respondents tended to be

neutral as to whether the information is important enough to read. Respondents mostly agreed that they interpret the symbols on textile product labels. Although respondents tended to perceive textile product labels positively, it still remains unclear whether it is important enough for consumers to use these labels found on textile products. By striving to improve consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels through better labelling initiatives and consumer education on labels, consumers might view labels as important and use them before and after purchasing a textile product. This will in effect teach consumers how to clean and maintain textile products to extend the product's lifespan. This would in turn contribute to the consumer's pre- and post-purchasing satisfaction. This study additionally found that respondents' perceptions of textile product labels were influenced by some of their demographic characteristics. Although there were no large effect sizes which illustrated practical significance, there were some small to medium tendencies regarding respondents' perceptions of textile product labels and their demographic characteristics. Different tendencies were especially found when analysing the relationships between respondents' perceptions and age or language. Older respondents (60 and older) tended to have a more positive perception of textile product labels than younger respondents (18 to 29 years). In addition, respondents with an African language as their home language seemed to differ from Afrikaans and English respondents. To understand South African consumers fully, researchers should understand the diversity and political history of South Africa, by focusing on cultural differences and reasons thereof. Different age generations need to be examined in further South African studies in order to determine the perceptions of consumers from different age groups regarding textile product labels.

KEYWORDS

- Clothing products;
- Consumers;
- Household textile products;
- Labels;
- Perceptions

OPSOMMING

Tekstielproduketikette word verskaf op kleding- en huishoudelike-tekstielprodukte om verbruikers met belangrike produkinligting by te staan. Nogtans kan die aanname nie gemaak word dat verbruikers die etikette gaan gebruik omdat dit maklik beskikbaar is op die produkte nie. Verbruikers baseer nie hulle voor- en na-aankoopbesluite op die realiteit nie, maar eerder op wat hulle (persepsie) as die realiteit beskou. Dus moet verbruikers se persepsies van tekstielprodukte bestudeer word, omdat dit hulle voor- en na-aankoopbesluite en gebruik van hierdie etikette beïnvloed. Verbruikers gebruik hulle persepsie as verwysingsraamwerk om aankoopbesluite te neem. Hierdie studie het verbruikers se persepsie bepaal om ten einde hulle voor- en na-aankoopbesluitneming van tekstiele beter te verstaan. Persepsie is egter nie 'n enkelvoudige konsep nie maar 'n interaktiewe komplekse proses wat feitlik gelyktydig plaasvind. Die huidige studie wat in die Gauteng Provinsie gedoen is, het dit dus ten doel gestel om verbruikers se persepsie van kleding- en huishoudelike-tekstielproduketikette te bepaal, deur op die perseptuele proses van verbruikers met verskillende demografiese agtergronde te fokus. Die eerste doelwit was om verbruikers se bewustheid van etikette op kleding- en huishoudelike-tekstielprodukte te bepaal. Tweedens, is bepaal of verbruikers se aandag deur etikette van kleding- en huishoudelike-tekstielprodukte getrek word. Derdens, is bepaal hoe belangrik etikette op tekstielprodukte vir verbruikers is en laastens, hoe verbruikers etikette op tekstielprodukte interpreteer. 'n Onderhoudvoerder-geadministreerde vraelys is gebruik as die data insamelingstegniek. 'n Totaal van 411 vraelyste is in hierdie studie afgeneem. Die studieomgewing het bestaan uit drie verskillende streke in die Gauteng Provinsie, naamlik Pretoria, Vereeniging en die Wesrand. Openbare plekke is vir die werwing van respondente binne die drie streke gebruik, wat skole, aftreeoorde, parkeerareas en regeringsinstansie ingesluit het. Dit het bygedra tot die moontlikheid dat 'n diverse groep respondente deelneem. Die studiepulasie het bestaan uit 44.5% mans en 55.5% vrouens. Die meerderheid van die respondente het hulle huistaal as Engels (20.9%), Afrikaans (21.1%) of isiZulu (16.5%) aangedui. Die respondente het na 'n positiewe persepsie van tekstielproduketikette geneig. Die resultate het geïllustreer

dat die respondente geneig het om saam te stem dat hulle van etiketinligting bewus is en dat die voor en agterpaneel van etikette hulle aandag trek. Die respondente het egter geneig om neutraal te wees of die inligting belangrik genoeg is om te lees. Die respondente het meestal saamgestem dat hulle die simbole op tekstielproduketikette interpreteer. Alhoewel die respondente geneig het na 'n positiewe persepsie van tekstielproduketikette, is dit nog steeds onduidelik of verbruikers dit as belangrik genoeg ag om hierdie etikette gevind op tekstielprodukte te gebruik. Deur daarna te streef om verbruikers se persepsies van tekstielproduketikette te verbeter deur beter etiketterings inisiatiewe en verbruikersopleiding oor etikette, mag verbruikers dit as belangrik genoeg ag om dit voor- en na-aankope van 'n tekstielproduk te gebruik. Dit sal verbruikers in werklikheid leer hoe om tekstielprodukte skoon te maak en te onderhou om die produk se lewensduur te verleng. Dit kan op sy beurt tot verbruikers se voor- en na-aankope tevredenheid bydra. Die studie het bykomend bevind dat respondente se persepsies van tekstielproduketikette deur sekere demografiese karaktereenskappe beïnvloed word. Alhoewel daar geen groot effekgroottes wat praktiese betekenisvolheid aandui was nie, is daar klein na medium tendense aangaande respondente se persepsie van tekstielproduketikette en hulle demografiese karaktereenskappe gevind. Verskillende tendense is veral gevind toe die verwantskap tussen respondente se persepsie en ouderdom of taal ontleed is. Ouer respondente (60 en ouer) het meer 'n positiewe persepsie oor tekstielproduketikette as die jonger respondente (20 tot 29 jaar) gehad. Dit het ook bykomend geblyk of respondente wat 'n Afrikataal as huistaal het verskil het van Afrikaanse en Engelse respondente. Navorsers moet die diversiteit en politiese geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika verstaan deur te fokus op kulturele verskille en die redes daarvoor om Suid-Afrikaanse verbruikers te verstaan. Verskillende ouderdomsgenerasies behoort in verdere Suid-Afrikaanse studies ondersoek te word wat die persepsie van verbruikers van verskillende ouderdomsgroepe aangaande tekstielproduketikette bepaal.

SLEUTELTERME

- Kleding-tekstielprodukte;
- Verbruikers;
- Huishoudelijke-tekstielprodukte;
- Etiketie;
- Persepsies

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

1.1.1 Consumers' perceptions of textile product labels

In a clothing purchasing environment consumers are constantly confronted with multiple environmental stimuli (De Klerk *et al.*, 1998:16; Cant *et al.*, 2006:114). These stimuli include promotional boards, price tags, visual merchandising displays and packaging, which are aimed at increasing sales by providing consumers with the necessary information (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:218). Therefore, labels found on clothing and household textile products can also be referred to as environmental stimuli. Textile product labels are important sources of information that can assist consumers before and after purchasing textile products (Cooklin, 1997:117; Collier & Tortora, 2001:503). However, consumers do not base their purchasing decisions on reality but rather on what they perceive (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:172) of a textile product label. As stated by Chen-Yu and Kincade (2001:30), consumers' overall perception of a textile product determines their purchasing behaviour. Thus consumers' perceptions of textile product labels needs to be studied as it influences their purchasing decisions that lead to consumers' satisfaction towards the textile product.

Perception is not a singular concept but a complex interactive process that occurs virtually simultaneously (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:304; Hawkins *et al.*, 2007:283). The perceptual process is initiated when the consumer becomes aware of and pays attention to an environmental stimulus (Cant *et al.*, 2006:115; Babin & Harris, 2009:42). If the stimulus is important enough for the consumer, it will be interpreted either positively or negatively (Otieno *et al.*, 2005:300), resulting in a perception.

Positive perceptions can influence consumers to purchase a product or use a certain stimulus, whereas negative perceptions can cause consumers to ignore a specific product or stimulus based on their previous experiences (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:244; De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008:38). In a study by De Klerk *et al.* (1998:21), it was found that when consumers have a negative perception of a clothing store, they will prefer alternative stores to meet their clothing needs and when their perception is positive, they use the store. This response might also be applicable to textile product labels. If consumers react on their negative store perceptions, they might react on their perceptions of textile product labels. If this is a negative perception, the consumer might react negatively towards the label by not using it before and after purchasing textile products. This might lead to unsatisfied consumer needs. On the other hand, positive perceptions of textile product labels might lead consumers to use textile product labels.

Consumers' perceptions can, therefore, also be referred to as the consumer's frame of reference for making purchasing decisions (Erasmus, 1995:16). Although perception is an important aspect in consumer behaviour there is limited research found in South Africa regarding consumers' perceptions of clothing products (Van Eck *et al.*, 2004:1), which includes limited research regarding textile product labels. Such research is needed as consumers from a Third-World Country, such as South Africa, cannot be compared to consumers from a First-World Country due to the different lifestyles, cultural diversities and attitudes influencing consumers' purchasing behaviour (D'Andrea *et al.*, 2006: 678; Gothan & Erasmus, 2008:640). Therefore, the current study regarding consumers' perceptions of textile product labels will be conducted to form a better understanding of their pre- and post-purchasing behaviour of these labels which might result in consumers' satisfaction towards textile products. In order to gain insight into consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels, each concept in the perceptual process is addressed.

1.1.2 Consumers' perceptual process

1.1.2.1 Consumers' awareness of textile product labels

Awareness refers to the process where consumers learn of the existence of an environmental stimulus (Boshoff, 2003:197), such as a textile product label, and is also the first step in forming an interpretation of a stimulus (Erasmus, 1995:17). If consumers are unaware of the stimulus, they will not be able to form a perception regarding the specific stimulus (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:305). Muller (1982:216) indicates that consumers are unaware of care label information provided on textile product labels. This dated study focused on a single aspect of textile label information, namely the care label. However, consumers' awareness of other information found on labels and the textile product label in general remains unclear. Therefore, the present study aims to determine if consumers are aware of labels found on clothing and household textile products.

1.1.2.2 Consumers' attention paid to textile product labels

Attention refers to the extent of mental information processing devoted to momentarily concentrating on a specific stimulus, enabling consumers to develop an understanding of the stimulus (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:74; Babin & Harris, 2009:42). However, consumers are selective about what they pay attention to in a purchasing environment (Solomon, 2011:101). Consumers can be aware of a stimulus (such as a textile product label) but choose not to pay attention to it (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:105).

If consumers do not devote attention towards a stimulus, their sensory receptors cannot be used to process the stimulus (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:74). Consumers' attention can be attracted through a stimulus that is clearly communicating and also be memorable in order to form an interpretation (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:303). According to Ampuero and Vila (2006:109), visual characteristics and information of food packaging are often combined and formed in various ways to attract consumers' attention additionally towards the product. Since consumers' sensory

receptors can only process a stimulus (textile product label) when they pay attention to it during the perceptual process, the present study will determine if textile product labels attract consumers' attention.

1.1.2.3 The importance of textile product labels to consumers

Although a stimulus can draw consumers' attention, it will only be interpreted if the stimulus is important enough for consumers to form a perception (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:305; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:89). By comparing stimuli to other previously experienced stimuli, consumers categorise them according to their views of the importance thereof (Michaelis *et al.*, 2008:409). Based on the positive or negative experience associated with the previous stimulus consumers will view this stimulus as important or unimportant (Michaelis *et al.*, 2008:409). The importance of consumers' association with a stimulus is an essential stage in the perceptual process, especially for marketers wanting consumers to view their stimulus as important enough to enhance resulting purchasing decisions (Babin & Harris, 2009:42). Therefore, it is necessary to determine whether textile product labels are important enough for consumers to process in order to form an interpretation of the labels.

1.1.2.4 Consumers' interpretation of textile product labels

Only after a consumer becomes aware of a stimulus, pays attention to it and views it as important enough to be processed, can it be interpreted (Cant *et al.*, 2006:115; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:89; Babin & Harris, 2009:42). Consumers can either interpret a stimulus as acceptable or dismiss it as unacceptable (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:76). Consumers' interpretation of stimuli forms their perceptions which will influence their actions, use, purchasing behaviour, leisure habits and other purchasing activities (Uusitalo, 2001:216; Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:217). The importance of consumers' interpretation in their ultimate consumer behaviour necessitates the need to include this construct of perception in the present study.

Although manufacturers of textile products' labels intend to aid consumers with valuable and necessary information regarding the textile product (Collier & Tortora, 2001:503), consumers often interpret a stimulus differently to what marketers or manufacturers intended (Andersson *et al.*, 2004:105; Cant *et al.*, 2006:114; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:187). It was found by Andersson *et al.* (2004:105) that consumers interpreted some clothing advertisements as distasteful and unacceptable causing them to form a negative perception of that specific brand. This indicates that consumers' interpretation of information and visual characteristics of textile product labels need to be addressed. Furthermore, a study by Maqalika-Mokobori (2005:86) found that some consumers had negative interpretations regarding the consistency of the positioning of the label on textile products. This may be because the textile product label's placement is not always easy to establish, making it difficult to use (Cooklin, 1997:18). This could create a negative perception of textile product labels which needs to be addressed in the present study. This research will assist in better understanding consumers' perceptions of textile product labels, allowing the improvement of the identified aspects which consumers perceive as negative in order to enhance the use of textile product labels.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Consumers are constantly overwhelmed with multiple environmental stimuli. Previous literature found that consumers often base their purchasing decisions on what they perceive, and not the actual reality of the stimulus, such as a textile product label. In addition consumers' perceptions are found to be either positive or negative, which can influence their use of such labels and result in purchasing decisions. However, limited research is found in South Africa regarding consumers' perceptions of textile product labels, which needed to be addressed. Consumers' negative perceptions may cause negative reactions towards textile products, resulting in consumers not purchasing the products, and consequently unsatisfied consumer needs. Furthermore, positive perceptions may lead consumers to use textile product labels or to purchase textile products. Perception is a complex

interactive process that occurs simultaneously. In this study on perception, the perceptual process is addressed because each stage in this process assists consumers in forming a perception of textile product labels.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The present study, done in the Gauteng Province, aims to determine consumers' perceptions of clothing and household textile labels, by focusing on the perceptual process of consumers from different demographic backgrounds (gender, language, age and education).

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In order to achieve the aim of this study, the following objectives were identified:

Objective 1: To determine consumers' awareness of labels on clothing and household textile products;

Objective 2: To determine whether consumers' attention is drawn to labels of clothing and household textile products;

Objective 3: To determine whether labels on textile products are important to consumers; and

Objective 4: To determine whether consumers interpret labels on textile products.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THIS MINI-DISSERTATION

This mini-dissertation is presented in an article format. Chapter 1, which is the introduction chapter, will represent the background, motivation and problem statement of the study, followed by the aim and objectives. The literature review will be discussed in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 is presented in the format of a scientific

research article which provides an abstract, introduction, brief literature review, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion. The format, layout and referencing of Chapter 3 was done according to the editorial prescriptions of the selected journal, the International Journal of Consumer Studies. In Chapter 4 the conclusion, limitations and recommendations, as well as the implications of this research, are presented in order to assist future research on this matter. Appendices A and B consist of an elaborated methodology and the questionnaire used in this study.

1.6 AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The study reported in this mini-dissertation was planned and implemented by a team of researchers, working together towards the same set of objectives. The contribution of each researcher is provided in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Authors' contributions to the study

Name	Role in the study
Mrs. L. Steyn	First author, responsible for literature research, the gathering of data and interpretation thereof, descriptive analysis, statistical analysis and preparation of this mini-dissertation.
Prof. M. van der Merwe	Study leader and co-author. Supervised the activities of the first author and advised throughout the study. Also acted as an overseer for the whole process.
Mrs. S.D. van Zyl	Co-study leader and co-author. Supervised the writing of this mini-dissertation.
Mrs. E. Botha	Assistant study leader and co-author. Supervised the writing of this mini-dissertation.
Dr. S. Ellis	Co-author of research article. Supervised the writing of the results and statistical consultation.

