BUYING MOTIVATIONS FOR APPAREL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE GENERATION Y CONSUMERS.

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Commerce (Marketing)

School of Management

of the University of KwaZulu-Natal

30 November 2011

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004: 259), "a product's position is the way the product is defined by consumers on important attributes". Knowledge of these attributes, and more specifically, which attributes "attract customers to stores is more important than ever" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 371). Furthermore, it is important to note that the attributes which constitute consumers' perceptions of value may be of different importance to different groups of consumers (Ziethaml 1988: 14 cited in Sweeney and Soutar 2001: 204), hence justifying the need to study Generation Y independently. According to Sweeney (2006: 6), it is important to study this specific age cohort as "Millennials are very different from previous generations at the same age" and many of their key behaviours and preferences "are likely to remain part of their lifelong culture" and adult buying behaviour. Consequently, it is vital to satisfy and capture this market now in order to secure a committed clientele for the future. Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 2) also describe Generation Y as "potentially one of the most powerful and influential generations ever" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 2), as well as being known for its unprecedented purchasing power "of which two-thirds goes on clothing" (Ebenkamp 1999: 4).

The research objectives for this study were:

1. To identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.

2. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers.

3. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when purchasing various garments and pieces of clothing.

4. To identify the determinant attributes that influence clothing store selection among Generation Y consumers.

5. To determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection.

The study involved a two-stage triangulated research design, with a qualitative focus group stage preceding a quantitative survey stage. The data obtained from the focus groups was analysed and subsequently used to formulate and refine the survey to be used in stage two of the triangulation. Purposive quota sampling was utilised during stage two of the research, which resulted in 380 sufficiently completed questionnaires, the findings from which enabled the researcher to achieve the research objectives.

The key findings of the study revealed that Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths and Identity were the most frequently patronised by the UKZNP student respondents. The attributes found to be of the most importance with regard to influencing clothing store selection were: High Quality Merchandise, Value for Money, Uniqueness of Merchandise, Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices. The clothing attributes which were identified as the most important to the sample of Generation Y respondents when choosing clothing to purchase, were: Good Fit, Comfort and Quality. The results of the Discriminant Analysis, combined with the mean importance ratings of the clothing store attributes, revealed three determinant attributes influencing clothing store selection among the Generation Y respondents, namely: Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise. Finally, an Independent Samples T-Test, as well as a Mann-Whitney U-Test, were run to determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection. The results revealed that female Generation Y respondents in this study place greater importance on the attributes of Convenient Location, Low Prices and Appealing Advertising, when choosing between clothing retailers, while the male Generation Y respondents perceived High Quality Merchandise as being more important and influential.

Lastly, numerous recommendations were made regarding how to target and satisfy the Generation Y consumer market, with particular reference to each of the clothing retailers.

DECLARATION

I, Kim Thompson, declare that

a) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

b) This dissertation/thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

c) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

d) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

> i) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
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Kim Thompson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would firstly like to thank my supervisor, Professor Debbie Vigar-Ellis for her constant guidance and assistance. Thank you Debbie for always being ready to help and inspiring me to achieve all that I can.

A big thank you goes to Professor Bhowan and Dr Ramroop who sacrificed their valuable time to help me with the numerous statistical techniques applied in this study. I am very grateful for their expert advice and consultation available to me throughout this process.

A special thank you goes to my boyfriend, Donald Baines, for his continuous and unwavering support, encouragement, assistance and enthusiasm. Thank you for being a strong, positive influence and for motivating me when I needed it the most.

Finally, thank you to my dad for agreeing to let me continue my studies on a full-time basis, for supporting me, both emotionally and financially. I am truly blessed and very grateful. Thank you.

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CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief summary of the problem statement, research objectives and an outline of the chapters to follow.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As suggested by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, all humans have a need for clothing, whether to satisfy a physiological need, for both privacy and protective reasons, or in order to meet needs related to esteem and belongingness (Hawkins, Mothersbaugh and Best 2007: 365). Thus, some money will be spent throughout their lifetime on the purchase of various garments to satisfy these needs (Hawkins *et al*. 2007: 365). It is, therefore, useful to investigate the capital-and people-intensive, substantial clothing industry of South Africa, particularly in terms of the apparel buying behaviour of Generation Y consumers (the focus of this study). The need for this research is due to the multifaceted and complex nature of the shopping habits with regards to these consumers, especially within a multicultural society such as South Africa (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 15). This is particularly relevant and required as Generation Y consumers are known for being more demanding and expecting "more selectivity, personalisation and customisation in their products and services" (Sweeney 2006: 1). In addition, Generation Y consumers have proven to be very distinct in terms of their buyer behaviour, requirements and preferences, particularly in comparison to previous generations at the same age. Even more importantly, these marked characteristics of Generation Y are unlikely to falter as they enter adulthood, making it essential to secure this market segment now to ensure loyal, dependable and constant patronisation for the future (Sweeney 2006: 6). Authors such as Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 2) have referred to Generation Y as "unique", as well as being highly "powerful and influential" within the marketplace, again justifying the need to develop a clear and comprehensive understanding of these consumers in order to achieve long-term success.

With the aim of initiating and cultivating such an understanding, the focus of this research is to find out why male and female Generation Y consumers prefer to purchase their clothing from one retailer over another in terms of the specific attributes applied in clothing store selection. Ultimately, the research aims to identify the reasons and motivations which drive Generation Y consumers to choose the particular clothing retailers which they patronise and to determine whether a difference exists between the attributes employed by male and female Generation Y respondents, aged 18 to 25 when choosing a clothing retailer.

1.2 Research Objectives

The objectives for the research were as follows:

1. To identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.
2. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers.
3. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when purchasing various garments and pieces of clothing.
4. To identify the determinant attributes that influence clothing store selection among Generation Y consumers.
5. To determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection.

1.3 Chapter Plan

Chapter 2 concentrates on Determining Dimensions in relation to Positioning. In order to achieve a greater understanding of the theory of positioning, the following subjects are discussed in Chapter 2, namely: the Definitions of Positioning, the Importance of Positioning, as well as a brief description of the Seven-step Process of Positioning. Step 2 of the positioning process is particularly concentrated on as this is the central focus of the research topic, and thus includes further discussion of the topics of Identifying Determinant Attributes, the Role of Determinant Attributes in Positioning, the Importance of Determinant Attributes, as well as Measuring Determinant Attributes.

Chapter 3 focuses on positioning and the attributes sought in clothing retail. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the context for the research study at hand, namely the clothing retail industry in South Africa. The chapter is founded on a theoretical discussion of the Definitions of Retailing, Consumer Behaviour in Retailing and the Importance of Positioning in Retail, which then evolves into a more contextual discussion of Determinant Attributes in Retailing, Determinant Attributes in Clothing Retail, and the South African Clothing Retail Context.

The focus of Chapter 4 is Generation Y as the age group to which the chosen sample belongs. This chapter thus includes an explanation of the definition of this generation, the importance of Generation Y, the characteristics of this age cohort, gender differences among Generation Y consumers, as well as past research on Generation Y.

Since the triangulated research design involves 2 stages, the first qualitative stage which involved focus groups, and the second quantitative stage which involved questionnaires, Chapter 5 focuses on Stage 1 of the Research Methodology, specifically the qualitative focus group stage of this two stage triangulated research design. The following methodology sections are therefore discussed in this chapter in relation to the qualitative research stage, namely: the sampling plan, focus group questionnaire design and distribution, and data analysis.
Since the findings of the qualitative research (focus group data) provide the input to the Stage 2 methodology, these are presented in Chapter 6 and the detailed methodology for Stage 2 (quantitative survey data) are presented in Chapter 7 along with the findings.

Chapter 7 provides a description of the Stage 2, quantitative research methodology, particularly in terms of the sampling plan, questionnaire design and distribution, pilot testing, data analysis, as well as reliability and relevant validity testing.

Chapter 8 presents the empirical data collected from the questionnaire, the second stage of the triangulated research design, which constituted the quantitative stage of the research.

Chapter 9 is the Discussion and Conclusions chapter and is structured in terms of the 5 research objectives and thus presents the findings in relation to the objectives for this study, as well as the pertinent literature from Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Conclusions are also drawn from this analysis.

Chapter 10 provides recommendations for each of the main competitors within the clothing industry in terms of targeting and meeting the requirements of Generation Y consumers in Pietermaritzburg.

Chapter 11 presents several limitations which were encountered during this research study. Accordingly, recommendations for future research are also included in this chapter to investigate certain findings which were beyond the scope of this study.

Chapter 12 presents the overall conclusions of this research study.

CHAPTER 2:

DETERMINING DIMENSIONS IN RELATION TO POSITIONING

The following chapter serves as the theoretical foundation for the current research study. It therefore includes a discussion of the Definitions of Positioning, the Importance of Positioning, as well as a brief description of the Seven-step Process of Positioning, with particular focus on step two of the positioning process, namely the identification of determinant attributes as the principal subject and focus of the study at hand.

2.1 Definitions of Positioning

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004: 259), "a product's position is the way the product is defined by consumers on important attributes" and is "the place the product occupies in consumers' minds relative to competing products". This definition highlights two key components of the concept of positioning. Firstly, positioning is frequently achieved by focusing on various attributes which are important to the target consumers in terms of influencing their patronage behaviour, and secondly, positioning is dependent on and relative to the consumers' perceptions of competing products (Peter and Olson 2010: 374). Consequently, Kotler and Armstrong (2004: 259) further explain that a product's position is ultimately a "complex set of perceptions, impressions, and feelings that consumers have for the product compared with competing products". Lusch, Dunne and Gebhardt (1993: 73), also maintain that "market position is not an absolute characteristic, but rather an 'amalgam' or accumulation of intangible perceptions which live in the minds of consumers".

Such definitions do, however, lack a crucial element of positioning theory, namely that a product's position is actively planned and designed by the marketer and thus is not simply left to chance (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259). This is included in a description proposed by Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 347) who define positioning as "a decision by a marketer to try to achieve a defined brand image relative to competition within a market segment". According to Walker and Mullins (2008: 151), "differentiation is at the heart of positioning" and thus, in order to achieve a successful positioning strategy, marketers must ensure that the product, service or firm is clearly differentiated from competitors, and even more specifically, that the product's position differentiates it from competing products in ways that are appreciated by and significant to the target consumer. Therefore, it becomes essential and highly necessary to identify which attributes and factors are determinant and exert the strongest influence in terms of impacting consumers' buying behaviour. This is reiterated by Walker and Mullins (2008: 24) who describe positioning as involving the design of the marketing mix, namely the elements of product, price, place and promotion, in such a manner so as to achieve a dual objective of firstly attracting the targeted consumer based on the relevant important attributes, as well as secondly, clearly setting the firm and its product apart from the competition. Additionally, the chosen position should also ensure that the target consumers perceive the product as being superior in terms of fulfilling their needs and requirements (Schiffman and Kanuk 2000: 34). In summation, the positioning strategy involves the exploitation of the elements of the marketing mix, namely that of product, price, distribution and promotion, to "create and maintain in the minds of a target market a particular image relative to competing products" (Etzel, Walker and Stanton 2001) and ultimately "provide a competitive advantage over rival offerings" (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 263), thus highlighting the significance and overall worth of a successful positioning strategy.

2.2 The Importance of Positioning

As Walker and Mullins (2010: 201) explain, "the success of a brand offered to a given target market depends on how well it is positioned within that market segment-that is, how well it performs relative to competitive offerings and to the needs of the target audience". According to Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003: 242), the positioning of a product or service, and how it is perceived by the consumer, is generally more imperative to impacting buyer behaviour and achieving profitability and success, than its actual, physical features. A further important outcome of positioning is that it facilitates the consumers' understanding of the brand itself as it enables such consumers to develop a mental connection with the brand (Harrell 2002: 189).

Firstly, a key component of any successful positioning strategy is differentiation, as this forms the foundation and is the final motivator for the majority of buying decisions. Ultimately, consumers choose to purchase a product or service which is "almost always different from others they could have chosen" (Walker and Mullins 2010: 202). Positioning is, therefore, "especially important when competitors in a market appear to be very similar" (Cannon, Perreault and McCarthy 2008: 82).

Secondly, Schiffman and Kanuk (2000: 141) explain that a successful positioning strategy is an important prerequisite to creating and developing a successful marketing mix, as it serves to enhance the chosen segmentation and target market plan (Schiffman and Kanuk 2000: 141). Simpson (2005: 254) reiterates this sentiment by arguing that the development of an appropriate marketing mix for each of the relevant market segments is contingent on the formation and articulation of a clear and effective positioning strategy. This is essential to the overall success of the firm as consumers commonly have very distinctive requirements and desires and positioning therefore "allows the marketer to take advantage of and be responsive to such differences and position particular goods and services so as to better meet the needs of consumers" in the chosen target segment(s) (Walker and Mullins 2010: 202). Positioning is thus closely monitored and maintained "because a brand whose position matches the desired position of a target market is likely to be purchased when a need for that product arises" (Hawkins, Best and Coney 2004: 23). This is confirmed by Sullivan and Heitmeyer (2008: 285) who explain that it is vital for the image of the retailer to match and be consistent with the specific targeted consumer group "in order to develop loyal customers" (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 285; Simpson 2005: 254). As Levy and Weitz (2009: 138) explain, it is the responsibility of the retailer and marketer to undertake the necessary research to identify its image and furthermore to ensure that this image corresponds with what the target consumers need and desire. Therefore, the marketer must develop "a clear understanding of the criteria a target consumer uses to evaluate alternatives in a category" and should thus aim to place the product, service or firm "in a favourable way along these dimensions" (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 281).

A positioning strategy also gives the marketer an opportunity to choose and plan the preferred position, rather than risking the consumers developing their own perceptions without any guidance from the marketer, which may prove to be detrimental to the organisation (Armstrong and Kotler 2003: 260). Consumers nowadays are consistently bombarded and overwhelmed with information, as well as a vast variety of available goods and services, consequently rendering it impractical for consumers to re-evaluate a product, service or firm each time a purchase is made (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259). Therefore, in order to simplify the decision-making process, consumers turn to and employ their own "mental positions" (Etzel *et al.* 2001: 167) of firms, goods and services when evaluating any of these offerings within the marketplace. In the end, consumers will develop their own perceptions of products and services, as well as consequent positions, regardless of whether this process is enabled and directed by marketers. Therefore, a positioning analysis is crucial as it "helps managers understand how customers see their market" (Cannon *et al.* 2008: 84), which in turn, provides the data necessary to choose, design, plan and maintain the positioning strategy which will differentiate the firm, product or service from its competitors as well as best meet the needs of the target market. As Cannon *et al.* (2008: 84) explain, "careful positioning can help highlight a unifying theme or benefits that relate to the determining dimensions of the target market".

In today's market, where competition is becoming more and more intense and where it is becoming increasingly difficult to be noticeable within such a highly congested marketplace, having a definite and apparent brand image is essential. This is particularly the case since consumers tend to base their purchase decisions more on the image of the product than its physical attributes (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg 2010: 5). A positive brand image will directly impact the prices consumers are prepared to pay for the product or service, the levels of customer loyalty, as well as consumer perceptions of value, which may all be accomplished using an effective positioning strategy (Schiffman and Kanuk 2000: 141). Ultimately, "product positioning has a major impact on the long-term success of the brand, presuming the firm can create the desired position" (Hawkins *et al.* 2004: 339).

Furthermore, conducting a positioning analysis also aids in defining the nature and "structure of competition by revealing the degree to which the various brands compete with one another and may indicate the presence of meaningful product gaps" thus further revealing "opportunities for new product entry" or for repositioning existing products, services or firms (Walker and Mullins 2010: 203-204).

Finally, the development and implementation of a positioning strategy is inevitably highly strategic in nature, particularly as a significant outcome and "purpose is to ensure that the whole marketing mix is positioned for competitive advantage" (Cannon *et al.* 2008: 84). Accordingly, it is imperative for the marketer to follow a series of steps in sequential order to ensure the intended position is successfully achieved, reinforced and maintained within the minds of the target consumers.

2.3 An Overview of the Seven-Step Process of Positioning

The fundamental aim and objective of positioning is "to have each targeted customer perceive the brand distinctly from other competing brands and favourably compared to the other brands" (Cravens and Piercy 2009: 194). In order to achieve this, Cravens and Piercy (2009: 195-199) suggest that the positioning process comprises three general stages, namely: selecting the positioning concept; developing the positioning strategy; and determining positioning effectiveness. This approach is, however, much simpler and more basic compared to the more detailed and specific processes proposed by authors such as Walker and Mullins (2008: 154) and Kotler and Armstrong (2004: 259), who recommend that the positioning process be divided into the following seven stages:

1. Identify a Relevant Set of Competitive Products

2. Identify Determinant Attributes

3. Determine Customers' Perceptions

4. Analyse Current Positions

5. Determine Customers' Most Preferred Combination of Attributes

6. Evaluate Possible Positions

7. Select Positioning Strategy.

Each of the above-mentioned stages are briefly outlined and discussed below, while particular focus is placed on Step 2, the identification of determinant attributes. This stage relates to a primary objective of the research, namely to determine the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. This step is thus of great value and importance to competitors within the clothing industry who may use this understanding of determinant attributes to satisfy consumer needs and, in so doing, ultimately achieve success. This will therefore be explained in greater detail in Section 2.4 of this literature review.

2.3.1 Step 1: Identify a Relevant Set of Competitive Products

The main objective of this first step in the positioning process is for marketers to identify all their current and potential competitors within the marketplace, including any substitute products. For instance, a firm considering the launch of a new breakfast cereal must consider all products which may possibly be consumed for breakfast and hence satisfy the consumers' breakfast needs, thus representing competition for the firm. The competitive set in this example would therefore comprise other breakfast products, such as instant breakfast drinks; other breakfast foods, such as bacon and eggs; or perhaps fast-food outlets and restaurants (Walker and Mullins 2008: 155). Ultimately, marketers must identify all firms that provide any product or service that may meet the same consumer need as they are striving to satisfy. This step in the positioning process is highly important and should be conducted as effectively and accurately as possible as "marketers who omit important substitute products or potential competitors risk being blindsided by unforeseen competition" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 155). This is confirmed by Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boschoff and Terblanche (2004: 110) who assert that firms need to be aware of and avoid any form of "competitor myopia", where the focus is merely "on current competitors rather than latent ones" (Lamb *et al.* 2004: 110), in order to achieve a successful analysis of the competitive marketplace.

2.3.2 Step 2: Identify Determinant Attributes

During this stage of the positioning process and analysis, the marketer aims to define the product space using only determinant attributes, which may include positioning bases such as specific features, benefits, manufacturing process, ingredients and so forth (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). Such determinant attributes can only be identified, however, from the customers' perspective and therefore some form of market research is required (Walker and Mullins 2008:

157). This stage of the positioning process is the central focus of this research project and will thus be explained in greater depth and detail later on in the literature review.

2.3.3 Step 3: Determine Customers' Perceptions

The main aim and objective of this step in the positioning process is to identify consumer perceptions of the various competitors and their offerings (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). This may be accomplished by conducting market research, which frequently involves a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups and questionnaires and surveys respectively (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157), as has been employed in the research study at hand. Nowadays, this type of market research is crucial for remaining competitive and marketing managers should thus ensure that all decisions impacting the formulation and implementation of strategy should be "anchored in solid evidence, not mere supposition or naive opinion" (Boyd, Walker, Mullins and Larreche 2002: 224). Ultimately, it is vital for any firm to research their customers in order to gain an understanding of "what the customer wants, needs or expects", and hence establish appropriate strategies to best meet the needs of the target consumer (Levy and Weitz 2009: 547). Upon completion of this stage of the positioning process, namely once the marketer has managed to successfully measure the consumers' perceptions of various brands within the relevant competitive set according to the determinant attributes, the marketer may then proceed to the next stage in the process.

