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HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS TEXTILE PRODUCTS ON OFFER BY RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE VREDEFORT DOME

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(B. Sc. HOME ECONOMICS)

A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MASTERS DEGREE IN CONSUMER SCIENCES AT THE NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

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DEDICATIONS

To my eldest daughter Bongekile S'ncendzile, leaving you at a time when you needed me the most was the hardest thing I have had to do in my life, but I thank the omnipresent God who is watching over you and because of him you coped reasonably well. To my youngest daughter Sisekelo Nkosim'londile, I know my absence did not make much sense to you, but I found peace in knowing that God is your keeper.

I LOVE YOU GIRLS

And

SURELY THERE IS NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD.

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"All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose". Thank you God for assuring me that starting over was a possibility.

I wish to convey my sincere gratitude to the following people who contributed in making this study a success.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGES: Africa Geo-Environmental Services PTY Ltd

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women

EAP: Economically Active Population

FLAGH: Farm Labour and General Health

RDP: Reconstruction and Development Programme,

SME: Small Medium Enterprises.

SMME: Small Medium Micro-Enterprises

THUSA: Transition, Health and Urbanisation in South Africa

WHS: World Heritage Sites

SUMMARY

Background

There are numerous challenges facing rural women in South Africa. These challenges include illiteracy and unemployment, which are some of the factors that subsequently lead to poverty. Women empowerment appears to be one of the tools that can help curb poverty amongst rural households. The Consumer Sciences Department of the North-West University empowered a group of women with basic sewing skills in the Vredefort Dome. It was anticipated that these skills would be used to produce textile products that could be sold to generate an income that could benefit these rural women and their families.

Aim

The aim of this study was to investigate the internal influences of consumer behaviour, namely perceptions and opinions of consumers (Owners of hospitality businesses) in the Vredefort Dome towards textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were, therefore, to:

- Identify the current and potential consumers of textile products in the Vredefort Dome.
- Assess the consumer needs of textile products around the Vredefort Dome.
- Establish the consumer perceptions and opinions regarding textile products on offer by the

local rural women entrepreneurs.

- Provide recommendations for new products that the local rural women entrepreneurs can produce based on consumers' needs and suggestions.

Methodology

An in-depth literature survey was conducted to bring to light the living conditions of women in South Africa and more especially rural women, the challenges they face and the empowerment measures implemented to alleviate poverty. The literature on consumer behaviour and how it affects consumer decision making was also discussed.

The convenience sampling technique was used to obtain a sample of consumers that are in the hospitality industry and use textile products in and around the Vredefort Dome. A list of 49 consumers was obtained from the tourism office in Venterskroon was used. This study was conducted by employing a combined quantitative and qualitative research design, making use of questionnaires and semi-structured face-to-face interviews respectively as data collection methods. The questionnaires were faxed to all consumers who were willing to participate in this study. Only 17 returned the questionnaires and interviews were then conducted with only 10 available consumers.

Results and conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that the hospitality industry consumers make use of a number of textile products that they purchase from different shops and some they make themselves. They replace these textile products ranging from after one month to after five years. After assessing the

textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs, a majority of the consumers expressed that the textile products were of good quality and reasonably priced. They also indicated that they would consider purchasing textile products from the rural women entrepreneurs on condition that the products adhere to their specifications, that is if they are of good quality, reasonably priced and are also delivered at the agreed time. The consumers further suggested textile products that the rural women entrepreneurs can sew for their establishments. It was concluded, therefore, that the rural women entrepreneurs have a market for their products as long as they adhere to the consumers requirements.

OPSOMMING

Agtergrond

Daar is talle uitdagings wat landelike vroue in Suid-Afrika in die gesig staar. Hierdie uitdagings sluit ongeletterdheid en werkloosheid, wat dikwels ook faktore is wat tot armoede lei, in. Die bemagtiging van vroue blyk 'n manier te wees wat kan help om armoede onder landelike huishoudings te beperk. Die Departement Verbruikerswetenskappe aan die Noordwes-Universiteit het 'n groep vrouens in die Vredefortkoepel met basiese naaldwerkvaardighede bemagtig. Die verwagting is dat hierdie vaardighede gebruik kan word om tekstielprodukte te vervaardig wat verkoop kan word om sodoende 'n inkomste te genereer wat die landelike vrouens en hulle gesinne tot voordeel kan strek.

Doel

Die doel van die studie is om vas te stel wat die interne invloede van verbruikersgedrag, naamlik persepsie en opinies oor tekstielprodukte wat deur landelike vroue-entrepreneurs te koop aangebied word, van die eienaars in die gasvryheidsbedryf in die Vredefortkoepel is.

Spesifieke doelstellings

- Die spesifieke doelwitte van die studie was om:
- die huidige en potensiele verbruikers van tekstielprodukte in die Vredefortkoepel te identifiseer,
- vas te stel wat die behoeftes vir tekstielprodukte in en om die Vredefortkoepel is,

- vas te stel wat die verbruiker se persepsies en opinies rakende tekstielprodukte, wat deur die landelike vroue- entrepreneurs te koop aangebied word, is,
- aanbevelings, gebaseer op die verbruikers se behoeftes en voorstelle, vir nuwe produkte, wat deur die landelike vroue-entrepreneurs vervaardig kan word, te verskaf.

Metodologie

'n In-diepte literatuurstudie om die lewensomstandighede van die vroue in Suid-Afrika en meer spesifiek, die landelike vrouens is te ondersoek, is gedoen. Uitdagings wat hulle in die gesig staar en bemagtigingsmaatreëls wat geïmplementeer kan word om armoede te verlig, is geïdentifiseer. Literatuur oor verbruikersgedrag en hoe dit die verbruiker se besluitneming raak, is ook bespreek.

Daar is van 'n gerieflikheidssteekproef gebruik gemaak om inligting van eienaars in die gasvryheidsbedryf in en om die Vredefortkoepel wat, tekstielprodukte gebruik, in te samel. 'n Lys met 49 name van die eienaars in die gasvryheidsbedryf, is van die toerismekantoor in Venterskroon vir gebruik, gekry. Die studie is uitgevoer deur van 'n gekombineerde kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp gebruik te maak waar vraelyste en semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude as data-insamelingsmetode gebruik is. Die vraelyste is aan al die eienaars in die gasvryheidsbedryf, wat bereid was om aan die studie deel te neem, gefaks. Slegs 17 vraelyste is terug ontvang en van hulle was net 10 eienaars vir onderhoude beskikbaar.

Resultate en gevolgtrekking

Die bevindinge van die studie het onthul dat verbruikers in die gasvryheidsbedryf van 'n hele aantal tekstielprodukte, wat hulle by verskillende winkels aankoop of self vervaardig, gebruik maak.

Hierdie die produkte word na 'n maand tot oor 'n tydperk van vyf jaar vervang. Nadat die verbruikers die tekstielprodukte wat deur die landelike vroue-entrepreneurs gemaak is, beoordeel het, het die meerderheid verbruikers te kenne gegee dat die tekstielprodukte van 'n goeie kwaliteit is en dat die pryse redelik is. Hulle het ook aangedui dat hulle dit sal oorweeg om van die landelike vroue-entrepreneurs se tekstielprodukte aan te koop op voorwaarde dat die produkte aan hulle spesifikasies, naamlik goeie kwaliteit, redelike pryse en aflewering wat betyds is, sal voldoen. Die verbruikers in die gasvryheidsbedryf het ook ander produkte, wat deur hulle gebruik kan word, voorgestel. Die gevolgtrekking kon gemaak word dat die landelike vroue-entrepreneurs 'n mark vir hulle produkte het, solank hulle aan die vereistes van die eienaars in die gasvryheidsbedryf voldoen.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Vredefort Dome is located approximately 120 km South-West of Johannesburg. It cuts across the North West and Free State Provinces and includes a stretch of the Vaal River as well as the towns of Parys and Vredefort (Aucamp, 2007:3). A massive meteorite landed in this area thus creating the Vredefort Dome. It is called a dome because the rock layers were bent into a shape of an upside-down bowl, 90 km in diameter, by the impact (Gibson, 2006:1).

This is the biggest and oldest meteorite impact that geologists have yet found on earth, as it dates back over 2,000 million years. This makes the Vredefort Dome a site of great importance and on 14 July 2005, it was declared South Africa's seventh World Heritage Site (WHS). WHSs recognise and protect areas of outstanding natural, historical and cultural value (Aucamp, 2007:3; Gibson, 2006:1).

As a World Heritage Site, the Vredefort Dome has become a tourist destination for both local and international tourists. There are a number of recreational activities on offer, these include river rafting, river tubing, absailing, horse riding, mountain biking, archery and walking. The core of the Vredefort Dome Heritage Site hosts 49 tourism services. These services focus mainly on a combination of accommodation, conference venues, adventure and ecotourism activities (Saayman *et al.*, 2007:20).

Out of the 49 tourism services, 35 provide accommodation for 2057 people per night. The average bed occupation is currently 56%. There has been an increase in both the number of tourism services (by 36%) and the number of beds (by 81%) since 2001 (Saayman *et al.*, 2007:20). This increase in the number of beds is an indication that the tourism industry is growing and will be experiencing an influx of tourists. There will also be an increased need for more accommodation facilities in the near future as tourists have already expressed concerns about the shortage of accommodation. The tourist services that provide accommodation in the Vredefort Dome include resorts, camping sites, lodges,

hotels, guesthouses and bed and breakfasts. It is anticipated that all of these hospitality services have a need for textile products such as bed linen, towels, kitchen linen, staff uniforms, and curtaining. At present, the consumers have to travel long distances to shops located at the surrounding towns to purchase these textile products.

Through the research from the Transition, Health and Urbanisation in South Africa study (THUSA), farm dwellers in the North West Province were identified as a vulnerable group with regard to deprived nutrition and physical and mental health (Voster *et al.,* 2000:505-514). The same study further revealed that the farm dwellers possess low levels of education, which may be contributing to limited job opportunities and subsequently to poverty. The people in the Vredefort Dome, especially in Venterskroon which is a town located in the Vredefort Dome in the North West Province live below the poverty line and cannot meet their basic needs due to unemployment and low-income levels. It was found in the study by Phiri (2006:1) that the women from surrounding areas had much spare time in their hands. As a result of limited employment opportunities a group of 12 women living in the Venterskroon area expressed their desire to acquire practical needlecraft skills, aimed at income generation.

In 2005 the Consumer Sciences Department of the North-West University trained these women in basic sewing skills to enable them to generate an income. Since then they have been sewing a number of textile products such as men's shirts, women's skirts, school clothing, overalls, shopping bags and pencil bags. They have recently supplied a nearby primary school with school uniforms. This could be an indication that, being located in the Vredefort Dome, the women are in contact with the consumers of textile products and that there is a definite need for textile products, which is likely to increase their orders and provide them with new product ideas.

A number of these women are unemployed and are solely depended on the income they receive from selling the textile products they sew. Only a few of them have seasonal or part-time jobs that are inconsistent and are not paying very well. For this reason they need to supplement their income and hence their involvement in the sewing project.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Previous studies have suggested that consumers tend to stereotype products manufactured in foreign countries, and that they are likely to have patriotic feelings and prefer goods made in the home country (Knight, 1999:151). Consumers are more likely to prefer domestically made goods. The country-of-origin phenomenon is defined as the image consumers associate with a given country of origin as the picture, the reputation, and the stereotype that consumers attach to products of a certain country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history and traditions (Knight, 1999:151).

Although some studies have questioned the importance of country of origin relevant to consumer decision making, past research has demonstrated that country of origin has a substantial effect on attitudes towards products and the likelihood of purchasing these products. These often demonstrate effects that are as strong as, or stronger than those of brand name, price or quality (Watson, 2000:1150-1151).

Findings from research on the effect of country-of-origin (Wang *et al.,* 2004:239) conducted in developed countries, have revealed that consumers have a general preference for domestic-made products rather than foreign products. The question is can these findings be generalised to hold true in the South African context or not? Hence explicitly this study will ascertain consumer perceptions on the quality and price of the domestic-made textile products offered by the rural women entrepreneurs.

Another study revealed that consumers hold positive attitudes towards products made in their own country, but the same consumers could be swayed to choose foreign products if quality and price considerations were sufficiently favourable. Specifically it was observed that consumers do not accept inferior quality domestic products when superior foreign products are available (Knight, 1999:152). Globally consumers are becoming increasingly demanding in what they look for in

textile products and increasingly discerning in what they find acceptable (Kadolph, 1998:12). A question, therefore, arises whether local consumers would prefer a locally made product that is of good quality at a reasonable price if it is available.

Moroka (2006:3) believes that loyalty and patriotism alone, however strong the motivation, will not ensure the purchase of the Proudly South African brands. Moroka (2006:3) further emphasises that the quality of local products has to meet international standards as South Africa has been flooded with foreign textile products that are not always good in quality. It is against this background that this research seeks to investigate the hospitality industry consumers' perceptions and opinions towards textile products offered by local rural women entrepreneurs.

The need for additional textile products in the future by the hospitality services can be addressed by small textile product manufacturing home-based or community-based businesses. Since the late eighties there was a move to smaller manufacturing enterprises in the informal sector to compensate for lost jobs in the formal sector (Van Aardt & Kroon, 1999:3). However, there is a general lack of information available on home-based textile products manufacturing. There is inadequate information on who the consumers of these products are and what their preferences are in terms of product type and quality required (Van Aardt & Kroon, 1999:3).

The lack of information available on the home-based production of textile articles raises the following question: How do the textile articles produced by home-based manufacturers compete with similar commercially manufactured textile products obtained from retail stores? Other questions that may emerge are whether the local entrepreneurs are able to obtain good quality raw materials to enable them to produce good quality textile products that can compete strongly with the ones sold in the retail stores or not. Whether home-based or community-based manufacturers, will they be able to produce these items within a reasonable time to meet demand from consumers?