The following statement is from the co-authors of the article, confirming their individual roles in the study. The statement also grants permission for the article to form part of the mini-dissertation:

I declare that I have approved the above-mentioned article, and that my role in the study, as stated above, is representative of my actual contribution and that I hereby give my consent that it may be published as part of the Masters' mini-dissertation of Mrs. L. Steyn.

Mrs. L. Steyn

Prof. M van der Merwe

Mrs. S.D. van Zyl

Mrs. E. Botha

Dr. S. Ellis

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Consumers take action and respond, not based on the objective reality, but on the basis of their own perceptions (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:172). Therefore, consumers' purchasing behaviour is determined by their perceptions of textile products (Chen-Yu & Kincade 2001:30). This makes perception an important aspect in consumer behaviour that needs to be addressed. Perception is a process by which consumers observe, select, organise, react and interpret environmental stimuli into a meaningful whole (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:102; Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:218; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:175; Solomon, 2011:83). However, perceptions can only be formed when the environmental stimuli are registered by one or more of the consumers' sensory receptors: vision, hearing, taste, smell and touch (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:218; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:80; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:175).

Clothing and household textile product labels can be referred to as such environmental stimuli, because the product information is normally communicated to consumers by means of attached labels (Davis, 1987:8; Cooklin, 1997:117; Maqalika-Mokobori, 2005:51). A label is an extra piece of fabric sewn in, hung on or printed directly onto a clothing or household textile product (Stevens, 1993:8; Thiry, 2008:22), which consumers can use to make informed purchasing decisions (Cooklin, 1997:117; Collier & Tortora, 2001:503; Maqalika-Mokobori, 2005:53). Thus, for the purpose of this study, the term 'textile product label' is used when referring to all labels found on clothing and household textile products including permanent and non-permanent labels, such as hangtags.

Consumers can be exposed to the same stimulus, under the same external conditions and circumstances, but still perceive the stimulus differently due to internal factors that have an influence on their perceptions (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:223; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:175). Because of these internal differences and

external influences, it can be assumed that each consumer will perceive the textile product label differently when they are exposed to it, resulting in different purchasing decisions and behaviour.

According to Otieno *et al.* (2005:300), perception can be interpreted positively or negatively by consumers. If consumers have a negative perception regarding a stimulus it may cause them to avoid and ignore the stimulus (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:244; De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008:38). This might include consumers' perceptions of textile product labels, which emphasises that consumers' negative perceptions of textile product labels might influence their purchasing decisions negatively. A study by Chen-Yu and Kincade (2001:41) indicates that negative perceptions decreased consumers' satisfaction towards the textile product, whereas positive perceptions led to improved consumer satisfaction. If consumers' perceptions of textile products influence their pre- and post-purchasing behaviour, their perceptions of textile product labels might also influence their pre- and post-purchasing behaviour. Therefore, this study needs to establish whether consumers perceive labels positively or negatively, in order to understand consumers' textile purchasing decisions better.

This literature review begins by defining consumers in the context of this study. Secondly the South African textile product label legislation and textile product labels are explained by focusing on information, visual characteristics and positioning of labels on textile products. The perceptual process is subsequently explained, to offer an understanding of how consumers' perceptions of textile product labels are formed and why it is important to determine their perceptions. This literature review also explains how the different concepts of the study are connected with one another by proposing a conceptual framework for this study.

2.2 CONSUMERS IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

There are mainly two types of consumers, namely organisational and personal consumers. Organisational consumers focus more on purchasing products and

services for businesses or organisations in order to run their organisation, while personal consumers are anybody who purchases products and services for personal or family use (Wood, 2004: 360; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:23). In the context of this study the term consumer refers to a personal consumer who purchases and uses clothing and household textile products. However, in order to understand the term consumer in terms of the South African context, further defining of the term is necessary.

South Africa is a developing Third-World Country (Molawa, 2009:3) with an emerging market (Appiah-Adu, 1998:120; Selvanathan & Selvanathan, 2004:2327). A Third-World Country can be described as a country that has problems such as: poverty, sub-standard infrastructure, poor economic growth, high inflation rates, rigid trade barriers, political imbalances, a lack of education and very limited access to advanced services, electronics, telecommunications, basic retailing and banking services (Appiah-Adu, 1998:120; Klemz *et al.*, 2005:591). Although South Africa is seen as a developing Third-World Country with limited resources, there are some urban regions that can be compared to First-World Countries (Klemz *et al.*, 2005:591; Molawa, 2009:3). For instance many of the households in South Africa have running water, electricity and basic appliances. In addition Klemz *et al.* (2005:591) state that some of the suburbs of South Africa comprise of modern infrastructure such as transport, electricity, water, telecommunications, banking and retailing.

Although the majority of consumers live in poverty, South Africa is known as one of the world's top ten largest emerging markets (Selvanathan & Selvanathan, 2004:2327). South African markets differ from other countries as a result of the "Apartheid" era, which meant exclusion amongst societies (Tustin & De Jongh, 2008:25). However, since the democratic elections of 1994, the majority of black South African consumers who were previously disadvantaged are currently entering the purchasing environment and only recently obtained access to education, owning a home, electricity as well as access to basic products or services (Gothan & Erasmus, 2008:640). This implies that there are over a million potential consumers in South Africa, who can be researched in order to understand their individual

consumer behaviour (Selvanathan & Selvanathan, 2004:2327). However, according to Van Eck *et al.* (2004:1), there are limited South African studies regarding consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards products such as clothing, including limited research regarding textile product labels. Consumer research is needed in South Africa in order to understand this multi-cultural society's perceptions of textile product labels, which ultimately lead to better understanding their textile purchasing decisions.

2.3 CLOTHING AND HOUSEHOLD TEXTILE PRODUCT LABELS

In the past there were only a few variations of textile fibres most of which were natural and these textiles had set cleaning instructions (Muller, 1982:216; Kadolph 2007:86). However, the textile industry has since drastically changed and created variations of synthetic textiles, fibres, fibre blends and finishes (Muller, 1982:216; Fianu & Harrison-Arthur, 1997:97; Shin 2000:20). This implies that consumers need to address complicated features of textile products (Shin 2000:20), and therefore sometimes find it difficult to follow the continuous textile changes in order to make appropriate textile purchasing and post-purchasing decisions (Muller, 1982:216). Textile product labels could assist consumers to make informed decisions and consumer satisfaction regarding care, choice and use of textile products and can be promoted by the information provided by the textile product label (Fianu & Harrison-Arthur, 1997:98). Therefore, the information on the textile product label should be appropriate, legible, adequate and understandable for consumers (Mason *et al.*, 2008:276).

2.3.1 Textile product label information as legislated in South Africa

Textile product label information consists of two forms of label information, namely mandatory and voluntary information. Mandatory information is compulsory on textile products and should be permanently attached for the product's lifetime (Collier & Tortora 2001:503; Kadolph, 2007:432). Mandatory information found on textile

product labels is governed by South African legislation and labels are required to provide the following information: fibre content, country of origin, name of the manufacturer, size and the care instructions (Glock & Kunz, 1995:545; Cooklin, 1997:117; Kadolph, 2007:432).

Voluntary information can be included on textile product labels, but is not a requirement (Glock & Kunz, 1995:545). This information includes the price, colour, labour used, style number and brand name of textile products (Stevens, 1993:1; Glock & Kunz, 1995:545). Most clothing textile products with the exception of shoes and accessories that are not used to cover or protect a part of the body are subject to these textile label regulations (Collier & Tortora 2001:503). However, the label legislations are not only prescribed for clothing textile products, but are often also applied to household textile products such as pillows, sleeping bags, upholstered furniture, bed linen and curtains (Thiry, 2008:26). The specific voluntary and mandatory information found on textile product labels is briefly discussed in sections 2.3.1.1 to 2.3.1.7

Labelling legislation ensures that consumers are provided with appropriate label information. In addition, South African consumers are also protected by consumer rights. These rights include: the right of the consumer to the satisfaction of basic needs, the right to be informed, the right to choose and the right to consumer education (Rousseau, 2003:454). Consumers have the right to select and use textile products consciously that satisfy their expectations, through access to understandable and complete information regarding what they are purchasing and how they should care for their textile products (SANCU, 2006:11; Mason *et al.*, 2008:276). Therefore, information on clothing and household textile labels must be honest and should adequately inform consumers.

2.3.1.1 Care label instructions

Care label instructions are designed to guide consumers and dry cleaners to care for textile products properly (Stevens, 1993:4). These instructions are a source of

information providing advice that will eliminate damage to textile products during cleaning and dry-cleaning, without shortening the textile product's lifetime (Hatch & Lane, 1980:361; Cooklin, 1997:118; Thiry, 2008:24).

South Africa's care label instruction legislation, known as the care labelling of piece goods, textile articles and clothing or South African National Standards (SANS) 10011, states that the textile product manufacturer or importer should provide an accurate, legible care instruction label that is permanently attached to the textile product in order to assist consumers in cleaning the textile product (Kadolph, 2007:434; SANS, 2008:138). The care label is required to be of an acceptable size without being hidden away to make it easily accessible for consumers to use (Cooklin, 1997:118; Thiry, 2008:24).

Although care labels are mandatory on clothing products, they are not required on household textile products (Thiry, 2008:24). However most manufacturers of household textile products attach care label instructions to advise consumers about the cleaning process of household textile products (Thiry, 2008:24). Insufficient information on labels and inadequate care label instructions can result in consumers not being well informed on how to take care of textile products (Kadolph, 2007:441), which might lead to negative consumer perceptions regarding textile product labels. For example when a consumer uses care label instructions to clean a dress, but the dress shrinks due to misinterpretation of label instructions, the consumer will have a negative perception regarding the information found on care label instructions and is likely to avoid future use of any care label instructions.

2.3.1.2 Fibre content

South African legislation (SANS 10235) regarding the fibre content of textile products was implemented in order to protect the consumer from misinterpreting the fibre content of products (Stevens, 1993:1; SANS, 2008:480). This legislation implies that it is mandatory to include standard terminology, fibre composition and listing of fibres (SANS, 2008:480). The name of the fibre must be in standard terminology in order to

avoid confusion (Hatch, 1993:130). The fibre composition of the textile product should be illustrated by weight percentage; however, the fibre should only be listed if it composes more than five percent of the total textile product (Stevens, 1993:1). This should be illustrated in the same font size from the largest to the smallest quantity in order to avoid consumers from being misled (Hatch, 1993:130; Stevens, 1993:1).

Fianu and Harrison-Arthur (1997:97) found that the fibre content of textile products was perceived by consumers to be the most important information aspect on the label. This perceived importance can be the result of consumers' perception that knowing the fibre content will better equip them to take care of the textile product. However, when consumers only consulted the fibre content to assist them in the caring for the clothing product, the majority of the consumers were dissatisfied with the clothing product's cleaning results (Fianu & Harrison-Arthur, 1997:102). Therefore, it was necessary to determine how consumers perceive textile product labels in order to understand consumers' behaviour regarding information found on textile product labels.

2.3.1.3 Country of origin

Country of origin refers to the name that appears on the 'made in' label (Chetty *et al.*, 1999:188). Country of origin is a valuable information source which informs consumers of the imported textile product's origin (Cooklin, 1997:118). It is mandatory in South Africa that the country of origin be displayed on labels of locally and imported textile products including the importer's customs code (Greyling, 2005:16; Thiry, 2008:26; Spoor & Fisher, 2009). It can only be stated that the product is 'made in South Africa', when the textile product is assembled and completed in South Africa (Greyling, 2005:16).

A study done by Chetty *et al.* (1999:185) indicates that consumers have certain (positive or negative) perceptions regarding products from specific countries. These perceptions are often based on consumers' previous experiences of the selected

country (Piron, 2000:308). Consumers often positively perceive products from advanced countries such as Europe and North America but perceive products from developing countries more negatively (Kaynak *et al.*, 2000:1225). South Africa, as a developing country, uses the “Proudly South African” logo in order to make consumers more aware of local products and to improve consumers’ perceptions of South Africa’s locally produced products (Frank, 2007). It is likely that the South African textile industry can be improved when consumers’ develop a strong culture to support local textile production and form a positive perception regarding locally produced textile products (Frank, 2007).

2.3.1.4 Manufacturer and brand names

The manufacturers’ name is mandatory information that should be presented on textile products (Stevens, 1993:1). Furthermore, South African textile products must specify the manufacturing company’s registration number (Greyling, 2005:16). Manufacturer information provides consumers with contact details if the textile product should fail to perform as expected (Kadolph 2007:440) and can assist them in choosing whether this manufacturer is trustworthy. Manufacturers often use a brand name to create an acceptable image in order to enhance consumers’ perceptions of the textile product (Thiry, 2008:24). Brand name information is provided voluntarily by the manufacturer in order to influence consumers’ purchasing decisions (Maqalika-Mokobori, 2005:33; Thiry, 2008:24), by forming a positive perception among consumers, which causes consumers to prefer a specific brand, leading to brand loyalty (Tustin & De Jongh, 2008:31).

Consumers often select a particular textile product based on its brand name, because they have formed prior expectations regarding the brand’s performance (Cote *et al.*, 1986:502). Brand name refers to a trademark, which is a distinctive mark attached to a textile product, in order for consumers to identify the product and repeat the purchase when they perceive positive opinions regarding the specific brand name (Hatch, 1993:135).

2.3.1.5 Size indication of textile products

The size of clothing textile products is an indicator of the way the clothing product should fit on a consumer's body (Mason *et al.*, 2008:278) or if the household textile product is the correct size for the area it is needed for, such as curtains. South African textile product legislation requires all clothing textile products to be accompanied by an appropriate size indication (SANS, 2008:144).

The size of the textile product should consist of the same sizing system that is used in that specific country (Cooklin, 1997:118), however, South Africa has no set sizing system for clothing products (Greyling, 2005:16; SANS, 2008:144). This makes it difficult for consumers to differentiate and comprehend the different sizing systems (Otieno *et al.*, 2005:300), which results in consumers having to try on multiple clothing products before purchasing. This can contribute to consumer dissatisfaction towards textile product's size indication (Mason *et al.*, 2008:277); resulting in consumers forming negative perceptions of their appearance and the textile product label (Alexander *et al.*, 2005:54).

2.3.1.6 Price of the textile product

The price indicator on textile products is voluntary information provided by retailers (Brown & Rice, 1998:39) in order to inform the consumer of the amount payable to purchase the selected product (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:160). Consumers often rely on textile product price to be an indication of the products' quality (Brown & Rice, 1998:41), which implies that consumers often perceive a product as of good quality when evaluating an item of high price (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:160). Marketers use this perception of quality that consumers have to influence consumers into purchasing more expensive products (Cant *et al.*, 2006:119).

2.3.1.7 Additional information

Manufacturers can add voluntary information to textile product labels to assist consumers in making more informed decisions regarding different aspects of textile manufacturing (Hatch, 1993:135; Glock & Kunz, 1995:545). Such voluntary information is briefly discussed below.

Environmental labels: Environmental labels inform consumers about green textile products (D'Souza *et al.*, 2006:163). These labels can display information such as being environmentally friendly, ozone-friendly, earth-friendly, degradable, recycled and recyclable, renewable and biodegradable (Kadolph, 2007:442). Environmental label information can assist consumers in forming a positive perception of green products which can influence consumers' product purchasing behaviour.

Sweatshop label: Describes employee's working conditions of the textile production (Brown & Rice, 1998:28). A study by Dickson (2001:89) found that consumers still perceive price, quality and appearance to be more important than the country of origin or information regarding sweatshops. Consumers in Dickson's (2001:98) study perceived sweatshop information negatively because they were afraid that when this information is implemented, prices of textile products will increase.

Textile finishes is voluntary information that can be displayed on textile product labels. Numerous available finishes can enhance a textile product such as: comfort finishes, easy care finishes, bionic finishes and protected finishes (Menezes & Choudhari, 2007:29). Finishes on textiles are added at the end of the textile product's development, and are used to improve the textile product's properties (Thiry, 2006:21). This improvement can add additional value to satisfy consumers' textile demands ultimately (Menezes & Choudhari, 2007:29).

Guarantees implies that the product is of good quality and consumers are assured that the product meets certain criteria or standards depending on the product (Muller, 1992:60). Guarantees that are regulated by specific standards can be applied to textiles with specific finishings such as being flame resistant and antistatic textile products (Chandler *et al.*, 1991:340). It is likely that consumers will perceive textile

products with a guarantee label as of better quality than textile products without a guarantee label.