2.3.4 Step 4: Analyse Current Positions

The basic objective of this stage in the positioning process is to gain an "understanding of the positioning of the products that have been determined to be in the competitive set" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 158). As confirmed by Solomon and Stuart (1997: 284), "the marketer must understand the current 'lay of the land'-what competitors are out there, and how they are perceived by the target market". During this stage of the positioning process, the marketer makes use of the data obtained in the previous stage and generally displays this information in a perceptual map or positioning grid to analyse the position currently being occupied (Walker and Mullins 2008: 158). In doing so, the marketer will aim to identify how the firm or brand is perceived compared to competitors according to the key dimensions, whether the current position is favourable for the firm or brand and whether this position needs to be altered or further reinforced and strengthened. As Walker and Mullins (2008: 157-158) explain, "it is important to develop a clear understanding of the positioning of the products that have been determined to be in the competitive set", as identified in the previous stage of the positioning process, and thus identify the "product's current location (positioning) in the product space and intensity thereof" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 155). In order to achieve this, the marketer will have to construct either a perceptual map or positioning grid, which "provides a visual representation of the positions of various products or brands in the competitive set in terms of (typically) two determinant dimensions" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 158), or a value curve, which "indicates how products within a category compare in terms of the level-high or low-of as many attributes as are relevant" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 159). Marketers must, however, not only consider their direct competitors, but also any other firm "that could also provide the same benefits people are seeking" (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 284). Therefore, when constructing a perceptual map or value curve, the marketer must consider all competitors and substitute products, and should also be aware that certain brands may not yet be in the awareness of many consumers and thus do not occupy a position within their minds, although they nevertheless still represent potential competition for the marketer and should thus be taken into account (Walker and Mullins 2008: 158).

2.3.5 Step 5: Determine Customers' Most Preferred Combination of Attributes

This stage of the positioning process requires the marketer to conduct a market positioning analysis which is necessary to identify "which positions are most appealing to customers" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 161). While the positioning analysis conducted in Stage 4 of the positioning process reveals how a brand is currently positioned, the market positioning analysis involves measuring "customers' preferences and locating them in the product space along with their perceptions of the positions of existing brands" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 161), which in turn enables the marketer to "determine if there is a market for a new brand or store that might locate in an 'open' position or whether the customers in other market segments prefer brands or stores with different attributes and positions" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 161).

There are numerous methodologies which may be employed to assist the marketer in successfully and accurately identifying the target consumers' ideal combination of attributes. According to Myers and Alpert (1968: 16), a direct questioning approach may be utilised which involves "asking respondents to describe the characteristics of the 'ideal' brand or company in the product or service category being studied" (Myers and Alpert 1968: 16). Subsequently, the researcher may ask respondents to rate certain brands on each of these attributes and characteristics and, in so doing, "find out where 'gaps' exist between his own brand image and the optimal brand image" (Myers and Alpert 1968: 16). A major limitation of this technique is that "people may have difficulty in conceptualising the 'ideal' brand and also might be unwilling to admit to some of the attributes by which they really are influenced" (Myers and Alpert 1968: 16). Walker and Mullins (2008: 161) propose an alternative approach which requires the respondent "not only to judge the degree of similarity among pairs of existing brands but also to indicate their degree of preference for each" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 161). Both the above-mentioned methods may be used by the analyst, in conjunction with the most suitable statistical procedures, to "locate the respondents' ideal points relative to the positions of the various existing brands on the product space map" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 161).

2.3.6 Step 6: Evaluate Possible Positions

Kotler and Armstrong (2004: 259) explain that "the key to winning and keeping target customers is to understand their needs better than competitors do and to deliver more value". Accordingly, firms should aim to obtain and develop a competitive advantage by positioning themselves as "providing superior value", particularly on the attributes previously identified as being determinant and thus the most influential in terms of impacting patronage behaviour (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259). Ultimately, it is essential to develop and foster a clear and comprehensive understanding of "what differentiates the shopping experience" for "brick-and-mortar stores, particularly apparel retailers, when creating a differentiated market position" (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 285).

When selecting which attributes and benefits to emphasise, marketers must be aware that customers in different market segments will be seeking different product or service features, characteristics and overall benefits (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). Therefore, during this stage of the positioning process, the marketer must thoroughly examine the different perceptions and attitudes of consumers in various market segments, as well as the perceptions of consumers regarding the positioning of several existing brands, products and services (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). By doing so, the analyst "can learn much about (1) the competitive strength of different brands in differing segments, (2) the intensity of the rivalry between brands in a given segment, and (3) the opportunities for gaining a differentiated position within a specific target segment" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). The main objective of this stage of the positioning process is ultimately to examine various positions which may potentially be occupied by the product or brand and identify the possible implications and consequences of each of these. For instance, the marketer would need to answer questions such as: who would our competitors be; how would the marketing mix need to be changed to achieve the new position; would it be feasible to change the current position and reposition the brand or product. In addition, when evaluating possible positions, marketers must be wary of building positions on empty promises. Once the firm has chosen to position itself in a specific manner, it must ensure that the position is solid and that it delivers on those very promises. For example, "if a company positions its product as offering the best quality and service, it must then deliver the promised quality and service" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259).

2.3.7 Step 7: Select Positioning Strategy

When selecting the positioning strategy, the marketer should consider each of the following criteria:

- Does the chosen position satisfy the preferences of the target segment?
- Does the chosen positioning strategy consider the current positions of other firms and brands within the competitive set?
- Does the chosen position match the current and future appeal of the targeted consumers?
- Does the chosen positioning strategy echo the advantages and limitations of the competitors?
- Is it economically viable and feasible to pursue and occupy the chosen position? (Walker and Mullins 2008: 163)

With regard to the number of attributes forming the basis of the positioning strategy, this has been surrounded by much debate and deliberation. For instance, some marketers believe that firms should choose only one attribute or feature to emphasise and to base its' positioning on, as it will then be able to focus its energy and resources into delivering and providing the best products or services in terms of that specific characteristic. According to Rosser Reeves, an influential businessman in advertising, "Each brand should pick an attribute and tout itself as 'number one' on that attribute. Buyers tend to remember number one better, especially in an over-communicated society" (cited in Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 261). Conversely, certain marketers argue that positioning in terms of more than one attribute is more beneficial and rewarding, particularly when many firms are "claiming to be best on the same attribute" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 261), and is also more advantageous and profitable in terms of appealing to more consumers in more market segments, thus broadening the firms customer base (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 261). Ultimately, however, the "most successful products are positioned based on one or, at most, two determinant attributes", as "using more attributes simply confuses customers" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 163), and marketers should thus aim to avoid this.

Finally, once the desired positioning strategy has been selected and developed, it should be clearly and explicitly articulated in a written document "so that those charged with developing and implementing the marketing strategy have a clear understanding of what is intended for the product and where it will fit in its competitive set" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 164). A positioning statement or value proposition may be used to facilitate this process. A positioning statement is defined as "a succinct statement that identifies the target market for which the product is intended and the product category in which it competes and states the unique benefit the product offers" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 164), and in so doing, effectively "summarises company or brand positioning" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 265). Alternatively, marketers may choose to communicate the "position (of) their brands on the key benefits that they offer relative to competing brands" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 263) by means of a value proposition, defined as "the full positioning of a brand – the full mix of benefits upon which it is positioned" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 263). It is important to note, however, that regardless of whether a positioning statement or value proposition has been chosen as a method of communication with regard to guiding strategy, both should state the "benefits that the user of the product will obtain, rather than features or attributes of the product itself" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 165).

Lastly, once the positioning strategy has been selected, the elements of the marketing mix must be altered and developed so as to reinforce and support the desired position, and should accordingly be "tailored to the selected target segment" (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 284).

Step 2 of the Positioning Process will now be discussed in detail as this is the focus of the research currently being conducted.

2.4 Step 2 of the Positioning Process

2.4.1. Identify Determinant Attributes

According to Solomon and Stuart (1997: 282), there are numerous dimensions which may be utilised to define and determine the positioning of any firm, product or service. A few examples of such positioning dimensions include: lifestyle image, price leadership, product class, competitors, occasions, users, quality and most relevant to this study, attributes (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 282). Furthermore, within the attributes dimension, positioning may also be based on a vast array of different factors (Walker and Mullins 2008: 156), including the following:

- **Features:** The concept of positioning "assumes that consumers compare products on the basis of important features" (Lamb et al. 2004: 182), with features being defined as "product characteristics that enhance the product's basic functioning" (Lamb et al. 2004: 194). Consequently, the marketer must focus on and accentuate the specific product attributes which are most salient and relevant to the target consumer (Lamb et al. 2004: 182), as well as using the features as "competitive tools that can be employed to differentiate a firm's product" (Lamb et al. 2004: 192), hence achieving the desired positioning objective.
- **Benefits:** A benefit is defined as "something a consumer gains as a result of a product attribute or feature" (Lamb *et al.* 2004: 201), and is thus ultimately "directly related to the product" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 156). When choosing to position on the basis of benefits, it is essential for the marketer to be very knowledgeable of and familiar with the target audience, particularly in terms of the specific benefits required by the consumers

(Hooley, Saunders and Piercy 2004: 576), in order to successfully meet their needs and desires.

- **Parentage:** When selecting parentage as the basis of positioning, the marketer may choose to emphasise either the manufacturer of the product or service, its particular product history in terms of "prior products" made by the same producer, or both (Walker and Mullins 2008: 156).
- **Manufacturing Process:** Many firms choose to position their product offerings on the basis of the production process employed in its manufacture. For instance, the watchmaker Jaeger-LeCoultre emphasises its manufacturing process by making claims such as "We know it's perfect, but we take another 1000 hours just to be sure" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 156), thus highlighting that each watch is meticulously made without forfeiting quality and craftsmanship.
- **Use or Application:** A product or service may also be positioned in terms of how it may be used or applied by consumers. For instance, orange juice has successfully been positioned as a breakfast drink, while champagne is frequently associated with celebrations and is thus positioned as such (Lamb *et al.* 2004: 201). This type of positioning is mostly used for new products or for existing products which are entering new markets as the consumers in such circumstances will generally be unfamiliar with the product and hence be unaware of how to use it (Belch and Belch 2007: 54). In addition, positioning by use or application may further be employed to "expand the uses of a product" (Belch and Belch 2007: 54), where new ways of using the product may be demonstrated to the consumer in an attempt to increase product usage, consumption and overall sales of the product.
- **Product Class:** As Lamb *et al.* (2004: 201) explain, the objective of this positioning method is "to position the product as being associated with a particular category of products". Positioning in this manner may be used as an alternative to positioning a product against competing brands by focusing on the related product category as opposed to the brand itself (Belch and Belch 2007: 54). For example, Canderel has chosen to position itself against sugar products in general rather than against competing sweetener brands (Lamb *et al.* 2004: 201). In order to successfully achieve this, however, it is vital for the marketer to emphasise particular points-of-parity which are shared by both the specific product and are common within the product category as a whole (Aaker 2005: 144). With regard to the Canderel example, for instance, the marketer must emphasise that both Canderel and sugar may be used as substitute products for one another as both products serve the purpose of sweetening various food or beverage items, thus allowing Canderel to effectively be positioned against the product category of sugar.

- **Ingredients:** Certain firms choose to position their products in terms of the ingredients and components which constitute their final product. For instance, a T-shirt manufacturer may wish to emphasise that its garments are made of organic cotton (Boyd *et al.* 2002: 214), while a soft drink producer may decide to highlight the absence of sugar in its beverages and position itself accordingly.
- **Endorsements:** According to Boyd *et al.* (2002: 214), there are two types of endorsements, namely "those by experts", where a doctor may for instance recommend a particular brand of aspirin, and "those by emulation" which generally involve celebrities or famous athletes using a specific brand, for example Michael Jordan wearing Nike shoes as a form of product endorsement (Boyd *et al.* 2002: 214). This method of positioning is similar to positioning by spokesperson, where marketers choose a product spokesperson with similar characteristics to those they want to ultimately be associated with the product, such as David Beckham, an extraordinary athlete and the spokesperson for Adidas, transferring his characteristic of being exceptional to the Adidas brand, which in turn becomes extraordinary by association.
- **Comparison:** According to Peter and Olson (2010: 377), "the major purpose of this type of positioning is to convince consumers that a brand is better than the market leader (or another well-accepted brand) on important attributes". This is illustrated by Pedigree Mealtime, a pet food manufacturer, who claims that "Tests prove Pedigree is more nutritious than IAMS, costs less than IAMS, and tastes great, too" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 156).
- **Pro-environment:** When using this method of positioning, the firm aims to portray itself as "a good citizen" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 156) which is exercising its social responsibility and thus aims to gain the patronage and support of consumers who adopt a similar philosophy.
- **Price-Quality:** Lamb *et al.* (2004: 201) explain that "this positioning base may focus on high price as a signal of quality or emphasise low price as an indication of value". Firms wishing to achieve the premium price, premium quality position must ensure that all elements of the marketing mix are maintained in a manner that will convey and reinforce the superior imagery, as is confirmed by Hooley *et al.* (2004: 570), who explain that "high-price positioning is usually accompanied by higher quality, branded offerings requiring strong reputations and clearly superior images". In order to achieve such a position, marketers need to provide consumers with products which are superior to competitors' offerings in terms of reliability, durability and aesthetic appearance, which consequently signify higher quality to the consumer (Hooley *et al.* 2004: 571). Conversely, firms aiming to occupy the lower price, value position need to ensure that prices are consistently

maintained to be lower than competitors', and that a price-sensitive consumer segment exists in order for such positioning to be financially viable and sustainable for the firm (Hooley *et al.* 2004: 568).

- **Origin:** Certain firms choose to position their products or services in relation to a specific country or geographic region, such as French wines and Russian vodka (Boyd *et al.* 2002: 214).
- **Product User:** A product may be positioned in terms of the specific type of user or consumer associated with using the particular product, as explained by Lamb *et al.* (2004: 201), who assert that "this positioning base focuses on a personality or type of user". For instance, Johnson&Johnson "repositioned its shampoo from a product used for babies to one used by people who wash their hair frequently and therefore need a mild shampoo" (Peter and Olson 2010: 377).

When deciding which attributes to emphasise and use as the basis for positioning, marketers may use various research methods. For instance, qualitative techniques such as focus groups and interviews may be used initially to ascertain and recognise the determinant attributes according to the specific target consumer and particular product type (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). As Aaker (2008: 46) explains, "the conventional approach is to start with qualitative customer research to find out what a business and its brands mean to customers". This may subsequently be supplemented with quantitative techniques, such as questionnaires and surveys, to establish the consumers' perceptions "on how competing products score on these attributes" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). Additionally, it may also be useful to conduct an in-depth analysis of all competitors within the industry, through consumer research, as well as examining the competition's "products, advertising, Web site and actions" (Aaker 2008: 46) as "weaknesses of competitors on relevant attributes or personality traits can represent an opportunity to differentiate and develop advantage" (Aaker 2008: 46).

Ultimately, positioning may be based on one or a combination of the above-mentioned attributes, however, marketers should be wary of emphasising too many factors as this may confuse consumers or cause them to disregard or question the claims being made (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). Etzel *et al.* (2001: 167) also recommend that positioning be based only on a single attribute as consumers in general are "seldom willing to invest much time and effort" (Etzel *et al.* 2001: 167) into the evaluation of alternatives and overall buying process. Walker and Mullins (2008: 157) further assert that "the positioning effort must be kept as simple as possible and complexity should be avoided at all costs". Furthermore, when choosing which attributes to highlight, "it is important to recognise that the importance attached to these attributes often varies" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157) and marketers should thus aim to focus on those attributes which are most important and determinant to their specific target market. In addition, the chosen attribute/s which form the basis for positioning must also differentiate the firm and its offerings from those of competitors, as “even an important attribute may not greatly influence a consumer’s preference if all the alternative brands are perceived to be about equal on that dimension” (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). Differentiation is ultimately “the key to winning” (Aaker 2008: 46). Finally, such determinant attributes, which help consumers differentiate between competitive offerings and which influence their choice of product or service, should be used by marketers “in defining the product space in a positioning analysis” (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157).

2.4.2 What makes an Attribute ‘Determinant’

Alpert (1971: 184) asserts that “some attributes are clearly more important than others in determining purchasing behaviour”, and “those attributes projected by the product’s image which lead to the choice of that product may be called determinant, since they determine preference and purchase behaviour” (Alpert 1971: 184). This thinking is still supported as Walker and Mullins (2008: 157) define a determinant attribute as a factor or characteristic which plays “a major role in helping customers to differentiate among the alternatives and to determine” which firm, product or service they prefer. Furthermore, according to Myers and Alpert (1968: 13), “in the wide spectrum of all the various features of a product or brand, there are some features which predispose consumers to action (that is, to preference for the product, to actual purchase, to making recommendations to friends, etc) and others which do not. Attitudes toward features which are most closely related to preference or to actual purchase decisions are said to be determinant” (Myers and Alpert 1968: 13). Armacost and Hosseini (1994: 383) thus define a determinant attribute as “those attributes that are perceived to strongly contribute to the choice among the alternatives”.

Nelson Foote, Manager of the Consumer and Public Relations Research Program for General Electric, claims that “the values that are salient in decision-making are the values that are problematic – that are important to be sure but also those which differentiate one offering from another” (1961 cited in Myers and Alpert 1968: 14). Accordingly, Arnold, Ma and Tigert (1978: 663) explain that in order for an attribute to be classified as determinant, it must exhibit two characteristics, which are as follows. Firstly, the attribute must be considered as important in terms of influencing patronage behaviour. The term ‘important’ implies that the consumer will be “extremely offended” (Foote 1961 cited in Myers and Alpert 1968: 14) “by the attribute’s absence” (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663) and that the presence of the attribute will provide the consumer “much satisfaction” (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663). Secondly, the attribute must be “perceived as being differentiated with respect to the presence of the important attribute”

(Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663) in terms of the various alternatives being considered as part of the choice process (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663). Therefore, to summarise the above definitions and descriptions, in order for an attribute to be considered determinant, the attribute must be both highly important and imperative to the consumer in terms of impacting their choice of brand, product or store, as well as differentiating the competitive offerings from one another on that salient attribute (Myers and Alpert 1968: 14). A determinant attribute is therefore much more specific and decisive than simply being important (Myers and Alpert 1968: 13). This is confirmed by Armacost and Hosseini (1994: 383) who state that "although certain attributes may be important, unless there are differences among the alternatives with respect to those attributes, the attributes generally will not play a significant role in the selection process and thus are not considered determinant". Walker and Mullins (2008: 157) explain that this vital data and ultimate "market knowledge is developed by first conducting qualitative research, perhaps interviews or focus groups, to learn which attributes are determinant".

The researcher does acknowledge the year in which Myers and Alpert (1968) and Arnold *et al.* (1978) published their findings as being old, however, the theory has not changed since, thus this information is not obsolete or redundant and unfortunately, these were the only original sources which the researcher was able to locate. Nevertheless, Van Ittersum, Pennings, Wansink and Van Trijp (2007: 1179), also further distinguish between attribute importance and determinance by explaining that, as suggested by Myers and Alpert (1968), determinance is rather a dimension of attribute importance, along with salience and relevance. Accordingly, attribute importance consists of three dimensions, namely: salience, which "reflects the degree of ease with which attributes come to mind or are recognised when thinking about or seeing a certain object" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1179); relevance, where relevant attributes are those that "provide benefits that satisfy important values and desires" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1179); and determinance, which "represents the importance of the attribute in judgement and choice" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1179). Hence, these authors propose that different methods may be utilised to measure the different dimensions of attribute importance, although each dimension must be assessed in order to accurately identify overall attribute importance.