The interest in conducting this study was prompted in part by the fact that there are a number of establishments around the Vredefort Dome with huge tourism potential. Therefore, this study will

ascertain the type of textile products these establishments need.

Sewing and supplying textile products on demand by the hospitality industry in the area will not only benefit the women who need to supplement their income, but will also be economical to the consumers. Obtaining the textile products within the Vredefort Dome will save the consumers time and money that they would be spending travelling to the nearby towns to purchase these products. If the women secure the market, they will have a challenge to sustain it by supplying good quality textile products at an affordable price and further deliver on time. By achieving all that, the women can stand a better chance of competing with the textile product retail stores in the surrounding towns.

Furthermore, their business is likely to grow as new hospitality businesses seem to emerge in the near future as the Vredefort Dome becomes a well-established tourist destination. The upcoming soccer World Cup in 2010 is also anticipated to bring many tourists to South Africa, which will result in an increased need for hospitality services which will consequently increase the need for textile products.

1.3 AIM AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate the internal influences of consumer behaviour, namely perceptions and opinions of consumers in the Vredefort Dome towards textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were, therefore, to:

- Identify the current and potential consumers of textile products in the Vredefort Dome.
- Assess the consumer needs for textile products around the Vredefort Dome.
- Establish the consumer perceptions and opinions regarding textile products on offer by the local rural women entrepreneurs.
- Provide recommendations for new textile products that the local rural women entrepreneurs can produce based on consumers' needs and suggestions.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

A literature survey was conducted in order to give an understanding of the background and living conditions of women in South Africa and more especially rural women, their challenges and their reasons for starting up small businesses. Another section of the literature study gave an understanding of the consumers' decision-making process as influenced by consumer opinions and perceptions and consequently how consumer behaviour is influenced.

A combined quantitative and qualitative research design was employed to investigate the perceptions and opinions of consumers in the hospitality industry towards textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs in the Vredefort Dome. The convenience sampling technique was applied.

The questions in the questionnaires were formulated based on the objectives of this study and also from the literature reviewed on consumer behaviour. The literature revealed that the consumers' decision to purchase or not to purchase a product or service is guided by the perceptions formed about the product or service. Questions in the questionnaire sought to determine the consumer perceptions on the quality and price of textile products and the service offered by rural women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the questions sought to establish consumer needs of textile products. The participants were first contacted telephonically to request them to participate in the research and to seek their consent. The questionnaires were then faxed to all the consumers who were willing to take part.

The questions for the interview schedule were based on the questionnaire. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted within the establishments. During the interviews different priced textile products sewn by the local women entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs from other income generating projects were shown to the consumers. This enabled the consumers to assess the quality and prices so that they could share their perceptions and opinions.

The data from both questionnaires and interviews were analysed and presented in the form of graphs, direct quotations and in a narrative manner.

1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This is a study within the larger Farm Labour and General Health (FLAGH) programme, being a multi-funded programme. The Ethics Committee of the North-West University Number 00M21 approved this study.

The researcher used several opportunities to explain the objectives of the research to the consumers. The consumers who have hospitality services were informed telephonically about the intentions of conducting the study and their consent to participate in this research was sought before the questionnaires were faxed to them. This procedure was also repeated before the commencement of the interviews.

The researcher further explained that their participation was voluntary, confidential and anonymous and that under no circumstances would they be held accountable for their contributions. Furthermore, they were assured that the data obtained would not be linked to their businesses. The participants were also informed that the findings would be available to the rural women entrepreneurs to enable them to produce textile products needed by the consumers.

1.6 KEY CONCEPTS

It is imperative to define key concepts as used in the context of this study. All these definitions are based on the relevant literature and have been adapted to the objectives of this study.

1.6.1 Consumer

A consumer is a person or organisation that identifies a need or desire for a specific service or product, makes a purchase and makes use of the product and then disposes of the product (Solomon, 2004:8; Sheth *et al.*, 1999:5).

1.6.2 Consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour is a decision process and physical activity individuals engage in when searching, evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:10; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:3; Solomon, 2004:9).

1.6.3 Consumer needs

A consumer need is an unsatisfactory physical condition of the customer that leads him or her to an action that will remedy that condition (Sheth *et al.,* 1999:41).

1.6.4 Consumer opinions

Consumer opinions are interpretations, expectations and evaluations, such as beliefs, feelings or attitudes a consumer has about a particular product or item (Blackwell *et al.,* 2006: 278).

1.6.5 Consumer perceptions

Consumer perception is the process of organising and interpreting sensation into meaningful experiences. It is a result of psychological processes in which meaning, context, judgment, past experiences and memories are involved (Solomon, 2004:49; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:150).

1.6.6 Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur is an individual with knowledge, skills, initiative, drive and spirit of innovation who identifies and seizes business opportunities, takes some calculated risks, applies general management principles, has performance intentions and plays a vital role in the economic development of a country (Van Aardt & Kroon, 1999:2).

1.6.7 Home-based or community-based businesses

Home-based or community-based businesses may be defined as the full-time or part-time, profit oriented enterprise operated in the owner's home or surrounding community buildings. The owners of home-based businesses do not require transport to a primary work location, whereas members of community-based businesses may require transport. Owners of home-based businesses work at home more than 50% of the number of hours available for work (Van Aardt & Kroon, 1999:2). The working hours can also be applicable to community-based businesses.

1.6.8 Textile products

Textile is a term originally applied to woven fabrics, now generally applied to fibres, yarns or fabrics (Kadolph, 2007:4). A textile product is an end-use article made of fibres, yarns or fabrics that retains the flexibility of the original yarn or fabric (Hudson *et al.,* 1993:395).

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation follows an article format where a scientific research article is included in Chapter Three. The dissertation is divided into four chapters.

Chapter 1: Background and problem statement

The background and problem statement are presented in Chapter One. The aim, specific objectives, methodology, key concepts, ethical considerations, as well as the author's role in this study are also mentioned.

Chapter 2: Literature review

The first section of the literature review consists of background information on women in South Africa and more especially the rural women including who they are, the challenges they face, their need for empowerment and the reasons why they start home-based small or community-based businesses. The second section presents the literature on consumer behaviour, specifically how perceptions and opinions affect the consumer decision-making process.

Chapter 3: Research article: Hospitality industry consumers' behaviour towards textile products on offer by rural women entrepreneurs in the Vredefort Dome

Chapter 4: Summary, recommendations and conclusion

The last chapter summarizes the findings of the study, provides recommendations for further research and finally comes to a logical conclusion.

1.8 AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY

I declare that I have personally conducted and written this research article with the help of my two supervisors Ms L. van Niekerk and Ms. M. Larney. My role was as recorded below:

- Conducting a literature survey.
- Adaptation and formulating a questionnaire.
- Formulating interview schedule.
- Compilation of data.
- Analysis and interpretation of data.
- Preparation of the manuscript.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review consists of two sections namely, the background information on women in South Africa and consumer behaviour. The first section of this chapter is an in-depth review of the background and living conditions of women in South Africa and more especially rural women, their challenges, their need for empowerment and their involvement in entrepreneurial activities. The second section consists of the literature review on internal factors influencing consumer behaviour and specifically perceptions. These are outlined to give an understanding of how internal factors influence consumer decision-making and subsequently consumer behaviour.

2.2 THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

Culturally women and more especially rural women live under undesirable conditions and are prohibited to pursue their individual interests (Endeley, 2001:36). They have been subjected to discrimination and are undermined and disempowered regarding their roles and their rightful place in society (Endeley, 2001:36). They have also been isolated and denied access to social and economic opportunities, which could better their lives as they live in abject poverty (Sathiparsad, 2002: 28).

Previously, educating girls was deemed a waste of money as they were expected to marry into other wealthier families (Kantor, 2005:67). Even though this phenomena was stronger in the past it has not yet been overcome, as confirmed by the statistics recorded by Booysen-Wolthers *et al.* (2006:613-614). These statistics indicate that the enrolment of boys in South African schools was higher than that of girls in 1996. In 2001 there was a slight increase in numbers, but still the girls' enrolment was lower.

According to Nkosi (2003:27-28), more than half of the South African population consists of

women, a group that is not homogenous, as women's life experiences are negatively influenced by their race, social class or position and their geographic location. All of these factors subsequently affect, among other things, the women's general and reproductive health and their social status. The male dominated society in which women live has also affected them negatively.

Endley (2001:34) stated that the society we live in is patriarchal. This is evident by the oppression of women and the deeply rooted nature of male domination. These have indisputably hampered the development of women to their full potential. The inconsistency here is that while we live in a male dominated society where men have power and control over resources, women head the majority of households in South Africa. In essence, while men remain dominant in the control of how the resources are spent, the women find themselves compelled to take up major responsibilities that require the very resources they do not have control over (Sathiparsad, 2002: 28; Kantor, 2005:65). This has contributed to poverty and poor economic conditions amongst women.

Because of the insistent poverty and deteriorating economic conditions, many women find themselves having to look for employment outside their homes in search for resources to use for the betterment of their and their families' lives. Women, therefore, have ventured into varied economic activities (Woldie & Adersua, 2004:79). It is worth noting that even though women do find employment on South African farms, according to Hussy and Samson (2001:10), women earn 25-50% less than men. This is due to the fact that the work the women do is viewed as supplementing that of their spouses.

Nevertheless, it is encouraging to note that the South African government and the private sector have taken a number of initiatives to address the plight of the disadvantaged in South Africa and more especially of women. Kgasi (2003:1) and Booysen-Wolthers *et al.* (2006:606) recorded that major developments meant to better the status and quality of life of South African women have been in place since 1994. These initiatives include attempting to correct the inequalities in the constitution and new legislature. They also include the inclusion of the customary law in the Bill of Rights, the outlaw of rape in marriages and gender affirmative action (Nkosi, 2003:27-28).

In addition to the above, social intervention programmes and adult education programmes as a means to transfer life-skills and knowledge have also been implemented. The millennium development goals of South Africa also aim at eradicating poverty and hunger by 2015 (Botha *et al.*, 2007:10). The people are also encouraged to play an active role in their own development by means of a people-driven process as initiated by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

Furthermore, South Africa has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) without reservations. The government has also put in place programmes that will ensure that all gender imbalances socially, economically and politically between men and women are corrected (Botha *et al.*, 2007:10; Marthur-Helm, 2005:57).

It is anticipated that the above programmes will improve the status of women and that especially rural women in South Africa will get better as the transformation processes aimed at addressing the challenges facing women are implemented (Endeley, 2001:34). As a means to address challenges women face, the eradication of poverty amongst the rural people of South Africa needs to be given the attention it deserves.

2.3 POVERTY AMONGST WOMEN

According to Van Der Walt (2004:2), poverty means different things to people in different places who come from different backgrounds at different times. "Poverty in India differs from poverty experienced in Canada, and poverty in the United States of America (USA) today is different from poverty in the USA 50 years ago". O'Boyle (1998:1411-1412) defines poverty as the income needed to purchase goods and services required to keep up the lowest standard of living. Furthermore, poverty is said to be both relative and absolute and, therefore, its definition should be two-dimensional to differentiate the poor according to the severity of their poverty.

Van Der Walt (2004:2) stated that by clearly defining poverty it would help to determine the success and failure of its reduction. It is not easy to get a precise definition of poverty. The way the poor

define poverty is different from how the non-poor define it. The poor describe poverty as the seclusion from the community, lack of security, low wages, lack of employment opportunities, and unavailability of resources, whereas the non-poor see poverty as a lack of income resulting from bad choices made by the poor (Van Der Walt 2004:2). Ndemo and Maina (2007:119) further mention that poverty is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities, lack of self-sufficiency, lack of access to education and support services and women's minimal participation in the decision-making process and failure to access economic resources. These economic resources include credit, land ownership and inheritance. Lack of education as a contributory factor to poverty will be discussed next.

2.3.1 Lack of education as a cause for poverty

Previously parents were less willing to invest in their daughter's education as mentioned earlier. Women, therefore, tended to have low levels of formal education and high rates of illiteracy and innumeracy, which then contributed to low levels of economic success (Kantor, 2005:67). According to South Africa (2005:6), only 35 % of black self employed females have a high school education.

Lack of education is seen as factor that leads to poverty. According to Booysen-Wolthers *et al.* (2006:611), close to 28% of South Africa's population was illiterate in 1996. In 2001 the illiteracy rate was decreased to 20.76%. Even though women's illiteracy improved between 1996 and 2001, their relative position worsened. Women formed a larger percentage of the illiterate population in 2001 than in 1996 and the rate of reduction in the total number of illiterate females was half as rapid as that of males (Booysen-Wolthers *et al.*, 2006:611).

Education increases women's ability to exercise control over their lives both by gaining access to information and by developing market related skills. Without education, women remain disempowered (Nkosi, 2003:29). There is considerable evidence for the claim that access to education can bring about changes in one's mental ability. The women's ability to question, reflect

on and to act on conditions of their lives is, therefore, improved. They also gain access to knowledge, information and new ideas. There is consequently a higher possibility that educated women will be capable of looking after their own well being and those of their families. Moreover, education enlightens women such that chances of educated women to suffer from domestic violence are minimum compared to their uneducated counterparts who are not so enlightened (Kabeer, 2005:16; Woldie & Adersua 2004:79).

Furthermore, Woldie and Adersua (2004:79) state that their low skills and low education levels prevent women from running competitive businesses and also limit their access to the various support services. Therefore, to improve the success of a business, education is a necessity (Smith-Hunter, 2006:31). Nieman (2001:446) further states that education should aim at equipping individuals to be agents of change with much emphasis on business skills training, technical skills training and entrepreneurial skills training. As women become educated, unemployment is reduced as their chances of finding jobs increase and they are in a better position to start small businesses and be self-employed (Kabeer, 2005:16; Woldie & Adersua, 2004:79).