2.3.2 Visual characteristics of labels

There are many visual characteristics of packaging and labels which can attract consumers (Bettman *et al.*, 1986:2) and, therefore, needs to be considered in the present study. The visual characteristics of a stimulus, such as a textile product label, may include the stimulus colour, chroma, size and illustrations (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999:78; Cant *et al.*, 2006:117), which can influence consumers' perceptions of products (Ampuero & Vila, 2006:109). The general appearance of a stimulus can be used by manufacturers to assist consumers in differentiating between different products (Erasmus 1995:19). Therefore, a brief explanation of visual characteristics of textile product labels is given, which includes: colour of textile product labels, text format and symbols used on textile product labels.

2.3.2.1 Colour

Colour is one of the first aspects consumers register during exposure to a stimulus (Ambrose & Harris, 2003:166). Consumers are attracted to various hues, values and chroma colours because different colours have different effects on consumers' emotions and energy levels (Gorn *et al.*, 1997:1395). The hue is the actual colour of the stimulus, for example blue, red or orange, the value refers to the brightness of the colour, and chroma is the purity of the colour (Crozier, 1999:7).

Gorn *et al.* (1997:1395,1396) explain that product labels containing red and other pure, high chroma colours result in higher excitement levels in consumers, whereas labels containing blue and bright, high value colours result in higher levels of relaxation in consumers. These variations of colours are often used in purchasing environments to stimulate consumers' interests in certain products in order to influence their purchasing decisions (Funk & Ndubisi, 2006:41). In addition, the use

of colours on product labels can also influence consumers negatively. In a study by Voordouw *et al.* (2009:97) it was found that dark letters printed on a dark background disabled consumers to read the food label, thus negatively influencing the readability of the label.

Furthermore, colour used on textile products is seen as a way to influence consumers' perceptions and their resulting purchasing decisions (Kazuya *et al.*, 2004:153). Colour can assist consumers to identify specific products from a range of competitor products allowing consumers to attach meaning to the product, and assist consumers in forming interpretations of the product (Grossman & Wisenbit, 1999:82; Cant *et al.*, 2006:117). If consumers use colour of products to influence their purchasing decisions, colour might also be relevant when addressing consumers' perceptions of textile product labels. Consumers can be made more aware of a stimulus by the intensity of the stimulus which refers to the magnitude thereof (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:220). For example, consumers are likely to become more aware of the label found on textile products, when the label's visual characteristics are bright and colourful. However, if colour is used inadequately it can give consumers a reason to ignore the product (Cant *et al.*, 2006:118).

2.3.2.2 Text format and symbols on textile product labels

The text format of information found on attached labels can be presented in different ways, depending on the product (Bettman *et al.*, 1986:18). It is important that the text format size of textile product labels should be easy to read (Maqalika-Mokobori, 2005:58). However, the readability of the label is not the only factor that needs to be considered. A study by Ampuero and Vila (2006:103) indicated that consumers associated different text format styles and size with the food product's performance, for instance a large, bold, uppercase text format and Roman letters were associated with elegant and durable products. These different associations of text format styles and size might also be true when referring to textile product labels.

Another visual characteristic found on textile product labels is symbols. Symbol images are an instant communication source, and convey an idea, instructions and information (Ambrose & Harris, 2003:127). According to Erasmus (1995:19), consumers can convey information by interpreting these symbols. However, Voordouw *et al.* (2009:97) suggest that symbols used as an information source should be selected with caution since it might confuse consumers.

Symbols are often used on care label instructions. The care instruction format for both clothing and household textile products can be symbols only, text only or a combination of symbols and text (Yan *et al.*, 2008:532). The text used on care instructions must be in English, including cases when symbols and text are used on care labels (Stevens, 1993:4).

The use of symbols on the care label is preferred by the clothing and household textile manufacturers, because the care symbols are globally recognisable and do not need to be translated into other languages (Kyllo, 2003:9). In contrast, it was found that consumers perceive care symbols and instructions as difficult to use and preferred text or a combination of text and symbols on care label instructions (Yan *et al.*, 2008:532). However, consumers' general perceptions of care label information and symbols remain unclear and therefore need to be addressed.

2.3.3 Positioning of labels on textile products

When finishing a textile product it is important that the information labels are in the correct position (Cooklin, 1997:117). The positioning of the label refers to the placement of the object (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:224) such as the placement of labels on clothing and household textile products. The positioning of labels on textile products differs depending on the textile product. Most clothing labels are positioned in the necklines or the back of pants and skirts (Kadolph 2007:432). Household textile product labels are often found in the length of the product (Stevens, 1993:10). A study by Maqalika-Mokobori (2005:108) found that consumers preferred positioning of labels to be consistent with the textile product. The reason for

consistent label positioning on textile products is to make it easier for consumers to find labels (Stevens, 1993:3; Cooklin, 1997:18). In a study by Van Der Merwe *et al.* (2008:90) it was found that incorrect or misplacement of shelf-edge labels caused consumers not to use these labels in grocery stores. If the stimulus is placed where the consumer expects it to be, the chances increase that consumers will become aware of the stimulus and most likely pay attention to it (Cant *et al.*, 2006:118). This might also be applied to the positioning of textile product labels and, therefore, was investigated.

2.4 CONSUMERS' PERCEPTUAL PROCESS IN THE CONTEXT OF TEXTILE PRODUCT LABELS

The perceptual process (Figure 2.1) is a complex, interactive, ongoing process and each stage occurs virtually simultaneously (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:304; Hawkins *et al.*, 2007:283). Consumers' perceptual process describes their tendency to process information and react accordingly under given circumstances (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:113).

Consumers' perceptual process of textile product labels shown in Figure 2.1 can be depicted by four stages that form perception. The perceptual process is initiated when consumers are exposed to environmental stimuli, become **aware** of it and pay **attention** to it (Cant *et al.*, 2006:115; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:80; Babin & Harris, 2009:42). Consumers' attention is based on importance and only if the stimulus is **important** enough for consumers will it be **interpreted** in order to form a **perception** of a stimulus according to their needs (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:305; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:89). These four stages are subsequently discussed and applied to the context of textile product labels.

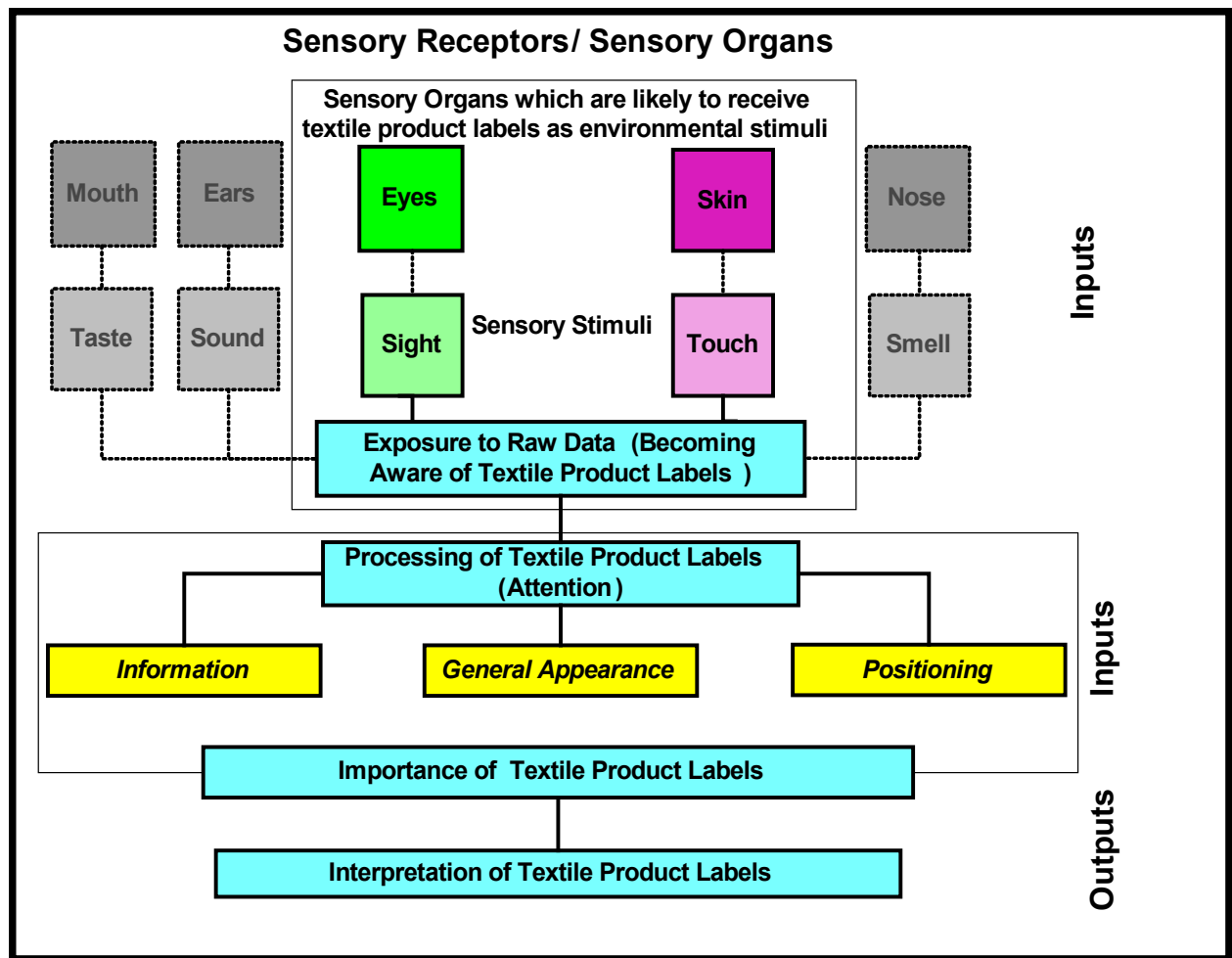


Figure 2.1: Applied model of the perceptual process of textile product labels (Adapted from Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:105; Kazuya *et al.*, 2004:153; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:80; Babin & Harris, 2009:42).

2.4.1 Awareness of a stimulus

Before consumers can become aware of a stimulus they have to be exposed to it (Erasmus, 1995:17; Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:304). Exposure to a stimulus is the first step in the perceptual process (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:103). Consumers are confronted and exposed to millions of environmental stimuli such as labels, packaging and advertisements on a daily basis (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003:218). As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the environmental stimuli from sensory inputs are registered as sound, sight, taste, smell and touch (Rousseau & Spoelstra,

2003:218). A study by Retief and De Klerk, (2003:21) indicated that sensory organs such as the eyes and skin are likely to be used when consumers are exposed to textile products to obtain visual and tactile information.

Exposure is the degree to which a consumer notices an environmental stimulus through their sensory receptors (Cant *et al.*, 2006:116). Awareness on the other hand is the process where consumers learn of the existence of an environmental stimulus after exposure thereto (Boshoff, 2003:197). Thus, when consumers are exposed to an environmental stimulus such as a textile product label, it is likely that they will become aware of the label's existence.

The shopping environment uses marketing stimuli to enhance consumer exposure to raw data such as products or services, related messages and information to influence consumers purchasing behaviour (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:70). As Figure 2.2 illustrates, consumers can be exposed to textile product labels, which they can see and touch (Kazuya *et al.*, 2004:153), but it does not necessarily mean that they will be aware of all the stimuli to which they are exposed and pay attention to them (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:103). A study by Muller (1982:216) indicates that consumers were unaware of care label information provided on textile product labels. This dated study focused on care label information, however, consumers' awareness of other label information remains unclear. Consumers' awareness of textile product labels in general needs to be addressed in order to understand consumers' purchasing decisions.

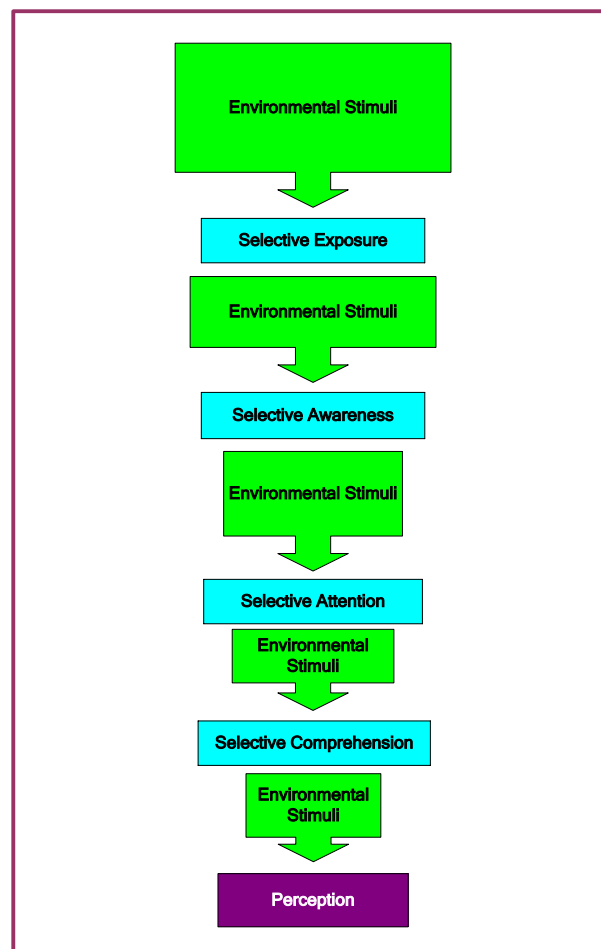


Figure 2.2: Consumer perceptual selectivity of environmental stimulus (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:105; Cant *et al.*, 2006:118)

2.4.2 Processing of Inputs (Attention)

It is consumers' information processing capacity which enables them to develop an understanding of a stimulus (Babin & Harris, 2009:42), such as a textile product label. As illustrated in Figure 2.2, consumers' attention is drawn from a smaller percentage of environmental stimuli than selective exposure and awareness (Cant *et al.*, 2006:155). Therefore, attention is an important construct in the perceptual process because interpretation can only occur when consumers attend to a stimulus (Mowen & Minor, 2001:45). Consumers focus their attention on stimuli that will satisfy their needs and disregard the stimuli in which they have no interest (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:181). Consumers' attention paid to a stimulus can be planned or spontaneous.

Planned attention is aim directed (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:104), such as when attention is drawn when consumers search for information to assist in their purchasing decision (Wilkie, 1994:218). Consumers are usually more likely to pay attention to label information when the performance of the textile product is unknown and complex (Chandler *et al.*, 1991:341). For example, consumers who need information to clean a silk dress, will seek information on the label to assist them in performing the cleaning process. In turn, spontaneous attention is usually paid when consumers do not concentrate or plan on searching for a stimulus, and the stimulus merely draws their attention (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:104). For example, contrasting colours can draw consumers' attention spontaneously (Erasmus, 1995:19), such as the use of colour on different textile product labels.

2.4.3 Importance of inputs

A stimulus can draw consumers' attention but only if the stimulus is important enough for consumers, will it be interpreted in order to form an interpretation of a stimulus (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001:305; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:89). Consumers categorise the stimulus according to their view of the importance thereof, by comparing it to their personal needs, expectations and other stimuli they already experienced which lead to their interpretation of the stimulus (Michaelis *et al.*, 2008:409; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:181). Based on the positive or negative experience associated with the previous experience of the stimulus, consumers will view the stimulus as important or unimportant (Michaelis *et al.*, 2008:409).

The importance of a stimulus is determined by selective comprehension which acts as a filtering device for information that consumers obtain from stimuli before an interpretation is formed (Cant *et al.*, 2006:119), as illustrated in Figure 2.2. Selective comprehension occurs when consumers combine prior knowledge with expectations and intentions in order to derive importance from a specific stimulus (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001:111). Consumers can filter out any stimulus that they find psychologically threatening or unimportant, even though exposure has already taken place (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:181). This filtering enables consumers to ignore

some information that seems unimportant to them, in order to change their understanding of a specific stimulus (De Chernatony & McDonald, 2003:98). Therefore, selective comprehension can be the result of incorrectly categorising the importance of the stimuli or distortion of information to fit consumers' likes, dislikes, preconception and attitude (Cant *et al.*, 2006:119). This entails that exposure to textile information does not necessarily lead to informed consumers who have the knowledge to make well-informed purchasing decisions (Mason *et al.*, 2008:282).