Therefore, it is highly necessary and fundamental to successful market research to correctly identify and establish which attributes influence and determine patronage behaviour as such attributes and features ultimately form the basis for the development and implementation of the marketing strategy as a whole (Myers and Alpert 1968: 13). This is verified by Armacost and Hosseini (1994: 383) who state that the "identification of determinant attributes is among the most critical issues in choice theory and consumer behaviour" and "plays a major role in developing a marketing program with respect to segmentation and positioning strategies" (Armacost and Hosseini 1994: 389-390).

2.4.3 Role of Determinant Attributes in Positioning

Positioning involves emphasising those particular determinant attributes which will successfully differentiate a product or brand from its competitors. Thus, the product or service will be positioned according to the distinct attributes associated with the purchase and use of a particular product or service (Belch and Belch 2007: 53). According to Aaker (2005: 226), "when a business is blessed with a strong, sustainable product attribute", then it is crucial for that feature to "be a prominent part of the strategic position" (Aaker 2005: 226). Aaker (2008: 141) once again reiterates this by saying that, "if a product or service attribute or benefit is central to the purchase and use of an offering, one strategic option is to dominate or even own that attribute". For example, Volvo has successfully managed to dominate and own the attribute of safety and has maintained its position as such for many years (Aaker 2008: 141). Furthermore, when developing a positioning strategy, it is vital for marketers to note that consumers within different market segments may have diverse needs and desires and thus may regard certain attributes as more important than others (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). Therefore, if an attribute is salient to a specific target market and plays a vital role in influencing buying decisions within the specific competitive set then the product or brand should be positioned on that attribute (Aaker 2008: 141). Lastly, however, identifying an attribute which is both imperative to the specific target market, as well as being unoccupied by competitors, may pose a substantial challenge for the firm (Aaker 2005: 226). Aaker (2005: 226) suggests that this obstacle may be overcome through recognising an unmet customer need or problem and hence developing a product offering with the appropriate features to satisfy such a need. Once an attribute is identified and proved to be "viable over time, it needs to be protected against competitors" (Aaker 2008: 141).

2.4.4 The Importance of Determinant Attributes

Determinant attributes play a major role in the development of brand preferences (Myers and Alpert 1968: 14) and generally form the basis and foundation of consumer selection in terms of brands, products or services (Alpert 1971: 184). According to Paulins and Geistfeld (2003: 371), "as new retail formats continue to develop and secure their positions in the market, knowledge of what attributes attract customers to stores is more important than ever" and therefore, all firms require "a clear understanding of what attributes affect consumers' store preferences" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 371). Subsequently, by clearly identifying and comprehending the determinant attributes which influence consumers' patronage behaviour, the marketer may be able to recognise what changes need to be made to better meet the needs of the target consumer as well as being equipped and prepared to implement the necessary changes in order to "remain competitive" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 371). Furthermore, marketers may use their knowledge of determinant attributes to reinforce differentiation along the salient attributes or even to redirect and reposition their brand, product or service along these dimensions. The South African apparel market is, for instance, highly competitive and it is therefore essential for firms to "differentiate (their) market offerings" (Du Preez, Visser and Zietsman 2007: 2).

Determinant attributes may also serve to potentially simplify the buying process as consumers are overwhelmed with choice in terms of the infinite selection of brands, stores, products and services, thus rendering it near impossible to "re-evaluate products every time they make a buying decision" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259). Accordingly, determinant attributes often play a pivotal role in attribute-based choice, which "requires the knowledge of specific attributes at the time the choice is made, and it involves attribute-by-attribute comparisons across brands" (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 570). Consumers may therefore apply the specific determinant attributes which they employ in choosing between various brands to organise the offerings into "categories and (resultantly) position them in their minds" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259), thus making it unnecessary to reconsider numerous potential vendors as the consumer would have already formed their relevant "perceptions, impressions and feelings" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259) of the brands, products or services in terms of their determinant attributes.

Determinant attributes may also be manipulated and emphasised by marketers in such a manner so as to achieve and establish a competitive advantage by providing the consumer with "superior value" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259) in terms of the specific attributes employed by their target market. For example, research conducted by Church and Dwight found that consumers frequently applied the use and inclusion of natural ingredients in products as a determinant attribute and consequently, certain firms began to emphasise that their toothpaste was made from baking soda to meet this consumer requirement (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 211). Zhang, Li, Gong and Wu (2002: 53-54) further suggest that "information on the relative importance of various attributes of products in consumers' minds is useful for new product development" and this "information is also useful for advertising campaigns, where the most important attributes are utilized in persuasive communication" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 54). In order to identify the determinant attributes and potential competitive advantage, "marketers must think through the customer's entire experience with the company's product or service" (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259) and thus approach the evaluation of the brand, product or service and the identification of competitive advantages from the perspective of the consumer. In the clothing industry in particular, "information on product attributes from a consumer perspective is useful for both manufacturers and retailers" as these players in the sector may use their knowledge "of the importance of different product attributes in consumers' minds to enact effective product development and marketing strategies" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 54). As is confirmed by Hansen and Deutscher (1977: 62), it is the retailer's customers who should indicate which attributes they apply when choosing between retail stores, and the retailer's customers who should indicate which attributes are the most important, which is ultimately "consistent with the marketing concept" (Hansen and Deutscher 1977: 62).

Ultimately, "most marketing research projects, both basic and applied, begin by developing a list of the attributes that are important with respect to the eventual consumer choice behaviour" (Armacost and Hosseini 1994: 390), thus rendering the accurate measurement of such attributes highly necessary and integral to achieving success with regard to meeting consumer needs and positively influencing their buying behaviour.

2.4.5 Measuring Determinant Attributes

The first and fundamental step in the development and formulation of a marketing strategy is to accurately identify which determinant attributes are used by the consumer; how the consumer perceives the various alternative brands on each of these attributes; and the relative importance of each of the attributes influencing patronage behaviour (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 574). The marketer must therefore aim to accurately identify the attributes which "are determinant for the target market and the product category under consideration" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157),

Firstly, in terms of identifying which attributes are employed by consumers when evaluating alternatives, the marketer may choose to utilise one of three techniques, namely direct questioning, indirect questioning, or observation and experimentation (Myers and Alpert 1968: 15). According to Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 575), "direct methods include asking consumers what criteria they use in a particular purchase or, in a focus group setting, noting what consumers say about products and attributes". Furthermore, in order to classify an attribute as determinant, dual questioning is employed where the consumer is asked: "what factors they consider important in a purchasing decision and then asked how they perceive these factors as differing among the various products or brands" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 359). Resultantly, "attributes judged high in combined importance and differences are selected as determinant" (Alpert 1971: 185). Marketers must be cautious and wary of an important limiting factor of the direct questioning approach, which is that consumers may either not recognise their own specific motives for making the purchases which they do or they may not want to disclose these in fear of appearing "foolish or irrational" (Myers and Alpert 1968: 16). Marketers may attempt to counter this by, for example, guaranteeing anonymity of the research respondents as well as using techniques such as self-administered questionnaires instead of focus groups and interviews.

Indirect questioning involves “any interviewing approach which does not directly ask respondents to indicate the reasons why they bought a product or service, or which features or attributes are most important in determining choice” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 360). This method of identifying determinant attributes assumes that consumers will be reluctant, unable or unwilling to disclose their particular determinant attributes and criteria used in evaluating alternatives (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 575). Motivation research is an indirect method commonly used which involves “third-person projective questioning” (Alpert 1971: 185). This technique gives the respondent an opportunity to state which attributes and criteria they believe their fellow respondents and consumers would use in a purchase situation. Accordingly, the marketer is able to infer that the ‘third-person’ is exploited as a “projection of the respondent” and so the marketer can fittingly “indirectly determine the evaluative criteria that would be used” (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 575). This technique, however, is mostly used to “avoid questions that might be embarrassing or evoke hostility if posed directly to a respondent” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 160).

Perceptual mapping is a second indirect method regularly used to establish determinant attributes and is “constructed by surveying consumers about various product attributes” and then creating a graph to represent the positions of competitors relative to these attributes (Peter and Olson 2010: 378-379). The perceptual map is thus a “visual representation of consumer perceptions of a product, brand, company, or any other object in two or more dimensions” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 621). Further techniques used for generating perceptual maps include: factor analysis, multidimensional scaling, discriminant analysis and correspondence analysis (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 622).

Observation and experimentation may also be utilised in the identification of determinant attributes. Observation involves watching and monitoring consumers in their actual purchase situation. There are numerous disadvantages associated with this technique, namely: firstly, only public “behaviour and physical personal characteristics” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 238) can be observed, thus the researcher is not able to gather data regarding “motives, attitudes, intentions or feelings” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 238); secondly, any observed behaviour in the present tense “may not be projectable into the future” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 238); and lastly, observation tends to be expensive in terms of both money and time. Conversely, the experimental approach tries to “isolate the role of one or more specific features by holding all others constant, varying the factor in question, and then measuring the impact upon some operationally defined performance criterion, such as buying choice” (Myers and Alpert 1968:

19). This approach does, however, also have its disadvantages, namely: it is very costly (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 278); and it is often impossible to control and replicate many environments in which buying would occur "without significantly altering the relative role of the buying influences whose effects the researcher is attempting to study" (Myers and Alpert 1968: 19).

Finally, the marketer determines the relative importance of each of the attributes influencing patronage behaviour. A recent study conducted by Van Ittersum *et al.* (2007) suggests that attribute importance is a "multidimensional concept and that different methods may measure different dimensions of attribute importance" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1179). Firstly, the dimension of salience, which "represents the importance of the attribute in memory" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180), is measured most accurately and validly using the *free-elicitation method* where participants are asked open-ended questions regarding which attributes they deem as important when, for instance, evaluating a particular product or brand. Accordingly, the attributes which are first mentioned and revealed by the participants are found to be the most important. This method is considered to be the most direct way of measuring the dimension of salience as "it solely relies on people's ability to retrieve internal attribute information stored in memory" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1181).

The second dimension of attribute importance, namely that of relevance, "represents the importance of the attribute to the individual based on personal values and desires" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180). This dimension may be measured using any of the following five methods:

- **Direct-rating method**, which requires participants to rate attributes, for instance, on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 represents that the attribute is unimportant and 7 that it is important;
- **Direct-ranking method**, where participants are asked to rank order a certain number on attributes;
- **Point-allocation method**, which requires research respondents "to distribute 100 points among the attributes (important attributes receiving more points)" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1181);
- **Analytical hierarchy process**, which involves multiple comparisons, where participants compare the importance of attributes two at a time, are used to derive overall attribute importance;
- **Information-display-board method**, which "measures attribute importance through the extent and order of information search" (Ford *et al.* 1989 cited in Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1181).

Each of the above-mentioned methods most directly measure relevance, as the participants' responses during each of these techniques "will be primarily driven by the importance of the attributes for them based on their personal values and desires" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1181).

According to Van Ittersum *et al.* (2007: 1181), the dimension of determinance, which "represents the importance of the attribute in judgement and choice" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180), may be measured by four different methods, namely:

- **Multi-attribute attitude method**, where the "importance of an attribute is represented by the weight that an individual gives to the attribute level in judgement – the impact of (the valuation of) a specific attribute level on the overall liking of the object" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1182);
- **Trade-off method**, which "has individuals conduct a matching task – for instance, adjust one attribute of one product, such that the product becomes equally attractive to another product that is fully described on all available attributes, from which attribute importance is derived" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1182);
- **Swing-weight method,** which asks participants "which attribute they would upgrade first if they were confronted with a product that has attributes with only the worst possible levels available" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1182), followed by the second attribute they would upgrade, the third and so forth, with the first being allocated 100 points, the second slightly less and so on;
- **Conjoint method**, a method which requires the consumer to rank a set of predetermined attributes "in terms of his or her preference for those combinations of features" (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 751). A computer program subsequently uses these preference ranks to "derive the relative importance consumers assign to each level of each attribute tested" (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 752). The main objective of conjoint analysis is to identify "which combination of a limited number of attributes consumes most prefer", and in so doing, determine which "key attributes are important to consumers" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166). Conjoint analysis therefore serves to measure "complex decision-making that requires multiattribute judgements" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 628). The primary disadvantage of conjoint analysis does, however, include a "degree of artificiality" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 631), as "respondents may be more deliberate in their choice processes" and may receive more product or brand information in the conjoint context as a simulated market environment as opposed to a "real market situation" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 631). In addition, it is also worth noting the influence of real advertising and promotion on product choice and selection, compared to the product descriptions provided during the conjoint analysis (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 631).

Walker and Mullins (2008: 166) do, however, propose an alternative to the above-mentioned methods of measuring the dimension of determinance, namely that of *Discriminant Analysis.* The first step in this statistical technique involves identifying the most important attributes used by the target consumer when evaluating the various options within the particular competitive set, in this case, the researcher identified the attributes Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. Next, the analyst will collect "data from a sample of consumers concerning their ratings of each product or brand on all attributes" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166). Finally, the "discriminant analysis program then determines consumers' perceptual dimensions on the basis of which attributes best differentiate, or discriminate, among brands" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166).

Ultimately, Van Ittersum *et al.* (2007: 1186) explain that "although it is tempting to conclude that the determinance of attributes thus should be the key component in research, all three dimensions – the salience, relevance and determinance, should play an important role". This has been employed in the current research project, which aims to investigate the South African clothing retail industry in terms of the specific attributes Generation Y consumers employ when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase their apparel. Accordingly, the **Free-elicitation Method** was utilised when conducting the qualitative aspect of the research design, specifically the focus group sessions, thus measuring the salience dimension of attribute importance. The **Direct-rating Method** was used in both the focus group guide and the questionnaire, forming the quantitative component of the project, as respondents were asked to rate the importance of various attributes when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing. Lastly, **Discriminant Analysis** was used to measure the attribute of determinance, as the respondents were asked in the questionnaire to rate each of five clothing retailers on all of the attributes previously identified as important.

In conclusion, the identification and measurement of determinant attributes as part of the positioning process, is essential in developing a clear comprehension of the attributes which consumers employ when forming preferences and making purchases which is, in turn, fundamental to the overall strategic planning and eventual success of a firm. A firm which understands the needs and desires of its target market, especially the desired image and position, is better equipped and able to design and maintain the marketing mix in such a manner as to meet these requirements, satisfy the consumer and achieve success. Accordingly, this research aims to understand the determinant attributes consumers employ when choosing between various clothing retailers, thus giving retailers the data necessary to accurately meet their consumers' needs.

CHAPTER 3:
POSITIONING AND THE ATTRIBUTES SOUGHT IN CLOTHING RETAIL

The research study at hand involves an investigation of the clothing retail industry in South Africa and thus a theoretical and conceptual explanation of the topic of retailing is included in the following chapter. In order to facilitate and achieve a greater comprehension of this subject matter, the chapter is divided into the following sections, namely: the Definitions of Retailing, Consumer Behaviour in Retailing, the Importance of Positioning in Retail, Determinant Attributes in Retailing, Determinant Attributes in Clothing Retail, and the South African Clothing Retail Context.

3.1 Definitions of Retailing

Cannon *et al.* (2008: 339) broadly define retailing as “all the activities involved in the sale of products to final consumers”, while Dunne and Lusch (2008: 4) add services to the retailing repertoire with the following definition; “retailing consists of the final activities and steps needed to place a product made elsewhere into the hands of the consumer or to provide services to the consumer”. Kotler (2003: 535) provides a slightly more specific definition where “retailing includes all the activities involved in selling goods or services directly to final consumers for personal, non-business use”. Therefore, the key words common in defining retailing include ‘activities’, ‘goods and services’ and ‘final consumer’.

Firstly, the term ‘activities’ has been chosen as opposed to ‘selling’, as retailing is much more complex and requires a greater variety of tasks and actions to be performed to successfully achieve the retailing function (Varley and Rafiq 2004: 3). For instance, the following features form part of the retailer’s overall offering to the consumer, namely: **convenience**, in terms of “available hours, finding needed products, fast checkout, location and parking”; **product selection**, with regard to assortment of merchandise and quality; **special services**, such as “home delivery, gift wrap, entertainment”; **fairness in dealings**, particularly in terms of return policies; **helpful information**, relating to friendly, helpful sales personnel as well as “displays, demonstrations, product information”; **prices**, where the retailer should provide “value, credit, special discounts”; **social image** and overall **shopping atmosphere** (Cannon *et al.* 2008: 341). Secondly, the terms ‘goods and services’ are used to illustrate that retailing involves the sale of both products and services, and neither exclusively. Third and finally, the terms ‘final consumer’ emphasise that the retailer is the “last step in a supply chain” (Dunne and Lusch 2008: 4). Consequently, “a retailer can therefore be seen as a business that focuses its marketing efforts on the final consumers with the intention of selling goods or services to them" (Terblanche 1998: 2).

Furthermore, the retailing function is not simply limited to the sales of goods and services via physical, brick-and-mortar stores (Levy and Weitz 2009: 6), and alternative retailing avenues include "automatic vending, door-to-door selling, telephone and direct-mail retailing", as well as being able to sell through various television programmes or the internet (Cannon *et al.* 2008: 346).

With regard to the particular functions performed by retailers, the most important include providing assortments in terms of both merchandise and services (Levy and Weitz 2009: 8). It is important for retailers to provide an assortment of merchandise to increase the likelihood of the customer finding the product that will meet their specific requirement by being able "to choose from a wide selection of brands, designs, sizes, colours, and prices in one location" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 8). With regard to services, "retailers provide services that make it easier for customers to buy and use products" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 8). Such services include: providing the option of buying on credit; displaying merchandise so consumers may see, test or try on the products before making a purchase; and hiring sales personnel to answer questions and provide any extra information required (Levy and Weitz 2009: 8). Accordingly, the retailer should be aspiring to provide time, place and possession utility to the final consumer (Lusch *et al.*1993: 5).

3.2 The Importance of Positioning in Retail

Varley and Rafiq (2004: 91) explain that "retail positioning is the process of creating and maintaining a distinctive and valued image of the retailer in the target customer's mind relative to its competitors". Many marketers strongly believe that market positioning is "the cornerstone of every successful retailer's strategy" (Lusch *et al.* 1993: 71) and that many retailers have failed in the past due to ineffective positioning or the absence thereof entirely (Lusch *et al.* 1993: 71). Central to the development and success of all retail strategies is the selection of a market position and/or group of consumers to target (Lusch *et al.* 1993: 48). This is necessary to achieve a more efficient and effective use of the firm's available resources, particularly since "consumers are not homogenous in their wants and preferences" (Lusch *et al.* 1993: 48) and will thus have to be segmented and receive tailored strategies according to the segment to which they belong (Lusch *et al.* 1993: 48). Ultimately, strategic planning is vital to the "long-term profitability" of a firm as well as its ability to "withstand competitive onslaughts" (Dunne and Lusch 2008: 55).

The importance of positioning is closely related with and corresponds to retail image which appears to be of equal significance, particularly in terms of impacting the overall positioning of the firm. Retailers and marketers should therefore exercise firm control over the various factors and dimensions which contribute to the overall image projected by the store, and this should furthermore be closely observed and supervised to ascertain consumer perceptions thereof and adapt strategies and policies to ensure better need satisfaction, particularly in comparison to the competition (Terblanche 1998: 64; Solomon and Stuart 1997: 524; Dunne and Lusch 2008: 358).