According to O'Boyle (1998:1412), employment lifts the person or family out of poverty as it provides income and, therefore, likens employment to one powerful means to address poverty. Women participation in economic development programmes is another way that is likely to reduce poverty. The concern for increasing women's economic participation can be seen as aimed at alleviating the socio-economic conditions of the poor households, especially those in the rural sector (Gold, 2003:167). Unemployment as a cause for poverty should be given attention.

2.3.2 Unemployment as a cause for poverty

Booysen-Wolthers *et al.* (2006:621) and Nieman (2001:445) recorded that in South Africa there were 4.6 million people believed to be unemployed in 1996 and the number increased by almost 2 million in 2001. The female unemployment rate was higher than that of men even though the portion of the female population who could potentially have been economically active exceeded that of the

male population in both years.

The above statistics on the unemployment rate in South Africa are an indication that there is a need to adopt development policies with regard to unemployment. These policies must focus on labour intensive business enterprises. Any policy prescriptions short of this will be futile and perhaps counterproductive because only one out of ten new entrants to the labour force finds employment in the formal sector. This is an indication that self-employment and small business start-ups could help curb the high levels of unemployment (Sandberg, 2003:408).

According to South Africa (2007:9), a small enterprise is any enterprise with less than 50 to 100 employees, which includes profit-making enterprises as well as not-for-profit enterprises. Within the definition of a small enterprise, many people also recognise a large number of very small or micro enterprises, with less than five employees. Small enterprises are also sometimes called SMMEs, a term which includes the larger end of the small business sector and medium-sized businesses (South Africa, 2007:11). The population of the country's Small Medium Micro-enterprises was identified by the government as a priority in creating jobs to solve the high unemployment rate in South Africa (Sandberg, 2003:408).

Nieman (2001:445) stated that the government recognises the importance of developing a strong SMME sector. Today it is internationally accepted and acknowledged that the SMME sector is an essential factor in promoting and achieving economic growth, development and the widespread creation of wealth and employment. The emphasis of the government's strategy is, however, primarily on the development of SMMEs in the previously disadvantaged communities. Previously disadvantaged communities refer to those sections of the population who have been disadvantaged by the separate development policies that were in place in the past (Nieman, 2001:445). The SMMEs also create jobs for the previously disadvantaged, especially women.

In 1996, 32.2 % of the South African population was considered economically active. About 3.5 million joined them by 2001, significantly increasing the Economically Active Population (EAP)

percentage to 37.5. The increase in female and male EAP by far exceeded the population changes occurring between 1996 and 2001. The pace of women joining the EAP marginally exceeded that of men and women constituted a somewhat larger proportion of the EAP by 2001 than before. The proportion of the female population considered economically active increased although the increase was smaller than the corresponding increase in the male population (Booysen-Wolthers *et al.*, 1996:620).

Furthermore, Booysen-Wolthers *et al.* (1996:620) recorded that in the 1996 Census, 14.28% of all households in South Africa had no income. After five years the figures increased to 23.21%. It was observed that there were more female-headed households that recorded a zero income than male-headed households in 2001. Although the rate of poverty among female-headed households increased more slowly, it was more than that of male-headed households (Booysen-Wolthers *et al.*, 1996:620).

Kantor (2005:65) indicates that the above mentioned statistics confirm that poverty is excessively high amongst female-headed households, as most of these families have zero income, assuming that zero income equates to poverty. Improving women's control over their earned income is an important strategy, because there is more evidence (Kantor, 2005:65) suggesting that under women's control, income is more often used to provide for the family than income under men's control. Increasing women's access to finances is, therefore, the main aim for women who embark on micro enterprise development, though it is not the sole objective.

Therefore, if micro enterprise programmes are to have sustainable positive influences on women's lives, they must also work to change the power relations that constrain women's ability to control household income. Focusing on economic outcomes only provides a partial view of success because it ignores the barriers many women face in transforming access to resources into control over them. By not recognising such barriers, traditional approaches to micro enterprise development do not capture the process by which income is translated into other valued outcomes and may, therefore, not benefit women (Gumede & Rasmussen, 2002:163). By addressing the challenge of

unemployment amongst women they will become empowered and be in a position to earn some income.

2.4 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Sathiparsad (2002:28) defines empowerment as a process by which an individual is enabled to control and direct his or her life and be successful in whatever he or she sets his or her mind to do. Charmes and Wieringa (2003:423) confirm this and view women empowerment as a means to develop women's ability to make decisions pertaining to their lives.

According to Kabeer (2005:13), "power is the ability to make choices" and to be disempowered is to be denied power, which means to be denied the freedom to make choices. Similarly, powerlessness is defined by Nkosi (2003:24) as being poor, being deprived of your rights, lacking resources and thus being disadvantaged.

Empowering women should not only focus on accessing money, but should also address all areas of women's lives; like using empowerment to overcome problems associated with their oppression and subordination. Furthermore, empowering women with knowledge of the worth and value of money enables women to make informed choices, which shows that access to income alone should not be viewed as empowerment. Women's access to income can hardly address their problems of oppression and subordination. Therefore, using empowerment in connection with projects that focus only on ensuring women's access to moneymaking opportunities can only be misleading (Endeley, 2001:35).

When women become empowered the education, health, and productivity of members of their households and particularly of children are influenced positively (Coughlin & Thomas, 2002:50). In short, their children become educated and their health status is improved. The higher education levels are expected to relate positively to income control, greater confidence levels and perhaps a more liberal household (Coughlin & Thomas, 2002:50).

Women's creative activities, particularly in the industry, empower them economically and allow them to give more to their overall development. Whether they are involved in small or medium scale production activities or in the formal or informal sectors, women entrepreneurial activities are not only a means for economic survival, but also have positive social benefits for the women themselves and their families (Woldie & Adersua, 2004:79).

According to Endeley (2001:35), the control of resources is the fundamental evidence of women's economic, social and political empowerment. When women are empowered they are able to take an equal place with men and contribute equally in the development process. When women receive some income to ensure their wellbeing, it is regarded as the lowest level of empowerment. On the other hand the highest level of empowerment is controlling resources in any area of their social or economic lives. Accessing money, let alone controlling it, is a challenge for the majority of women, especially the very poor. Therefore, the women empowerment process should aim at achieving both levels of empowerment to ensure that the primary objective of women empowerment is realised. Women who have been empowered with skills can venture into entrepreneurial activities in order to generate an income.

2.5 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

The women who start their own businesses are often referred to as entrepreneurs. Ndemo and Maina (2007:118) define an entrepreneur as an agent who plays a vital role in the economic development of a country and as an individual with knowledge, skills initiative, drive and spirit of innovation who identifies and seizes opportunities for their economic benefit. Alsos *et al.* (2003:437) are of the opinion that entrepreneurship is the discovery and exploitation of profitable opportunities. The attentive entrepreneur identifies business opportunities as inadequacies in the market and brings resources together to exploit these opportunities, thus restoring the imbalance in the market.

Women entrepreneurs are the backbone of economic development in many developing countries. They create jobs, wealth and innovation. In many of these countries, the growth rate of women

creating new businesses is greater than the rate of growth for men entrepreneurs (Dreisler *et al.*, 2003:383). In spite of the women's contribution to economic development, their freedom to lead and make strategic business decisions is negatively affected by culture, financial status and lack of education (Dreisler *et al.*, 2003:383).

A society and economy which generates and provides freedom of access to opportunities that can be pursued through profit oriented entrepreneurial ventures will foster creation of businesses, jobs and consequently, economic development and growth and incidentally, income and tax revenues. A key point is that entrepreneurship requires the presence of opportunities exploitable for individuals and personal gain (Tosterud, 1996:35). During the last thirty years, entrepreneurship has become what most nations would call a socially desirable action and thus a target for planned social change. A central question for a nation is how this socially desirable action can be promoted (Dreisler *et al.*, 2003:383). According to Kantor (2005:69) entrepreneurs who are in constant contact with suppliers, contractors and customers are less dependent on a third party to carry out economic functions and, therefore, they are more likely to save and be in a better position to control their income (Ndemo & Maina, 2007:119).Women who have been empowered with skills can venture into entrepreneurial activities in order to generate an income. There are also other reasons why people and specifically women start their own businesses.

2.5.1 Reasons for the small home- or community- based business start-up

Forson (2006:419) stated that the starting of businesses could be adopted as the new approach targeted at curbing the high unemployment rate that currently exists in South Africa. Researchers also agree that new firms and small businesses would help deal with unemployment at macro level. Consequently this could also benefit children and women who are the majority of the impoverished in the world. The micro enterprises undertaken by some of these women enable them to improve the quality of life for themselves and their children, impacting on the rest of the community. In addition to that, by starting their own businesses, women are creating an environment where they are in control of where they work, how they work and when they work. Being in control of where one

works is beneficial to women considering their other domestic responsibilities (Coughlin & Thomas, 2002:9).

Women often enter the informal sector, engaging in home-based income-generation as a desperate effort when there are few alternatives. Personal circumstances like unemployment are often the driving force behind micro home or community-based business start-ups. When women need money and they cannot find paid work after a long period of unsuccessful job hunting, they decide to start their own businesses. For unemployed women the primary motivation is to generate income to support their families. Besides its economic and income-generating role, business ownership also contributes to a person's equilibrium and sense of fulfilment (Coughlin & Thomas, 2002:13).

2.6 CHALLENGES WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS FACE

The challenges being faced by rural women entrepreneurs include lack of education and skills, multiple roles, socio-cultural factors and access to finances. Poverty and lack of education as the major challenges women entrepreneurs are facing were discussed in the previous sections. The multiple roles of women, socio-cultural factors and access to finances will be discussed next.

2.6.1 Multiple roles of women

According to Nkosi (2003:28), women begin to assume intense domestic chores at a very young age and are expected to handle both educational and domestic responsibilities. These normally cause a strain, resulting in their academic performance lagging behind and eventually lead to early dropout from school. Women in South Africa find themselves having to perform dual responsibilities. They have domestic demands such as being the primary parent, emotional nurturer, and housekeeper and also running their businesses (South Africa, 2005:6).

Woldie and Adersua (2004:79) state that women also work for long hours daily, carrying out household chores such as cooking, cleaning, bringing up children, as well as engaging in income

generating activities. The combination of two jobs is difficult for any woman in any country; it is doubly taxing for a woman in a developing country let alone in Africa, where poverty, lack of infrastructure and lack of labour saving devices can make the most basic tasks more difficult and more time consuming (Woldie & Adersua, 2004:79). Given the patriarchal systems applicable in Africa and South Africa, women entrepreneurs are not likely to be relieved of their domestic responsibilities when they start a business and this result in a conflict between their business and family responsibilities (South Africa, 2005:6). Other than multiple roles, women also face challenges due to certain socio-cultural factors.

2.6.2 Socio-cultural factors

Cultural and social traditions play a large role in determining who becomes an entrepreneur, for example social conditions in some communities inhibit women from starting their own businesses. For a female business owner, the process of starting and operating a new enterprise can be difficult because they often lack skills, education and support systems that can speed up their business pursuits (Forson, 2006:419).

Women are traditionally regarded as inferior to men regardless of their age or educational status (Marthur-Helm, 2005:56). Women entrepreneurs often experience conflict, as the behaviour that they are expected to display to make them acceptable in the work place can undermine their self confidence and their ability to assert themselves, assume responsibility and succeed in a line of business. Women entrepreneurs feel obstructed by the gender segregation which prevails in almost all of Africa (Marthur-Helm, 2005:56). The attitude towards women entrepreneurs can be regarded as a traditional African attitude, which weakens women's initiation in business (Woldie & Adersua 2004:80). Accessing finances is another barrier that women face.

2.6.3 Access to finances

Having access to finances whether through loans, revolving credit, lines of credit or overdraft

accounts, is a major concern for women entrepreneurs. A number of studies have indicated that women entrepreneurs are more likely to experience difficulty accessing finances than their male counterparts (Smith-Hunter, 2006:128). In spite of the wide range of finance options, it is frequently reported that some small businesses struggle to access the finance they need, mostly at the start-up stages (Rouse & Jayawana 2006:391).

Kantor (2005:67) attributes the limited access to finances by women to the difficulty women face in acquiring property and other goods needed for collateral purposes. Rouse and Jayawana (2006:391) on the other hand state that the failure to access finances is due to the lack of information about available financial options as opposed to lack of available credit. Furthermore, new small-business women may have difficulty providing credibility to private financiers since they do not have track records or assets to act as collateral.

Women-owned SMMEs in the form of small home-based or community-based businesses are reported to be growing at a faster rate than the economy as a whole in several countries. Removing a number of obstacles would allow their potential to be fully tapped. Promoting the participation of women entrepreneurs strengthens the economy and can be a source of political, economic and social innovation (Coughlin & Thomas, 2002:58).

To be a successful entrepreneur one needs more than skills and business knowledge or a good product. One must also know one's customer, as a basic marketing concept states that a business exists to satisfy consumers' needs. Consumer needs lead to action which is consumer behaviour.

2.7 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

This section of the literature review is based on the internal factors influencing consumer behaviour with reference to consumer perceptions. Perceptions influence the decision to purchase or not to purchase a product. When the decision making process is implemented that behaviour is referred to as consumer behaviour (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:10; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:3; Solomon,

2004:9).

Consumer behaviour is a decision process and physical activity that individuals engage in when searching, evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:10; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:3; Solomon, 2004:9). It is driven by internal as well as external factors. The internal factors influencing consumer behaviour include motivation, perceptions, memory, learning, personality and changing attitudes. In this study the focus will be on internal factors and more attention will be given to consumer perceptions (Kelly, 2002:5).

As articulated by Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:3), consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources. These decisions include what, why, when, where, and how often consumers purchase and use products, how they evaluate them after purchase, how the evaluation affects future purchases and how they dispose of the products (Goldsmith, 2005:153). Sheth *et al.* (1999:5) and Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003:10) further state that consumer behaviour is a mental, emotional and physical activity undertaken to satisfy needs and desires. Before a consumer can decide on whether or not to make a purchase a need for the product or service has to arise.