Establishing the importance of a stimulus is an essential stage in the perceptual process for marketers wanting consumers to view their stimulus important enough to enhance purchasing and use of the stimulus (Babin & Harris, 2009:42). In a study by Krugel and Van Heerden (2008:36), most of the respondents viewed textile product labels as an important source of information. Fianu and Harrison-Arthur (1997:98) also found that consumers view textile labels as an important reference to assist them in making valuable decisions regarding textile products. Consumers faced with a textile product that has limited information, will perceive the product as less valuable (Rao & Sieben, 1992:259). This entailed that consumers' view of textile product label importance should be determined in order to understand their perceptions of textile product labels.

2.4.4 Interpretation of inputs

The interpretation of inputs is the last stage in the perceptual process (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:89). After exposure and paying attention to a stimulus, consumers attempt to derive meaning from the information they received to interpret the stimulus (Babin & Harris, 2009:43). This enables them to interpret the stimulus (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:89), including when consumers attach meaning to textile product labels. Consumers' interpretation (of textile product labels) depends on what they notice and their background used to interpret the stimuli (Erasmus, 1995:18).

Consumers make informed decisions when they interpret the stimulus (textile product label) according to their prior frame of reference in order to determine their purchasing outcome (Erasmus, 1995:16). Consumers' interpretation of the information on textile products has a significant influence on their expectations and use of textile products labels (Mason *et al.*, 2008:277).

2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section discusses the conceptual framework (Figure 2.3) that was constructed based on previous literature and objectives of the study (Chapter 1). The conceptual framework directed this study to reach its aim to clarify and categorise concepts that are discussed in this literature review. The conceptual framework is divided into the following sections: consumers and consumer perception.

The first section, consumers, in the present study refers to South African individuals who purchase products and services for themselves or their families. Within the context of this study, consumer perception is regarded as the main section. Perception is a complex process and can be divided into different constructs of the perceptual process, which are: exposure to stimuli, awareness, processing of stimuli (attention), determining importance of the stimuli and interpreting the stimuli. The arrows seen in Figure 2.3 indicate the relationship between perception and the perceptual process. The stimuli in the context of this study refers to the labels found on clothing and household textile products, which consist of label information, visual characteristics and positioning of textile product labels.

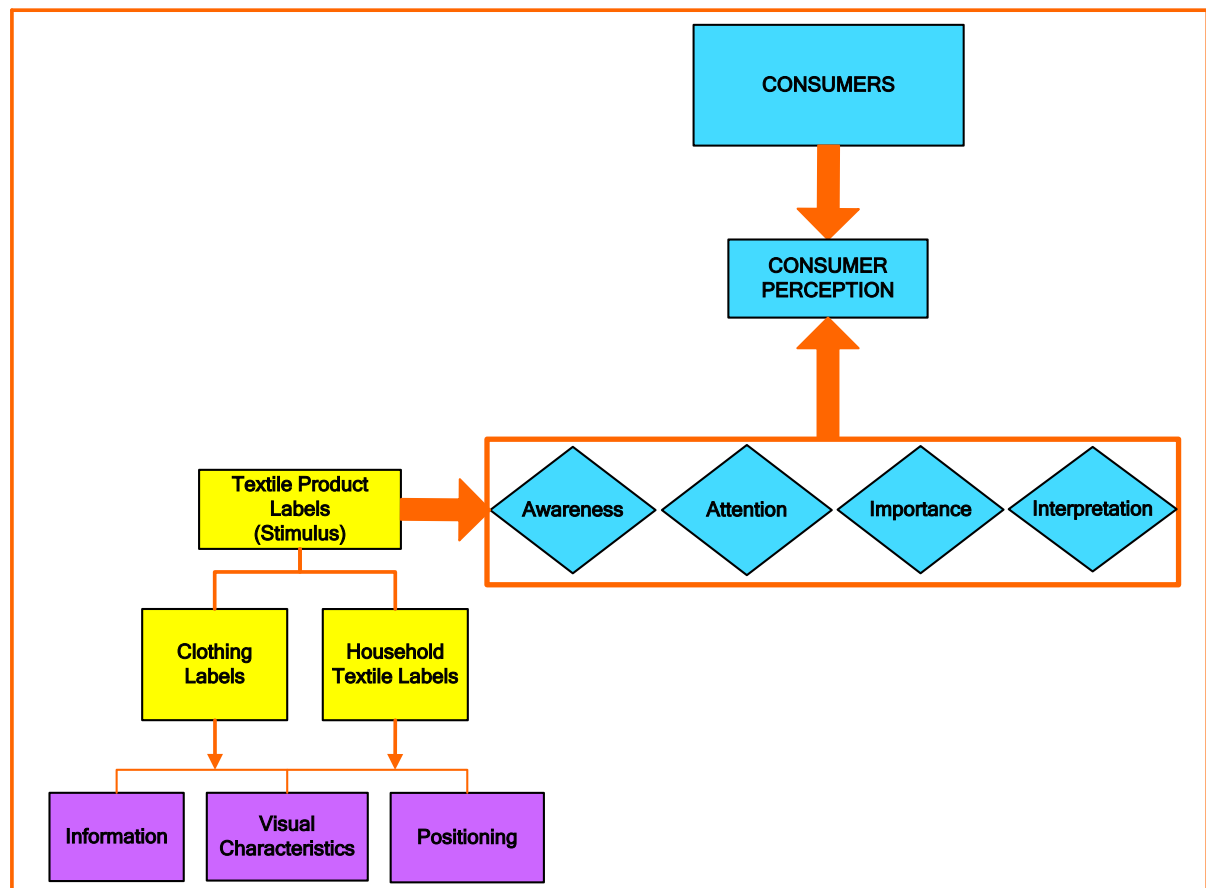


Figure 2.3: Conceptual framework of consumers' perceptual process of textile product labels.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Consumers take action and respond, not based on the objective reality, but on the basis of their own perceptions. Therefore, in order to understand consumer behaviour it was necessary to address consumers' perceptions of textile product labels by focusing on their perceptual process. The perceptual process is initiated when the consumer becomes aware of the textile product labels and pays attention to it. However, only if textile product labels are important enough to consumers, will they be interpreted. By addressing this perceptual process, consumers' perceptions of textile product labels could be determined. Therefore perceptions regarding textile product labels are important factors that need to be determined in order to understand consumers better and to improve consumers' satisfaction of textile

product labels. However, limited research has been done in South Africa regarding consumers' perceptions of labels on clothing and household textile products. This present study explores consumers' perceptions towards labels on textile products by addressing the perceptual process.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Consumer perceptions regarding labels on clothing and household textile products: a study in Gauteng

(Manuscript to be submitted for publication in the Journal of Consumer Studies and the editorial prescriptions of this journal were followed)

(A more detailed methodology section can be found in Appendix A, while the questionnaire is provided in Appendix B.)

Title: Consumer perceptions regarding labels on clothing and household textile products: a study in Gauteng

Short title: Consumers perceptions of textile product labels

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Abstract

Consumers do not base their pre- and post-purchasing decisions on reality but rather on what they perceive to be the reality. Consumers' perceptions of textile product labels are important to be studied in order to understand how they influence their pre- and post-purchasing decisions and use of these labels. Perception is not a singular concept but a complex interactive process. The present study, done in the Gauteng Province (South-Africa), aimed to determine consumers' perceptions of clothing and household textile labels, by focusing on the perceptual process of consumers from different demographic backgrounds (gender, language, age and education). An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used as the data collection technique and 411 questionnaires were filled out. Different public locations of three regions in Gauteng Province in South Africa namely Pretoria, Vereeniging and the West Rand were selected. The public location selection contributed to the probability that a diverse group of respondents were recruited. The study population consisted of 44.5% males and 55.5% females. The home languages most spoken among the respondents were English (20.9%), Afrikaans (21.1%) or isiZulu (16.5%). The results illustrated that the respondents tended to agree to be aware of label information and that the front and back panel of the label draw their attention. However, respondents tended to be neutral as to whether the information is important enough to read. Respondents mostly agreed that they interpret the symbols on textile product labels. Although this study had statistical significance, there were no large effect sizes, which usually illustrate practical significance of a study. There were only small to medium effect sizes that illustrate that there were some tendencies regarding textile product labels and respondents' characteristics. Tendencies were especially found when analysing the relationships between consumers' perceptions and age and between perceptions and language. Older respondents (60 and older) tended to have a more positive perception of textile product labels than younger respondents (18 to 29 years). In addition, respondents with an African language as their home language seemed to differ from Afrikaans and English respondents. In general respondents seem to have a positive perception towards textile product labels. Better labelling initiatives and consumer education can strive to improve consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels to be more positive. This in effect will teach consumers how to clean and maintain textile products to extend the product's lifespan and in turn contribute to the consumer's pre- and post-purchasing satisfaction.

Keywords

Clothing products; Consumers; Household textile products; Labels, Perceptions

Introduction

The majority of empirical studies about consumers are conducted in First-World Countries, such as the United States of America. However, more than 80% of the world's consumers live in developing Third-World Countries with emerging markets (Steenkamp & Burgess, 2002), such as South Africa. Consumers from the latter countries cannot be compared to those from First-World Countries due to the different lifestyles, cultural diversities and attitudes influencing consumers' purchasing behaviour (D'Andrea *et al.*, 2006; Gothan & Erasmus, 2008). Therefore, the behaviour of consumers from Third-World Countries should not be generalised to those of consumers from First-World Countries but should rather be viewed separately in order to understand consumers from Third-World Countries better. However, there is limited academic research regarding consumers in Third-World Countries such as South Africa (Steenkamp & Burgess, 2002), and even less consumer behaviour research regarding textile products (Van Eck *et al.*, 2004). This also implies limited research regarding labels found on textile products.

Textile product labels are important sources of information that can assist consumers before and after purchasing textile products (Cooklin, 1997; Collier & Tortora, 2001). However, consumers do not base their pre- and post-purchasing decisions on reality but rather on what they perceive (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010) of a textile product label. Thus consumers' perceptions of textile products (such as textile product labels) need to be studied as it influences their pre- and post-purchasing decisions (Chen-Yu & Kincade, 2001) and use of these labels. This study focuses on clothing and household textile labels referred to as textile product labels.

Consumers can either interpret perception positively or negatively (Otieno *et al.*, 2005). Positive perceptions can influence consumers to purchase a product or use a certain stimulus, whereas negative perceptions can cause consumers to avoid a specific product or stimulus based on their previous experiences (Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003; De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008). A study by De Klerk *et al.* (1998) indicated that when consumers have a negative perception

of a clothing store, they will prefer alternative stores to meet their clothing needs. This response might also be applicable to textile product labels. If consumers react on their store perceptions, they may also react on their perceptions of textile product labels. If this is a negative perception, the consumer might react negatively towards the product by not purchasing or using it. This may lead to unsatisfied consumer needs.

Consumers' perceptions can also be referred to as their frame of reference for making purchasing decisions (Erasmus, 1995). Therefore, consumers' perceptions of textile product labels needs to be determined, to form a better understanding of their textile pre- and post-purchasing behaviour. However, perception is not a singular concept but a complex interactive process that occurs virtually simultaneously (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001; Hawkins *et al.*, 2007). Thus in order to gain insight into consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels, each concept in the perceptual process needs to be addressed. The perceptual process is initiated when consumers are exposed to environmental stimuli (textile product labels), become aware of it and pay attention to it (Cant *et al.*, 2006; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008; Babin & Harris, 2009). Consumers' attention is based on importance and only if the stimulus (textile product label) is important enough to consumers will it be interpreted in order to form a perception according to their needs (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001; Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008).

The present study, done in the Gauteng Province, aims to determine consumers' perceptions of clothing and household textile labels, by focusing on the perceptual process of consumers from different demographic backgrounds (gender, language, age and education). The first objective is to determine consumers' awareness of labels on clothing and household textile products. Secondly it was to determine whether consumers' attention is drawn to labels of clothing and household textile products. Thirdly it was to determine whether labels on textile products are important to consumers and finally whether consumers interpret labels on textile products.

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study was constructed based on previous literature and the study's objectives (Figure 1). The consumers concerned in the present study were a sample of

South African consumers from Gauteng who use textile product labels before and after purchasing textile products for themselves or their families. Within the context of this study consumer perception is regarded as the main aspect divided into different constructs of the perceptual process, namely: awareness of the stimulus, attention drawn towards the stimulus, the importance consumers attach to the stimulus and interpretation thereof. The stimulus in context to this study refers to textile product labels found on clothing and household textile products, which consists of label information, visual characteristics and positioning of textile product labels. The literature review further explains each concept given in Figure 1.

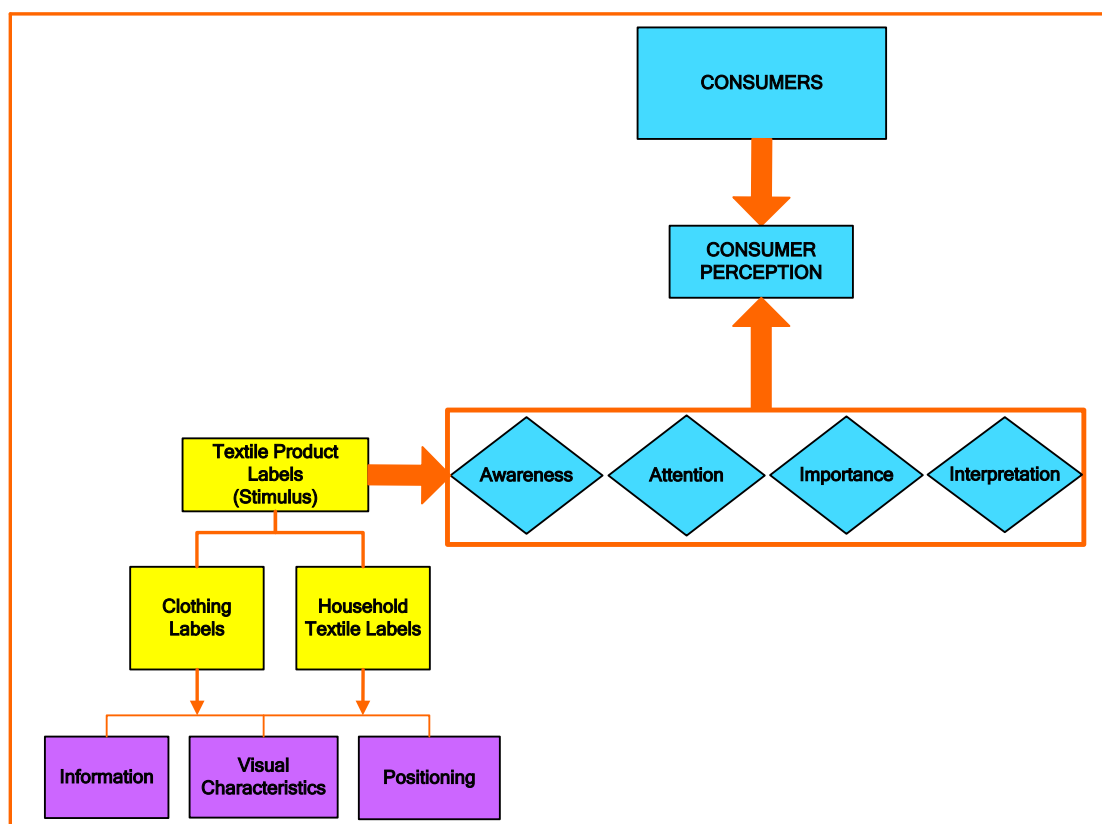


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of consumers' perceptual process of textile product labels.