Retail image is defined by Terblanche (1998: 6) as “the mental picture of the retailer formed in a consumer’s mind”, illustrating the similarity with market positioning. Terblanche (1998: 6) advises that retailers seeking success should aim to create a distinctive image in the minds of its targeted consumers so as to clearly differentiate itself from its competitors. Store image is a direct consequence of the consumer’s previous encounters and experiences with the store and thus “rewarding consequences give rise to a favourable store image which induces customer loyalty”, while disappointing experiences result in a negative store image and lead to the consumer avoiding the particular store altogether (Kunkel and Berry 1968: 22), again illustrating the importance of a positive store image. Dunne and Lusch (2008: 433) also demonstrate the connection between positioning and image and describe retail image as “the overall perception the consumer has of the store’s environment”, hence “its market position relative to the competition” (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 524). Furthermore, Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 346) refer to store image as “what people think of and feel when they hear or see” the retail store, and such “meanings and imagery are powerful drivers of consumer decision making” (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 347).

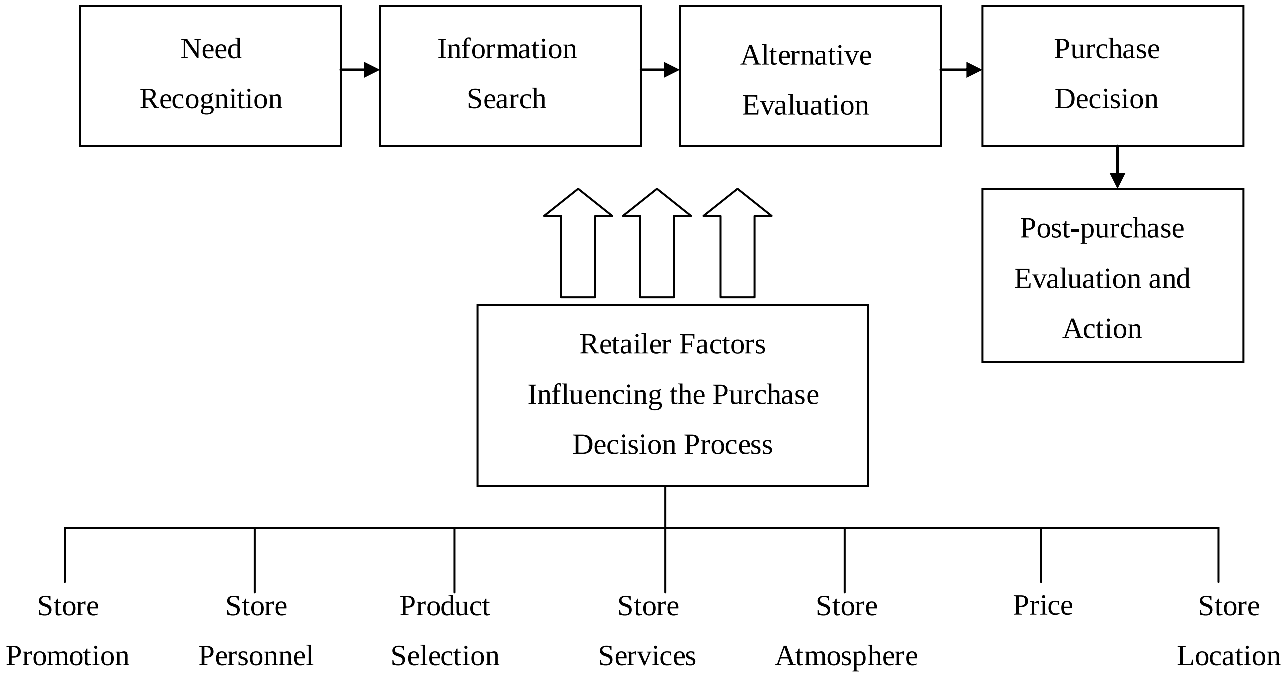
As is reiterated by Schiffman and Kanuk (2000: 150), retail store image influences the consumers’ perceptions of the store, as well as its products and merchandise, and thus also serves to impact the consumers’ decision regarding where to shop (Schiffman and Kanuk 2000: 150). Ultimately, the image and position a store or product occupies in the mind of the consumer exerts a very strong influence over and affects the behaviour of the consumer in terms of retail store selection, as is confirmed by Assael (1995 cited in Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 55), who states that “consumers in each market segment form images of various stores based on their perceptions of the attributes they consider important and will use these criteria to select a store”. The image of a retailer “serves a critical role in the store selection process” by aiding in attracting consumers to the store and subsequently, persuading the consumer to purchase its merchandise (Dunne and Lusch 2008: 435). Dunne and Lusch (2008: 358) also explain that creating and maintaining a favourable image in the mind of the consumer is very important as "the retailer hopes to develop a long-term relationship with the customer", thus achieving consumer patronage and loyalty (Dunne, Lusch and Griffith 2002: 409). Positioning and the selection and maintenance of the desired store image are significant components of the overall strategic planning process which is, according to Cannon *et al.* (2008: 340), critical to the survival of all retailers, especially as "retailers interact directly with final consumers". This is because retailers who lose customers to their competitors will have to bear the burden of such an occurrence as the "producers and wholesalers still make their sale regardless of which retailer sells the product" (Cannon *et al.* 2008: 340). Therefore, any poor decision-making and ignorance on the part of the retailer "can lead to serious errors in a retailer's strategy planning" (Cannon *et al.* 2008: 341).

3.3 Factors Influencing the Purchase Process and Retail Store Selection

According to Armacost and Hosseini (1994: 383), the identification of factors and attributes influencing consumer decision-making "is among the most critical issues in choice theory and consumer behaviour". Nowadays, it is essential for retailers to "determine which store attributes are more important to their target customers to meet customers' expectations" (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 56). Furthermore, this task frequently forms the foundation of the majority of marketing research endeavours as research is initiated by compiling a "list of the attributes that are important with respect to the eventual consumer choice behaviour" (Armacost and Hosseini 1994: 390). Consequently, it is necessary to examine and investigate consumer behaviour within the retail context and hence develop an understanding of the process of consumer choice and buying behaviour and how such behaviour is impacted and affected by factors relating to the product, buyer and retailer.

Figure 3. 1 The Purchase Decision Process

Levy and Weitz (2009: 97) explain that it is important for marketers to understand the buying process applied by consumers as this aids in the identification and development of the most suitable strategies for attracting and retaining the attention, patronage and loyalty of the targeted consumers.



(Hasty and Reardon 1997: 151)

With regard to store choice, the process of selecting a retailer is very similar to the buying procedure applied in choosing a brand, product or service. The consumer recognises an unsatisfied need which requires visiting and patronising a retailer, he then searches for relevant information, evaluates the alternative retail stores and ultimately makes a decision (Terblanche 1998: 62-63). The most significant stage in the purchasing process, however, in terms of relating specifically to the research at hand, is that of stage three, the Evaluation of Alternatives. Therefore, the discussion of the purchasing process will be limited to this step only. During the Evaluation of Alternatives stage of the buying process, the consumer compiles a set or list of various alternatives in terms of potential products and retailers which may satisfy their needs and requirements (Levy and Weitz 2009: 99). However, it is worth noting that, "given their limited time, energy and cognitive capacity, consumers seldom consider every possible choice alternative" (Peter and Olson 2010: 166). Zhang *et al.* (2002: 53) explain that, "in this process, the various attributes of the goods or service are important, since they direct the attention of information search and form the base for evaluation. Normally, various attributes have different importance in the consumer's mind, and thus form the selection criteria in purchase decision making". When evaluating the "alternative retail solutions", the consumer considers attributes such as "product, brand, price, store, service contract, guarantee, credit and delivery" (Hasty and Reardon 1997: 153). This is emphasised by the multi-attribute model, which "is based on the notion that customers see a retailer or a product as a collection of attributes or characteristics" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 105), and may thus be used by marketers and retailers to gain insight into the evaluation process applied by the consumer in terms of the determinant attributes and evaluative criteria used "to judge the merits of competing options" (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 211). Accordingly, this particular model aims to "predict a customer's evaluation of a product or retailer based on (1) its performance on several attributes and (2) those attributes' importance to the customer" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 105). As Kotler (2003: 205) explains, "consumers vary as to which product attributes they see as most relevant and the importance they attach to each attribute. They will pay the most attention to attributes that deliver the sought benefits" (Kotler 2003: 205-206) and meet the unsatisfied need recognised earlier. Correspondingly, the multi-attribute model aims to identify the specific characteristics and features customers use when choosing which store to patronise.

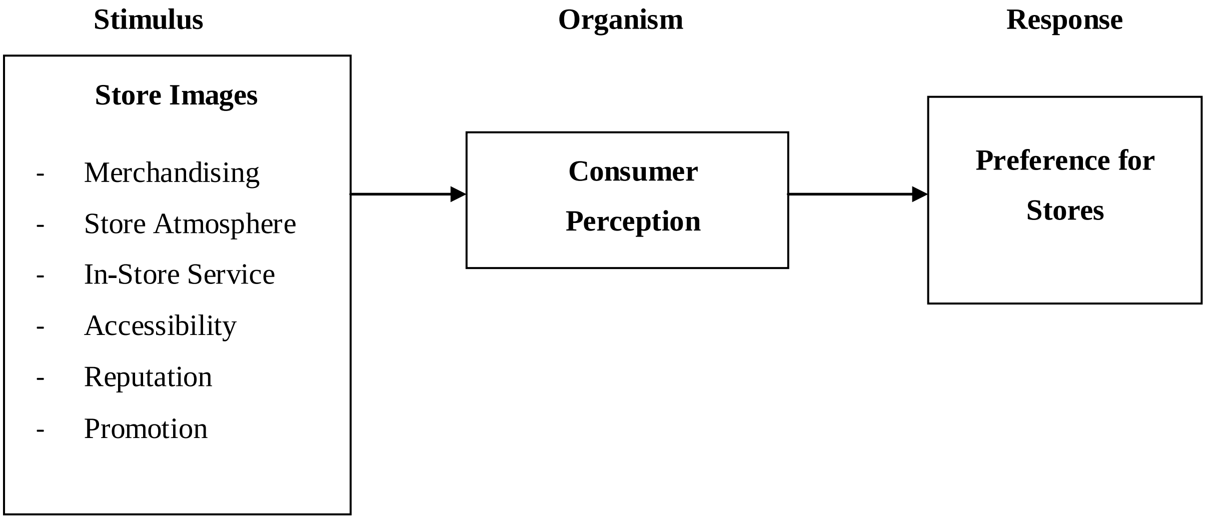
Ultimately, the consumer is influenced by many factors and attributes throughout the buying process and these factors impact the consumers decision of whether to purchase or not, what to purchase and where to purchase it. As consumers evaluate the various alternatives available to them, the image projected by a store often exerts a substantial influence over the consumer's final purchase decision. Terblanche (1998: 6) further explains that "a host of factors contribute to and influence a retailer's image", and retailers use these factors in such a manner so as to "satisfy customers' needs and to influence their buying behaviour and compete effectively" (Varley and Rafiq 2004: 91). Dodds (1995 cited in Moore and Carpenter 2008: 325) confirms this and further proposes that "the contemporary consumer focuses upon extrinsic product attributes when making purchase decisions due to increasing complexity in the marketplace including: an overabundance of brands, technical complexity of products and overabundance of retail choices". According to Terblanche (1998: 6), Ghosh (1990: 176), and Hasty and Reardon (1997: 151), examples of such factors include:

- The physical layout and facilities of the store;
- Prices;
- Assortment and selection of products;
- Quality of the products and merchandise;
- Sales personnel, in terms of their "behaviour, appearance, knowledge and helpfulness" (Terblanche 1998: 6);

- Supplementary store services, such as parking and credit;
- Advertising and store promotion;
- Store atmosphere and ambiance, with regard to attractiveness, mood and congestion;
- Store location, in terms of convenience and accessibility.

The S-O-R model of consumer retail purchase behaviour, suggested by Donovan and Rossiter (1982 cited in Thang and Tan 2003: 194) clearly illustrates the influence various factors exert over retail store selection, as shown in Figure 3.2 below:

Figure 3. 2A S-O-R Model of Consumer Retail Purchase Behaviour



(Thang and Tan 2003: 194)

According to the stimuli in the S-O-R framework presented above, various retail attributes act as "cues that enter a consumer's cognition and rouse or incite him (as a recipient) consciously or subconsciously into action" (Thang and Tan 2003: 194). Examples of store attributes which may represent a stimulus include: merchandising, store atmosphere, in-store service, accessibility, reputation, promotion, facilities and post-transaction (Thang and Tan 2003: 194). Ultimately, retailers should aim to emphasise the "stimuli that enhances the favourable perceptions of consumers" in order to "increase their preference for the store" (Thang and Tan 2003: 194).

Further criteria frequently applied by consumers when choosing between retail outlets (Terblanche 1998: 63) often involve the following dimensions as well as the corresponding components:

Table 3. 1 Dimensions and Components as Criteria influencing Store Choice

Dimension	Component
Merchandise	Quality, depth, width, style, price, innovativeness
Service	Lay-bye plan, returns, credit, delivery, packaging, complaints handling
Clientele	Browsers, buying customers, passing trade
Physical Facilities	Cleanliness, store layout, decor, flooring, width of aisles, traffic flow, displays
Convenience	Location, accessibility, parking provision
Communication	Advertising, sales promotion, sales staff
Institutional	Shop reputation, time in operation, size of firm
Post-transaction	Follow-up calls, performance on guarantees, response to calls

(Terblanche 1998: 63)

Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 608) explain that "the selection of a specific retail outlet involves a comparison of the alternative outlets on the consumer's evaluative criteria", such as those illustrated in Table 3.1. Therefore, "to develop a program for attracting customers, the retailer must do market research to collect the following information: 1) alternative stores that customers consider; 2) characteristics or benefits that customers consider when making their store evaluation and choice; 3) customers' rating of each store's performance on the characteristics and 4) the importance weights that customers attach to the characteristics" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 108). These days, with competition in the retail sector rapidly intensifying, and "as new retail formats continue to develop and secure their positions in the market, knowledge of what attributes attract customers to stores is more important than ever" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 371). To achieve success in such a volatile and competitive environment, retailers must aim to gain a solid understanding of the specific attributes which shape consumers' preferences regarding retail outlets (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 371). Many researchers have set out to do exactly this and their subsequent findings will now be discussed.

3.3.1 Attributes influencing the Selection of Retail Stores in General

An early study conducted by Jolson and Spath (1973: 49) set out to determine how consumers rank the various factors which influence their choice of where to shop, whether retailers fully comprehend these determinants of shopper patronage and what relationship exists "between the retailer's understanding of patronage factors and the retailer's fulfilment of consumer needs" (Jolson and Spath 1973: 39). In their attempt to understand shoppers' requirements, they subsequently found that the consumers' choice of which store to patronise depended mostly on customer perceptions of "price/value relationships, store specialisation, quality of merchandise, availability, salesclerk service, and store location" (Jolson and Spath 1973:49). Lindquist (1974-1975 cited in Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663) summarised 26 "empirical and theoretical studies of retail store selection" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663) to identify the attributes most frequently mentioned across all studies. These included: Merchandise selection or assortment, Merchandise quality, Merchandise pricing, Locational convenience, Merchandise styling or fashion, Service in general and Service provided by the sales personnel (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663). Further attributes potentially influencing retail store selection, including clothing retailers, were identified by Hansen and Deutscher (1977: 64-65) through summarising past literature and research and were hence concluded to be:

Table 3. 2 Attributes influencing Retail Store Selection

Numerous brands	Courteous sales personnel
Wide selection	Easy to return purchases
Well-known brands	Store is known by friends
High fashion items	Store is recommended by friends
Low prices compared to competition	Attractive decor
Many specially priced items	Company operates many stores
Store is nearby	Easy to park
Short time to reach stores	Advertising is informative
Easy drive to store	Advertising helps planning
Convenient compared to other stores	Advertising is appealing
Advertising is believable	Friendly store personnel
Company is well-known	Been in community a long time
Easy to exchange purchases	Fair on adjustments

Bearden (1977 cited in Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 372), however, concluded from his research that "atmosphere, location, parking facilities, and friendliness of sales people" were the attributes which exerted the strongest influence over retail store selection. In addition, Westbrook (1981: 78) conducted a study investigating the “sources of consumer satisfaction with retail outlets” (Westbrook 1981: 68), and subsequently argued that attributes such as stores’ sales personnel, special store sales, products or services purchased at the store, store environment and the value-price relationship offered by the store were the most influential components of retail satisfaction (Westbrook 1981: 78).

A more recent study carried out by Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001: 498) investigated consumer shopping strategies, namely “how consumers organise their shopping behaviour in terms of the kinds of stores they choose to buy different bundles of goods from” (Leszczyc and Timmermans 2001: 495), from which they concluded that consumers tend to prefer a certain type of store or specific retail format over others when “prices were lower, parking costs were less, better assortments were offered, travel time was reduced, and checkout lanes were shorter” (Leszczyc and Timmermans 2001: 508). Klein (1998 cited in Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 286) also found that the vast majority of men and women (86% and 87% respectively) regard reasonable prices as the most important factor impacting their choice of retailer. Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002: 25) found that, across a variety of different types of retail stores, including grocery, durables, chemists, lifestyle, books and music, apparel, cigarette and accessory stores, the “primary reasons for choosing a store are convenience and merchandise, store ambiance and service” (Sinha *et al.* 2002: 25). Furthermore, shoppers across all retail types “would like to minimise the effort of shopping by reducing either the travel time or the time spent in the shop” (Sinha *et al.* 2002: 25).

Moreover, a study conducted by Thang and Tan (2003: 199) found merchandising to be the most significant factor contributing to consumer preference of department stores, followed by accessibility, reputation, in-store service, store atmosphere and promotions. The attribute of **merchandising** included the merchandise mix, value for money and the availability of stock and merchandise within the retail outlet; while **accessibility** referred to the ease and duration of travel to the store, as well as parking facilities (Thang and Tan 2003: 197). **Reputation** was found to be the third most influential attribute impacting store preference thus highlighting that respondents in this particular study preferred reputable stores, and tended to link a good reputation with quality and value for money (Thang and Tan 2003: 198). The attribute of **in-store service**, the fourth most important factor in this study, included aspects such as congeniality (likeability), advice on purchase, gift wrapping and convenient payment options (Thang and Tan 2003: 197). **Store atmosphere**, the next most significant variable affecting consumer store preference, included components such as decorations, layout, ease of movement and the way the merchandise is displayed within the store (Thang and Tan 2003: 197). Finally, **promotions,** which referred to the advertising, promotions and special events planned by the store (Thang and Tan 2003: 197), was found to be the sixth most significant variable of a total of eight variables potentially impacting consumer store preference.

Gehrt and Yan (2004: 17) also identified a set of attributes affecting consumer store selection by conducting a factor analysis to determine the specific attributes with the highest importance ratings and, in so doing, found four factors to be the most salient in impacting consumers' selection of traditional stores, catalogues and websites. These four factors were: transaction service, merchandise, retailer personality and price. The factor of **transaction service** referred to attributes such as: easy to place an order, 24 hour accessibility, ability to touch or try merchandise, security and privacy policy, several options for payment, and reliable shipping (Gehrt and Yan 2004: 17). The factor of **merchandise** included attributes such as: easy to find merchandise, quality merchandise, unique merchandise, large selection of merchandise, and immediate availability of merchandise (Gehrt and Yan 2004: 17). **Retailer personality** represented attributes such as: shopping atmosphere, well-known national brands, familiarity with the retailer, and sales assistance or merchandise information (Gehrt and Yan 2004: 17). Lastly, the **price** factor refers to low prices and the ease of price comparison as important attributes (Gehrt and Yan 2004: 17).