2.7.1 Consumer needs

Kelly (2002:42) views needs as the forerunners for motives and as the forces that drive people to buy and use products and services. Moreover, needs are straightforward, for example when a person chooses what to have for lunch. People are often not fully aware of the forces that drive them towards some products and away from others (Solomon, 2004:116).

Marketers ask a number of questions in an attempt to understand why consumers behave the way they do. Why do customers in their roles as users, payers and buyers purchase what they do? What goals are they trying to achieve? What needs are they trying to satisfy? What feelings and emotions are they experiencing? How do these needs and emotions shape their lifestyles? How do their

lifestyles relate to and explain their behaviour as customers? To understand motivation is to understand why consumers do what they do (Sheth *et al.,* 1999:342).

2.7.2 Consumer motivation

Motivation is the driving force within individuals that drives them to action. This driving force is, therefore, produced by a state of tension which exists as a result of an unfulfilled need (Solomon, 2004:114). Individuals strive consciously and subconsciously to reduce the tension through behaviour that they anticipate will fulfil their needs and thus relieve them of the stress they feel. The specific goals they select and the patterns of action they undertake to achieve their goals are the result of individuals' thinking and learning (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:83). Kelly (2002:42) also agrees that a motive is a need or a desire that has been intensified either through natural processes or external influences, to the point where an individual is moved to take an action towards its fulfilment, or has made the conscious decision to do so.

According to Chisnall (1995:40), motives initiate behaviour and direct it towards specific types of activities. Wants and needs have been described as the initiating and sustaining forces of behaviour and these may be characterized as 'positive' driving forces that direct wants towards objects, or 'negative' forces such as fears or aversions, which lead wants away from objects. Once the goal is attained, the tension is reduced and the motivation recedes. Motives have direction as well as strength. They are goal oriented in that they drive one to satisfy a specific need. A number of ways in which a certain goal is achieved and the objective of a company is to convince consumers that the alternative it offers provides the best chance to attain the goal (Chisnall, 1995: 40).

Motivation is subject to personal perception of needs and until marketing activities have stimulated these needs, individual consumers may perceive no reason to buy a particular product. Differing levels of aspirations which are reflected in their behaviour motivate people. Clearly, social and intellectual aspirations influence people's behaviour and extend to the types of products they consume. Because of the insatiability of human needs, consumers accumulate an ever-increasing

collection of products (Chisnall, 1995: 40).

Solomon (2004:124) attests to the fact that there are perceived linkages between consumers' needs, goals or values and product knowledge. When relevant knowledge is activated in the memory, a motivational state is created that drives behaviour. As involvement with a product increases, the consumer devotes more attention to advertisements related to the product, exerts more mental efforts to understand these advertisements and focuses more attention on the product-related information in them. Foxall *et al.* (1998:51) state that after consumers have been motivated and have become aware of the brands or products, their buying decision is guided by their perceptions or impressions formed from information they get about brand or product characteristics.

2.7.3 Consumer perceptions

The study of perceptions then focuses on what one adds to the raw sensations in order to give them meaning (Solomon, 2004:49). Consumers use the five human sensory organs, which are eyes, ears, mouth, nose and skin as sensory receptors by receiving, evaluating and interpreting consumer products.

Perception is how a person interprets information about the brand or product and then uses it to make a decision. The same information may be interpreted differently by different people (Kelly, 2002:45). Perception is further defined as a process by which sensations are recognised, selected, organised and interpreted into a meaningful coherent picture of the world (Assael, 2004:146; Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003:218); Foxall *et al.*, 1998:52; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:152; Sheth *et al.*, 1999:298; Solomon, 2004:49).

As mentioned above the consumer decision-making process is guided by the perceptions formed about the product or service, and the action as the decision-making process is implemented, is the consumer behaviour.

2.7.4 Consumer decision-making process

Before purchasing any product, consumers need to undergo a decision-making process. This process begins with the consumer recognizing a problem to be solved or a need for a certain product that has to be satisfied. Problem recognition occurs whenever a consumer sees a significant difference between his or her current state of affairs and some desired or ideal state. It is a realisation by the customer that he or she has a need for a particular product and that the purchase of this product will enable the consumer to go back to the normal state of comfort physically or psychologically (Sheth *et al.,* 1999:520*)*. The decision making model has five components namely, problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase and post purchase experience. Foxall *et al.* (1998:29) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:531) further classify these components into inputs, central processing and outputs.

Once consumers realise the need for a certain product they then gather adequate information to resolve it. Information search or pre-purchase search is the process by which the consumer surveys his or her environment for appropriate data to make a reasonable decision (Solomon, 2004:297). The consumer recollects past experiences, usually drawn from the long-term memory, which might provide the consumer with adequate information to base the present choice on (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:533).

Much of the effort that goes into a purchase decision occurs at the stage in which a choice must be made from available alternatives. A decision is a selection of an option from two or more alternatives. Consumers' freedom is often expressed in terms of a wide range of products choice, thus if there is always a choice to be made, there is always an opportunity for consumers to make decisions. Then a consumer engages in extended problem solving and may carefully evaluate several products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:526).

Solomon (2004:297), Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:526) and Sheth *et al. (*1999:520*)* all state that when evaluating potential alternatives, consumers tend to focus mainly on the different brands from

which they plan to make their selection and the term alternatives available may be taken to average products available in the market. The alternative shops or outlets from which to obtain the product also form part of the alternatives available, as consumers also need to consider from which of the many available outlets they will purchase.

Choosing which product to purchase involves integrating information from sources such as prior experience with the product or a similar one, information present at the time of purchase and beliefs about the brands that are created by advertising. These influence the consumer's perceptions on which product to choose. When consumers buy, use or pay for a product, it is not an isolated act. When they face a market place decision, it is not their first exposure and response to the market place; rather it is a sequence of other market place decisions made in the past. Consumers become aware of and learn about brands through packaging, promotions, advertisements and conversations with other people. Brand awareness is clearly a prerequisite of buying, but naturally, it cannot guarantee sales by itself (Sheth *et al.,* 1999:298).

The recollection of experiences might provide the consumer with adequate information to make the present choice. On the other hand, when the consumer has no prior experience, he or she may have to engage in an extensive search of the outside environment for useful information on which to base a choice. The consumer usually searches his or her memory (internal sources) before seeking external sources of information regarding a given consumption-related need (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:533-534). The existing knowledge of a product may be a result of direct learning. Alternatively, acquiring information may be in a more passive manner. Exposure to advertising, packaging and sales promotion activities may result in incidental learning (Solomon, 2004:297).

The consumer considers only a select subset of brands, for instance the awareness set which consists of brands the customer is aware of an evoked set which consists of brands that the consumer remembers at the time of decision making. Of the brands in the evoked set, not all are deemed fit to ones needs and those considered unfit are eliminated right away. The remaining brands are termed the considered set or the brands the customer will consider buying. New information may bring

additional brands into awareness, evoked and considered. The source of information is advertising, sales persons, product literature and brochures, the Internet and in-store display (Sheth *et al.*, 1999:524).

Search strategy is the patterns of information acquisition customers utilise to solve their decision problems. Since information acquisition has costs in terms of time, physical efforts and mental efforts, customers weigh the cost against the likely gains from information acquisition. That comparison helps them decide how much information they will acquire and from what sources (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:534).

Furthermore, some evidence indicates that more extended processing occurs in situations in which negative emotions are aroused due to conflict between the choices available. The alternatives actively considered during a consumer's choice process are his or her evoked set, which consist of those products already in memory, plus those prominent in the retail environment. Once the customer has evaluated the alternatives, he or she makes the purchase in three steps. The consumer identifies the most preferred alternative, determines which product to purchase and from which outlet or shop to obtain it, and to finally implement the actual purchase (Sheth *et al.*, 1999:544). The output component of the model concerns two closely associated kinds of post decision activity, purchase behaviour and post purchase evaluation, both of which aim at increasing the consumer's satisfaction from his or her choice (Foxall *et al.*, 1998:30). The customer's decision process does not end with the purchase. In some cases the consumer will be pleased with the experience and a repeat purchase will occur. In other cases, the consumer will be disappointed and may even return or exchange the product. The post purchase process includes four steps: decision confirmation, experience evaluation satisfaction or dissatisfaction and future response. After a customer makes an important decision, he or she experiences an intense need to confirm the wisdom of that decision. The other side is that he or she wants to avoid the disconfirmation. Methods of confirming the soundness of one's decision are seeking further positive and avoiding negative information about the chosen alternative (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:546).

Experience evaluation is the feedback given to marketers about the product performance and whether the consumers intend to consume the product routinely. The usage outcome is characterised by satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Sheth *et al.*, 1999:550). Satisfaction is how the actual performance compares with the expected performance or whether the product fulfils the pre-purchase expectations and then satisfaction results (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007:279). This view is supported by Assael (2004:45) who further states that satisfaction occurs when consumer expectations regarding the product are met or exceeded.

According to Solomon (2004:361), consumer satisfaction is determined by the general feeling or attitude felt about a product. This usually occurs after consumers have made acquisition, consumption or disposition and have positive evaluations about a product (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007:279). If the purchase expectations are not met then dissatisfaction results. If consumers are dissatisfied with their experience with the product they may decide never to buy the brand again, referred to as an "exit". "Voice" is the term used when dissatisfied consumers complain and then decide to give either the brand or the marketer another chance or simply to exit. "Customer loyalty" means that the consumer buys the same brand repeatedly, this is a response observed from satisfied consumers (Sheth *et al.*, 1999:550). Brand loyalty can be achieved through high quality products (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007:279). Consumer perceptions of textile product quality and price will be discussed next.

2.7.5 Consumer perception of textile product quality and price

Quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied customer's needs for economy and function (Solomon, 2004:350). Merkel (1991:5) defines textile product quality as the initial appearance, perceived comfort, purchase price, maintenance requirements and serviceability. Kadolph (2007:14) and Kadolph & Langford (2002:11) confirm that textile product quality is a sum total of product characteristics such as appearance, end use, performance, material interaction within the product, consistency among identical products and freedom from defects in construction.

According to De Klerk and Lubbe (2004:320), textile product quality is when the product conforms to set standards. Moreover, when consumers purchase products they look for quality and value (Solomon, 2004:348). Consumers use a number of indicators to deduce quality. These include product name and price. Sheth *et al.* (1999:306) record that consumers often use price as a quality cue especially when customers are seeking psychological satisfaction and they may view higher prices as a reflection of exclusivity and status. Assael (2004:175) also states that consumers have certain expectations about what prices should be and frequently associate the price with the product quality. Therefore, price and quality are some of the factors consumers base their product perceptions on.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The first section of this chapter outlined the status of women in South Africa. Rural women are the most affected by poverty due to their low levels of education that consequently result in unemployment. Women, therefore, need to be empowered with skills that would enable them to generate an income. As a result of empowerment, there is an increase of women entrepreneurs especially among the rural population of South Africa. Having said this, there are still a number of challenges women entrepreneurs need to overcome in order to run their businesses successfully. These challenges include lack of capital, lack of education and skills and the multiple roles of women in society. By overcoming these challenges, the women and their families, especially female headed households will benefit. This will go a long way in the eradication of poverty.

The second section of this chapter defined consumer behaviour influencing consumer opinions and perceptions. Consumer needs were mentioned as the motives that drive consumers towards purchasing certain products. Furthermore, consumer motivation as the force that propels consumers to purchase a product was discussed.

This section further stated that the purchase of a product is influenced by consumer's perceptions and opinions that are the consumer's impression of the product. Subsequently the consumer

undergoes a decision making process in obtaining the product and then purchasing the product results. Consumers determine whether the product satisfied the expectations held prior to the purchase or not and this process is called post purchase decision.

The consumers in the hospitality industry have a need for textile products in their hospitality establishments. Consequently, they must first decide which of the many textile products they need to purchase, which one of the shops or outlets to purchase from and how much are they willing to pay (Solomon, 2004:352).

Chapter Three is the research article on the hospitality industry consumers' behaviour towards textile products on offer by rural women entrepreneurs in the Vredefort Dome and will consequently follow.

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CHAPTER 3: ARTICLE: HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS TEXTILE PRODUCTS ON OFFER BY RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE VREDEFORT DOME

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TITLE: HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS TEXTILE PRODUCTS ON OFFER BY RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE VREDEFORT DOME.

ABSTRACT

The Farm Labour And General Health (Flagh) project implemented a skills programme aimed at income generation for rural women in the Vredefort Dome following intensive needs assessment previously conducted. As a World Heritage Site, the Vredefort Dome has several hospitality establishments. This article outlines an investigation of hospitality industry consumers' perceptions towards textile products manufactured by rural women. The use of textile products in these establishments was investigated and subsequently a possible market for the textile products was ascertained. The consumers were of the perception that the textile products are of good quality, are reasonably priced and that they would consider purchasing them. The consumers further suggested a number of textile products that the women could make for the different establishments. It was concluded that there is a need and market for textile products in the various establishments as the textile products were reported to be replaced from between one month to over five years.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article presents the socio-economic aspects of women in South Africa, the challenges they face and their need for empowerment. Their involvement in a sewing income generating project is also presented. The Vredefort Dome is acknowledged as a World Heritage Site with hospitality services that have a potential market for textile products. The method followed in conducting this study is outlined and the findings are presented and discussed. A conclusion is drawn and recommendations are presented.

2. BACKGROUND

The Vredefort Dome was created over 2,000 million years ago when a massive meteorite landed in this area. It is called a dome because the rock layers were bent into a shape of an upside-down bowl, 90 km across, by the impact (Gibson, 2006:1). This makes the Vredefort Dome a site of great importance and on 14 July 2005, it was declared South Africa's seventh World Heritage Site (WHS). WHSs are recognised and protected areas of outstanding natural, historical and cultural value (Aucamp, 2007:3; Gibson, 2006:1).