Literature review

Consumers in a South African context

South Africa is a developing Third-World Country (Molawa, 2009:3), which has an estimated population of 47.8 million (Statistics SA, 2008). A Third-World Country can be described as

one that has problems such as: poverty, sub-standard infrastructure, poor economic growth, high inflation rates, rigid trade barriers, political imbalances, a lack of education and very limited access to advanced services, electronics, telecommunication, basic retailing and banking services (Appiah-Adu, 1998; Klemz *et al.*, 2005). These problems relate to developing Third-World Countries as well, but the latter aims to improve and solve these problems (Appiah-Adu, 1998; Trainer, 2002). Since the first democratic elections of 1994, numerous problems were realised and the majority of black South African consumers who were previously disadvantaged had the opportunity to improve their living conditions (Klemz *et al.*, 2005). Many black South Africans have since entered the purchasing environments and recently obtained access to education, owning a home and electricity as well as access to basic products or services (Gothan & Erasmus, 2008).

Although South Africa is seen as a developing Third-World Country with limited resources, some urban regions have more resources available (Klemz *et al.*, 2005). For instance many of the households in South Africa have running water, electricity and basic appliances, while the suburbs of South Africa comprise of modern infrastructure such as transport, electricity, water, telecommunication, banking and retailing (Klemz *et al.*, 2005).

Gauteng is one such urban region found in South Africa with more resources, modern infrastructure and urbanised consumers (Pauw *et al.*, 2005). A total estimate of 96.3% of residents in Gauteng lived in urban areas in 2004 (Lehohla, 2004). Although consumers are more urbanised in Gauteng, this region still has high poverty and unemployment rates (Pauw *et al.*, 2005). A large diversity of cultures is found in South Africa (Steenkamp & Burgess, 2002) and Gauteng thus consists of many people from different socio-economic backgrounds, which explains the variety of consumers from distinct lifestyles and the multicultural differences (Gothan & Erasmus, 2008). This diversity of consumers makes Gauteng a suitable location for a South African study on consumers' perceptions of textile product labels.

Consumers' perceptions of textile product labels

A textile product label is an extra piece of fabric sewn in, hung onto or printed directly onto a clothing or household textile product (Stevens, 1993; Thiry, 2008), which consumers can use

to make informed pre- and post-purchasing decisions (Cooklin, 1997; Collier & Tortora, 2001). Consumers base their pre- and post-purchasing decisions on their perceptions of textile products (Chen-Yu & Kincade, 2001; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). This could also be applicable to labels on textile products (Figure 1).

If consumers are unaware (Figure 1) of the stimulus, they will not be able to form a perception regarding the specific stimulus (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001). A Study by Muller (1982) indicates that consumers are unaware of care label information provided on textile product labels. This dated study focused on a single aspect of textile product labels, namely the care label. However consumers' awareness of other aspects of textile labels remains unclear (Maqalika-Mokobori, 2005). These aspects include the following: the visual characteristics, label positioning and other information found on textile labels including fibre content, country of origin, brand name, size and price (Davis, 1987; Thiry, 2008). Therefore, the present study aims to determine whether consumers are aware of textile product labels.

Attention (Figure 1) refers to the extent of mental information processing devoted to momentarily concentrating on a specific stimulus, enabling consumers to develop an understanding of the stimulus (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008; Babin & Harris, 2009), during the perceptual process. However, consumers' are selective about what they pay attention to in a purchasing environment (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008). Consumers' attention can be attracted through a stimulus that is communicated clearly and is memorable, in order to form an interpretation (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2001). A study by Ampuero and Vila (2006) found that visual characteristics and information of food packaging are often combined and formed in various ways to attract consumers' attention towards the product. Since consumers' sensory receptors can only process a stimulus (textile product label) when they pay attention to it during the perceptual process (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008), the present study will determine whether these labels draw consumers' attention in order to form a perception thereof.

Consumers often categorise the stimulus (textile product label) by comparing it to other previously experienced stimuli (Michaelis *et al.*, 2008). Based on the positive or negative experience associated with the previous stimulus, consumers will view the stimulus as either important or unimportant (Michaelis *et al.*, 2008). The importance (Figure 1) consumers associate with a stimulus is an essential concept of the perceptual process, especially for

marketers wanting consumers to view their stimulus important enough to enhance purchasing decisions positively (Babin & Harris, 2009).

A stimulus can either be interpreted as acceptable or be dismissed as unacceptable (Otieno *et al.*, 2005). Consumers' interpretation (Figure 1) of stimuli forms their ultimate perception which will influence their actions, use, purchasing behaviour, leisure habits and other purchasing activities (Uusitalo, 2001; Rousseau & Spoelstra, 2003). Although manufacturers of textile products labels intend to aid consumers with valuable and necessary information regarding the textile product (Collier & Tortora, 2001), consumers often interpret a stimulus differently to what marketers or manufacturers intended (Andersson *et al.*, 2004; Cant *et al.*, 2006; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). It was found by Andersson *et al.* (2004) that consumers interpreted some clothing advertisements as distasteful and unacceptable causing them to form a negative perception of that specific brand. This indicates that consumers' interpretation of information and visual characteristics of textile product labels also need to be addressed. Furthermore, a study by Maqalika-Mokobori (2005) found some consumers to have negative interpretations regarding the consistency of the positioning of the label on textile products. This may be because the textile product label placement is not always easy to establish, making it difficult to use (Cooklin, 1997). This can create a negative perception of textile product labels which needs to be addressed. Therefore, the importance of consumers' interpretation as a final stage within the perceptual process necessitates the need to determine this aspect of perception in the present study.

Methodology

Method of enquiry

A quantitative research approach was chosen, since this study aimed to collect information from a variety of people that can be statistically analysed in order to find accurate and precise results (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; McDaniel & Gates, 2007). There is limited research available regarding consumers' perceptions of clothing (Van Eck *et al.*, 2004), and more specifically their perceptions of textile product labels. Therefore a non-experimental, descriptive and exploratory research design was used in this study to explore and identify new ideas or information that present specific details of a social situation and describe the

research topic (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004; Fouché & De Vos, 2007). Furthermore, an interviewer-administered questionnaire was used as the data collection technique.

Sampling

The study location was three different regions in Gauteng Province, as Gauteng is the region in South Africa with the largest population (Statistics SA, 2008) and is classified as an urban area (Pauw *et al.*, 2005). Urban consumers are more likely to be exposed to a variety of textile products, textile product attributes (such as textile product labels) and retail stores, as well as to have the resources to purchase textile products on a regular basis (Erasmus, 1995; Mason *et al.*, 2008).

The three selected regions were distributed throughout Gauteng, namely: Pretoria, Vereeniging and West Rand. Public locations were used for the recruitment of respondents selected within the three regions, which included: schools, retirement villages, parking areas of shopping centres and government institutions. This contributed to the probability that a diverse group of respondents participated. Therefore, a non-probability, convenience sampling technique was used, as the respondents were approached in pre-selected locations (Strydom, 2007), based on accessibility and fieldworkers' safety (Neuman, 2006). Furthermore, purposive sampling was applied as this technique allowed the inclusion of respondents based on specific criteria and judgement specified by the researcher (Strydom, 2007).

The inclusion criteria required that the respondents were the legal age of 18 years or older. To accommodate South Africa's multi-cultural society (Gothan & Erasmus, 2008), these inclusion criteria were used to incorporate more variation in the sample by including respondents of any ethnicity and gender. Furthermore, respondents were asked whether they used the textile product label, since only label users were asked to participate. Non-label users were to find the questionnaire irrelevant, as the questionnaire contained questions that can only be answered by consumers who use textile product labels. According to Muller (1982), non-label users are not interested in the information found on the label and are not aware of the benefits they can derive from this information.

Data collection

Data collection took place during March to April 2010. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used as the data collection technique, as this technique is often used in South Africa due to the relatively low level of literacy among the population (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In addition interviewer-administered questionnaires minimise incomplete questionnaires, by training the fieldworkers to assist respondents without influencing respondents' opinions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Maree & Pietersen, 2007).

As proposed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, this study aimed to obtain 400 usable questionnaires. To achieve this, more than 400 questionnaires were filled out by trained fieldworkers to compensate for unusable questionnaires, and a total sample quantity of 411 were realised.

The layout of the questionnaire was as follows: Section A measured respondents' perceptions of labels found on clothing and household textile products focusing on respondents' awareness of, attention paid to, the importance of and interpretation of textile product labels. Furthermore this section included questions on textile product label information, visual characteristics of labels and the positioning of labels on textile products as indicated by the literature. Respondents had to answer a series of psychographic questions based on a 5-point Likert scale which consisted of the following choice descriptor categories: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided (neutral), 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Section B contained demographic questions including: age, home language, education, marital status and gender. The questionnaire was tested in a pilot study prior to the main study. The pilot questionnaire was improved for understandability, readability as well as the time it took to fill out a questionnaire.

Ethical considerations

Respondents were informed about the content of the study and gave informed consent to participate. They were also kept anonymous and were given the option to withdraw at any time. This study was registered and ethically approved by the North-West University's Ethical Committee (reference code NWU-00024-09-S1).

Data analysis

Data were statistically analysed using a descriptive and exploratory research design. This design focused on respondents' perceptions by addressing four constructs, namely: awareness, attention, importance and interpretation of textile product labels. Data analysis was done in conjunction with the Statistical Consultation Services of the NWU using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences programme (SPSS Inc).

Firstly, descriptive statistics were analysed on demographic variables. Secondly, validity and reliability was tested for. Thirdly, consumer perceptions based on awareness, attention, importance and interpretation for different demographical groups were tested with T-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Buckingham & Saunders 2004; Burns & Burns, 2008). T-tests and one-way ANOVA are statistical tests for significance of differences between mean scores of different groups across one or more variables (Burns & Burns, 2008). ANOVA was used in this study to examine the difference between means for the cohort groups (education, age and languages) across dependent variables (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004). Furthermore, gender and marital status differences were examined across the dependent variables using T-tests (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004). Since this study was based on purposive sampling methods rather than random sampling, significance tests are not relevant and therefore, practical significance was determined by analysing Cohen's d-values as measures of effect size (Ellis & Steyn, 2003). However, p-values were also determined to provide additional insight into the data. Cohen (1988) gives the following guidelines for interpretation of d, where a small effect is indicated by $d=0.2$; a medium effect by $d=0.5$ and a large effect size by $d=0.8$; the latter implies practical significance. Results of medium to large effect sizes will be discussed which indicates typical to large practical significance for social sciences (Morgan *et al.*, 2007).

Validity and reliability

Face validity was obtained by analysing whether the actual questionnaire appears valid (Pietersen & Maree, 2007), during the pilot study. The questionnaire was analysed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University and by the project leaders as well as experts in the field of perceptions. This ensured that each question was analysed and

compared to the objectives of this study in order to determine whether the questionnaire was valid to use in the present study. Factor analysis was performed in order to analyse construct validity. To obtain construct validity, exploratory factor analysis was applied to section A of the questionnaire. Principle axis factor analysis was used to place the selected items into different factors using Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization as rotation method (Field, 2009). All factors with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted, with the use of the Kaiser Criterion (Field, 2009). The five factors (Table 2) were categorised as “Attention to back panel label information”, “Attention to label information content and label appearance”, “Interpretation of symbols on labels”, “Awareness of labels as information source”, “Importance of reading label information” including the two separate items “Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me” and “I notice information on the front panel of a textile label”.

In order to ensure stability reliability of this research (Delpont, 2007; Neuman, 2006) the same questionnaire was used throughout the study (Gray, 2005; Denscombe, 2007). Furthermore stability reliability can be ensured by training fieldworkers to assist respondents with the questionnaire without influencing respondents’ opinions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Maree & Pietersen, 2007). The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University screened the questionnaires in order to obtain reliability and ensured that the study can be statistically analysed. Furthermore, internal reliability consistency of multi-item scales was tested using Cronbach’s alpha (Furlong *et al.*, 2000).

Results and discussion

Demographic characteristics of sample

A non-probability sample (n=411) was taken from the three regions in Gauteng. Table 1 indicates that the study population consisted of 44.5% males and 55.5% females. The most spoken home languages among the respondents were English (20.9%), Afrikaans (21.1%) or isiZulu (16.5%). This could be explained as these languages are among the four most spoken home languages (isiZulu, Afrikaans, Sesotho and English) in Gauteng (Lehohla, 2004). Another reason why most respondents were either English or Afrikaans might be because of

the political history of South Africa that caused many individuals within the larger population to feel uncomfortable to supply information to researchers from a different race (Van Eck *et al.*, 2004). Consumers from other language groups might, therefore, have been hesitant to participate in the study.

Most of the respondents were aged between 20 and 59 years (85.9%). This distribution shows that there was a variety in age of the respondents who filled out the questionnaire. The biggest group of the respondents (41.6%) had a grade 12 education and a further 37.2% had tertiary education such as a diploma or degree (Table 1). This corresponds with the statistics that only 8.4% of the Gauteng population aged 20 years and older have no formal schooling (Lehohla, 2004).

Table 1 Frequencies and distributions of respondents' demographical characteristics

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (n)	Distribution (%)
Gender (n=411)		
Female	228	55.5
Male	183	44.5
Home language (n=411)		
Afrikaans	87	21.1
English	86	20.9
isiZulu	68	16.5
isiXhosa	26	6.3
Seswati	3	0.7
isiNdebele	2	0.5
Sepedi	24	5.8
Sesotho	37	9.0
Setswana	52	12.7
Tshivenda	9	2.2
Xitsonga	15	3.6
Other (German, Dutch)	2	0.5
Age (n=411)		
18 to 19 years	8	1.9
20 to 29 years	107	26.0
30 to 39 years	96	23.4
40 to 49 years	90	21.9
50 to 59 years	60	14.6
60 to 69 years	31	7.5
70 and older	19	4.6
Highest level of education (n=411)		
No formal education	2	0.5
Some primary school education	6	1.5
Primary school completed	12	2.9
Some high school education	67	16.3
Grade 12 completed	171	41.6
Technicon diploma/degree	92	22.4
University Degree	61	14.8

Validity and reliability

Seven factors were extracted (Table 2) by the factor analysis and a total variance of 52% was explained. The seven factors were different constructs that form respondents' perception of textile product labels. However, factor 5 had no real pattern and all the items within the factor had double factor loadings and were, therefore, placed with other, more suitable factors. The Kaiser-Meier-Olkin's (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to examine the appropriateness of the factor analysis. The KMO value for this factor analysis was 0.821 which according to Field (2009) is a "great value" for a study.

The communality of most of the items in all the factors yielded communalities >0.3 with the highest communality being 0.553. Only eight of the items had a low communality of <0.3 as indicated (Hair *et al.* 2006), with the lowest communality being 0.164. However, theoretically the factor loadings made sense and when calculating the factor scores, the average of all items contributing to a factor was calculated to ensure that all the questions have equal weight and that factor scores can be interpreted on the original Likert scale. The factor analysis for this questionnaire complied to a large degree with the requirements for construct validity and, therefore, this questionnaire could be seen as an acceptable instrument regarding validity.

Internal reliability consistency of multi-item scales (Table 2) was tested using Cronbach's alpha (Furlong *et al.*, 2000). The threshold value for a satisfactory scale is >0.6 (Malholtra & Birks, 2007). Most factors were within the satisfactory scale, except factor 2 "Attention to label information content and label appearance". This factor yielded a value just below 0.6 ($\alpha=0.539$), but according to Field (2009), when measuring psychological constructs with large variation of constructs (such as perception), the factors may have a lower value. Therefore, factor 2 can still be seen as acceptable to be used in this study. Factor 7 only had two items and was, therefore, not reliable ($\alpha=0.262$), making it more suitable to view these items separately. Therefore, the five remaining factors and the two separate questions can be seen as acceptable regarding internal reliability consistency to be used to interpret the data. As shown in Table 2 the inter-item correlation of each construct is well within the range of 0.15 to 0.5, as suggested by Clark and Watson (1995). Therefore, the reliability of this instrument is acceptable.