Finally, most recently Pan and Zinkhan (2006: 238) also investigated the determinants of retail patronage and found the attribute of **wide selection of merchandise** to have "the highest average correlation with store choice, followed by service, quality, store atmosphere, low price levels, convenient location, fast checkout, convenient opening hours, friendliness of salespeople, and convenient parking facilities" (Pan and Zinkhan 2006: 238). Overall, these authors found that wide selection, service and product quality are the most important for explaining retail choice (Pan and Zinkhan 2006: 240).

3.3.2 Attributes influencing the Selection of Specific Retail Stores Types

Hansen and Deutscher (1977: 69) conducted an empirical investigation of attribute importance in retail store selection where the sample was subsequently split into two, with one half asked to respond to image questions relating to grocery stores and the other asked to respond to image questions relating to department stores. The questionnaire asked respondents to rate the importance of 41 attributes of a department or grocery store on a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 being not important and 10 being extremely important. The mean importance scores were then calculated and presented in a separate table for grocery and department stores in order of importance. This is shown in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3. 3 Top 10 Attributes identified by Hansen and Deutscher (1977: 69)

Top 10 Attributes	
Department Store	**Grocery Store**
1. Dependable products	1. Dependable products
2. Fair on adjustments	2. Store is clean
3. High value for money	3. Easy to find items you want
4. High quality products	4. Fast checkout
5. Easy to find items you want	5. High quality products
6. Fast checkout	6. High value for money
7. Helpful personnel	7. Fully stocked
8. Easy to return purchases	8. Helpful personnel
9. Easy to exchange purchases	9. Easy to move through store
10. Store is clean	10. Adequate number of store personnel

(Hansen and Deutscher 1977: 69).

Thus it was concluded that, in terms of which attributes are important in influencing store selection, "a number of similarities exist in what is important to shoppers in evaluating a store" (Hansen and Deutscher 1977: 68).

Arnold, Oum and Tigert (1983: 156), however, chose to focus their efforts and research solely on the retail food industry and used the Multinomial Logit Model "to identify determinant attributes and to provide a relative ranking of these attributes across 15 consumer samples" (Arnold *et al.* 1983: 149), which revealed "the finding that locational convenience and low prices are the top-ranked determinant attributes across most markets and cultures" (Arnold *et al.* 1983: 157). Tigert and Arnold (1981 cited in Arnold *et al.* 1983: 156), furthermore, conducted 14 different studies relating to the retail food sector in which "the important store characteristics were found to be locational convenience, low prices, assortment/variety, courteous helpful service, high quality merchandise, quality of fresh meat, fast checkout/fast service, cleanliness, and shopping environment" (Arnold *et al.* 1983: 156), with the attributes of locational convenience and low prices undoubtedly the most important of all the factors (Arnold *et al.* 1983: 156). These findings corroborate with what Arnold *et al* (1978: 665) discovered previously, but for one exception, namely the inclusion of special sales/coupons/weekly specials as one of the attributes most commonly mentioned by respondents when asked "what is the single most important reason you shop at (___) for most of your food shopping?" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 665).

A descriptive study conducted by Nguyen (2009: 114) investigating the attributes which influence supermarket selection in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, found that the attributes of price, locational convenience, store merchandise, store services, store personnel and reputation to be the most important and determinant in affecting grocery store selection (Nguyen 2009: 114). Redding (2009: 133), on the other hand, focused on the university student market, and thus aimed to indentify the main factors and attributes "that cause University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg students to choose their preferred supermarkets to buy their groceries from". The study found that, in order of importance, cleanliness, high quality products, value for money, selection of products offered, ease of access in store, convenient location and low prices were the most important when choosing a supermarket (Redding 2009: 134).

The following table serves as a summation of the previously mentioned attributes (from Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2) as potential factors influencing store choice:

Table 3. 4 Summary of Attributes

Price/Value Relationship	Convenient Shopping Hours
Fashionable Merchandise	Flexible Return Policies
Quality of Merchandise	Availability of Credit Facilities
Helpful Sales Personnel	Availability of Delivery
Convenient Store Location	Uniqueness of Merchandise
Assortment of Merchandise	Well-known brands in the store
Low Prices	Dependable Products
Style of Merchandise	Clean Store
General Store Services	Many brands available in the store
Friendly Sales Personnel	Store is known by friends
Store Atmosphere and Ambiance	Store is recommended by Friends
Availability of Parking	Company operates many stores
Low Parking Costs	Advertising is Informative
Special Store Sales	Advertising is Appealing
Short checkout Lanes	Advertising is Believable
Reasonable Prices	Time in operation
Short travel time to store	Company owning the store is well-known
Availability of Stock and Merchandise	Store Layout
Easy to travel to store	Ease of Movement through Store
Store Reputation	Merchandise Displays
Attractive Store Decor	Easy to find what I'm looking for
In-store Service	Store Specialisation

Each of the above-mentioned attributes has the potential to influence the selection of various retailers, whether clothing or grocery related or anything in between. The importance placed on these attributes, however, may further be impacted by factors such as task definitions and the retail format.

3.3.3 Role of Task Definitions on Attribute Importance

Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999:125) suggested that "store choice and store-attribute saliences form the basis for the specific reasons that consumers have for buying a product or service" which is in turn impacted by various situational conditions, referred to as task definitions (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 126). Van Kenhove *et al* (1999: 125) investigated the impact of such task definitions on the importance assigned to store attributes, as well as its affect on store choice in the DIY (do-it-yourself) product sector. Their findings showed, for instance, that when the consumer was experiencing time constraints, the attributes of proximity, quick service and availability of stock were the most important when choosing between retailers, while attributes such as low prices and quality were less important (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 131). When purchasing larger quantities, low prices and sufficient stock were the most important factors influencing store selection (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 131), whereas stores which provided good services before and after the purchase, as well as offering a wide selection of high quality products were preferred when buying materials for a complex or difficult task (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 132).

With regard to regular, everyday purchases, consumers tended to base their store preferences on the attributes of proximity, low prices and the availability of sufficient stock (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 132). Finally, store services, wide assortment of products, novelties and attractive store design were the most important attributes when 'window-shopping' and looking for ideas (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 132). These results are relevant to the research at hand as D-I-Y products and clothing are similar in that both these product categories are "of a higher involvement nature" (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 128), which is confirmed by Gehrt and Yan (2004: 10) who explain that "clothing is regarded as an experience good that tends to be examined closely and tried on before being purchased".

Gehrt and Yan (2004: 7) further suggest that "shopping activities also differ depending on whether individuals are shopping for a gift or for themselves". According to a study conducted by Mattson (1982 cited in Gehrt and Yan 2004: 7), the attributes of "salesperson attention, return policies and the availability of prestige brands were critical for gift shoppers and price was important when shopping for oneself". Ryans (1977 cited in Gehrt and Yan 2004: 15) added that store reputation is another important factor consumers consider when choosing a retailer for gift-buying purposes. Gehrt and Yan (2004: 14) also found that "in situations that involve experience goods (e.g. clothing), consumers are sensitive to retailer personality", which "suggests that the brand cache of the retailer makes a difference".

3.3.4.Role of Retail Format on Attribute Importance

Identifying determinant attributes, such as those discussed above, is important as consumers essentially develop specific ‘hot buttons’ which they apply to assist them when evaluating alternatives and choosing between retailers (Woodside *et al.* 1992 cited in Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 483). For instance, Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998 cited in Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 483) found that shoppers frequently based their retail store selections on the presence of high quality sales personnel, low prices and an abundance of promotions. Sinha and Banerjee (2004: 488) found that attributes differed in importance depending on the specific type of retailer the consumer was intending to patronise. For example, when choosing a grocery store, consumers tended to base their patronage decision on proximity, in terms of having a convenient location; and patronisation, in terms of having long-term relationships with the retailer and having patronised the store for a long time (Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 487). This illustrates that consumers prefer to reduce their travel time and also to demonstrate loyalty when choosing between grocery retailers (Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 488).

Conversely, when choosing between consumer durables stores, shoppers place greater importance on the actual merchandise, in terms of offering a wide selection of good quality products that are easily available, always in stock and represent value for money; referral, with regard to the store being recommended and having a good reputation; and ambiance, in terms of the store being a comfortable place to shop with attractive displays (Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 487). Therefore, when buying durables, consumers prefer stores that offer a variety of products, in terms of both the depth and breadth of product assortment, provide good prices and discounts, high quality goods, and a comfortable setting and ambiance (Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 488). Lastly, consumers purchasing leisure products, such as books, music and accessories, are attracted to stores which offer an appealing ambiance. Such consumers ultimately “want a comfortable store” (Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 488). Therefore, the attribute of ambience is more important when the consumer will be spending more time in the store, such as for durables and apparel (Sinha *et al.* 2002: 25).

Such findings indicate that retailers ultimately have “various tools at hand (e.g., greater assortment, low prices) to influence shoppers’ intention to patronise their stores” (Pan and Zinkhan 2006: 238). Pan and Zinkhan (2006: 239) further explain that, “for traditional retailers, factors such as physical location, parking facilities, checkout speed, and store atmosphere can make or break a store” (Pan and Zinkhan 2006: 239).

3.4 Determinant Attributes in Clothing Retail

According to Du Preez (2003: 11), it is essential for all retailers, producers and marketers to gain an in-depth understanding and appreciation of consumers in the 21st century as “they exert their spending power within a marketplace, thereby influencing the success of all stakeholders in that marketplace” (Du Preez 2003: 11). This is particularly necessary given the intensely competitive and unpredictable nature of the current marketplace, and is pivotal to the success of any firm (Du Preez 2003: 11). With regard to the apparel sector specifically, Du Preez (2003: 11) asserts that knowledge of the apparel customer is especially required as “apparel shopping is not the result of a single variable, but rather a phenomenon that is influenced by a very large number of variables” (Du Preez 2003: 11), and the decisions relating to the purchase of apparel thus need to be investigated and considered in their own right (De Klerk 1999; Du Plessis and Rousseau 1999 cited in Du Preez 2003: 11). This is confirmed by Du Preez and Visser (2003: 16) who state that an understanding of the selection of which clothing retailer to patronise is highly important “as apparel consumers will often gather information, evaluate alternatives and make decisions at the point of purchase” (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 16), unlike most retail buying processes.

Furthermore, Du Preez (2003: 11) argues that there is a lack of and “gap in knowledge of apparel shopping behaviour in South Africa” and it is therefore highly necessary for marketers to investigate and examine this phenomenon so as to determine the specific factors which drive and influence apparel buying behaviour (Du Preez 2003: 11). With the aim and intention of achieving this, Du Preez (2003: 12) proposes a macro-conceptual theoretical model to aid in the identification of the variables and attributes which “influence the consumer decision-making process” and cause “specific apparel shopping behaviour” (Du Preez 2003: 12). Accordingly, Du Preez (2003: 13) suggests that there are three distinct categories of variables affecting apparel shopping behaviour, namely:

1. Market-dominated Variables, which are related to the product, promotion, price and place of distribution associated with the apparel retailer (Du Preez 2003: 13).

2. Consumer-dominated Variables, which include the demographics of the target consumers, socio-cultural influences as well as aspects relating to the psychological field (Du Preez 2003: 13).

3. Market and Consumer Interaction Variables, which relate to shopping orientation, patronage behaviour, in terms of the consumer decision-making process, and previous experiences with the specific retailer (Du Preez 2003: 13).

Consequently, each of these variables play a role in influencing the decision-making process applied by the consumer, resulting in specific apparel shopping behaviour (Du Preez 2003: 12).

Du Preez and Visser (2003: 15) explain, however, that “the combination of fashion and seasonal changes make the apparel business one of the most change-intensive businesses in the world”. Therefore, although this macro-perspective model “provides marketers of apparel with a holistic view of variables influencing female apparel shopping” (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 18), a more comprehensive, micro-perspective is needed given the volatile, “capital and people intensive” (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 15) nature of the apparel industry, where an understanding of the final consumer is essential to ensure survival and development (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 15). Subsequently, much research has been conducted to facilitate greater insight into the apparel buying process, as will now be discussed.

According to Hyllegard, Ogle and Yan (2009: 113), “there is much evidence to indicate that apparel attributes contribute in important ways to consumers’ product evaluations and intent to purchase”. Such attributes may be divided into intrinsic attributes, such as fit, comfort, style, colour, workmanship, price, permeability, fabric softness, trendiness, durability, easy care, brand, fibre content, warmness and fabric thickness (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 61); or extrinsic attributes such as “merchandise, service, clientele, physical facilities, convenience, communication, institutional and post-transaction” (Terblanche 1998: 63). Intrinsic attributes are used by consumers to evaluate apparel, while the extrinsic factors influence consumers’ retail store selection, and each of these will now be discussed in turn.

Firstly, with regard to intrinsic apparel attributes, Beaudoin, Moore and Goldsmith (1998: 194) conducted a study in which they aimed to “explain why American consumers buy so many imports” and, in the process of doing so, the following 12 attributes were identified as potentially influencing the “overall attitude toward imported and domestic apparel products” (Beaudoin *et al.* 1998: 196), namely: good fit, durability, ease of care, good price, comfort, quality, choice of colour, attractiveness, fashionableness, brand name, appropriateness for occasion, and choice of styles. The study conducted by Beaudoin *et al.* (1998: 193), involved a sample of female respondents aged 18 to 25, and aimed to identify the consumers’(fashion leaders and followers) perceptions of domestic (American) versus foreign apparel in relation to the attributes previously identified. The subsequent findings revealed that “Leaders tended to report that imported apparel was more durable, was of better quality, had a better choice of colours, was more attractive and more fashionable, had better brand names, and offered a better choice of styles than domestic apparel” (Beaudoin *et al*. 1998: 203). Conversely, the fashion followers “considered American-made apparel superior to imports regarding ease of care, good price, and comfort” (Beaudoin *et al*. 1998: 203).

A study conducted by Zhang *et al.* (2002: 53) aimed to identify "the importance of product attributes of casual wear for Chinese consumers", and thus involved asking the respondents to rate the importance of 15 attributes on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means that the attribute is very unimportant, and 5 that the factor is very important. Accordingly, the "relative importance of each attribute was measured by the average score of the attribute" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 55). The authors concluded that, "the larger the score, the more important the attribute to consumers", and the smaller the standard deviation, the "less variation in opinions on the importance of these attributes" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 55). Subsequently, "it was found that fit, comfort, style, colour and workmanship were the most important attributes for Chinese consumers" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 53), while price was found to be "relatively less important" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 55). Thus, when evaluating casual wear, Chinese consumers in this study examine the sizing of the garments, the comfort and style, which represents the physical and psychological benefits derived from the clothing items, as well as the workmanship of the garment, as this is perceived as a "tangible factor of quality" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 55). Zhang *et al.* (2002: 58) then conducted a factor analysis to group the original 15 attributes into a few factors, thus verifying the top five most important attributes previously identified through examining the mean scores. It was found that, "all the four attributes contained in the factor 'appearance' are among the top five most important attributes discussed earlier, thus appearance can be regarded as the most important dimension of casual wear" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 59), along with the 'function' factor, which related to the attributes of comfort (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 59). Therefore, it was concluded that these specific consumers "want to look and feel good", and are less worried about the price (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 59).

To summarise the study conducted by Beaudoin *et al.* (1998: 194), ultimately found that American fashion leaders preferred imported apparel, as opposed to locally produced clothing. This is because these consumers perceived foreign apparel as being superior in terms of durability, quality, and fashionability, as well as offering a wider assortment of colours and styles (Beaudoin *et al.* 1998: 203). Accordingly, it may be deduced that these factors thus play a determining role in the fashion leaders' selection criteria and process when choosing clothing to purchase as it has lead them to develop a preference for exotic apparel. Conversely, the Chinese consumers in the study by Zhang *et al.* (2002: 53) regarded the actual "fit, comfort and workmanship" of the clothing to be the most important and influential with regard to impacting their choice of apparel, as well as colours and styles of the clothing. Accordingly, the factor of a wide selection of styles and colours was evident in both studies and thus this seems to be an important attribute influencing clothing selection, regardless of country or geographic disparities. This study will therefore serve to further investigate this finding and establish whether South African Generation Y consumers, living in Pietermaritzburg specifically and aged 18 to 25, also regard the selection of various styles and colours as determinant in their choice of clothing.

Secondly, with regard to extrinsic attributes, Arnold *et al.* (1978: 66) found the following attributes and store characteristics to be important in the selection of women's clothing retailers, according to a Canadian sample of respondents, in ranked order of importance: 1) gives best value for money; 2) has the largest overall assortment/selection; 3) has the highest quality women's fashions; 4) has the most knowledgeable, helpful salesclerks; 5) best for current, up-to-date women's fashions; 6) best for conservative, everyday wear; 7) easiest to get to from home; 8) best for latest, most fashionable women's wear; 9) has the lowest prices; 10) has the most exciting merchandise display; 11) has the best fashion advertising (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 66). Consequently, these authors concluded that "fashion shoppers are not as concerned about physical convenience. They search out value, quality, wide assortments, and up-to-date fashions. They appear to be willing to travel to whatever location is required to find what they want" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 666).

Conversely, Mahoney and Sternquist (1989) and Thorpe and Avery (1983 both cited in Terblanche and Boshoff 2004: 4), argued that clothing shoppers are most influenced by the quality and knowledge of the salespeople when choosing a clothing retailer, while Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001: 207) found that, in rank order of importance, price, quality and selection of merchandise, followed by the particular brands carried in the store and the friendliness of personnel, were the top five most significant attributes which affected the apparel purchase decisions of the American respondents included in their sample, which consisted of 201 men, of which most were university students.

Terblanche and Boshoff (2004: 1) used the ISE (in-store shopping experience) instrument "to compare the in-store shopping experiences of customers of two diverse retailing environments (supermarkets versus clothing retailers) by assessing its impact on customer retention" (Terblanche and Boshoff 2004: 1). Their analysis and findings revealed that "personal interaction and store environment impacted positively on retention", however, the merchandise value dimension exerted the strongest impact overall on customer retention (Terblanche and Boshoff 2004: 9). Furthermore, an investigation conducted by Kleinhans, Visser, Van Aardt and Du Preez (2001 cited in Terblanche and Boshoff 2004: 3) concluded that black South African female shoppers are most influenced by the physical facilities of the clothing store, the services provided by the sales personnel and the store layout when deciding to purchase clothing from a particular apparel store.

Given the numerous studies, Paulins and Geistfeld (2003: 373) successfully summarised the findings of multiple authors to identify a total of 18 attributes potentially influencing consumers' selection of a clothing retailer. The literature search conducted by Paulins and Geistfeld (2003: 373) subsequently revealed the following attributes as illustrated in Table 3.5 below:

Table 3. 5 Attributes influencing Clothing Store Selection

Advertising	Post-transaction Satisfaction
Delivery	Pricing Strategies
Displays	Rest Rooms
Dressing Rooms	Return Policy and Adjustments
Fashionability of Merchandise	Sales Personnel
Merchandise Information	Store Atmosphere
Merchandise Quality	Store Hours
Store Appearance	Store Layout
Parking	Store Location

(Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 373)

These attributes were then used to formulate a questionnaire which was used to establish consumer perceptions regarding each of the above-mentioned attribute dimensions and, in so doing, identify the reasons for why "a particular store is a desirable place to shop" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 382). The findings indicated the attribute of Appealing Merchandise, in terms of the store offering the type of clothing the consumer liked, to be the most significant with regard to affecting store preference, followed by the outside appearance of the retail outlet, which should be attractive to encourage consumers to enter the store (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 382). Furthermore, despite poor perceptions of discount stores regarding their displays, outside appearance, the appealing nature of their merchandise, and providing pleasant dressing rooms, the attribute of reasonable prices was still "positively perceived" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 383), which "suggests that customers are willing to sacrifice some store attributes as long as they receive lower prices" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 383). Accordingly, speciality stores were found to be negatively perceived with regard to reasonable prices, parking and rest room availability (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 383).