As a WHS, the Vredefort Dome has become a tourist destination for both local and international tourists. It provides a number of recreational activities that include river rafting, river tubing, absailing, horse riding, mountain biking, archery and walking. The core of the Vredefort Dome Heritage Site hosts 49 tourist services. These services focus mainly on a combination of

accommodation, conference venues, adventure and ecotourism activities (Saayman et al., 2007:20).

There are a number of tourist services that provide accommodation in the Vredefort Dome. These include resorts, camping sites, lodges, hotels, guesthouses and bed and breakfasts. It is anticipated that all of these establishments have a need for textile products such as bed linen, towels, kitchen linen, staff uniforms, and curtaining. At present, the consumers have to travel long distances to surrounding towns to purchase these textile products.

Through the research from the Transition, Health and Urbanisation in South Africa (Thusa) study the farm dwellers in the North West Province were identified as a vulnerable group with regard to deprived nutrition and physical and mental health (Voster et al., 2000:505-514). The same study further reveals that the farm dwellers possess low levels of education, which may be contributing to poverty and limited job opportunities. Furthermore, the people in Venterskroon are no exception and live below the poverty line and cannot afford basic needs due to low-income levels and unemployment. The women from the surrounding areas have much spare time (Phiri, 2006:1). As a result a group of 12 women expressed their desire to acquire practical needlecraft skills.

As an initiative by the Flagh (Farm Labour And General Health) project, in 2005 the Consumer Sciences Department of the North-West University trained a group of women in basic sewing skills as a means to empower them, thus enabling them to produce textile products that they can sell to generate an income. A number of these women are unemployed and are solely depended on the income they receive from income generating activities. Only a few of the women have seasonal or

part-time jobs that are inconsistent and are not paying well, therefore, they need supplementary income. The social status and living conditions of rural women are outlined below.

Culturally women and more especially rural women live under undesirable conditions and are prohibited to pursue their individual interests. They have been subjected to discrimination and are being undermined and disempowered regarding their roles and their rightful places in society (Endeley, 2001:36). They have also been isolated and denied access to social and economic opportunities and, therefore, live in abject poverty (Sathiparsad, 2002: 28).

According to Van Der Walt (2004:2), poverty means different things to people in different places who come from different backgrounds at different times. O'Boyle (1998:1411-12) defines poverty as the income needed to purchase goods and services required to keep up the lowest standard of living. To substantiate the need to define poverty, Van Der Walt (2004:2) states that by clearly defining poverty it would help to determine correctly the success and failure of its reduction.

The causes of poverty amongst rural women include illiteracy and unemployment. O'Boyle (1998:1412) suggests that employment is one way that lifts a person or family out of poverty as it provides an income. Therefore, addressing the challenge of unemployment by empowering women puts them in a position to earn some income (Booysen-Wolthers et al., 1996:620), thus lifting them out of poverty.

Kantor (2005:67) states that it is anticipated that the status of women, especially rural women in

South Africa will get better as women become empowered. As a means to address challenges faced by women, the eradication of poverty amongst the rural people of South Africa needs to be given the attention it deserves. Women empowerment could be one way to alleviate poverty (Endeley, 2001:34).

Sathiparsad (2002:28) defines empowerment as a process by which an individual is enabled to control and direct his or her life and be successful in whatever he or she sets his or her mind to do. Moreover, Charmes and Wieringa (2003:423) view women empowerment as a means to develop women's ability to make decisions pertaining to their lives.

When women become empowered, the education, health and productivity of members of their household, particularly children are influenced positively. This is a starting point in the eradication of poverty. There is evidence suggesting that income under women's control is more often used to provide for the family income than income under men's control (Kantor, 2005:65). Women who have been empowered with entrepreneurial skills can venture into income generating activities.

Even though entrepreneurship is one way in which women can make money and overcome poverty, there are still a number of challenges that they need to overcome. These challenges include lack of educational skills, women's multiple roles, access to finances and other socio-cultural factors that still regard women as inferior citizens (Ndemo & Maina, 2007:119; Marthur-Helm, 2005:56). Once the challenges outlined above have been overcome, women can then venture into entrepreneurial activities as discussed below.

As entrepreneurs embark on different business ventures, they need to understand consumer behaviour and specifically how perceptions influence consumer decision making. According to Solomon (2004:17) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:15), consumer behaviour is driven by internal as well as external factors. As stated by Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:3), consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources. These decisions include what, why, when, where and how often consumers purchase and use products, how they evaluate them after purchase, how the evaluation affects future purchases and how they dispose of them (Goldsmith, 2005:153). Before consumers can embark on the decision to purchase a product or a service a need must arise.

Kelly (2002:42) views needs as the forerunners for motives. Before one is motivated to purchase a certain product or service, there has to be a need. Moreover, motivation is the driving force within individuals that pushes them to action. This driving force exists as a result of an unfulfilled need. Individuals strive to fulfil their needs. The specific goals they select and the patterns of action they undertake to achieve their goals are the result of individuals' thinking and learning (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007: 83; Kelly 2002:42).

Foxall et al. (1998:51) state that after consumers have been motivated, their buying decision is guided by their perceptions or impressions of the brand or product. The study of perceptions then focuses on what one adds to these raw sensations in order to give them meaning (Solomon, 2004: 49).

Consumers use the five human sensory organs, which are the eyes, ears, mouth, nose and skin to receive, evaluate and interpret consumer products. Therefore, perception is how a person interprets information or a situation which differs from individual to individual. It is a process by which sensations or stimuli are selected, organised and interpreted in order to make sense of the world around us (Foxall et al., 1998:52; Solomon, 2004:49). Once the perception process has been interpreted meaningfully, a decision-making process can begin. This decision-making process begins when the consumer recognises a problem to be solved that might be satisfied by the purchase and consumption of a product or service (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:533). When consumers purchase products they look for quality and value which is the perception of the product.

Quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied customer's needs for economy and function. Consumers use a number of indicators to deduce quality which includes brand name and price (Solomon, 2004:348-350). According to De Klerk and Lubbe (2004:320), quality in textile products is when the textile product conforms to set standards. Merkel (1991:5) defines textile product quality as the initial appearance, perceived comfort, purchase price, maintenance requirements and serviceability. Kadolph (2007:14) and Kadolph & Langford (2002:11) confirm this and add that there must be consistency among identical products and freedom from defects in construction. Consumers base their purchase decision satisfaction on these cues as well as others (Solomon, 2004: 362).

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The need for textile products in the hospitality industry in the Vredefort Dome can be addressed by textile manufacturing home-based or community-based businesses. Since the late eighties there was a move to smaller informal manufacturing enterprises to compensate for lost jobs in the formal sector. However, there is a general lack of information available on home-based textile products manufacturing and information on who the consumers of these products are and what their preferences are in terms of product type and the quality required (Van Aardt & Kroon, 1999:3). The lack of information available on the home-based and community-based production of textile products raises the following question. How do the textile products manufactured by home-based or community-based manufacturers compete with similar commercially produced ones obtained from large shops?

The performance of a product in the market is influenced by its country of origin. Findings from a research on the effect of country-of-origin (Wang et al., 2004:239) reveal that consumers have a general preference for domestic-made products over foreign products. Knight (1999:152) reveals that consumers hold positive attitudes towards products made in their own country. Knight (1999:152) continues that the same consumers could be swayed to choose foreign products if quality and price considerations were sufficiently favourable. It was observed by Wang et al. (2004:239) that consumers do not accept inferior quality domestic products when superior foreign products are available. The question then arises: Would the local hospitality industry consumers purchase locally products that are of good quality at a reasonable price if they are available?

Moreover, globally consumers are becoming increasingly demanding in what they look for in textile products and increasingly discerning in what they find acceptable (Kadolph, 1998: 12). Moroka (2006:3) states that the quality of local products has to meet international standards. It is against this background that this research seeks to investigate consumer perceptions and opinions of textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs.

Other questions may emerge such as whether the local entrepreneurs are able to obtain good quality raw material to enable them to produce good quality articles that can compete strongly with the ones sold in the large shops or not. If home-based manufacturers, will they be able to produce these items within a reasonable time to meet demand from consumers?

The interest in conducting this study was prompted in part by the fact that there are a number of establishments around the Vredefort Dome with huge tourism potential requiring textile products. This study will, therefore, ascertain the type of textile products these establishments need and further identify possible consumers. Furthermore, these textile products could be readily accessible to the hospitality industry's consumers since they will be produced in the same vicinity as their establishments.

Located in the Vredefort Dome, the women are in contact with potential consumers. This will most probably increase their textile product orders and give them new product ideas. It is anticipated that after securing the market, these entrepreneurs will have a challenge to sustain it by supplying good

quality products at affordable prices on time. The rural women's business has a potential to grow as new hospitality businesses are definitely going to emerge in the near future, as the Vredefort Dome becomes a well-established tourist destination. The upcoming soccer World Cup in 2010 is also anticipated to bring many tourists to South Africa which will result in an increased need for hospitality services and consequently an increase in textile products.

4. AIM AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions and opinions of the hospitality industry consumers towards textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs.

The specific objectives of the study were, therefore, to:

- Identify the current and potential consumers of textile products in the Vredefort Dome.
- Assess the consumer needs for textile products around the Vredefort Dome.
- Establish the consumer perceptions and opinions towards textile products on offer by the local rural women entrepreneurs.
- Provide recommendations for new products that the local rural women entrepreneurs can produce based on consumers' needs and suggestions.

5. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research design, study population, ethical considerations and data collection methods and data analysis procedures.

5.1 Research design

A combined qualitative and quantitative descriptive research design was employed to investigate the perceptions and opinions of textile consumers in the hospitality industry in the Vredefort Dome. The combined research design focuses on collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study (Creswell, 2003:210). Therefore, the author used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews for data collection. The combined method provides greater confidence that what is being targeted is being measured accurately and it also attempts to understand the subject being studied (De Vos et al., 2005: 357). According to Creswell (2003:210), combining the qualitative and quantitative research designs also expands an understanding from one method to another, converging or confirming findings from different data sources.

5.2 Study population

The target population for this research consisted of all the consumers who operate hospitality services in the Vredefort Dome. A list of 49 consumers was obtained from both the register compiled by the tourism office in Venterskroon and from a report compiled by Africa Geo-

Environmental Services PTY Ltd (AGES) (Saayman et al., 2007:25) of which 35 hospitality services make use of textile products. This is due to the large amount of accommodation facilities that require bedlinen and other textile items. A convenience sample of 17 hospitality industry consumers with facilities that require the use of textile products was obtained based on their availability. The 17 consumers are the ones that returned the questionnaires and out of the 17 only 10 were available for the follow-up semi-structured interviews. According to De Vos (2005:202) a convenience or availability sample are those that are most easily available. Such samples are cheap and quick to obtain. The convenience sampling technique was used in this study mainly because most of the hospitality industry consumers were not readily available as most of them do not reside in the establishments and also because some were too busy to participate in this study.

5.3 Ethical considerations

This is a study within the larger multi-funded Flagh programme. The Ethics Committee of the North-West University approved this study (number 00M21). The author used several opportunities to explain the objectives of the research to the consumers. Firstly, the consumers were informed about the intentions of conducting the study and secondly, the author called the consumers who have hospitality services, requesting their consent to participate in this research before the questionnaires were faxed to them. This was also repeated before the commencement of the interviews. The author further explained that their participation was voluntary, confidential and anonymous and that under no circumstances will they be held accountable for their contributions. Furthermore, the data obtained will not be linked to their businesses. The participants were also informed that the findings

would be available to the rural women entrepreneurs to enable them to produce textile products needed by the consumers.

5.4 Data collection methods

5.4.1 Questionnaires

The literature revealed that the consumers' decision to purchase or not to purchase a product or service is guided by the consumers' perceptions formed about the product or service (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:10; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:3; Solomon, 2004:9). The questions in the questionnaires were formulated based on the objectives of this study and also from the literature reviewed on consumer behaviour, including information regarding perceptions and opinions. These questions included closed, open and dichotomous questions on consumer perceptions on the quality and price of textile products and service offered by the rural women entrepreneurs. The main purpose of the questionnaires was to gather the quantitative data.

The participants were first contacted telephonically to request participation in the research and to seek their consent. The questionnaires were then faxed to all the consumers. The questions used in the questionnaire will be presented as statements in the discussion of the results.

5.4.2 Interviews

The questions from interview schedule were developed from the questionnaire. Some of the open

ended questions on consumer perceptions on the quality and price of textile products and the service offered by rural women entrepreneurs, were not answered by a number of consumers. Repeating these questions enabled the researcher to ensure that this information is collected and to also determine the consistency of the responses.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted within the establishments to gather consumer perceptions of textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs and to further explore issues that were not adequately addressed by the questionnaires. According to De Vos et al. (2005:292), semi-structured interviews are organised around certain areas of interest or themes and still allow a considerable amount of flexibility in scope and depth. The interviews further explored the reasons for the responses given in the questionnaire, for example reasons for purchasing from certain retail outlets and reasons for the textile product selection criteria.

During the interviews, priced textile products sewn by women entrepreneurs were shown to the consumers. The textile products included place mats, an apron, a shopping bag, a draw string bag, a man's shirt, a beaded hand bag, pencil bag, and a skirt. This enabled the consumers to assess the quality and prices so that they could give their perceptions and opinions.

5.4.3 Validity and reliability of measurement instruments

De Vos et al. (2005:160-62) state that validity of an instrument is when it actually measures the concept in question and that the concept is measured accurately. He further defines reliability as the

consistency of the measurement. This study is explorative in nature and therefore the tests and re-tests methods could not be used to ascertain validity and reliability of the measurement instruments. Nevertheless, the questionnaire was administered to six staff members of the Consumer Science Department who provided expert advice and input on the subject and are also consumers of textile products. The staff members completed and critiqued the questionnaire to ensure content validity. This exercise was carried out in order to improve the success and effectiveness of the investigation (De Vos et al., 2005:210). The questions from the questionnaires were modified and included in the interview schedule to ensure their validity and reliability. The interview data was more rich and detailed compared to the questionnaire data. This was due to the additional data gathered regarding price, quality, delivery and customer service. The consistency of the responses further ensured reliability of the measurement instruments.