Table 2 Summary of exploratory factor analysis of the 25-item perception scale (Factor loadings from principal components analysis)

Item	Factor loadings						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I notice information on the back panel of a textile label.	0.692 ¹						
The back panel of the textile label is important to me.	0.359 ¹					0.274	
I consult the textile label information when I clean the product.	0.336 ¹						0.322
I notice written information on textile labels.	0.267 ¹			0.209			
I notice when the textile label does not include all the necessary information.	0.248	0.243 ²					
I will notice a change in visual appearance on the textile label of a favourite brand.		0.554 ²					
Textile labels indicate the brand of the textile product		0.493 ²					
I value the appearance of textile labels.		0.297 ²			-0.247	0.272	
Symbols on the textile label are valuable to me.			-0.648 ³				
Symbols on labels are easy to understand.			-0.632 ³				
Symbols are a useful source of information on textile labels.			-0.456 ³		-0.390		
I notice symbols on the textile label.		0.221	-0.368 ³				
Textile labels contain sufficient information.			-0.255	0.238 ⁴	0.216		
The print on the textile label should be large enough to read.				0.537 ⁴			
Labels are sources of information.				0.493 ⁴			
The written information on textile labels is useful.				0.422 ⁴	-0.203		
Larger textile labels are more noticeable.				0.405 ⁴			
I know where to find specific information on a textile product.			-0.202	0.252 ⁴	0.256		
I read labels on textile products.				0.249		0.504 ⁶	
I spend more time reading textile labels than my friends.						0.433 ⁶	
I consult the label when I buy textile products.		0.274				0.355 ⁶	
I read all the information on textile labels.	0.237				0.299	0.319 ⁶	
I follow the textile label information to help the item last longer.				0.222		0.247 ⁶	
Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me.							0.559 ^{7a}
I notice information on the front panel of a textile label.							0.282 ^{7b}
Inter Item correlation	0.28	0.23	0.31	0.22	-	0.26	-
Cronbach alpha coefficient	0.60	0.54	0.64	0.62	-	0.63	0.26
Average mean and (SD)	3.63 ±(0.71)	3.37 ±(0.80)	3.72 ±(0.78)	4.01 ±(0.54)	-	3.47 ±(0.76)	3.49 ±(1.24)^{7a}
Perception average mean and (SD)	3.63 ±(0.51)						3.71 ±(1.06)^{7b}

¹ Attention to back panel label information² Attention to label information content and label appearance³ Interpretation of symbols on labels⁴ Awareness of labels as information source⁵ Items divided into other factors⁶ Importance of reading label information⁷ Separate items^{7a} Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me^{7b} I notice information on the front panel of a textile label

Respondents' perceptions of textile product labels

In order to determine consumers' perceptions, constructs measuring the perceptual process needed to be addressed. As presented in Table 2, overall mean values of the factors were above the average value of three ("undecided"), indicating that they tended to agree to most of the factors, related to the perceptual process. Respondents agreed that they were aware of textile product label information (mean=4.01) and the back panel information (which often contains the care instructions) drew their attention (mean=3.63). However, they tended to be more neutral as to whether the information content on the label and its appearance draw their attention (mean=3.37) and whether the label was important enough to read (mean=3.47).

Respondents mostly agreed that they interpret the symbols (mean=3.72). Respondents were on average neutral (mean=3.49) on whether the placement of the labels matters to them. However they agreed that they notice the front panel of the textile label (mean=3.71). Respondents' average perception also indicated that they lean more towards positive perceptions (mean=3.63) of textile product labels in general, than negative perceptions.

Table 3 illustrates respondents' frequencies of responses for each item used in the study. Respondents mostly "agreed" to the items of each construct with a distribution percentage range of 24.1% to 67.2%, whereas "strongly disagree" had the lowest distribution percentage range of 1.2% to 29.0%. These results, therefore, correspond with the mean values that illustrate that the respondents' perceptions were more positive regarding textile product labels. This might imply that respondents' positive perceptions might cause them to use textile product labels, since Chen-Yu and Kincade (2001) indicate consumers' overall perception of a textile product determines their purchasing behaviour.

A study by De Klerk *et al.* (1998) found that when consumers have a negative clothing store perception, they will prefer alternative stores to meet their clothing needs and when their perception is positive, they use the store. This might imply that since the results indicated that the respondents tended to have a positive perception of textile product labels they might use them before and after purchasing textile products. When consumers perceive the stimulus (textile product label) as positive, it often increases their satisfaction towards the product (Chen-Yu & Kincade, 2001) indicating that consumers might use textile product labels.

Table 3 Respondents' frequencies and distributions for each construct according to their responses to the items in the questionnaire.

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree	
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
<i>Attention to back panel label information</i>										
The back panel of the textile label is important to me.	28	6.8	91	22.1	63	15.3	166	40.4	63	15.3
I notice information on the back panel of a textile label.	25	6.1	76	18.5	43	10.5	221	53.8	46	11.2
I consult the textile label information when I clean the product.	17	4.1	49	11.9	18	4.4	219	53.3	108	26.3
I notice written information on textile labels.	9	2.2	36	8.8	28	6.8	276	67.2	62	15.1
<i>Attention to label information content and label appearance</i>										
Textile labels indicate the brand of the textile product.	31	7.5	58	14.1	53	12.9	193	47.0	76	18.5
I value the appearance of textile labels	45	10.9	80	19.5	40	9.7	175	42.6	71	17.3
I will notice a change in visual appearance on the textile label of a favourite brand.	47	11.4	63	15.3	54	13.1	170	41.4	77	18.7
I notice when the textile label does not include all the necessary information.	48	11.7	91	22.1	53	12.9	175	42.6	44	10.7
<i>Interpretation of symbols on labels</i>										
Symbols are a useful source of information on textile labels.	29	7.1	45	10.9	19	4.6	181	44.0	137	33.3
I notice symbols on the textile label.	17	4.1	35	8.5	31	7.5	249	60.6	79	19.2
Symbols on labels are easy to understand.	26	6.3	66	16.1	43	10.5	202	49.1	74	18.0
Symbols on the textile label are valuable to me	23	5.6	63	15.3	40	9.7	203	49.4	82	20.0
<i>Awareness of labels as information source</i>										
The print on the textile label should be large enough to read.	12	29.0	26	6.3	17	4.1	197	47.9	159	38.7
I know where to find specific information on a textile product.	21	5.1	52	12.7	43	10.5	208	50.6	87	21.2
Larger textile labels are more noticeable	5	1.2	32	7.8	16	3.9	221	53.8	137	33.3
Labels are sources of information.	2	0.5	14	3.4	16	3.9	217	52.8	162	39.4
The written information on textile labels is useful.	7	1.7	26	6.3	25	6.1	239	58.2	114	27.7
Textile labels contain sufficient information.	8	1.9	43	10.5	53	12.9	226	55.0	81	19.7
<i>The importance of reading labels</i>										
I follow the textile label information to help the item last longer.	19	4.6	50	12.2	29	7.1	214	52.1	99	24.1
I read labels on textile products.	15	3.6	32	7.8	19	4.6	219	53.3	126	30.7
I consult the label when I buy textile products.	57	13.9	78	19.0	31	7.5	161	39.2	84	20.4
I spend more time reading textile labels than my friends.	77	18.7	119	29.0	68	16.5	99	24.1	48	11.7
I read all the information on textile labels.	26	6.3	108	26.3	25	6.1	181	44.0	71	17.3
<i>Separate items</i>										
I notice information on the front panel of a textile label.	17	4.1	58	14.1	30	7.3	229	55.7	77	18.7
Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me.	31	7.5	79	19.2	50	12.2	159	38.7	92	22.4

Respondents' perceptions of textile product labels as explained by demographic characteristics

Tables 4 to 7 summarise respondents' perceptions of textile product labels based on their demographic characteristics, as rated according to their agreement on a Likert scale where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree". ANOVA did not indicate any significant relationship between education and consumers' perceptions with any of the factors or separate items. The results of the ANOVA based on age are provided in Table 4. The following statistically significant differences among age and respondents' responses to four of the factors as well as for one of the separate items were indicated: "Attention to back panel label information" ($p=0.019$), "Interpretation of symbols on labels" ($p=0.043$), "Awareness of labels as information source" ($p=0.006$), "Importance of reading label information" ($p=0.000$), and "Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me" ($p=0.001$). Significant differences among respondents' perceptions were also found ($p=0.000$).

Tukey's multiple comparison tests indicated some statistical significant differences between the younger (18-29 years) and older respondents (60 years and older) (Table 4). Although both groups agreed to be aware of the label as an information source the younger group (mean=3.88) were not as aware ($p<0.05$) as older respondents (mean=4.20). The younger respondents were neutral (mean=3.16) about that reading the information is important as well as to where the label is placed on the textile products (mean=3.18), whereas the older group agreed to these aspects (mean=3.73 and 3.96 respectively)

In a study by Muller (1982) it was found that age difference had an impact on the way consumers used textile care label instructions. The younger respondents did not use textile product labels as often as the older respondents during pre- and post-purchasing. The results of the present study confirmed that age had an impact on how respondents perceived textile product labels. Younger respondents (aged 18 to 20) seemed to have a significantly more neutral perception (mean=3.44) of textile product labels than all the other age groups' respondents (mean=3.66 to 3.79) who tended to have had a more positive perception. While most of the factors had a statistical significance, the results also showed some practical significance between the different age groups. "Awareness of labels as information source" ($d=0.54$), "Importance of reading label information" ($d=0.67$) and "Where the label is placed

on the textile product matters to me” ($d=0.61$) all had medium effect sizes between the younger (aged 18 to 20) and older (aged 60 and older) respondents. This might indicate that the younger respondents might not use textile product labels as often as older respondents. A possible reason for this occurrence might be because some of the younger respondents might not yet be responsible for the purchasing or taking care of textile products themselves.

Table 4 One-way ANOVA analysis: Mean differences in respondents’ perceptions of textile product labels based on age

Factors	Age 18 to 29		Age 30 to 39		Age 40 to 49		Age 50 to 59		Age 60 and older		p-value ANOVA
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Attention to back panel label information	3.44 ^a	0.83	3.72 ^a	0.66	3.69 ^a	0.67	3.74 ^a	0.66	3.63 ^a	0.59	0.019
Attention to label information content and label appearance	3.27 ^a	0.82	3.51 ^a	0.79	3.36 ^a	0.84	3.33 ^a	0.77	3.42 ^a	0.74	0.272
Interpretation of symbols on labels	3.59 ^a	0.80	3.62 ^a	0.79	3.82 ^a	0.69	3.83 ^a	0.82	3.89 ^a	0.72	0.043
Awareness of labels as information source	3.88 ^a	0.59	3.99 ^{ab}	0.52	4.07 ^{ab}	0.52	4.04 ^{ab}	0.55	4.20 ^b	0.42	0.006
Importance of reading label information	3.16 ^b	0.85	3.52 ^a	0.64	3.57 ^a	0.75	3.59 ^a	0.69	3.73 ^a	0.66	0.000
Separate items: Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me	3.18 ^c	1.28	3.43 ^{bc}	1.30	3.77 ^{bc}	1.09	3.38 ^{ab}	1.26	3.96 ^a	1.05	0.001
Separate items: I notice information on the front panel of a textile label	3.56 ^a	1.16	3.83 ^a	1.00	3.72 ^a	1.00	3.77 ^a	1.02	3.72 ^a	0.99	0.417
Perception	3.44^b	0.59	3.66^a	0.48	3.71^a	0.46	3.67^a	0.45	3.79^a	0.40	0.000

SD standard deviation

Shading indicates statistical significance difference: $p \leq 0.05$

Statistically significantly group differences are indicated by different superscripts (Tukey’s multiple comparison test)

The results were also analysed to determine specific differences among languages and respondents’ perceptions. Statistical significant differences for different language groups as indicated by ANOVA’s and Tukey’s multiple comparisons were found for: “Interpretation of symbols on labels” ($p=0.006$) and the separate item “Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me” ($p=0.015$) and respondents’ perceptions of labels ($p=0.041$) (Table 5).

Afrikaans speaking respondents agreed (mean=3.91) that they interpreted symbols on textile product labels whereas African languages tended to be neutral to agree (mean=3.52) on the matter. As indicated in Table 5 respondents who spoke an African language (mean= 4.06) agreed to the separate item “where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me”

while English speaking respondents were more neutral (mean=3.22). The reason why Afrikaans and English respondents mostly differed from respondents who spoke an African language could be because of cultural differences (Van Eck *et al.*, 2004). A study by Klemz *et al.* (2005) indicated that shopping motives, perceptions and needs may be shaped by the culture in which consumers live. A large diversity of cultures is found in South Africa (Steenkamp & Burgess, 2002), which might influence consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels.

Tukey's multiple comparison tests indicated that the respondents' perceptions sometimes differed between different languages. Afrikaans (mean=3.63) and English (mean=3.51) speaking respondents' perceptions did not differ from each other; only the respondents with African languages (mean=3.81) seemed to differ from English respondents. Respondents who spoke an African language tended to have a significantly more positive perception than English respondents who tended more towards a neutral to positive perception regarding textile product labels. The latter result is unexpected as textile product labels are provided in English and English speaking respondents would have been expected to have more positive perceptions than other language groups. It is possible that English speaking respondents' perception is negative towards textile product labels because they think that they know how to use the textile product without the use of labels (Fianu & Harrison-Arthur, 1997).

Although there were some statistically significant differences found among respondents from different language groups, these were only of medium practical significance. With the factor "Attention to label information content and label appearance" Afrikaans respondents and respondents with an African home language had an effect size of $d=0.50$ and the English and African respondents had an effect size of $d=0.66$. Respondents who spoke Afrikaans or an African language had an effect size of $d=0.66$ which is a medium practical significance with their interpretation of symbols. This might imply that respondents with an African home language who were previously disadvantaged (Gothan & Erasmus, 2008) found the symbols on labels difficult to interpret (Yan *et al.*, 2008), which might cause uncertainty. A study by Fianu and Harrison-Arthur (1997) indicates that consumers are often uncertain and confused due to the variety of information on clothing labels. Furthermore, differences of medium effect sizes were found for "Importance of reading textile product labels" ($d=0.50$) and

“where the label is placed matters to me” ($d=0.66$) between African and English speaking respondents. These effect sizes of different language groups illustrate that the results are only typical and does not necessarily have practical significance (Morgan *et al.*, 2007).

Table 5 One-way ANOVA analysis: Mean differences in respondents’ perceptions of textile product labels based on languages

Factors	Afrikaans		English		African Languages		p-value ANOVA
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Attention to back panel label information	3.60 ^a	0.70	3.56 ^a	0.74	3.63 ^a	0.80	0.894
Attention to label information content and label appearance	3.23 ^b	0.74	3.17 ^b	0.65	3.60 ^a	0.58	0.066
Interpretation of symbols on labels	3.91 ^a	0.58	3.61 ^{ab}	0.79	3.53 ^b	0.49	0.006
Awareness of labels as information source	3.93 ^a	0.53	3.98 ^a	0.51	4.12 ^a	0.42	0.358
Importance of reading label information	3.41 ^{ab}	0.79	3.36 ^b	0.79	3.81 ^a	0.90	0.106
Separate items: Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me	3.56 ^{ab}	1.12	3.22 ^b	1.27	4.06 ^a	0.97	0.015
Separate items: I notice information on the front panel of a textile label	3.77 ^a	0.95	3.70 ^a	1.01	3.94 ^a	0.75	0.618
Perception	3.63^{ab}	0.48	3.51^b	0.49	3.81^a	0.34	0.041

SD standard deviation

Shading indicates statistical significance difference: $p \leq 0.05$

Statistically significantly group differences are indicated by different superscripts (Tukey’s multiple comparison test)

Independent T-tests indicated the following statistically significant differences for gender in Table 6: “Attention to back panel label information” ($p=0.013$), “Importance of reading label information” ($p=0.002$), “I notice information on the front panel of a textile label” ($p=0.016$) and respondents’ perceptions ($p=0.012$). Women agreed to pay attention to textile product labels (mean=3.71), to view labels as important (mean=3.57) and to notice front panel label information (mean=3.82), whereas men tended to be more neutral on these aspects (mean=3.53, 3.34 and 3.57 respectively). These results contradict those of Fianu and Harrison-Arthur (1997) who found that male and female respondents viewed textile product labels as equally important. However, more recent consumer behaviour studies in general tend to differ. Cleveland *et al.* (2003) indicate remarkable differences between male and female consumer behaviour. In addition Rocha *et al.* (2005) found that male consumers are less conscious of the physical variables of clothing product characteristics than female consumers. Krugel and Van Heerden (2008) found that female participants have more knowledge about textile product labels and use label instructions more than male participants before and after purchasing. The results of the current study are mostly consistent with the more recent

studies, which indicate that there are some statistical significant differences between male and female respondents' perceptions of textile product labels.