The following table presents all the attributes identified throughout the literature search and review of previous studies, as well as the authors who found the relevant attribute to be the most important in influencing store selection:

Table 3. 6 Summary of Attributes found in Past Studies

Attributes	**Author(s)**
Price/Value Relationship Low Prices Reasonable Prices	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Arnold, Oum and Tigert (1983); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Nguyen (2009); Redding (2009); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999); Mattson (1982); Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978); Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001); Jolson and Spath (1973); Westbrook (1981); Thang and Tan (2003); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Terblanche and Boshoff (2004); Lindquist (1974-1975); Klein (1998); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Fashionable Merchandise Style of Merchandise	Lindquist (1974-1975); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Arnold, Ma and Tigert (1978)
Quality of Merchandise	Jolson and Spath (1973); Lindquist (1974-1975); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Redding (2009); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978); Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001)
Helpful Sales Personnel	Jolson and Spath (1973); Lindquist (1974-1975); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Westbrook (1981); Thang and Tan (2003); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Nguyen (2009); Mattson (1982); Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978); Mahoney and Sternquist (1989); Thorpe and Avery (1983); Terblanche and Boshoff (2004); Kleinhans, Visser, Van Aardt and Du Preez (2001); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Convenient Store Location Short Travel Time to Store Easy to Travel to Store	Jolson and Spath (1973); Lindquist (1974-1975); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Bearden (1977); Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Arnold, Oum and Tigert (1983); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Nguyen (2009); Redding (2009); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003); Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001); Thang and Tan (2003); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978)
Assortment of Merchandise Many brands available in the store Store has the Type of Clothing I like	Lindquist (1974-1975); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001); Thang and Tan (2003); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Redding (2009); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978); Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
General Store Services	Lindquist (1974-1975); Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002); Thang and Tan (2003); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Nguyen (2009); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999)
Friendly Sales Personnel	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Bearden (1977); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001); Kleinhans, Visser, Van Aardt and Du Preez (2001)
Store Atmosphere and	Bearden (1977); Westbrook (1981); Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002);

Ambiance Attractive Store Decor	Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Terblanche and Boshoff (2004); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Thang and Tan (2003)
Availability of Parking Low Parking Costs	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Bearden (1977); Thang and Tan (2003); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003); Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001)
Special Store Sales	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Westbrook (1981); Thang and Tan (2003); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978); Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998)
Short checkout Lanes	Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999)
Availability of Merchandise/Fully Stocked Store	Thang and Tan (2003); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Van Kenhove, De Wulf and Van Waterschoot (1999); Sinha and Banerjee (2004)
Store Reputation Store is known by friends Store is recommended by friends Time in operation Company owning the store is well-known	Thang and Tan (2003); Nguyen (2009); Ryans (1977); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Hansen and Deutscher (1977)
Convenient Shopping Hours	Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Flexible Return Policies	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Mattson (1982); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Availability of Credit Facilities	Thang and Tan (2003); Gehrt and Yan (2004)
Uniqueness of Merchandise Store Specialisation	Gehrt and Yan (2004); Jolson and Spath (1973)
Well-known brands in the store	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Mattson (1982); Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001)
Dependable Products	Hansen and Deutscher (1977)
Clean Store	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Redding (2009)
Company operates many stores	Hansen and Deutscher (1977)
Advertising is Informative Advertising is Appealing Advertising is Believable	Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Thang and Tan (2003); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003); Arnold,Ma and Tigert (1978)
Store Layout Ease of Movement through Store Easy to find what I'm looking for	Thang and Tan (2003); Kleinhans, Visser, Van Aardt and Du Preez (2001); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Redding (2009); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Merchandise Displays	Thang and Tan (2003); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); Arnold, Ma and Tigert (1978); Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Outside appearance of the store	Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)
Adequate rest rooms Pleasant dressing rooms	Paulins and Geistfeld (2003)

By conducting research such as this, marketers and retailers within the clothing retail sector will gain and benefit from an increased understanding of consumers' reactions to "price, product quality and attitudes towards shopping in this highly competitive and rapidly changing market" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 324). As confirmed by Du Preez (2003: 13), "no retailer would be able to influence shopping behaviour without an understanding of the variables that influence behaviour". Ultimately, such insights may subsequently be used in the formulation and development of appropriate marketing and retail strategies, particularly in terms of pricing policy, product quality and the overall shopping environment (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 324). This emphasises the belief that "marketers who know why consumers purchase or do not purchase apparel will succeed in communicating with them" (Du Preez 2003: 13). Du Preez and Visser (2001: 80) strongly assert, however, that "information on the South African apparel shoppers is scant and researchers are urged to focus on the multi-cultural nature of the South African population".

3.4.1 Role of Gender on Attribute Importance in Clothing Store Selection

According to Chen-Yu and Seock (2002: 51), the "fundamental segmentation of the clothing market is based on gender", and gender therefore plays a vital role in influencing a consumer's clothing selection and apparel buying behaviour (Bohdanowicz and Clamp 1994 cited in Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 51). Shopping is even described by Dholakia (1999: 154) as a "gendered activity". Unfortunately, however, "there is limited research into how males and females differ in their shopping behaviour" (Van Slyke, Comunale and Belanger 2002: 85), as well as very little research specifically exploring male shopping behaviour, especially in South Africa, hence rendering this field fairly "unchartered" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2).

Nevertheless, a study conducted by Cox and Dittmar (1995 cited in Bakewell, Mitchell and Rothwell 2006: 170) found that male British students tend to focus more on the functional aspects of clothing, including warmth and durability and are thus "less interested in clothing and fashion" (Cox and Dittmar 1995 cited in Bakewell and Mitchell 2006: 1297), whereas the female students perceive clothes "in terms of their symbolic value for gaining approval and acceptance from peers" (Cox and Dittmar 1995 cited in Bakewell *et al.* 2006: 171). Zhang *et al.* (2002: 57) found that, of all the demographic variables, "gender is the one that has significant impacts on the importance of most of the attributes". Accordingly, it was found that the female Chinese consumers regarded the attributes of fit, comfort, style, colour and easy care to be more important compared to the male respondents with regard to choosing casual clothing, whereas there was no significant difference in the importance ratings of price, workmanship and trendiness between the two genders (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 57).

Otnes and McGrath (2001: 111) conducted a study investigating the perceptions and realities of male shopping behaviour in which the findings contradicted the general male shopping stereotypes of ‘Grab and Go’, ‘Whine and Wait’ and ‘Fear of the Feminine’. Accordingly, it was concluded that “men often evaluate alternatives, bargain, and even shop in ‘feminine’ stores” (Otnes and McGrath 2001: 111). For instance, in observing a male shopper, it may seem as though he is simply using a ‘Grab and Go’ shopping strategy, while in reality he has most likely used “the internet and/or catalogues to preselect items” (Otnes and McGrath 2001: 122). The ‘Fear of the Feminine’ stereotype was also disproved in a study conducted by Manrai, Lascu, Manrai and Babb (2001 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4), in Eastern Europe, which found that “males tended to buy products that previously would have been dismissed as too feminine, such as jewellery, skin-care products and cosmetics, as well as fashion apparel”. Otnes and McGrath (2001; 123) also found that when shopping for ‘high-tech’ products, “ongoing search among men was higher than among women-but that among clothing shoppers, the reverse was true”.

With regard to gender differences in terms of attribute salience, “men give more prominence to proximity. Women tend to trade this off with merchandise offered by the store” (Sinha *et al.* 2002: 25). This may be due to the fact that women often “buy for other members of the family and hence would like to make a more informed decision” (Sinha *et al.* 2002: 25). A study conducted by Chen-Yu and Hong (2002 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2), which focused on South Korean male consumers, found that younger male apparel shoppers were less price sensitive and were “reassured and less inhibited by higher-priced fashion brands than their female counterparts”, representing an opportunity for retailers who could potentially “introduce price mark-ups” to take advantage of this highly profitable consumer segment (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2). Contradictory to this, Chen-Yu and Seock (2002: 50) conducted a study to investigate the clothing purchase motivations, information sources and selection criteria of young male and female consumers, aged between 13 and 19. Their findings revealed that, “for both male and female participants, price was the most important store selection criterion” (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 66). Furthermore, “female participants considered product variety/availability and store display significantly more important than male participants”, while there were no significant differences between males and females in terms of perceptions of importance regarding the attributes of store environment/community involvement and customer service/store image, thus “assigning similar weights to the importance” of these factors (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 66).

Dholakia (1999: 163) concurs with Chen-Yu and Seock (2002) and also suggests that “the female patron will continue to be the main target of store layout and design efforts”. In the study conducted by Chen-Yu and Seock (2002: 66), the attribute of Product variety/availability included dimensions such as availability of different sizes, wide variety of different styles, and availability of well-known brands, while the attribute of store display also refers to factors such as window and product displays, and attractive store layout (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 66). A possible explanation for the female participants regarding these attributes to be more important than the male participants may be due to the females' shopping motivation of recreation, as "product variety and store display increase the fun and enjoyment" (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 73), whereas the male participants' shopping motivations are linked to sexual attraction and recognition (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 71). This is confirmed by Dittmar, Long and Meek (2004: 434) who investigated gender differences in on-line and conventional buying motivations, and found that "the buying environment may play a much more important role for women consumers". Furthermore, the attribute of Store environment/community involvement also included the dimensions of music, number of fitting rooms, restrooms, resting seats and lighting, while customer service/store image refers to the store salespeople, ease of return, and store reputation (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 66).

Lastly, Bakewell and Mitchell (2006: 1299) conducted a study investigating the decision-making styles of males versus female consumers, and subsequently concluded that "males still appear as brand conscious as females"; male shoppers have a 'perfectionism' trait meaning they generally won't settle for anything less than the best or exactly what they want; some young male shoppers exhibit the 'store promiscuity' trait suggesting that they are "indifferent to the store and the brands on offer and prefer to shop at many different stores"; the 'store loyal/low price seeking' trait is however also evident for many young male shoppers who employ as simple a shopping strategy as possible "to reduce the complexity of the shopping task and the time spent doing it"; and finally, some men display a 'confused time-restricted' trait where they tend to feel perplexed and overwhelmed regarding store selection and thus may fall prey to the 'grab and go' method, purchasing items too quickly (Bakewell and Mitchell 2006: 1299). Conversely, female shoppers in the study tended to be bargain seekers, where they purchase as much as possible at sale prices; demonstrate the 'imperfectionism' trait, where they will settle for a product which is not precisely what they require nor the best in its category; as well as being store loyal, where they tend to visit the same stores each time they shop (Bakewell and Mitchell 2006: 1299). Manrai *et al.* (2001 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4) also found that "young male shoppers are more fashion conscious than young females", while Chen-Yu and Seock (2002: 61) found that young females shop significantly more often compared to young males.

3.5 The South African Clothing Retail Context

The South African apparel market has frequently been described as "highly competitive" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2), "rapidly changing" (Du Preez 2003: 11), "large and capital and people intensive" (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 15) and as "becoming more globally orientated" (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 16), thus representing major opportunities for both marketers and retailers alike (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 16). Terblanche (1998: 26-27) confirms the competitive nature of the South African retail market as he explains that, with the "exponential growth in the formats of retailing today" (Terblanche 1998: 26), including "informal traders selling branded goods on the city streets and the emergence of value centres, flea markets and factory shops" (Terblanche 1998: 26), as well as "the noteworthy growth in the development of shopping malls in South Africa" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 7), competition in the South African retail environment is rapidly increasing (Terblanche 1998: 27). Consumer Scope (2005 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 6), however, also reported that store selection is mostly dependent on and determined by the consumer's Lifestyle Level, where Levels One and Two (LSM 1-5), "tend to shop at lower priced stores, such as Pep and Jet, while those on Levels Three and Four (LSM 6-9) patronise higher-priced stores, such as Woolworths and Edgars" (Consumer Scope 2005 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 6). Consequently, firms need to clearly and effectively differentiate themselves in order to achieve success in such a dynamic environment riddled with competition and rivalry (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2).

Moreover, Nel, Gerber-Nel and Stanford (2005: 7) argue that the South African "apartheid laws kept the retailers and consumers of different races apart, which resulted in inadequate shopping facilities in the traditional black areas, and an oversupply of retailing outlets in the traditional white areas". Gaining access to these 'new' markets represents both a major challenge and important opportunity for the retailers of today, particularly with regard to the growing disposable income of the "Black middle class" which has particularly "benefitted retail sectors such as clothing" (Tustin 2010: 14 and 56). Furthermore, according to Tustin (2010: 79), the South African "retail trade sales will probably amount to around R600 432 billion for 2010, implying real growth of 1.5%", a low growth rate which is "inhibited by continued uncertainty over job security and income growth, which will dampen consumer spending" (Tustin 2010: 23). With regard to women-and-menswear specifically, the former comprised R58 387 million of the total industry sales in 2010, while the latter contributed R34 584 million to total sales (Tustin 2010: 62-63), again representing major opportunities within this sector.

Additionally, "in the South African consumer environment, the role of apparel as a means of portraying social standing and status is evident, as so many consumers could not do so via the 'traditional' status indicators, such as housing and vehicles" (Johnson 2006 cited in Du Preez *et* *al.* 2007: 4). The apparel worn by consumers is thus often judged, particularly in terms of its uniqueness and fashionability, and used to evaluate the social standing of the individual and subsequently formulate social comparisons (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4). According to The Status Society (1999: 12 cited in Du Preez and Visser 2003: 16), "apparel is regarded as the third highest status item (8.2%), after cars (65.3%) and cellphones (10.2%), and therefore the apparel worn is seen as a reflection of an individual's status in society. Black diamonds, the "new black South African middle class" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4), are especially prone to and associated with this type of consumer behaviour and, as a group, this consumer segment is "characterised by its great need for products associated with personal status and conspicuous consumption" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4). Black Diamonds are also responsible for an estimated 20% of all consumer spending in South Africa, further indicating the lucrative and profitable opportunities of the 'black market' as a whole and, in particular, the Black Diamonds of South Africa (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4). Nel *et al.* (2005: 7) also state that "there is sufficient evidence to indicate the growing disposable income of the so-called black market".

Finally, despite the intensely competitive nature of the South African clothing retail industry, the sector is flourishing and ultimately represents an abundance of opportunities for retailers and marketers in South Africa, particularly in terms of the black consumer segments, whose disposable income is rising and whose needs have previously been unsatisfied. Retailers must note, however, that the increasing competition, as well as the increase in consumer demands and expectations (Terblanche 1998: 26), means retailers need to be more 'in-touch' with their customers and target market and should thus be conducting market research on a regular basis to identify the consumers' preferences, in terms of stores and attributes, and develop an understanding of their apparel buying behaviour. Varley and Rafiq (2004: 69-70) also explain that consumers of different demographics, psychographic and behavioural characteristics, as well as those living or shopping in different geographic regions place varying levels of importance on the dimensions and attributes influencing buying behaviour. Inevitably, various market segments will have diverse requirements and will be seeking different benefits and features when choosing a retail outlet (Terblanche 1998: 63-64). Gender, for instance, plays a vital role in the overall segmentation of the clothing industry and clothing shopping has been described as a "gendered activity" (Dholakia 1999: 154), with males and females having different requirements, expectations and preferences which in turn, influence their determinant attributes and choice of clothing retailer. There is very little research on this topic, particularly in South Africa. Ultimately, the lack of South African research regarding gender differences for apparel shopping and especially amongst Generation Y consumers, further justifies the need for this research, which aims to determine whether a significant difference exists between the store preferences, buying motivations and determinant attributes of male and female Generation Ys.

CHAPTER 4:
GENERATION Y

This chapter focuses on Generation Y and thus includes a discussion of the definition of this generation, the importance of Generation Y, the characteristics of this age cohort, gender differences among Generation Y consumers, as well as past research on Generation Y. A focus is placed on 'Twixters', a subgroup of Generation Y and the focal point of this study. This generation is of particular interest as it is known for its unprecedented purchasing power "of which two-thirds goes on clothing" (Ebenkamp 1999: 4). O'Donnell (2006 cited in Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 285) states that "Gen Y consumers' expenditures on cars, apparel and other-items grew by 82 million (dollars) to exceed those of previous generations". Furthermore, as Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 97) explain "Generation Ys will hold differing attitudes/values/behaviour regarding shopping vis-a-vis other cohorts, because of technological/socio-cultural/economic and retail changes during the last 10 to 20 years", providing further validation for researching this consumer segment.

4.1 Defining Generation Y

According to Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: xi), the term Generation Y refers to those individuals born between 1978 and 2000, and these "tween, teen and twenty-somethings have become the nation's tastemakers, holding unprecedented sway over almost every aspect of shopping" in the US (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: xi). This particular age cohort is also often referred to as 'Millennials' (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: xi), 'NextGen' (Sweeney 2006: 1), 'Internet Generation', 'Nintendo Generation', Digital Generation' (Raines 2002: 1) and 'Echo Boomers', as the "children of the original baby boomers" (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 131).

4.2 Importance of Generation Y Consumers

According to Sweeney (2006: 6), it is important to study this specific age cohort as "Millennials are very different from previous generations at the same age" and many of their key behaviours and preferences "are likely to remain part of their lifelong culture since they seem to be embedded in their personalities" and will thus impact their buying behaviour as they mature and enter adulthood. Consequently, it is vital to satisfy and capture this market now in order to secure a steadfast clientele for the future. In addition, Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 97) further explain that Generation Y consumers have inevitably been influenced and affected by the many "technological, socio-cultural or economic and retail changes during the last 10 to 20 years" and have thus developed a very distinct set of beliefs and values which will in turn be reflected in their unique buying behaviour and hence "marketing and retailing to this cohort requires a different approach" (Phelps 1999 cited in Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 95). This is confirmed by Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 2) who describe Generation Y as "unquestionably unique" and "potentially one of the most powerful and influential generations ever" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 2). According to Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001: 35), "marketers are aware that the buying habits that Generation Y establish now will likely have a significant impact in the retail world in years to come". Subsequently, information, insight and understanding of these consumers and their buying behaviour is needed to achieve constant growth and development of this diverse industry by continuously satisfying their ever-changing requirements (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 15).

Levy and Weitz (2001: 114) explain that Generation Y consumers generally represent three types of opportunities for marketers targeting this specific age group:

1. This age cohort has more disposable income and "money to spend" than previous generations at the same age (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114).
2. Generation Y consumers tend to exert a powerful influence over the household expenditures as a whole "through their requests to parents or by shopping themselves" (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114). Hawkins *et al* (2007: 133) further explain that "teenagers currently spend over $150 billion annually for personal consumption, spend billions more while doing the household shopping, and influence the purchase of many additional items such as cars and vacations".
3. Generation Y consumers represent a highly profitable and lucrative consumer segment and market for the future (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114). As is confirmed by Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 133), "preferences and tastes formed during the teenage years can influence purchases throughout life". With regard to the apparel product category itself, Generation Y represents a major growth market for this particular industry as these consumers, aged 18 to 34, "spend the most of all age categories" on clothing (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 133).