5.5 Data analysis

5.5.1 Analysis of questionnaire data

The data from the questionnaires were coded and percentages were calculated. A Microsoft Excel programme was used to summarise the quantitative data into graphs.

5.5.2 Analysis of data from interviews

The data from interviews were analysed in four steps as adopted from Creswell (2003:191-92) namely preparation of data, reading through data, coding and data entry and data presentation.

During data collection the interviews were voice recorded and during the data preparation they were transcribed verbatim. The author read and re-read through all the data collected from the interviews. Minor editing was done where necessary, this included synthesising field notes with the recorded interviews and arranging the content sequentially in a coherent manner. The data were analysed by means of content analyses. Content analysis refers to a textual investigation of the verbal data through means of inferences of data by identifying themes and concepts that best represent the data. Then the data was colour coded, cut, pasted and integrated into pre-set themes as used in the interviews. The findings of the study will be presented and discussed.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questions from the questionnaire were transformed into statements which also acted as constructs for the semi-structured interviews. The responses from the participants in the interviews were incorporated under different themes. The following themes were formulated from the interviews.

- Identification of participating establishments.
- The use of textile products by the different establishments.
- The frequency with which the textile products are replaced.
- Shops and outlets from which the establishments purchase textile products.
- Consumers' reasons for purchasing from these shops.
- Consumers' perceptions on the textile products and services offered by rural women

entrepreneurs, including:

-Consumer perceptions on textile product quality.

- Consumer perception on price.

- Consumer perceptions on customer service.

- Consumer perceptions on delivery.

- Consumer suggestions on how to improve the textile products.

- Market prospects for textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs.

Attention will be given to the individual themes.

6.1 Identification of participating establishments

Sixty per cent of the establishments that participated in this study are located in the North West Province and 40 per cent are situated in the Free State Province. Figure 1 shows the participating establishments in the Vredefort Dome. These establishments comprise of 32 per cent lodges, 15 per cent bed and breakfasts, 13 per cent guest houses, 10 per cent camping sites, 9 per cent conference venues, 6 per cent shops, chalets and wedding venues and 3 per cent outdoor centres. No hotels participated in this research (Figure 1). Some of these establishments provide self-catering units whereas others have cooking facilities with dining areas.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

These establishments vary from small and medium to large. The small establishments have rooms ranging from one to five and the largest establishments have a total of 30 rooms or more. The same was observed in the number of employees with smaller establishments having employees ranging from one to five and the largest establishments having 30 employees or more. The findings revealed that the hospitality industry consumers practiced a diversification of establishments as there is more than one type of establishment operating on the same premises. The common combinations observed were a wedding venue or conference centre with a lodge, guest house or bed breakfast and a shop. Camping sites are usually combined with chalets, outdoor centre or lodges.

6.2 The use of textile products by the different establishments

The textile products were grouped in categories of use, for example bed linen consists of sheets, duvets covers, comforters and pillow cases. Curtaining includes all curtains used in all the sections of the establishments. Kitchen linen consists of all textile products used in the kitchen and table linen includes table clothes, table napkins, table drapes, overlays and food nets. Bath linen includes bath towels and bath mats.

Figure 2 shows all the establishments that participated in this research and the different textile products used. All the establishments recorded a 100 per cent use of bed linen, curtaining and staff uniforms. This means that all the participating establishments have sleeping facilities, need curtains and they also provide their staff with uniforms. Eighty per cent of the establishments use kitchen

linen. This indicates that some of the establishments do not provide kitchen linen in the self-catering units and the guests use their own kitchen linen.

[Insert Figure 2 here]

The use of table linen in the establishments amounts to 67 per cent. The reason for this is because a number of the establishments like outdoor centres, camping sites and chalets do not have formal dining facilities and therefore do not use table linen. In some instances the guests use their own bath linen and as a result there is 44 per cent use of bath linen in the establishments. This was observed in outdoor centres, camping sites and chalets.

6.3 The frequency with which textile products are replaced

The replacement period of the textile products ranges from between one month and more than five years (Figure 3). On average 37 per cent of the textile products are replaced yearly which are mainly bed linen, curtaining and staff uniforms. Every six months 18 per cent of the textile products are replaced. Kitchen linen forms a larger part of the 12 per cent textile products that are replaced monthly and most establishments replace curtaining after more than five years.

[Insert Figure 3 here]

Bed linen is the most frequently replaced product, followed by staff uniforms and kitchen linen. All

of these textile products are washed after every use and, therefore, the colour fades faster. The bed linen undergoes much wear and tear. Curtains on the other hand, are rarely washed compared to the other textile products although they may deteriorate from sunlight. Most of the establishments replace them between three and five years.

Twenty-two percent of the establishments indicated that they replace most of their textile products only when necessary. They could not specify when exactly they replace the textile products. One reason for that was that large establishments have a number of managers for the different facilities. As a result in the absence of the other managers the interviewees were not in a position to give a specific answer. When asked about how often they replace their textile products one respondent said 'I cannot be specific on that one since the kitchen manager is not around. He is the one that deals with that department'.

Another reason for not specifying when the establishments replace the textile products that was observed in large establishments was the fact that purchasing of the textile products is conducted at head offices which are usually situated outside the establishments and as a result, the managers in the establishments could not give a specific time when they replace the textile products. Two of the interviewees gave the following answer 'I'm not very sure about that, the purchasing of the textile products is done by our marketing and reservation office which is in Johannesburg'.

Other establishments gave different reasons why they do not have specific answers as to when they replace their textile products as indicated in the following responses. 'I buy when I see something

new, maybe on sale, but good quality or maybe I had paid up my Edgars account or when I'm told that the textile products we have are old and they need replacing. I don't buy all the sets of sheets every year, I don't have the finance for that and so I buy as I see the need and can afford it'.

6.4 Shops and outlets from which the establishments purchase textile products

Currently the hospitality industry consumers purchase textile products from different retail stores. In this study the retail stores are classified into different categories namely; department stores which include Mr Price Home, Sheet Street, Edgars, Boardmans, @Home, Ackermans and Jet. Supermarkets include Spar, Shoprite and Pick and Pay. There are shops that sell exclusive brand names and these are classified as exclusive shops. Glodina and cooperate uniforms are grouped as speciality shops because they sell specific textile products such as towels and uniforms respectively. There is also a category of home-based businesses. Informal markets such as flea markets, street vendors and hardware shops are classified as 'other'. Some of the consumers indicated that they make certain textile products themselves and these formed a category called 'self made'.

Forty-nine per cent of the textile products were purchased from department stores, 25 per cent from exclusive shops, 6 per cent from home-based businesses, 5 per cent from speciality shops 4 per cent from supermarkets and 3 per cent from other shops and outlets. Eight per cent of the textile products used were produced within the establishments and these are textile products such as table clothes, table drapes, overlays and curtains.

[Insert Figure 4 here]

The hospitality industry consumers gave different reasons why they purchase textile products from these shops. These reasons are outlined below.

6.4.1 Consumers' reasons for purchasing from these shops

The reasons why consumers purchase from these shops can be depicted mainly in four concepts namely, location, quality, store loyalty and price.

- **Location.** To some of the consumers (respondents) the reasons for purchasing from these shops are because they are conveniently located and are near to their establishments. Below are some of their responses: 'It is convenient, I just go to the nearest town and buy what I need'. Assael (2004:556) confirms that products must be positioned conveniently to meet the needs of the target population.

- **Quality.** Other consumers associate certain exclusive shops with quality and one consumer said: 'I buy from Volpes in Port Elizabeth'. 'Their quality is very good and I get towels from Glodina as I get the best quality from them'. One of the consumers said 'I bought these placemats from a home-based business; Oprah Winfery bought all the decorations for her school from them. These entrepreneurs were on the news at that stage and this indicates that the consumers also associate the shops with the celebrity customers who buy from them and

conclude that they sell quality textile products.

- **Store loyalty.** Some of the consumers mentioned loyalty that has developed over the years as purchasing textile products from these shops. They have developed strong friendships with the personnel and are now loyal customers. One respondent said, 'I buy from them because they have become very good friends now'.

- **Price.** Other consumers gave reasonable prices as their reasons for purchasing from these retail stores. Most of these retail stores were said to provide a wide variety of textile products at affordable prices to choose from and could supply large quantities to the consumers.

6.5 Consumers' perceptions on textile products and services from rural women entrepreneurs

The following sub-themes emerged from this theme namely, quality and price.

6.5.1 Consumers' perceptions and opinions of textile product quality

Quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied customer's needs for economy and function (Solomon, 2004:350). Merkel (1991:5) defines textile product quality as the initial appearance, perceived comfort, purchase price, maintenance requirements and durability. Kadolph (2007:14) confirms this by saying that textile product quality 'is a sum total of product characteristics such as appearance, end use, performance,

material interactions within the product, consistency among identical products and freedom from defects in construction'.

A number of respondents concurred with the above statements and described quality in the concept of durability.

- **Durability of textile products as a quality attribute.** Durability is considered to be the ability to retain properties and characteristic like strength and colour fastness for a reasonable period of time. One participant said: 'The quality should be of such a nature that you do not have to replace the products after either the first or second wash or after a month of use, in short the fabric must be durable'.

- **Good construction and physical characteristics as a quality attribute** is another concept that emerged. A good quality textile product was described by some respondents as good stitching, neat finishing and the physical characteristics of the fabric. This means that the quality of a textile product could be determined by the senses of sight and touch. The way textile products feel to the skin is often evaluated by feeling the fabric and the eyes can also be used to determine quality of a textile product (Kadolph, 2007:28: Merkel, 1991:326).

After assessing the textile products made by the rural women entrepreneurs, most of the consumers were of the perception that their textile products are of good quality. This is what they said: 'The textile products are very neat and I would say some of the articles have been stitched very well and

have been professionally made'. This confirms what Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:178) say that consumers often judge quality based on extrinsic or physical characteristics of the product.

Even though there were a number of consumers who stated that the textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs are of good quality, there were only a limited number of consumers who felt that the quality was fairly good but had a few concerns about the designs and stitching of the seams as recorded below. 'The textile products are very neat, but they need professional advice on the designs because this is very amateurish and I think they need to improve on their skills in reference to straight stitching'.

6.5.2 Consumers' perceptions on price

Price was seen as another sub-theme related to quality. Price is the amount of money a person pays to buy or use goods and services (Goldsmith, 2005:23). It is essential to set the price right as consumers often use price as a quality cue. Consumers assume that if a price is too low it may indicate poor quality. When customers are seeking psychological satisfaction they may view higher prices as a reflection of exclusivity and status (Goldsmith, 2005:23; Sheth et al., 1999:306). Assael (2004:175) also states that consumers have certain expectations about what prices should be and frequently associate the price with the product quality as seen by the following concepts:

- **Reasonably priced.** The prices of the textile products offered by the rural women entrepreneurs were viewed by 80 per cent of the consumers to be reasonable. These are

examples of what consumers said: 'The prices are actually very good', 'they are very reasonable, I would buy these textile products to resell them to my customers and still make a profit'. 'I think the prices are fair because the fabric used is good quality material'.

- **Discount.** To get discount when purchasing many textile products was also important especially when they place big orders as someone said: 'We look for reasonable price, when we buy, we buy for 75 units, so it is a big order and then we try to get a good price from the companies'. Kadolph et al. (1993:383) in reference to large textile manufacturers stated that in order for manufacturers to be competent they need to produce the product for less and to ensure that they should use less expensive, but equally serviceable materials and construction steps and the same would apply to home-based businesses.

- **Value for money.** The respondent's equated price with the type of textile product and look at the fabric and the time consumed producing the item and what they get out of it. They want to pay for what they get. Merkel (1991:6) explains that the retail price includes all raw material and manufacturing costs and retail mark up.

Although most consumers felt that the prices of the textile products were reasonable, there were a few who had different views. Some consumers felt that a few of the textile products like the pencil cases were too expensive and other felt that the prices of the products are very cheap.

6.5.3 Consumers' perceptions on customer service

Customer service is a series of activities designed to enhance the level of customer satisfaction that is, the feeling that a product or service has met the customers' expectations (Blackwell et al. 2006:549). Twenty percent of the respondents indicated that they expect good customer service from their suppliers. There was only one concept with regard to this theme.

- **Friendliness.** To the respondents, good customer service equals friendliness especially from the shop assistants. Some respondents had this to say: 'The suppliers must be friendly. In my opinion, good customer service is service with a smile on the face which will bring a smile on the customer's face and developing a relationship with your customers'.

6.5.4 Consumers' perceptions on delivery

Home delivery is usually an additional service provided by the supplier and it is one of the critical resources necessary for the success of a business as the suppliers should ensure that the customer orders are delivered quickly and efficiently. The delivery of goods can actually be as much as 43 per cent cheaper compared to the current costs of consumers visiting the store using their own car and spare time (Punakivik & Saranen, 2001:156). The hospitality industry consumers were asked to share their opinions on textile products delivery. 'Thirty-six percent of the consumers expressed the importance of timely delivery, but a number of consumers stated that the textile products they need to purchase do not require any delivery. The only concept that matters for those who want their

supplies being delivered, is delivering on time'.

- **Timely delivering.** The respondents were adamant that if they ordered any products, they must be there on time. The following quote represents their opinion: 'We are very particular about timely delivery, I get frustrated when I expect something to be delivered on a certain date and it is not on time'.