Table 6 Independent T-test analysis: Mean differences in respondents' perceptions of textile product labels based on gender

Factors	Female		Male		p-value T-test	Effect size (d)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Attention to back panel label information	3.71 ^a	0.66	3.53 ^b	0.77	0.013	0.23
Attention to label information content and label appearance	3.43 ^a	0.78	3.31 ^a	0.83	0.130	0.15
Interpretation of symbols on labels	3.73 ^a	0.78	3.70 ^a	0.78	0.668	0.04
Awareness of labels as information source	4.04 ^a	0.52	3.97 ^a	0.57	0.205	0.12
Importance of reading label information	3.57 ^a	0.70	3.34 ^b	0.82	0.002	0.28
Separate items						
Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me	3.50 ^a	1.24	3.49 ^a	1.24	0.940	0.01
Separate items						
I notice information on the front panel of a textile label	3.82 ^a	1.04	3.57 ^b	1.06	0.016	0.24
Perception	3.68 ^a	0.48	3.56 ^b	0.54	0.012	

SD standard deviation

Shading indicates statistical significance difference: $p \leq 0.05$

Statistically significantly group differences are indicated by different superscripts (Tukey's multiple comparison test)

Effect size (d): 0.2 = small; 0.5 = medium*; 0.8 = large**

The results in Table 6 illustrate that there is a difference in perceptions of textile product labels between gender groups, with females indicating a higher mean value of 3.68 than males (mean=3.56). This suggests that female respondents have a significantly more positive perception of textile product labels than males but male respondents also tended to be positive. The reason for these statistical differences might be that female consumers are still mostly the main purchaser and cleaner of the household including purchasing and cleaning clothing and household textile products (Johnson & Learned, 2004). Presently, men do some of the housework, but it is still not comparable to what women do around the house. Although the household responsibilities are presently more evenly divided between men and women than in the past, female consumers are still mostly obliged to purchase and clean clothing and household textile products (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008), which can indicate that they use textile product labels more. However, only small ($d \leq 0.2$) effect sizes were found between gender for all factors and individual items, which indicate that they are not practically significant (Morgan *et al.*, 2007).

For the purpose of analysis marital status was reduced to two categories namely married (married and living together) and single (single, divorced, widowed) as done by Dhurup (2008). Statistical significant differences for marital status are indicated in Table 7 for:

“Interpretation of symbols” ($p=0.013$) and “Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me” ($p=0.045$). Although both married (mean=3.83) and single (mean=3.63) respondents tended to agree on their interpretation of symbols on labels, married respondents agreed significantly more. The latter group also agreed (mean=3.59) on the importance of the placement of labels, while single respondents were more neutral (mean=3.31) in this regard. The reason for this can be that married respondents have a greater responsibility (Johnson & Learned, 2004) to purchase and clean textile products and, therefore, use the labels more for their households than single respondents. No significant differences were, however, found in their perceptions of textile product labels ($p=0.059$). In addition the results show that there were only small effect sizes ($d \leq 0.2$) indicating that there was no practical significant relationship between respondents’ perceptions and their marital status. A study by Dhurup (2008) also found no significant differences were noted between marital status and their shopping motivations. Although the study was about hypermarket shopping, marital status of South African consumers seems to have no practical significance.

Table 7 Independent T-test analysis: Mean differences in respondents’ perceptions of textile product labels based on marital status

Factors	Single		Married		p-value T-test	Effect size (<i>d</i>)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Attention to back panel label information	3.55 ^a	0.82	3.69 ^a	0.63	0.071	0.17
Attention to label information content and label appearance	3.42 ^a	0.85	3.38 ^a	0.77	0.617	0.05
Interpretation of symbols on labels	3.63 ^b	0.85	3.83 ^a	0.66	0.013	0.24
Awareness of labels as information source	4.03 ^a	0.63	4.02 ^a	0.49	0.895	0.01
Importance of reading label information	3.35 ^a	0.81	3.50 ^a	0.73	0.072	0.19
Separate items						
Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me	3.31 ^b	1.35	3.59 ^a	1.15	0.045	0.21
Separate items						
I notice information on the front panel of a textile label	3.74 ^a	1.10	3.76 ^a	0.99	0.814	0.02
Perception	3.58 ^a	0.59	3.68 ^a	0.45	0.059	

SD standard deviation

Shading indicates statistical significance difference: $p \leq 0.05$

Statistically significantly group differences are indicated by different superscripts (Tukey’s multiple comparison test)

Effect size (*d*): 0.2 = small; 0.5 = medium*; 0.8 = large**

Conclusion

Consumers in a developing Third-World Country, such as South Africa, have a unique purchasing behaviour. However, South Africa has limited research regarding consumer behaviour towards clothing and household textile products and labels found on these

products. Textile product labels are important because they provide consumers with valuable information regarding the textile product. Still, consumers do not base their decisions on the reality that textile product labels are a valuable source of information but rather on their perceptions of textile product labels. The current study presents information that can direct future research to focus more on Third-World consumer behaviour towards clothing and household textile product labels.

The purpose of this study in Gauteng was to determine consumers' perceptions of labels on clothing and household textile products, by focusing on the perceptual process, as consumers' perception is a complex process. The results illustrated that respondents tended to agree be aware of information found on textile product labels. Additionally, respondents mostly agreed that the textile product labels draw their attention. However, they were undecided or neutral as to whether label information is important enough to read. Respondents mostly agreed that they interpret symbols on labels. Therefore, respondents' perceptions of textile product labels tended to be positive especially regarding certain characteristics of textile product labels such as the back panel information (caring instructions), the front panel and the symbols that they interpret. However, further research is needed in order to conclude how consumers perceive each characteristic found on textile product labels. In addition, future research could determine if this positive perception encourages them to use the textile product labels as this was beyond the scope of the current study.

This study additionally found that respondents' perceptions of textile product labels were in some cases influenced by their demographic characteristics. Although differences in the respondents' responses had statistical significance in some cases, there were no large effect sizes, which usually illustrates practical significance. There were only small to medium effect sizes that illustrated that there were some tendencies regarding textile product labels and respondents' characteristics. Tendencies were especially found when analysing the relationships between respondents' perceptions and age and between their perceptions and language. Older respondents (60 and older) tended to have a more positive perception of textile product labels than younger respondents (18 to 29 years). Further studies can, therefore, focus specifically on consumers from different age generations and their perceptions of textile product labels. In addition, respondents with an African home language

seemed to differ from Afrikaans and English respondents. Respondents who spoke an African language tended to have a more positive perception than English speaking respondents, who tended to have a more neutral to positive perception regarding textile product labels. Cultural diversity can cause these differences in consumer behaviour and could be the reason for the differences in perceptions of textile product labels.

South African consumers are diverse and unique and their behaviour can, therefore, not be generalised and should be viewed separately. Further studies can examine the differences between consumers' perspectives from different ethnicities and their use of textile product labels. This might assist clothing and household textile manufacturers, retailers and marketers to understand the diversity of South African consumers and meet these consumers' needs better. Furthermore, this study found that female respondents tended to have a more positive perception regarding textile product labels than males. This could be because female respondents, especially older respondents, are still mostly responsible for the purchasing and cleaning of textile products and, therefore, use labels more. Further studies can focus on perceptions of female South African consumers regarding textile product labels and whether there are any differences in age generations.

Respondents seemed to have a positive perception towards textile product labels. However, they tended to be undecided or neutral as to whether textile product labels are important enough to read. By striving to improve consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels through better labelling initiatives and consumer education on labels, consumers might view labels as important enough to use them before and after purchasing a textile product. This will in effect teach consumers how to clean and maintain textile products to extend the products' lifespan. This would in turn contribute to the consumer's pre- and post-purchasing satisfaction.

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CHAPTER 4

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study in Gauteng was to determine consumers' perceptions of labels on clothing and household textile products. This was done by focusing on consumers' perceptual process, since perception is not a singular concept but a complex process. The conclusions reached for this study will be discussed in more depth in this final chapter, focusing on the conclusions regarding the achievement of the research objectives, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research and implications for clothing and household textile retailers.

4.2 CONCLUSION

Consumers from South Africa are multi-cultural with diverse backgrounds which sometimes make the behaviour of South African consumers difficult to understand. Research can assist retailers and manufacturing industries to understand these consumers' textile purchasing behaviour better, including their perceptions regarding textile product labels. Consumers are constantly confronted with multiple environmental stimuli in a clothing purchasing environment that can influence their pre- and post-purchasing decisions. Previous literature found that consumers often base their purchasing decisions on what they perceive, and not the actual reality of the stimulus, such as a textile product label. In order to determine consumers' perceptions, constructs from the perceptual process needed to be addressed. Therefore, the objectives of this study were formulated from the perceptual process, and conclusions will be discussed accordingly.

The objectives were reached by using a descriptive and exploratory research design.

This design focused on respondents' perceptions by addressing four constructs relevant to the perceptual process, namely: awareness, attention, importance and interpretation of textile product labels. The results illustrated that respondents tended to agree that are they aware of information found on textile product labels. Additionally, respondents mostly agreed that textile product labels draw their attention and they notice both back and front panel information on textile product labels. Respondents were neutral as to whether the placement of the label matters to them. The respondents mostly agreed that they interpret symbols on the textile product labels. Although respondents tended to perceive textile product labels positively, they were neutral as to whether the information is important enough to read.

Furthermore, this study found that respondents' perceptions of textile product labels were in some cases influenced by their demographic characteristics. Differences in the respondents' responses were in some cases statistically significant, however, there was a lack in practical significance. Still, there were some tendencies towards textile product labels and respondents' characteristics. Tendencies were especially found when analysing the relationships between respondents' perceptions and age and between their perceptions and language. Older respondents (60 and older) tended to have a more positive perception of textile product labels than younger respondents (18 to 29 years). In addition, respondents with an African home language seemed to differ from Afrikaans and English respondents. Respondents who spoke an African language inclined to having a more positive perception compared to English speaking respondents, who tended to have a neutral to positive perception regarding textile product labels. Cultural diversity can cause differences in consumer behaviour and could be the reason why Afrikaans and English respondents mostly differed from respondents who spoke an African language.

4.3 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first limitation was lack of background information and research on South African consumers' perceptions especially regarding textile product labels. This bounds the

value of this research, since the results of this study could only be compared to limited other South African research in this context. However, through the exploratory nature of this study, these results can be used as a starting point to fill this gap of limited research. Therefore, the current study presents information that can direct future research focusing more on Third-World consumers' behaviour towards clothing and household textile product labels.

As mentioned this was an exploratory study with a non-probability sample which included urban consumers in the Gauteng region. Therefore, the results of this study may not be generalised to all consumers in South Africa. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, this research could be used as an initial point of departure for future research on South African consumers' perceptions of textile product labels. It could be recommended that a replication of this study might be conducted using a probability sampling technique in Gauteng, or ultimately for a national study.

The current study indicated statistical significant results, however, there was a lack in practical significance. Further studies using a probability sample technique with a larger sample size might correlate with this study's results or gain practical significance that could better explain consumers' perceptions towards textile product labels.

Another limitation might have been the length of the questionnaire, and the race of the fieldworkers. With South Africa's historic background, some respondents might not feel comfortable talking to fieldworkers from another race or gender. Future research might administer the questionnaire in different languages and use fieldworkers from different races and gender in order to ensure that the majority of respondents understand the questionnaire and may answer in their own language.

This study only focused on urban Gauteng consumers, while future research might include both urban and non-urban consumers. The final limitations of this study were that time restriction and limited financial resources restricted the sample size and magnitude of the study. This allows the opportunity for more elaborated future research on this topic

Results from this study indicated that the majority of the respondents tended to have had a positive perception towards textile product labels. Future research could determine if this positive perception encourages consumers to use textile product labels, as this was beyond the scope of this study. Additional research is needed in order to conclude how consumers perceive each specific aspect found on textile product labels. Furthermore, this study found that there were some demographic tendencies among age and language. It can, therefore, be recommended that further studies focus more on consumers from different age generations and their perceptions of textile product labels. Future research can also focus on South African languages and cultural groups which might have an impact on consumers' perceptions of textile product labels. Finally, a further qualitative study may obtain a more in-depth understanding of consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels.

4.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

4.4.1 Consumers

This study added to the limited South African research regarding consumers and textile product labels. Therefore, future research can use this study to as a reference to guide this research. Although respondents seemed to have a positive perception towards textile product labels, they were neutral as to whether textile product labels are important enough to read as previously mentioned. Although respondents were found to be aware of information on textile product labels, retailers and education authorities could develop educational opportunities to encourage consumers in realising the importance of textile product labels and by striving to improve consumers' perceptions regarding textile product labels to be more positive. These education and awareness programmes could alter consumers' perceptions positively and teach them to understand the information on clothing labels and use it in the correct way. These programmes can be implemented in schools and in the form of advertisements, billboards, campaigns, television and radio programmes. Further studies need to determine how consumers' perceptions could be improved and how

they could be informed about the advantages and importance of using all information on textile product labels on a regular basis.

4.4.2 Clothing and household textile manufactures, retailers and marketers

Clothing and household textile manufactures, retailers and marketers should realise the importance of consumer research, especially in Third-World Countries such as South-Africa, in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of consumer differences. It will be in the interest for all clothing and household textile industries, retailers and marketers to acknowledge that consumers from different cultures have differences in their purchasing behaviour. For instance this study found that respondents with an African home language tended to have different perceptions of textile product labels than respondents with English and Afrikaans as home language.

Respondents were undecided or neutral as to whether the information content on the label and its appearance draw their attention and whether the label was important enough to read. However they mostly agreed that they interpret the symbols. This implies that clothing and household textile manufactures, retailers and marketers could make an effort to make consumers more aware of the entire textile product label. However the focus should be to advance and improve label information and its visual appearance in order to draw consumers' attention. In addition it is necessary for manufacturers, retailers and marketers to make consumers more conscious of the importance of reading and using textile product label information. This could influence consumers to use textile product labels more, which could extend the product's life expectancy.

In retail stores, in-store advertisements such as pamphlets, brochures, display features and hangtags can be used to draw consumers' attention to all the information found on textile product labels. Clothing and household textile industries and retailers should realise the value of textile product labels as information sources that can influence consumers' pre- and post-purchasing decisions. Improving

clothing and household textile product labels to meet consumers' preferences can lead to better consumer application of clothing labels and can ultimately lead to improved consumer satisfaction, thereby also benefiting manufacturers, retailers and marketers through increased textile product sales.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

A quantitative research strategy was followed in order to achieve the aim of this study. This research strategy focused on methodology, procedures and statistical measures that were determined through data collection that represents a large number of respondents' opinions (Amaratunga *et al.*, 2002:19; Eldabi *et al.*, 2002:65). This strategy utilised statistical analysis of data in order to find accurate and precise results (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:270; Eldabi *et al.*, 2002:65; McDaniel & Gates, 2007:128). Since this study aimed to collect accurate information from a variety of people living in Gauteng, the quantitative research strategy was chosen as the obtained data could be statistically measured. A non-experimental, descriptive and exploratory research design was used in this study to explore and identify new ideas or information that present specific details of a social situation and describe the research topic (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004; Fouché & De Vos, 2007)

5.2 RESEARCH SAMPLE

There are an estimated 47.8 million citizens living in South Africa (Statistics SA, 2008:3). Approximately 10.5 million of these citizens live in Gauteng, accounting for 21.5% of South Africans, making Gauteng the region with the largest population (Statistics SA, 2008:3). The majority of Gauteng is classified as an urban area (Pauw *et al.*, 2005:18). Urban consumers are more likely to be exposed to a variety of textile products and retail stores, as well as to have the resources and incentives to purchase textile products on a regular basis (Erasmus, 1995:21; Mason *et al.*, 2008:278). Therefore, it can be assumed that urban consumers are more exposed to various textile product attributes (such as textile product labels), than rural consumers. Subsequently urban consumers of the Gauteng region were used in this study.