In addition, Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 12) demonstrate the power and importance of Generation Y as a consumer segment as they describe this age group as active bloggers who continuously express their opinions, attitudes and experiences through various online mediums and, in so doing, "use their power to effect social change, make or break retailers, and popularise (and occasionally destroy) other people" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 12). Inevitably, "Gen Y's unique relationships with brands, their powerful influence on marketers, their peers and their friends, their love of technology, and their speedy, visual world are reshaping retailing" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 22). With regard to the economic recession, for instance, many older generations significantly altered their buying behaviour during this time while Generation Y consumers, although purchasing less than normal, still "have carried retailers of affordable fast fashion safely through the tough early months of 2009" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 43). This is the direct result of the vital role that shopping plays in the lives of Generation Y consumers. These consumers use shopping as a means of connecting with each other, discovering and learning about themselves, and adds to their sense of control and predictability of the vague and tentative future (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 75). This in itself represents a major opportunity for marketers and retailers "to be a central part of these consumers' lives and to be adored" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 75). By achieving this, retailers will be equipped to remain competitive and profitable within the volatile, highly competitive market that is retailing.

Finally, Du Preez and Visser (2003: 19) assert that "all stakeholders in the apparel industry could benefit from an understanding of the youth market", particularly since these segments "are extremely lucrative, with high expenditure on apparel" (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 19).

4.3 Characteristics of Generation Y Consumers

According to Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001: 33), "Generation Y is believed to have unique characteristics that are different from preceding generations". Woodruffe (2009: 32) explains, however, that these characteristics apply to Generation Y in general and thus it should not be assumed that "everyone born within their timeslot will embody all their characteristics-good or bad". Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 11-17) explain that Generation Y is known for its "big four" characteristics, namely:

- **Confidence.** Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 12) argue that Generation Y is empowered as a result of being "doted on by parents", being "told they were special by everyone", being able to "find out for themselves and share ideas on the internet", and lastly, being envied by society for the one characteristic that belongs to this age group alone, their youth (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 12-13). Raines (2002: 3) adds that Generation Y's are very confident in their ability to overcome anything that may lie in the way of their path to success.
- **Connection.** Generation Y individuals tend to be "inclusive and team-oriented, and they harness technology to get and stay connected to each other" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 14), and have frequently been referred to as "permanently connected" (Woodruffe 2009: 35). They are also very collaborative in nature and thus place great importance on a "fair to all" mentality (Raines 2002: 4), and work well within a team (Woodruffe 2009: 32).

- **Choice.** This feature refers to this generations' "overwhelming array of choices" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 11) as a result of the "internet and portable, digital technology" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 16).
- **Speed and instant gratification.** This attribute represents the fact that "Gen Y is a high-speed generation" that is "easily bored and highly attuned to the power of visual symbols" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 17). Accordingly, Generation Y has frequently been described as "impatient, convenience-oriented, blunt, image-driven, stimulation junkies" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 18). These consumers "want what they want when they want it" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 8). The availability of technology, and the internet in particular, has shortened their attention spans, increased their need for immediate gratification, and enabled them to become highly efficient and "super speedy at processing visual data" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 9). Therefore, Black (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212) explains that "the shopping experience must be easy" as "Gen Y is accustomed to instant gratification and has no time for hassles".

Further characteristics include:

- **Brand conscious.** Generation Y consumers tend to prefer products that are customised to their specifications, as well as placing great importance on brands (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 132). However, "while Gen Yers like their brands, they are quick to switch retailers if the retailer fails to deliver on its brand promise", particularly in terms of quality and customer service (Levy and Weitz 2009: 96-97). Therefore, although Generation Yers are "more enthusiastic" about brands, they also tend to be more "fickle" about them (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 27). Furthermore, Cheng (1999 cited in Wolburg and Pokrywcznski 2001: 38) found that "the teen market can be extraordinarily brand-loyal if they trust the brand; however, if they don't trust the brand, "they run away screaming". According to Morton (2002 cited in Hyllegard *et al.* 2009: 113), "brands may be an especially salient factor in shaping purchase decisions" for Generation Y consumers. O'Donnell (2006 cited in Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 288), however, further explains that "cheap or elite merchandise alike appeal to this market segment", demonstrating that these consumers base their purchase decisions on the promise that comes with a brand rather than on the actual expense of a brand name. According to Levy and Weitz (2009: 96), Generation Y is the "driving force behind the growth of masstige-products with prestige appeal but mass market prices" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 96). This is confirmed by Taylor (2006: 50-51) who believes that Generation Y is characterised by a consumer orientation as a result of being "acculturated into a materialistic and consumer culture" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 97) and thus prefers the "idea of being an active customer as opposed to a passive one" (Pellegrin 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 213).

- **Money-wise.** Generation Y is known to be "cash-conscious and savvy about competitive pricing", as well as clearly comprehending the "price/value relationship" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212). These consumers are thus highly admired for the extent of their "fiscal knowledge" which has "earned them the respect of marketers today" (Martin and Turley 204: 465). They have also developed and fostered a substantial "knowledge about investments" (Farris, Chong and Dunning 2002: 90). Accordingly, Generation Y college students become more and more "protective of their money and focused on the tangible benefits of products" as they reach higher levels of education and develop their understanding and acumen regarding money matters (Martin and Turley 2004: 468).
- Generation Y also tend to be **Entertainment orientated** (Taylor 2006: 50-51). Moore and Carpenter (2008: 332), for instance, found that the Generation Y consumer "engages in clothing shopping for its entertainment value". A key finding in a study conducted by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 103) indicated that, for this age cohort, "shopping is a form of leisure and enjoyment" and "retailers should consider ways to improve the leisure experience for this group" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103). Black (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 211) further explains that "today's Gen Y expects an entertainment environment" which should be "eclectic and theme driven" in order to attract this generation and "entice" them to buy.
- As a group of consumers, Generation Y displays a strong **Sense of Entitlement** (Taylor 2006: 50-51; Woodruffe 2009: 32). Zaslow (2007: 2) explains that "signs of narcissism among college students have been rising for 25 years" and this is, according to Professor Chance (cited in Zaslow 2007: 2) "representative of a culture of excessive doting". For years, Generation Y children have had their 'egos boosted' and self-esteems lifted by constantly being told that they are 'special' just the way they are. This, unfortunately, lead them to believe that there was in fact no need to improve and the "idea that being special comes from working hard and having high expectations for yourself" (Zaslow 2007: 1) was lost. According to Hill (2002: 62), echo boomers have been raised in an environment where they are praised for anything and everything which "fails to build skills or prepare young people for the realities of the adult world".
- **Tech-savvy.** Generation Y is known for embracing technology (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 287) as they are, according to Rist (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 215), "more immersed in technology than any generation before them". The 'techno-literate' (Farris *et al.* 2002: 91) nature of these consumers means that they are "using these tools to

become more educated about products and talk with each other about what to buy" (Rist 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 215). Black (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212) adds that, "the more technically inclined the retailer, the more apt this consumer is to make purchases". This is confirmed by Rist (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 215) who recommends that all retailers exploit this characteristic by developing a "community for Gen Yers to communicate with each other as this should be a major part of the marketing program".

- **Sense of excellence** (Taylor 2006: 50-51), **well-educated, achievement-orientated** (Raines 2002: 1), and **highly ambitious** (Woodruffe 2009: 32). As Reynolds (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 217) explains, Generation Y's "are anxious to learn, to grow, and to have chances to achieve meaningful goals". Hill (2002: 63) adds that, for Echo Boomers, "motivation has increasingly turned inward, and work is more about personal fulfilment and less about external rewards".
- **Scepticism** (Taylor 2006: 50-51) and **anti-corporate sentiment** (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 288). This Generation Y characteristic is clearly illustrated by "the driving mantra for the Gen Y shopper" which "is that there are no rules" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 211). Furthermore, the Generation Y consumer is "keenly sensitive to what is real: an environment that feels authentic and doesn't demand a purchase but instead invites the customer to participate in the process of discovery" (Pellegrin 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212-213).
- **Socially responsible** and **environmentally conscious** (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 288, Farris *et al.* 2002: 94), as well as being **civic-minded** (Raines 2002: 4). Generation Y consumers are "taught to think in terms of the greater good" (Raines 2002: 4), playing a highly active role in contributing to their local communities as well as creating a safe, "sustainable environment" (Raines 2002: 4). According to Dart and Tang (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 220), Generation Y's have a "passion to save the earth" and this is reflected in their lifestyle and in every decision they make. Ultimately, Generation Y consumers "will look to support positive change via their purchases, increasingly responding to cause-related products and marketing" (Salzman 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 225).
- **Sociable** (Raines 2002: 1). As Generation Y is prone to spending "innumerable hours on social networking sites, such as MySpace and Facebook" (Dart and Tang 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnel 2009: 219).
- **Independence** and **individualism** (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 288). Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 132) describe this generation as being "characterised by a strong sense of autonomy" made up of individuals who are "assertive, self-reliant, emotionally and intellectually

expressive, innovative and curious" (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 132). According to Farris *et al.* (2002: 90), the majority of Generation Ys have grown up in homes where both their "parents work outside the home" and, as a result, these consumers are "more self sufficient, responsible, and mature than any other generation". With regard to their individuality, this is often expressed in the clothing worn by this generation as they are not "encumbered with strict codes of fashion" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212).

- **Idealistic** (Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 288) and **hopeful** (Raines 2002: 1 and 4). Farris *et al.* (2002: 95) explain that "Generation Y seems to be more optimistic than preceding generations".
- **Influential** (Raines 2002: 1) and **outspoken** (Woodruffe 2009: 32). As Rist (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 214) explains, "although they prefer face-to-face communication most of all, they are much more likely to use their cell phone, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging, and online communities such as MySpace or Facebook to discuss services, products or brands".

Generation Y consumers, according to Levy and Weitz (2001: 114), display many behaviours which seem to be contradictory and inconsistent. For instance, these consumers value and strive for a high quality of life, yet they participate in too many hobbies and interests, which in turn cause them to feel stressed and overwhelmed, and many of these young consumers also become involved in the abuse of drugs and alcohol, which is ironic considering the high quality of life they wish to achieve. Furthermore, Generation Y consumers refuse to have their lives ruled and dictated by jobs and work, yet are still not willing to compromise on the vast amount of shopping they have become accustomed to (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114). Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 111) also discovered that although these consumers want to be seen as unique and individualistic, they still want to feel a sense of unity and "belonging to groups" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 111). These consumers thus often battle with their desire to be individuals and independent which "conflict(s) with their need to conform to group standards" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 111).

4.4 Past Research on Generation Y Consumers and their Apparel Purchasing Behaviour

A study conducted by Moore and Carpenter (2008), which aimed to identify whether the four main generational cohorts differed in their perceptions of market cues for quality, price and shopping enjoyment (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 327), found that Generation Y consumers were less likely to "use the country-of-origin cue in their purchasing consideration for clothing" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 331), indicating that Millennials will not likely scrutinise the quality of a product based on where it is produced (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 332). The attribute of 'country-of-origin' comprised two components, namely: does the consumer believe that clothing made overseas (that is, not in the US) is of a lower quality; and does the consumer observe the country-of-origin label on the clothing when making a purchasing decision (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 331).

The study also found that Millennials "perceive higher prices as a cue for prestige that encourages purchasing behaviour" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 332). This is confirmed by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 98) who state that "younger generations are more likely to associate higher prices per se with improved quality and worth" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98) and that "one in two adult female Generation Ys pursue quality, even if it implies higher prices" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103). According to Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 44), Generation Y consumers "may want some fashion that's cheap and fast, but Millennials are also big spenders when they think it's worth it". Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 102) also found that Generation Y consumers generally seek high quality products and these authors believe this to be caused by the media which "portray affluent and opulent lifestyles" which "Generation Ys have been acculturated by" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 102). In summary, these authors found that "Millennials pay the least attention to quality among the four groups. However, this group is the most likely to purchase clothing when it is considered to be prestigious" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 333). Furthermore, Millennials "appear to be less price conscious", and they also indicate "the highest degree of shopping enjoyment, particularly compared to their parents, the boomer cohort" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 333).

Further findings with regard to retail attributes were identified by Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 45), who found that "Gen Yers are particularly irritated and annoyed by discourteous and unfriendly salespeople", as well as being equally frustrated with "high prices, long lines, disorganised displays, and out-of-stock merchandise" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 46), which contradicts previous findings in terms of the price factor. This was reiterated by Martin and Turley (2004: 464) who conducted a study examining the consumption motivations of Generation Y consumers aged 19 to 25, with particular reference to shopping at malls. The findings indicated that "this group is largely motivated by objective, functional and economic motivations to consume" (Martin and Turley 2004: 469) and thus it is suggested for retailers to focus on delivering products and services which will meet the economic requirements of these consumers, as opposed to concentrating on other attributes such as atmospherics, which seem to be irrelevant for practical shoppers such as these (Martin and Turley 2004: 470).

Accordingly, a contradiction regarding the attribute of price is evident between the studies of Moore and Carpenter (2008) and Martin and Turley (2004), as well as the theory of Yarrow and

O’Donnell (2009). In summary, it seems that Generation Y consumers generally prefer low prices, however, they are willing to spend more should they perceive the extra capital outlay as beneficial in terms of achieving high prestige or status, or when purchasing products which are of a higher quality. Therefore, Generation Y consumers appear to be more concerned with getting value for their money and thus prefer prices that are reasonable for what they are receiving in return.

Lastly, Hyllegard *et al.* (2009: 122), in their study which examined Generation Y consumers’ responses to advertising using fair labour versus sexual appeal message strategies, found that the attribute of ‘socially responsible production’ was important in influencing Generation Y consumers’ evaluation of retailers and “a fair labour message may contribute to positive evaluations of advertisements and may build positive attitudes toward apparel retailers, which may, in turn, influence patronage intentions” (Hyllegard *et al.* 2009: 122). This finding, along with the generally recognised Generation Y characteristic of being socially responsible and environmentally conscious, suggests that retailers targeting this consumer segment should pay close attention to the messages portrayed in their advertising, as well as exercising their corporate social responsibility.

Therefore, to sum up, from the literature it appears that Generation Y consumers are most influenced by the following characteristics when choosing between clothing retailers, namely: high quality merchandise, price/value relationship, reasonable prices, speedy checkout lanes, well organised merchandise displays, fully stocked store and corporate social responsibility on the part of the retailer, while being less concerned or affected by the attributes of country-of-origin of the merchandise, as well as the overall atmospherics of the store.

4.5 Gender Differences among Generation Y Consumers

Generation Y research conducted by Yarrow and O’Donnell (2009: 119) shows that “men shop less frequently, don’t stay as long when they go, and spend far less than their female counterparts on clothing, shoes, and accessories – not to mention groceries”. It is apparent, however, that the men of Generation Y are shopping more than the men of previous generations and this increase in shopping amongst the male gender seems to be growing each year (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 119). There are many reasons for this, such as the changing perceptions of shopping which is now seen as something “fun and sociable” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 119) and a way of spending time with friends; men have “gotten more particular in their tastes; and retailers have gotten better at catering to them” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 120).

Inevitably, gender differences are slowly fading as a “shift towards gender convergence” becomes more prominent (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 128). Accordingly, “men and women are increasingly similar in how they live, what they want, and who does what” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 128) and generally, “there’s much more freedom for men to explore formerly female categories like cooking and clothes, and for women to dip into traditionally guy categories like extreme sports and yard care” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 128), as well as technologically-orientated products (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 129). The lack of distinctive gender differences with regard to shopping is also the result of an increased importance in appearance. The growth in appearance concerns translates into both men and women shopping for clothing, accessories and personal care products as the items directly associated with and affecting appearance (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 129). Nevertheless, retailers must still note that the main “interests” of both men and women have remained almost unchanged, with men spending “big on luxury” (Smith 2008: 1), as well as preferring to purchase “music, electronics, games and sporting equipment”, while women prefer to shop for “clothing, accessories, and home decorations” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 129).

With regard to the specific shopping behaviour and preferences of males and females, “women want choice, and they’re willing to try on way more articles of clothing than men are to find the right thing” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 132), while “men, on the other hand, view lots of choice as overwhelming” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 132). Accordingly, women “may be more apt to bargain-hunt when it comes to fashion” (Smith 2008: 1), while men are “more focused on solutions than on options” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 132). Furthermore, according to Mulpuru, a Research Analyst, “men tend to value their time more” (Smith 2008: 1) and are thus “much more forthright than women in expecting quick checkout service” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 133). Men do not, however, “like to ask for advice, insight, or different sizes” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 133). With regard to online shopping in particular, men have been described as a “retailer’s dream” as they “spend more, make snap decisions, and return less stuff” (Smith 2008: 1). Ultimately, men and women use fashion in different ways: “women tend to enjoy fashion in its own right, as creative expression and as a social vehicle”, while “men use fashion and dressing in a solution-focused way” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 135).

Looking specifically at female Generation Y consumers, Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 95) conducted a study to determine the decision-making styles of adult female Generation Y consumers. Their findings indicated five groups of distinct decision-making styles applied by adult female Generation Y consumers, which were as follows: 1) Recreational quality seekers who enjoy shopping, want quality products, are brand loyal and are willing to pay more for brand names; 2) Recreational discount seekers, who are "price-sensitive and, although fashion conscious, they prefer sale and discount prices" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103); 3) Shopping and fashion uninterested, who are concerned with saving time and energy when shopping and with the price/value relationship of the items being purchased; 4) Trend setting loyals, who are highly "fashion and style conscious" and who "visit the same stores and buy the same brands" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 100); and 5) Confused time/money conserving, who are confused with overchoice, concerned with price versus value and who prefer lower prices to higher quality items (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 102). Unfortunately, however, these findings regarding female Generation Y consumer decision-making styles could not be compared to that of their male counterparts as a similar study could not be found for male Generation Y consumers.

Accordingly, the most important attributes to female Generation Y consumers seem to be: Wide Selection of Merchandise; and Low Prices, while the male Generation Y consumers appear to place greater importance on attributes such as: Speedy Checkout Lanes. The importance of various attributes do, however, differ depending on the decision-making style of the female Generation Y consumer. For instance, some women prefer high quality branded merchandise which they are willing to pay more for, while others prefer low prices and discounts. The research at hand aims to investigate this further and hence determine whether a significant difference exists between the determinant attributes of male and female Generation Y consumers.

4.6 'Twixters' as part of Generation Y

Within Generation Y, a sub-generation, referred to as the 'Twixters' and aged 18 to 25, has been identified and referred to as a "larger phenomenon" in today's society (Grossman 2005: 1). Grossman (2005: 1) explains that, "in the past, people moved from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to adulthood, but today there is a new, intermediate phase along the way. The years from 18 until 25 and even beyond have become a distinct and separate life stage, a strange, transitional never-never land between adolescence and adulthood in which people stall for a few years". The individuals caught up in this so-called pause in the natural progression of life are referred to as being "betwixt and between", hence the name 'Twixters' (Grossman 2005: 1). This subgroup of Generation Y, which accounts for over one-third of this generation (Martin and Turley 2004: 465), is thus the chosen sample of this study.

As Cui, Trent, Sullivan and Matiru (2003: 313) explain, Generation Y spans across a period of 17 years and thus "it is reasonable to assume that the perceptions of the older members are significantly different from those of younger members. The cultural reference points or psychographic experiences that affect market response or behaviour will also differ; therefore age becomes an important control factor" (Cui *et al.* 2003: 313). Noble, Haytko and Phillips (2009: 618) add that "Gen Y's age range from 14 to 31 years old indicates a heterogeneous group" where "a 14 year old will surely have different motivations for a purchase than a 31 year old". This is reiterated by Levy and Weitz (2001: 113) who explain that the Generation Y cohort spans across so many years that it is logical to break the generation down into children and young adults, especially since the age differences affect the manner in which the two groups respond to the marketplace. For this reason, Generation Y has been broken down and divided into a smaller cohort according to age, ultimately resulting in a chosen sample of university students aged 18 to 25. Martin and Turley (2004: 464) add that "the wealthiest members of the Generation Y consumption group are those 19-25 years old", many of whom are employed on a part or full-time basis, as well as being either part or full-time students enrolled at university (Martin and Turley 2004: 464). According to Grossman (2005: 5), "marketers have picked up on the fact that twixters on their personal voyages of discovery tend to buy lots of stuff along the way", which, along with the discretionary nature of their income, makes the 'twixter' subgroup of Generation Y highly worthy of study in its own right.