6.5.5 Consumers' suggestions on how to improve the textile products

Another theme of importance to the rural women who are going to make the products was suggestions of how to improve their products. The consumers gave the following suggestions on how the rural women can improve the quality of their textile products. They:

- Need professional advice on the embroidery designs to be able to sell them even to the four star guest houses.
- Must use colourfast fabrics that will not lose colour with use.
- Can combine the denim fabric with other coloured fabrics and can also add beads and glitters to improve the appearance.
- Must make smaller placemats that will not take up too much space and also be thinner so that glasses rest sturdily on them.

Some of the suggestions can easily be incorporated, but some of the suggestions will give problems

especially where the customers want glitter and beads on the products. It may improve the appearance but the products will not be very durable any longer. As the consumers of these products do not have very much knowledge of textiles, they must be convinced and advised of good practices.

6.5.6 Market prospects for the textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs

The hospitality industry consumers were asked if they would consider purchasing textile products from the rural women entrepreneurs. Eighty per cent of the consumers indicated that they would consider purchasing their textile products. The reasons for this theme emerged in the following two concepts: supports for the local community and consumers expectations of products.

- **Support for the local community.** The consumers stated that they would like to support these women as a way of giving back to the community and this opinion was representative of what some of the participants said: 'Yes we would consider purchasing textile products from these women', 'the main reason would be to support them', 'as a company we try to invest into the local community'.

- **Consumers' expectations of products.** Different opinions occurred. Some consumers would consider buying textile products from the rural women entrepreneurs only if the textile products conform to their expectations. This is what one of them said: 'I would consider buying from them if they can produce the type and quality and amount of textile

products that I need within the agreed time'. The other twenty per cent of the consumers stated that they do not consider buying textile products from the rural women entrepreneurs and gave the following reasons: They think their textile products are good, but feel that the products are below their standards with regard to the fabric used, the designs and workmanship. They feel the products are not special enough for their clients. According to one of the participants whose remark was: 'This is not what I want, here I run an exclusive wedding venue so this is not suitable for my clients'.

This means that the rural women entrepreneurs should aim at producing textile products that have the necessary serviceability characteristics, appeal to the target market, and can be made within the acceptable time frame at a reasonable cost and can be sold at a profit (Kadolph & Langford 2002:8).

7. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicated that all the hospitality establishments that participated in the study in the Vredefort Dome make use of textile products. The textile products utilised differed according to the services offered by each establishment. A majority of the textile products are obtained from the nearby department stores. This is evident that convenience is an important factor when deciding where to purchase any product. Therefore, it could be concluded that since the rural women entrepreneurs are located in close proximity to the establishments, the consumers will definitely consider purchasing textile products from them. Convenience alone will not guarantee the purchase of the textile products. It was observed that some consumers travel to distant places in

search of high quality products. All the consumers emphasised the need for good quality textile products. A majority of the consumers observed that the textile products produced by rural women entrepreneurs were of good quality and were reasonably priced. Nonetheless, there were a few other consumers who felt that there was still a need to improve on the quality of the textile products. The quality of textile products can be improved by sourcing good quality raw materials and by having the rural women entrepreneurs undergo further training to improve their sewing skills.

There is a need to conduct regular market research. This will enable the rural women entrepreneurs to know when the establishments require the different textile products and to find out the specifications in terms of type of textile products, colours and fabric textures. By conforming to the quality and price requirements stipulated by the establishments, the rural women entrepreneurs will be guaranteed a continuous market for their products and consequently a steady source of income that will go a long way in trying to eradicate poverty amongst the rural households. It could be concluded that this study was able to achieve the set objectives.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section will present a short list of recommendations based on the findings of this study.

- There is a need to conduct follow-up market research to know the clients of each establishment, to find out what specific products the establishments need and when they

need them.

- There is also a need to find out what the specifications in terms of colours, fabric textures and dimensions of the products are.
- As the Vredefort Dome is a tourist attraction site, the women can also produce smaller textile products like souvenirs that are reasonably priced. They can display these at strategic places accessible to the tourists who are accommodated in the different nearby establishments. The hospitality industry consumers expressed that the tourists accommodated in their establishments have expressed a need for such products.

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FIGURE 1 THE TYPES OF ESTABLISHMENTS

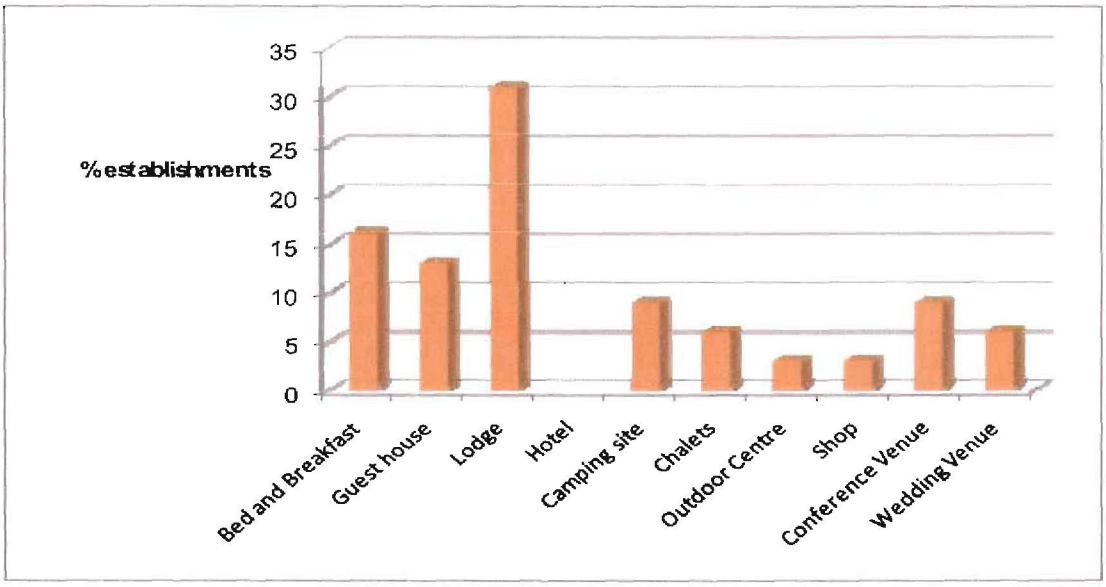


FIGURE 2 THE USE OF TEXTILE PRODUCTS IN THE DIFFERENT ESTABLISHMENTS

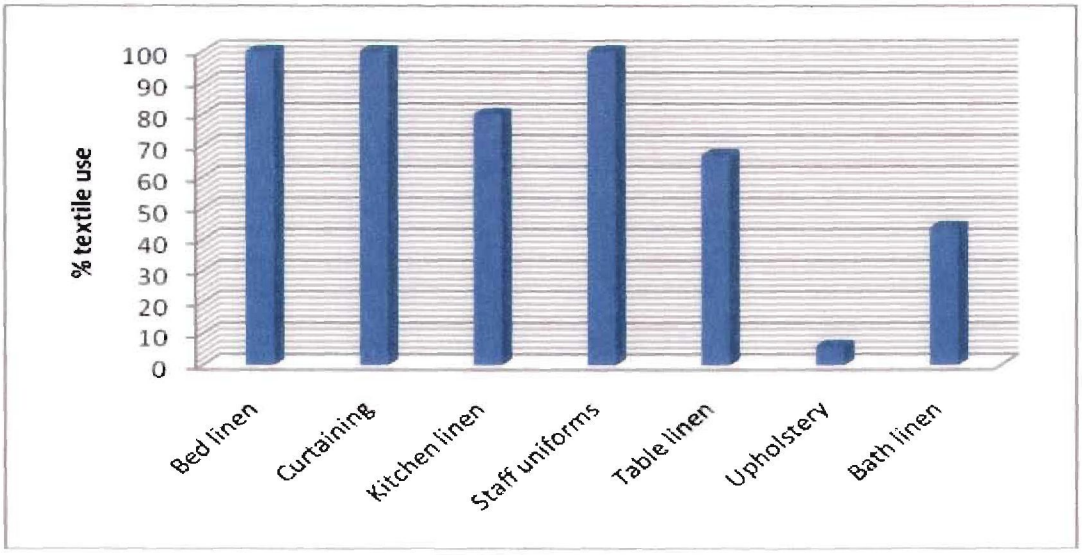


FIGURE 3 THE PERCENTAGE TEXTILE PRODUCT REPLACEMENT

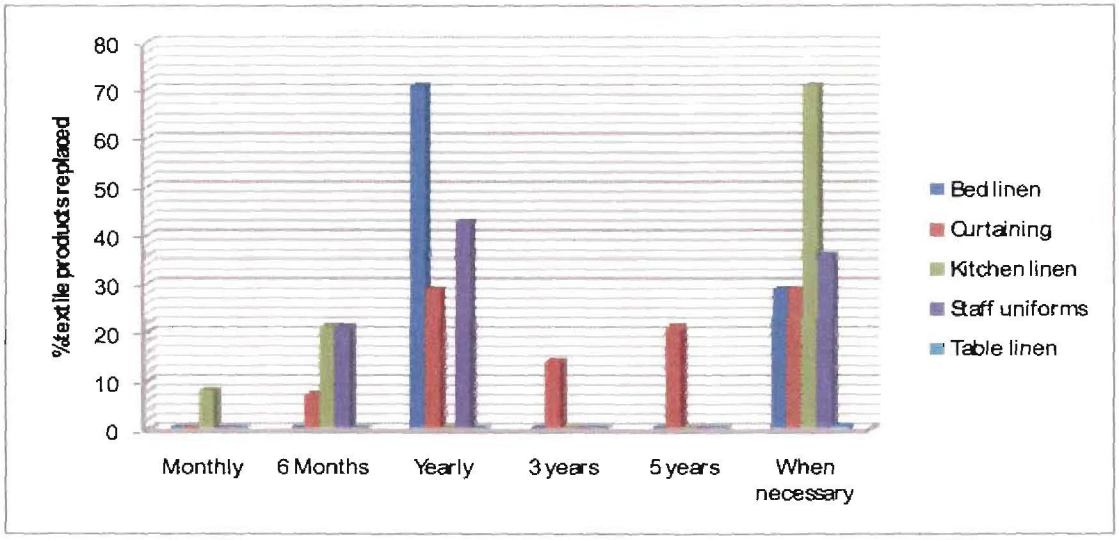
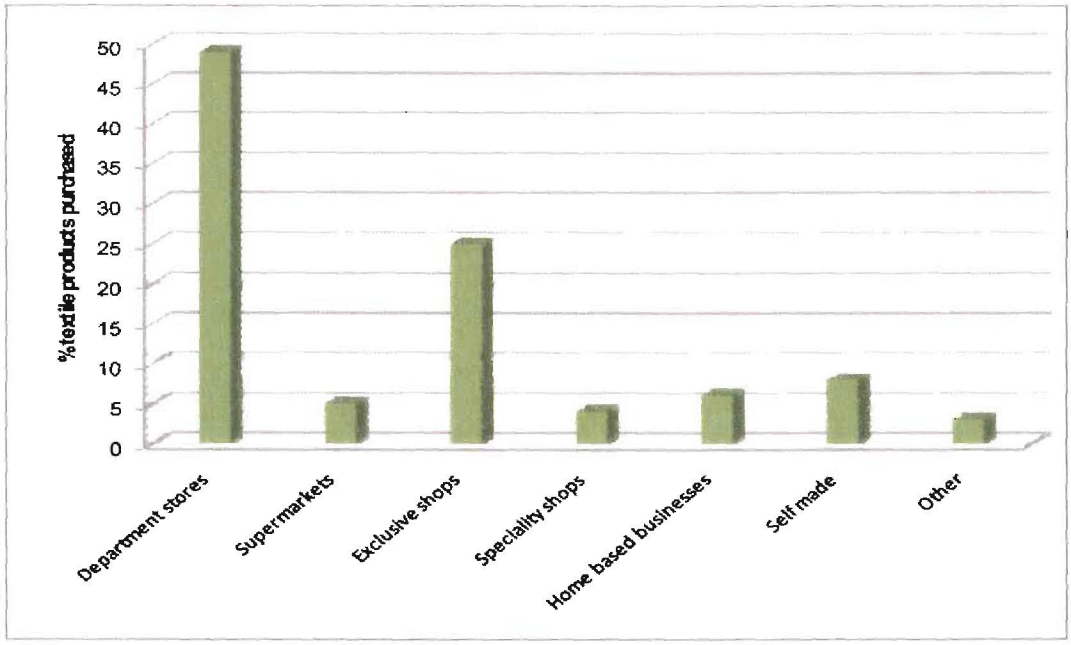


FIGURE 4 THE DIFFERENT SHOPS FROM WHICH TEXTILE PRODUCTS ARE PURCHASED



CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

This study investigated perceptions of the hospitality industry consumers towards textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs. Chapter One outlined the living conditions of rural women in South Africa, the challenges they face and their involvement in income generating activities. Furthermore, Chapter One introduced the Vredefort Dome as a World Heritage Site with a number of hospitality services that are a potential market for the textile products offered by the rural women entrepreneurs in the Vredefort Dome. The purpose of this study was to investigate the hospitality industry consumers' perceptions of textile product offered by rural women entrepreneurs. The first chapter also outlined how this study was to be conducted, ethical considerations were also given and key concepts were defined.

Chapter Two provided an in-depth literature study that highlighted the living conditions of women in South Africa and especially rural women, the challenges they face and their involvement in income generating activities as a means to alleviate poverty. Furthermore, the literature on how perceptions influence consumer decision making and subsequently consumer behaviour was discussed.

Chapter Three is a research article. It presented a brief introduction of rural women entrepreneurs and their involvement in a sewing project. The Vredefort Dome is also introduced as a World

Heritage Site with a number of hospitality services that are a potential market for the textile products offered by the rural women entrepreneurs. The problem statement, aim and specific objectives were also outlined. The research methods used in gathering the information, results discussion, conclusion and recommendations are presented in this chapter.