5.2.1 Respondents' inclusion criteria

All respondents were the legal age of 18 years or older, in order to eliminate ramifications of acquiring guardians' permission. South African consumers consist of a multicultural population from different backgrounds, income groups, education and living environments (Goldman, 1978:11; Du Plessis, 2003; Gothan & Erasmus, 2008:640). In an attempt to include a variety of consumers, the respondents included in this study were of any ethnicity and gender. Due to ethical reasons only willing respondents filled out a questionnaire (Neuman, 2006:135). Furthermore, respondents were asked whether they use the textile product label, as only label readers were asked to participate. Non-users would have found the questionnaire irrelevant, seeing that the questionnaire asks questions that can only be answered by consumers who use textile product labels. According to Muller (1982:223), non-label users are not interested in the information found on the label and are not aware of the benefits they can derive from this information.

5.2.2 Sampling technique

The respondents were recruited based on the above set of inclusion criteria (5.2.1) (Strydom, 2007:202) in order to reach the study's aim. A non-probability, purposive sampling technique was applied in this study to recruit respondents. This sampling technique allowed the inclusion of respondents based on the inclusion criteria according to the researcher's and fieldworkers' judgement. The sampling was convenient, as the respondents were approached in pre-selected locations (Denscombe, 2007:18) which enabled a large number of respondents to participate in this study within a short time period (Maree & Pietersen, 2007a:177).

5.2.3 Sample size

The sample size consisted of an estimate of 400 respondents, including male and female consumers, living in the urban areas of Gauteng, as suggested by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University. To achieve this, more than 400 questionnaires were filled out to compensate for unusable questionnaires (Piron, 2000:312), and a total sample quantity of 411 were realised.

5.3 RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

As mentioned in 5.2, the study was conducted in the Gauteng Province, South Africa. The areas selected in Gauteng Province were:

- Pretoria,
- Vereeniging and
- The West Rand.

The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University suggested these three regions because these regions are distributed throughout Gauteng. This contributed to the probability that the study population consisted of a diverse group of respondents. The choices of the three regions are also based on accessibility and the fieldworkers' safety.

The questionnaires were interviewer-administered, by trained fieldworkers, at selected public locations, such as schools, retirement villages, parking areas and government institutions such as municipalities and licensing departments. Public locations were selected as data collected at different locations and at different times of the day represent a greater variety of consumers than data collected from consumers shopping in one selected shopping centre (Piron, 2000:313). These different public locations thus limit the potential of bias that could occur when collecting data at a single shopping centre. Consumers in shopping centres are often found to be in a hurry and are often not willing to engage in research (Piron,

2000:313). Thus public locations were selected in this study where people are most likely to stand in queues and wait for assistance, making it the ideal time to fill out a questionnaire. The following locations were selected:

- **Schools** were chosen because there are usually parents waiting in their cars for their children. The fieldworkers approached parents 30 minutes before school ends to fill out the questionnaires while waiting. The schools chosen for this study were prominent schools in the three different regions and were easily accessible to the researcher.
- Residents and employees of **retirement villages** were included to ensure that the elderly were also involved in this research. Researchers asked the residents of the retirement village to fill out a questionnaire.
- **Government institutions** such as municipalities and licensing departments were selected because various people are usually waiting to be assisted. While waiting in a queue the fieldworkers asked them to complete a questionnaire. The employees of the relevant institutions, who were not busy assisting people, were also asked to participate.
- Large shopping centres' **parking areas** were also included in this study. Consumers from a wide variety of population segments usually visit large shopping centres (Otieno *et al.*, 2005:302). Consumers in the parking area of a shopping centre who are entering or exiting shopping centres were asked to participate in this study.

The researcher asked anyone who was available on the day of data collection, who met the inclusion criteria, to participate. It was estimated to complete a total of 450 questionnaires which entails that 150 questionnaires were aimed to be completed at each of the three regions (Vereniging, Pretoria and West Rand), which were further divided into four public locations, giving a total of 37 questionnaires per location. Permission was obtained from the relevant authorities before collecting data at these public locations.

5.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

A questionnaire was used as the data collection technique, as it can acquire large quantities of information in a straightforward and open way in a minimum amount of time (Rousseau, 2003:23). Questionnaires enabled researchers to determine consumers' behaviour and measure it in statistical format (Otieno *et al.*, 2005:302). Respondents were asked to answer questions with an interviewer-administered questionnaire regarding consumers' perceptions of labels found on clothing and household textile products. Interviewer-administered questionnaires are often used in South Africa due to the relatively low level of literacy among the population (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:120). This enabled anyone who met the set of inclusion criteria to participate in this study. Trained fieldworkers assisted respondents to clarify and explain difficult questions or concepts without influencing respondents' opinions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:120; Maree & Pietersen, 2007b:158).

The questionnaire was formulated to reach the objectives of the study and to find demographic results without risking the respondents' anonymity. The layout of the questionnaire was as follows: Section A of the questionnaire measured the respondents' perceptions of labels found on clothing and household textile products by focusing on respondents' awareness, attention, importance and interpretation of textile product labels. Furthermore, this section included questions on textile product label information, visual characteristics of labels and the positioning of labels on textile products as indicated by the literature. These questions were randomised beforehand. Respondents needed to answer a series of psychographic questions based on a 5-point Likert scale that contained the following choice descriptor categories: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided (neutral), 4=agree and 5=strongly agree (Appendix B).

Section B of the questionnaire determined demographic or personal characteristics. Demographic information included: age, home language, education, marital status and gender. Although section B had more personal questions, the questions did not include any information that violated respondents' anonymity. The questionnaire was tested in a pilot study, which is discussed in 5.5.

5.5 PILOT STUDY

The 2009 Consumer Sciences Honours study from the North-West University developed and used the same set of questions used in this study. The 2009 study served as the pilot study for the present research. The questionnaire was administered in the North-West Province to test and refine it for readability and to determine the time it took to complete a questionnaire. It enabled the researcher to detect any ambiguities and biases found in the questionnaire (Otieno *et al.*, 2005:302). The pilot study also evaluated the validity and reliability of the questionnaire (Pieterse & Maree, 2007:215,221). The questionnaire was statistically revised and refined with the assistance of the study leaders and Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University.

5.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data were statistically analysed using a descriptive and exploratory research design. This design focused on respondents' perceptions by addressing four constructs, namely: awareness, attention, importance and interpretation of textile product labels. Data analysis was done in conjunction with the Statistical Consultation Services of the NWU using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences programme (SPSS Inc).

After collecting the data it was coded numerically by re-organising it into a suitable form (Neuman, 2006:343) within Microsoft® Office Excel®. After the data were entered into Microsoft® Office Excel®, they were exported to SPSS. Firstly, descriptive statistics were done on demographic variables. Secondly, validity and reliability was analysed. Thirdly, respondents' perceptions based on awareness, attention, importance and interpretation for different demographical groups were tested with T-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Buckingham & Saunders 2004:256; Burns & Burns, 2008:258). T-tests and one-way ANOVA are statistical tests for significance of differences between mean scores of different groups across one or more variables (Burns & Burns, 2008:259). ANOVA was used

in this study to examine the difference between means for the cohort groups (education, age and languages) across dependent variables (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:255). Furthermore, gender and marital status differences were examined across the dependent variables using T-tests (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:255). Since this study was based on purposive sampling methods rather than random sampling, significance tests are not relevant and, therefore, practical significance was determined by analysing Cohen's d-values as measures of effect size (Ellis & Steyn, 2003:52). However, p-values were also determined to provide additional insight into the data. Cohen (1988) had given the following guidelines for interpretation of d, where a small effect is indicated by $d=0.2$; a medium effect by $d=0.5$ and a large effect size by $d=0.8$, the latter implies practical significance. Results of medium to large effect sizes were discussed in the article which indicated typical to large practical significance for social sciences (Morgan *et al.*, 2007:92).

5.7 VALIDITY

An instrument such as a questionnaire can only be valid if it measures what it was designed to measure (Maree & Pietersen, 2007b:147). The standardisation and the accuracy of constructs covered by the questionnaire were measured by construct validity (Neuman, 2006:193; Pietersen & Maree, 2007:217). Factor analysis was performed to analyse construct validity. To obtain construct validity, exploratory factor analysis was applied to section A of the questionnaire. Principle axis factor analysis was used to place the selected items in different factors using Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization as rotation method (Field, 2009:659). All factors with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted, with the use of the Kaiser Criterion (Field, 2009:659). The five factors were categorised as "Attention to back panel label information", "Attention to label information content and label appearance", "Interpretation of symbols on labels", "Awareness of labels as information source", "Importance of reading label information" including the two separate items "Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me" and "I notice information on the front panel of a textile label".

Face validity was obtained by analysing whether the actual questionnaire appears valid (Pietersen & Maree, 2007:217) during the pilot study. This implied that the indicator (questionnaire) really measured the construct (Neuman, 2006:192). The questionnaire was judged by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University and by the project leaders as well as experts in the field of perceptions. This ensured that each question was analysed and compared to the objectives of this study in order to determine whether the questionnaire was valid to use in the present study.

5.8 RELIABILITY

In order to ensure stability reliability of this research (Delpont, 2007:162; Neuman, 2006:189) the same questionnaire was used throughout this study. This implied that the same data were collected every time it was used (Gray, 2005:187; Denscombe, 2007:334). The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University screened the questionnaires in order to obtain reliability and ensured that the study could be statistically analysed.

Internal reliability consistency of multi-item scales was tested using Cronbach's alpha (Furlong *et al.*, 2000:68). By using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, each respondent's answer to each question was compared to the other respondents' answers to the same question (Furlong *et al.*, 2000:68). Most of the questions were homogenous, as they only measured one attribute at a time, the inter-item consistency values calculated were high, subsequently ensuring reliability (Furlong *et al.*, 2000:68; Pietersen & Maree, 2007:215). The threshold value for a satisfactory scale is > 0.6 (Malholtra & Birks, 2007:358). However, according to Field (2009:629), when measuring psychological constructs with large variation of constructs (such as perceptions), the factors may have a lower Cronbach's alpha value, which can be seen as acceptable.

5.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study was registered and ethically approved by the North-West University's Ethical Committee (reference code NWU-00024-09-S1). A few other factors were also taken into consideration when asking the consumers to participate in this research study:

- Participation was voluntary and respondents were prepared to dedicate time to the questionnaire (Neuman, 2006:135).
- Respondents were assured that their identity was held anonymous and they could withdraw at any time (Neuman, 2006:135).
- The respondents were informed about the purpose of the research (Rousseau, 2003:31).
- The respondents were assured that there are no wrong answers to the questions (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:58).
- The researcher and fieldworkers were friendly throughout the study and built a trusting relationship with the respondents. The relationship between the researcher and respondents was based on mutual trust, cooperation and respect (Strydom, 2007:280).

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APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

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South African consumers' perceptions of textile product labels

Liezl Steyn is currently performing a **study on consumers' perceptions of labels found on textile products**. Your support and participation will enable her to conduct the study.

Your participation is anonymous and voluntary, and the information provided will be handled confidentially. Please read the following questionnaire and complete the questions with care. This should not take more than 15 minutes of your time. Please ensure that you complete all of the questions.

Thank-you for your kind support in this regard.

SECTION A

Question 1

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Undecided	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
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Please answer Question 1 by indicating your general impression of textile product labels. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by ticking ☒ the appropriate box.		1: Strongly disagree	2: Disagree	3: Undecided	4: Agree	5: Strongly agree	
1	Letter sizes on some textile labels are difficult to read.	1	2	3	4	5	V
2	Textile label information is misleading.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
3	I sometimes need information that is not available on the label.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
4	I follow the textile label information to help the item last longer.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
5	Symbols are a useful source of information on textile labels.	1	2	3	4	5	V
6	I read labels on textile products.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
7	Textile labels indicate the brand of the textile product.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
8	I value the appearance of textile labels	1	2	3	4	5	V
9	I consult the label when I buy textile products.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
10	I spend more time reading textile labels than my friends.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
11	Information on the front panel of the textile label is more important than information on the back panel of the label.	1	2	3	4	5	P
12	The back panel of the textile label is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	P
13	I notice information on the front panel of a textile label.	1	2	3	4	5	P
14	Textile labels indicate the durability of textile products.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
15	I sometimes notice only written information on the textile label.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
16	Too much textile label information confuses me.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
17	Textile label information is difficult to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
18	Too many colours on textile labels are confusing.	1	2	3	4	5	V
19	The print on the textile label should be large enough to read.	1	2	3	4	5	V
20	I notice symbols on the textile label.	1	2	3	4	5	V
21	I know where to find specific information on a textile product.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
22	The colour of the textile label can make it difficult to read.	1	2	3	4	5	V

	Please answer Question 1 by indicating your general impression of textile product labels. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by ticking ☒ the appropriate box.	1: Strongly disagree	2: Disagree	3: Undecided	4: Agree	5: Strongly agree	
23	I read all the information on textile labels.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
24	I notice information on the back panel of a textile label.	1	2	3	4	5	P
25	Larger textile labels are more noticeable	1	2	3	4	5	V
26	Labels are sources of information.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
27	I will notice a change in visual appearance on the textile label of a favourite brand.	1	2	3	4	5	V
28	Letter types on some textile labels are difficult to read.	1	2	3	4	5	V
29	Symbols are printed onto the textile label.	1	2	3	4	5	V
30	The written information on textile labels is useful.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
31	Symbols on labels are easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	V
32	Symbols on the textile label are valuable to me	1	2	3	4	5	V
33	I do not need textile label information.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
34	I tend to look at textile labels that have bright colours.	1	2	3	4	5	V
35	I consult the textile label information when I clean the product.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
36	I look at textile labels when they are attractive.	1	2	3	4	5	V
37	I notice when the textile label does not include all the necessary information.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
38	The positioning of a textile label is consistent.	1	2	3	4	5	P
39	The layout of the textile label motivates me to buy the product.	1	2	3	4	5	V
40	Textile labels contain sufficient information.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
41	Where the label is placed on the textile product matters to me.	1	2	3	4	5	P
42	I notice written information on textile labels.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
43	Textile label information indicates how to clean a textile product.	1	2	3	4	5	LI
44	Textile labels indicate the quality of the textile product.	1	2	3	4	5	LI

Question 2

1 Not important at all	2 Fairly unimportant	3 Undecided	4 Fairly important	5 Very important
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Please answer Question 2 by indicating perception of the importance of the following aspects of textile product labels. Indicate the extent to which you consider each aspect to be important by ticking ☒ the appropriate box.		1: Not important at all	2: Fairly unimportant	3: Undecided	4: Fairly important	5: Very important
1	Care instructions	1	2	3	4	5
2	Brand name	1	2	3	4	5
3	Price tag	1	2	3	4	5
4	Ecological information	1	2	3	4	5
5	Fabric content	1	2	3	4	5
6	Size of product	1	2	3	4	5
7	Country of origin	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION B

Demographics

Please complete Section B by ticking ☒ the appropriate box.

1) How old are you?

18 or 19 years	1
20 to 29 years	2
30 to 39 years	3
40 to 49 years	4
50 to 59 years	5
60 to 69 years	6
70 and older	7

2) What is your highest level of education?

No formal education	1
Some primary school education	2
Primary school completed	3
Some high school education	4
Matric	5
Technicon diploma/degree	6
University degree	7
Other (please specify)	8

3) What is your gender?

Female	1
Male	2

5) What is your employment status?
Mark more than one option, if necessary.

Full time		1
Part time		2
Housewife or husband		3
Student		4
Retired		5
Unemployed		6

6) What is your marital status?
Mark more than one option, if necessary.

Single		1
Married		2
Living together		3
Divorced		4
Widowed		5

8) Do you have any of the following in your home?

Vacuum cleaner or floor polisher	1. Yes	2. No
Motor vehicle	1. Yes	2. No
Microwave oven	1. Yes	2. No
Flush toilet inside your home	1. Yes	2. No
Fridge or freezer	1. Yes	2. No
TV set	1. Yes	2. No

(Adapted from Hardy, 2008)

4) What is your home language?

Afrikaans		1
English		2
isiZulu		3
isiXhosa		4
Seswati		5
isiNdebele		6
Sepedi		7
Sesotho		8
Setswana		9
Tshivenda		10
Xitsonga		11
Other (please specify)		12

7) With whom do you share your home?

No-one		1
Spouse / partner		2
Child / Children		3
Family members (other than above)		4
Other (please specify)		5