The findings of this study reveal that a majority of the consumers in the Vredefort Dome have positive perceptions about the textile products offered by the rural women entrepreneurs. It was concluded, therefore, that there is a market for the textile products.

4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The author encountered a number of limitations at the time this research was conducted. One limitation was due to the fact that the convenience sampling technique was used to obtain a sample which resulted in the omission of all the consumers who were not available during the data collection process.

Another limitation was that a majority of the owners of hospitality services in the Vredefort Dome do not reside in the establishments and as a result some could not complete the questionnaires and others were not available for the interviews. This resulted in the further reduction of the sample size and consequently the perceptions and opinions of these consumers were omitted.

Large establishments employ several managers for the different departments. These managers work

independently and in the absence of one manager the information about their departments could not be obtained. Therefore, the limitation was that incomplete information was collected.

It was also observed in the large establishments that head offices that are outside the establishments conduct purchases of textile products. The personnel at the establishments could not give information on the textile products they use, which was another limitation.

The researcher had initially intended conducting focus group discussions to collect qualitative data. This was a limitation in that convening the hospitality industry consumers for focus group discussions was impossible because they run the businesses themselves and could not leave the establishments. As a result the information that could have been obtained from focus group discussions was not captured during the interviews and yet focus groups allow the researcher to investigate a number of perceptions in a defined subject (De Vos et al., 2005:300).

Another drawback was that in some instances during the data collection stage some of the establishments were too busy. Although appointments with the owners of the establishments were made, the time was taken up by the guests who took priority over the author and that resulted in failure to conduct the interviews in some establishments.

Furthermore, some establishments changed ownership and employees during the course of the data collection process of this study, which resulted in inconsistent responses being given.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.3.1 Recommendations that arose from the study

The establishments replace their textile products between one month and more than five years. It is recommended that the establishments be visited regularly to enable the rural women to know what textile products the establishments need and when they need them. This market research will also inform the women entrepreneurs about the consumer specifications in terms of colours, fabric textures and other detail.

As the Vredefort Dome is a tourist attraction site, the women can also produce smaller textile products that are reasonably priced that can be purchased by the tourists. These textile products can be displayed at strategic places accessible to the tourists who are accommodated in the different nearby establishments.

4.3.2 Recommendations for further research

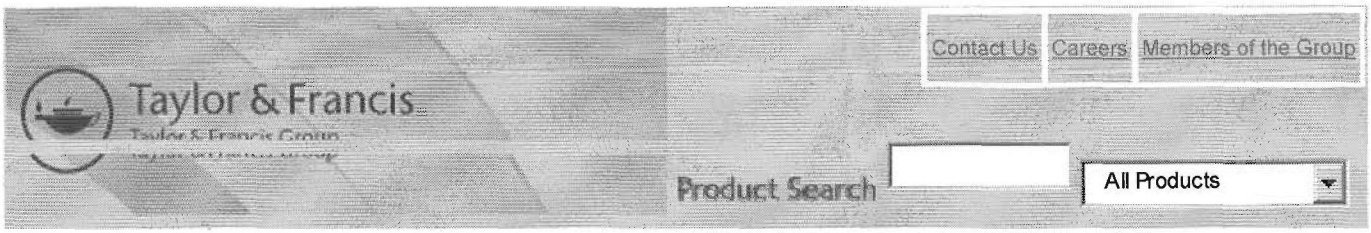
In future further research could be conducted to include all hospitality industry consumers around the North West Province to broaden the market for textile products offered by the rural women entrepreneurs.

A similar study could be conducted whose findings would assist other rural entrepreneurial activities such as basket weaving and vegetable gardening in the same or different location.

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APPENDIX 1: AUTHORS GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS FOR DEVELOPMENT SOUTHERN AFRICA JOURNAL



Journals Listings

Alphabetical Listing

Journals by Subject

New Journals

Author Resources

Authors' Newsletter

Author Rights

Copyright Transfer FAQs

Instructions for Authors

iOpenAccess

General Resources

Advertising

Commercial Opportunities

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Submit all tables and figures (diagrams, graphs, maps) in a separate file from the text file. Mark in the text the places where these are to go.

Supply an appropriate heading for each table and figure. Headings for figures must be outside, not inside, the text box containing the figure.

Do not create a table or figure using tabs or the space bar. Use the appropriate table function on your computer program, or even draw the table, diagram or figure by hand to save time and make the structure clear.

Please send diagrams in MSWord or MSDraw, and graphs in MS Excel.

Maps should contain essential information only and be as clear as possible. Details and features should not be cramped or too small. Use only high resolution jpeg or tif files.

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Maximum length: 25-30 pages (not including tables and graphs), or 8 000 words.
Submit papers in 12 pt Times New Roman or Arial, double line spacing.
For printouts, use A4 paper and leave wide margins (e.g. a minimum of 2.54 cm on all sides) and print on one side of the paper only.
Remember to number the pages (at the bottom, centred).
Use bullets for lists and not dashes, asterisks or letters of the alphabet.

Content and style

1 Abstract

Provide a brief abstract (100-150 words). Type this in italics under the title of the paper.

2 Concepts

Bear in mind that certain concepts are self-evident to people in your field, but DSA has many readers from other disciplines, including non-economists. Therefore, consider including a brief definition of concepts early on in the paper.

3 Acronyms

Give the names of organisations, institutions, etc. in full the first time you use them, followed by the abbreviated form or acronym in brackets. This applies to the text, tables, figures and list of references.

Note that acronyms that are usually read as a word have an initial capital letter only (e.g. Cosatu, Nedlac, Unisa), whereas those that are spelt when pronounced are written all in upper case (e.g. ANC, DBSA).

4 Sources

Acknowledge all sources of ideas, statements, tables, graphs, etc. that are not your own. Use only references that are relevant to your discussion.

5 Style

When referring to yourself, write 'the author'.

Your general style of writing should neither overestimate nor underestimate the comprehension of the readers.

Do not use italics, underlining or bold to emphasise 'keywords'. Rather achieve the required emphasis with an effective style of writing.

6 Footnotes/Endnotes

Do not use endnotes. Use footnotes only when absolutely necessary and keep them short. Do not use footnotes to elaborate on the text.

Spelling, punctuation and referencing style

1 Spelling

For purposes of standardisation DSA uses UK English conventions and spelling rules. For these, follow the most recent edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary (currently the tenth edition), but note that we use '-ise/-isation' rather than '-ize/-ization'.

2 Italics

Note that Latin words and some French words are not routinely italicised. For example, terms such as per capita, vis-à-vis, et al., inter alia and in situ are no longer italicised, whereas words and phrases from other languages, e.g. isiZulu, German, are.

3 Quote marks

Use single quote marks. Use double quote marks only for quotations within quotations. For long quotations, double indent the text in a separate paragraph and omit the quote marks.

4 Spacing between sentences

Leave a single space after a full stop in the text, not a double space.

5 Full stops

Use full stops after abbreviations such as e.g., i.e., et al., etc.

Do not use a full stop when the abbreviation ends on the same letter as the full word, e.g. Dr, Mr, Ms. (Note that Prof. has a full stop.)

Do not use a full stop after a person's initials, e.g. D Coetzee, AB Smith.

6 Percentages

Use 'per cent' or 'percentage' and not the % sign, except in tables and figures.

7 Capital letters

Use lower case as far as possible (e.g. parliament, government, state, president, director-general, regional council), except in specific, direct references such as 'Mr P Mabena, Deputy Director-General and President of XYZ, said that...'.

Use lower case for the first letter of a generic ethnic group (e.g. black, white, coloured) but upper case for the first letter of a specific group (e.g. Chinese, Indian, Swedish).

8 Dates and numbers

Write dates as 20 July 2005. Not as 20th etc. (Do not use superscripts.)

Express ranges of dates and pages in the smallest number of digits, e.g. 1974-94 and not 1974-1994, and 315-7 and not 315-17 or 315-317.

Use a space, and not a comma, to indicate tens of thousands etc., e.g. 10 000. Write thousands without a space, e.g. 1000, except in tables, where the space is needed to get the alignment right.

For fractions use the decimal point, not comma, e.g. 3.85.

9 Section headings

Please number the sections of your paper, beginning with **1. Introduction**, using DSA heading styles:

Main headings in upper case, bold, e.g.
4. AGRICULTURE

Subsections and subsubsections in sentence case, bold, e.g.
4.1 Market for existing crops
4.1.1 Maize and wheat

Please number sections manually and not with the auto numbering function.

10 References

Use the Harvard system of referencing.

Please use DSA's referencing style. (See examples below or refer to any recent issue of ***DSA***.)

Include in the reference list ONLY the works you refer to in the text.

Please check that all the works cited in the text are in the reference list, and vice versa.

Give full details for each reference. Remember to give the date and place of publication, the name of the printer or publisher, the volume and issue numbers of journals and the page range of articles, and the dates (day and month) of seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.

If a publication by two authors is referred to in the text, use the ampersand (&) and not the word 'and', e.g. Brown & Jones (1999:267).

If a publication by more than two authors is referred to in the text, write 'et al.' from the start, e.g. Skosana et al. (1997:14), but provide the names of all the authors in the reference list.

References to more than one publication by an author in the same year should be distinguished alphabetically, for example Fields, 1984a, Fields, 1984b.

Book:

SEN, A, 1988. *On ethics and economics.* New York: Blackwell.

Chapter in a book:

TIMMER, CP, 1988. The agricultural transformation. In Chenery, H & Srinivasan, TN (Eds), *Handbook of development economics*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Journal article:

FRY, B, 1995. Crocodile farming in Natal. *Journal of Biodiversity and Conservation*, 4(8): 291-5.

Conference paper:

DELGADO, CL & SIAMWALLA, A, 1997. *Diversification in developing countries.* Proceedings of the 23rd International Conference of Agricultural Economists, 10-16 August, Sacramento, California, USA.

Official document:

NDA (NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE), 2001. *The strategic plan for South African agriculture*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

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BOOTH, J, 2004. Blair plans annual UK-China summit. *Guardian*, 11 May, p. 6.

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LEVINE, D, 1993. *A parallel genetic algorithm for the set partitioning problem*. PhD thesis, Illinois Institute of Technology.

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APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE OF A QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO OBTAIN DATA ON CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTILE PRODUCTS OFFERED BY RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY
NOORDWES UNIVERSITEIT

Please find herewith attached a questionnaire that will assist the Consumer Sciences group of subjects to identify consumer perceptions and opinions with regard to textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs in the Vrederfort Dome.

You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire and return it no later than 25 May 2007 by e-mailing it for the attention of Bukisile Makhanya to 20819951@ nwu.ac.za or fax 018 299 2464. Alternatively contact 0724607713 for collection. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Instructions:

Please select the appropriate answer by crossing over it where options are provided.
If more than one answer is applicable, select all those answers.
Write your answers in the spaces provided as detailed as possible.

PART I

1. What type of establishment do you own?

1. Bed and breakfast	2. Guest house	3. Lodge	4. Hotel	5. Camping site	6. Other (specify) .....

2. How many workers are employed within the establishment?

1. 1-5	2. 6-10	3. 11-20	4. 20-30	5. 30 and Above

3. How many rooms do you have within your establishment?

1. 1-5	2. 6-10	3. 11-20	4. 20-30	5. 30 and Above

4. In which province is your establishment located?

1. Free State Province	2. North West Province

PART II

5. Does your establishment make use of textile products e.g. bed linen, kitchen linen, and curtains?

1. YES	2. NO

6. What type of textile products does your establishment make use of?

1. Bed linen	2. Curtaining	3. Kitchen linen	4. Staff uniforms	5. Other ....

7. How often do you purchase the textile products?

Textile product	Monthly	Every six months	Yearly	Other(specify)
Bed linen				
Curtaining				
Kitchen linen				
Staff Uniforms				
Other (specify)				

.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

8. Where do you normally purchase the textile products?

Textile Product	Shop/out let
Bed linen	
Curtaining	
Kitchen linen	
Staff uniforms	
Other (specify)	.....

9. What are your considerations when purchasing the textile products?

1. Good Quality	2. Reasonable price	3. Good customer service	4. Timely delivery	5. Other ....

PART III

10. Please give your opinion regarding textile products produced by rural women entrepreneurs in general with regard to:

a. Quality

.....

.....

b. Price

.....

.....

c. Customer Service

.....

.....

d. Delivery

.....

.....

11. Would you consider supporting local women entrepreneurs by purchasing their textile products?

1. YES	2. NO

12. What would motivate you to purchase textile products from the local women entrepreneurs?

1. Good quality	2. Reasonable price	3. Good customer service	4. Timely delivery	5. Support for local community	6. Other (Specify) .....

13. Name any textile products you would definitely not consider buying from rural women entrepreneurs.

.....

.....

14. Suggest any textile products that you are in need of and you would consider buying from the local rural women entrepreneurs.

.....

.....

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE USED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEXTILE PRODUCTS OFFERED BY RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. With reference to your completed questionnaire, give reasons for buying the textile products from the shops listed.
2. With reference to the questionnaire, give reasons for the selection criteria of these textile products.
3. What are your general perceptions regarding the quality of the textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs?

What do you mean by good quality?

4. What are your general perceptions regarding the price of the textile products offered by rural women entrepreneurs?
5. What are your general perceptions regarding the customer service offered by rural women entrepreneurs?
6. What are your general perceptions regarding the delivery of textile products by rural women entrepreneurs?
7. Have you ever purchased textile products produced by home-based entrepreneurs and what were your experiences.

SHOW SOME OF THE TEXTILE PRODUCTS

8. After viewing these textile products, what are your opinions regarding their quality?
9. After viewing these textile products, what are your opinions regarding their price?
10. Give reasons for your answers as to why you would/ would not consider purchasing any textile products from the local women entrepreneurs.
11. Suggest any textile products that you may be interested in buying from the rural women entrepreneurs and give reasons why.