Subsequently, it is easy to recognise the importance of Generation Y, however, this study also involves university students as a representative group of the Generation Y age cohort. Chhabra (2010: 796) explains that university students are an "important subset of Generation Y" and "a detailed insight into this stratum provides an important insight into the mindset of a unique population belonging to today's generation and can serve as a basis for future deliberations" (Chhabra 2010: 796). This market segment is unique, lives a different lifestyle, and will potentially play a major role in the future market, resulting in marketing strategies having to "diversify to stay unique and distinctive in the midst of competition" (Chhabra 2010: 796; Levasseur 2007 and Treloar *et al.*, 2004 cited in Chhabra 2010: 796). According to Martin and Turley (2004: 465), the Generation Y consumers aged between 19 and 25 and currently registered at and attending university also have a "purchasing power of $105 billion" (Martin and Turley 2004: 465) in the US, thus rendering this market highly lucrative for many "college student-friendly products", such as apparel as is confirmed by Setlow (2001 cited in Martin and Turley 2004: 465), who found clothing shopping to be the number one favourite activity and hobby among Generation Ys (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98).

Finally, the importance and potential of Generation Y, as well as the 'Twixter' sub-segment, is clearly evident and an understanding and appreciation of this age group will undoubtedly lead to achieving great success, both in present and future markets. Capturing this market segment, will, however, require in-depth research and investigation in order to develop and foster a deeper knowledge of the preferences and buying behaviour of these highly lucrative consumers. This research aims to do exactly that, by determining the most patronised stores according to a sample of Generation Y consumers, as well as identifying the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. By knowing what they want, marketing strategies can be adapted and their needs can be better satisfied, thus representing vital market knowledge for all clothing retailers aiming to target Generation Y.

CHAPTER 5:
STAGE ONE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this chapter is "to communicate how the research was conducted" (Hair, Wolfinbarger, Ortinau and Bush 2008: 313) and hence explain the "logic behind research methods and techniques" (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell 2005: 2). This study employs a triangulated research design where the research is split into two main stages of data collection and analysis, and thus the research methodology will accordingly be divided into two chapters. This chapter focuses on the overall triangulated research technique, as well as particular focus on stage one of the research design, namely the focus group methodology as the qualitative component of the study. Since the findings of the qualitative research (focus group data) provide the input to the Stage 2 methodology, these are presented in Chapter 6 and the detailed methodology for Stage 2 (quantitative survey data) is presented in Chapter 7 followed by the findings in Chapter 8. The following sections are discussed in relation to Stage 1 of the research, namely; the sampling plan, focus group questionnaire design and distribution, and data analysis.

5.1 Statement of the Research Problem

As suggested by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, all humans have a need for clothing, whether to satisfy a physiological need, for both privacy and protective reasons, or in order to meet needs related to esteem and belongingness (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 365). Thus, some money will be spent throughout their lifetime on the purchase of various garments to satisfy these needs (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 365). The focus of this research is to find out why male and female Generation Y consumers prefer to purchase their clothing from one retailer over another in terms of the specific attributes applied in clothing store selection. Ultimately, the research aims to identify the reasons and motivations which drive Generation Y consumers to choose the particular clothing retailers which they patronise and to determine whether a difference exists between the buying motivations and determinant attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents, aged 18 to 25.

The research question for this study was therefore:

What are the buying motivations of male and female Generation Y consumers aged 18 to 25, and what are the specific attributes which determine their patronage behaviour in terms of clothing store selection?

Accordingly, the research objectives for this study were:

1. To identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.
2. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers.
3. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when purchasing various garments and pieces of clothing.
4. To identify the determinant attributes that influence clothing store selection among Generation Y consumers.
5. To determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection.

5.2 Research Design

According to Aaker, Kumar and Day (2004: 73), "a research design is the detailed blueprint used to guide a research study toward its objectives" and thus "serves as a master plan of the methods used to collect and analyse the data" (Shiu, Hair, Bush and Ortinau 2009: 61). In this study, a triangulated research design has been chosen. According to Cooper and Schindler (2006: 237), "triangulation is the term used to describe the combining of several qualitative methods or combining qualitative with quantitative methods". Cooper and Schindler (2006: 237) further explain that four main strategies for combining such methodologies are evident in marketing research today, namely:

1. The qualitative and quantitative design methodologies may be conducted simultaneously;
2. As Cooper and Schindler (2006: 237) explain, "a qualitative study can be ongoing while multiple waves of quantitative studies are done, measuring changes in behaviour and attitudes over time";
3. A qualitative study may be conducted before a quantitative study; or
4. A "quantitative study can precede a qualitative study" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 237).

The research at hand made use of the third of the above-mentioned triangulation strategies, and hence involved a qualitative study preceding a quantitative one. The main purpose of this was to "increase the perceived quality of the research, especially when a quantitative study follows a qualitative one and thus provides validation for the qualitative findings" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 237). Cooper and Schindler (206: 237) further justify that "many marketers recognise that qualitative research compensates for the weaknesses of quantitative research and vice versa" and therefore, these "methodologies complement rather than rival each other" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 237). The first stage of this two stage triangulated research design comprised the qualitative element of the study, namely the focus groups. The main aim of the focus groups was to identify the attributes the Generation Y respondents use when choosing between clothing retailers, as well as which clothing retailers they patronised and why. The overall objective was to gain a better understanding of the buying behaviour of these young adults and hence comprehend why they purchase what they do from where they do. The data obtained from these focus groups was analysed and subsequently used to formulate and refine the survey to be used in Stage 2 of the triangulation, which comprised the quantitative element of the research design.

This specific study made use of both exploratory and descriptive research designs in an attempt to "answer the marketing research objectives" (McDaniel and Gates 2001: 28). The exploratory component of the research aimed to "expand understanding of a topic, provide insights and possible explanations" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 193). This was achieved through the use of focus groups. The second component of the research design was descriptive in nature and aimed to discover "answers to the questions who, what, when, where, or how much" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 62). Accordingly, the researcher employed questionnaires in the second stage of the research to address these issues in relation to clothing store attributes and their influence over Generation Y's clothing store selection.

The study at hand focuses on Generation Y, however, a subset of this Generation, referred to as "Twixters" (Grossman 2005: 1; Belch and Belch 2007: 106) and aged 18 to 25, has been chosen to enhance the manageability of the study for the researcher in terms of ensuring a representative sample and ultimate results that will be both valid and reliable. Cui *et al.* (2003: 313) further explain that Generation Y spans across a period of 17 years and thus "it is reasonable to assume that the perceptions of the older members are significantly different from those of younger members" (Cui *et al.* 2003: 313). This study therefore focuses on what has been termed as "the heart of Gen Y-those who are in the lucrative college market" (Noble *et al.* 2009: 618). Accordingly, Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001: 33) strongly assert that this subgroup is worth thorough investigation due to the following factors: firstly, the overall size and enormity of this market; secondly, the role these consumers play as leaders within the market or as 'trendsetters'; the brand loyalty of these consumers which will remain steadfast as they progress into adulthood; the general nature of these consumers in terms of being open to try new things and act as 'early adopters'; their purchasing power with regard to both their own disposable income as well as influencing the purchases of their friends and family members; and lastly, since these consumers are studying at university, they are expected to graduate with a degree and thus achieve success later in life, resulting in a 'higher standard of living' and once again, more disposable income (Wolburg and Pokrywczynski 2001: 33). Therefore, the chosen sample for this study comprises university students aged 18 to 25.

With regard to the type of data used within the research process, the primary data, namely the "original data collected by the researcher for the purposes of his or her own study at hand" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 149), was obtained through focus groups and questionnaires. Secondary data was used to guide the primary data collection process, particularly in terms of the focus group questionnaire formulation, data analysis and interpretation. Subsequently, it is evident that both qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilised, through the use of both focus groups and surveys, and thus triangulation of the research design was achieved.

5.3 Research Ethics

The ethical standards of this research were maintained by the following:

1. Firstly, ethical clearance was obtained from UKZNP prior to conducting the focus groups and distributing the questionnaires (Refer to Appendix A);
2. Secondly, each respondent was asked to complete an Informed Consent document which was attached to each questionnaire so as to ensure that the respondents "take part freely" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 181). In addition, the Informed Consent document served to ensure that the researcher obtained the "necessary permission" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 201) from the respondents once they have been "truthfully informed about the purpose of the interview and the investigation" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 201);
3. Finally, the identity of the respondent(s) remained anonymous (Welman *et al.* 2005: 201) and therefore the participants' responses did remain confidential. In so doing, the researcher aimed to uphold the rights of the respondents, namely; the right to privacy, safety, to know the true purpose of the research, to know the research results and to decide which questions to answer (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 21).

Stage 1: Qualitative Data Collection

Stage 1 of the triangulated research design involved the collection of qualitative data which was obtained through focus groups.

5.4 Focus Group Sampling and Sample Size

The first stage of this two-stage triangulation design involved the use of four focus groups which were initially intended to consist of 10 participants per session.

5.4.1 Sampling

With regard to the sampling process applied during this first stage of triangulation, the researcher employed purposive quota sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, which involved selecting "prospective participants according to pre-specified quotas" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 481). In this case, potential focus group participants were selected for a particular demographic factor, namely age, in order to ensure that the respondents fell within the Generation Y, 18-25 year-old, age cohort. Furthermore, the researcher also aimed to select focus group participants in such a manner so as to ensure that a fairly even number of participants were recruited from each gender, to achieve the fifth research objective, as well as from each year of study, from first year through to post-graduate, to obtain a sample which is as representative of the sampling frame as possible.

5.4.2 Sample Size

Although the total focus group sample size was planned to be 40, it was 37. The following classes were visited by the researcher in an attempt to recruit focus group participants:

- French (1st year);
- Finance (2nd year);
- Sociology (3rd year);
- Marketing (Post-graduate).

In addition to visiting classes, the researcher also asked and encouraged those students who did agree to participate to 'bring friends' when they came to the focus group session in an attempt to ensure that the desired sample size would be reached by compensating for the expected poor response rate.

5.5 Stage 1 Data Collection

5.5.1 Focus Group Questionnaire

The focus group research involved "bringing a small group of people together for an interactive and spontaneous discussion of a particular topic or concept" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 175), in this case clothing store selection and the attributes which affect the corresponding patronage behaviour. The success of such a discussion tends to depend "heavily on the group dynamics" and "the willingness of members to engage in an interactive dialogue" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 175). The Generation Y students were asked to participate in this discussion in order to provide the researcher with an opportunity to develop a dialogue and conversation regarding the students' apparel buying behaviour. By being in such a setting, the researcher was able to ask the students questions, such as why they feel a certain way, as well as asking them to elaborate on certain points which in turn, enabled the development of a deeper and more accurate understanding of why they choose certain retailers over others, what they look for when choosing a store and why. The focus group discussions also gave the researcher a chance to note "what consumers say about products and attributes" (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 575).

Each focus group session began with an introduction by the researcher, explaining the purpose of the study, its objectives and what was expected of the participants. This was, unfortunately, repeated a few times before starting the focus group as many participants arrived late and in 'drips and drabs' so many respondents were addressed individually or in pairs to save having to repeat the introduction to those who had arrived on time. The focus group participants were then asked to read the informed consent document (Refer to Appendix B) attached to the focus group questionnaire and then to sign and date it if they still agreed to participate.

The principal objective of the focus group sessions was ultimately to identify the attributes which Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers, to develop an understanding of the meaning of these attributes, to determine the importance of these attributes, and finally to recognise the reasons and rationale for why the attributes are important and integral in influencing clothing store selection. An important purpose of the focus group sessions was to spend more time on the 'why' questions in this research and to develop an understanding of the meaning of the attributes. Therefore, in order to facilitate the achievement of these goals, the focus group participants were also asked to complete the focus group questionnaire, hence enabling the researcher to gather some data despite the lack of discussion on the part of some of the group members. Each focus group session was also recorded with a Digital Voice Recorder and saved to a CD-ROM so that verbal discussion as well as written responses could be analysed.

5.5.2 Explanation of Questions in Focus Group Questionnaire (Refer to Appendix C)

Question 1: Where do you purchase your clothing?

This is the first step in the positioning process, namely identifying the relevant set of competing products, in this case, competing clothing retailers. This question was discussed among the respondents. By asking the respondents to indicate where they purchase their clothing, the researcher aimed to gather the data needed to achieve the first research objective, namely, to identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.

Question 2: How often do you purchase clothing from the store identified in Question 1?

Next the respondents were asked how often they patronise these stores and to fill this in on the focus group questionnaire. This question was included to enable the researcher to identify the buying behaviour of the Generation Y consumers, and thus determine whether this impacts the choice of clothing retailer, as well as recognising any differences between male and female Generation Y consumers.

Question 3: Why do you shop at this store? What are your reasons for preferring this particular clothing retailer?

This question was discussion based and followed immediately after the students disclosed where they most frequently purchase their clothing. This relates to step 3 of the positioning process, which involves determining consumers' perceptions of the various competitors within the relevant industry (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). The aim of this question was to identify the buying motivations of the Generation Y research participants and, hence determine and understand the meaning of the various attributes applied by these consumers when choosing between clothing retailers, thus achieving the second research objective.

Question 4: What are the factors or attributes which you use when choosing between clothing retailers?

This question required the focus group participants to indicate which attributes they use when choosing between clothing stores and to fill their responses in on the questionnaire. As Van Ittersum *et al.* (2007: 1179) explain, attribute importance is a multidimensional concept, the first of which is the dimension of salience which is measured most accurately and validly using the **free-elicitation method** where participants are asked open-ended questions, such as Question 4, regarding which attributes they deem as important when choosing a particular product or brand, in this case, when choosing a clothing retailer. The respondents were also asked to rank these attributes to determine relative importance, with factor 1 being the most important. In so doing, the researcher aimed to gather data necessary to eventually identify the determinant attributes of this consumer segment, which is the second step of the positioning process. The ultimate purpose of this question was to ascertain and understand which attributes Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers and the relative importance of these factors in terms of influencing clothing store selection, thus accomplishing research objective number two. Upon completing Question 4 of questionnaire, the focus group participants were subsequently asked to share their factors with the rest of the group, as well as explaining why the factors had been chosen as the most important influencing their choice of clothing store, thus leading into question 5, and further fostering an understanding of the attributes used by this group in evaluating clothing retailers.

Question 5: Why is Factor 1 (in Question 4) the most important to you when choosing a clothing store?

This question was, again, discussion based and required participants to explain and elaborate on the reasons for choosing a particular factor as the most important and influential when choosing between clothing retailers. An important objective of the focus group sessions was to, not only identify what attributes are important to male and female Generation Y consumers, but also to discuss why these attributes are regarded as being so significant, thus developing and enhancing the researcher's understanding of the findings and ability to explain the results.

Question 6: Please rate the following attributes in terms of their importance when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where: 1 = the factor had NO influence over you; 10= the factor had a STRONG influence over you

The aim of this question was to measure the second dimension of attribute importance, namely that of relevance, and this was done using the **direct-rating method**, which requires participants to rate attributes (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180), in this case, on a scale from 1 to 10. The focus group questionnaire included a total of 46 attributes which had been identified throughout the review of various secondary literature sources. This question asked the respondents to rate the importance of all 46 attributes, and the resulting mean scores were then used to identify the most important attributes according to this sample, thus reducing and refining the list of factors to be included in the questionnaire to be pilot tested for the stage two survey of the triangulated research design.

Question 7: Please rate the following attributes in terms of their importance when choosing clothing to purchase? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where: 1 = the factor had NO influence over you; 10= the factor had a STRONG influence over you

This question focuses on a total of 16 intrinsic clothing attributes which influence a consumer's choice of clothing and apparel, as opposed to their choice of clothing retailer as is the case in the previous question (Question 6). The data collected from this question was used to enhance and support a more comprehensive, micro-perspective of the apparel buying behaviour of the final consumer, which is particularly necessary given the volatile, "capital and people intensive" nature of the apparel industry (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 15). All 16 intrinsic clothing attributes were included in the focus group questionnaire and respondents were again asked to rate the importance of each of these in terms of the factor's strength of influence when choosing clothing to purchase, again utilising the direct-rating method suggested by Van Ittersum *et al.* (2007: 1180). The attributes which received the highest average ratings of importance were subsequently included in the Stage 2 questionnaire.

Question 8: Please indicate Yes or No to the following questions:

8.1 Is your choice of store affected by how much time you have to shop?

8.2 Is your choice of store affected by how much you are buying (large or small quantities)?

8.3 Is your choice of store affected by whether you are buying a gift or shopping for yourself?

The focus group participants were asked to complete this question on the questionnaire. The first three questions (8.1 - 8.3) were included in the focus group questionnaire to investigate the findings of Van Kenhove *et al.* (1999) and Gehrt and Yan (2004) who concluded that certain situational conditions, such as time constraints, the quantity being purchased as well as whether the purchase is a gift or for oneself, influence the importance placed on store attributes, thus affecting the store selection criteria and process.

8.4 Is your choice of store affected by the messages used in the stores' advertising?

The aim of this question is to investigate a finding by Hyllegard *et al.* (2009: 122), which claimed that Generation Y consumers' perceptions and evaluation of retailers is often influenced by the messages used in the stores advertising.

8.5 Do higher prices signify higher quality?

8.6 Are you loyal to a specific brand?

8.7 Are you loyal to a specific store?

8.8 Are you willing to pay more for brand names?

8.9 Do you prefer sales/discount prices?

8.10 Are you fashion conscious?

8.11 Do you enjoy shopping?

Questions 8.6, 8.8 and 8.11 were included to probe the suggestions of Sullivan and Heitmeyer (2008: 287) who stated that Generation Y females "enjoy shopping, want quality goods, are brand loyal and willing to pay more for brand names", as well as investigating the findings of

Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 100), which concurred with that of Sullivan and Heitmeyer (2008: 287) while also further suggesting that a large percentage (33%) of their female respondents are not drawn to low prices or discounts and do “associate higher prices per se with improved quality and worth” (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98). Furthermore, the remaining five questions were incorporated into the focus group questionnaire to assist the researcher in identifying the respondents’ shopping orientations as “researchers have found that consumers with different shopping orientations have different store selection criteria” (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 56). For instance, Shim and Kotsiopulos (1992 cited in Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 56) found that “consumers who were brand or fashion conscious placed importance on the brand name of the store, customer services, or the visual image of the store”.

Question 9: What discourages you from purchasing from a particular store?

According to Myers and Alpert (1968: 15), “for many years, direct questioning involved asking respondents to tell why they bought or did not buy a given product as a means of uncovering determinant attitudes”. This final discussion question made use of the latter part of this technique by asking the participants to describe why they do not patronise certain clothing retailers, which further evoked discussion of several stores which were avoided for specific reasons. By asking the respondents to reveal what discourages their patronisation of a clothing retailer, the researcher aimed to further identify factors of importance in terms of influencing store selection, although from a negative perspective. For instance, respondents who claimed that high prices discouraged them from choosing certain stores were also inadvertently stating that low or reasonable prices form part of their selective criteria when choosing a clothing store.

Question 10: What is your Gender?

Question 11: What is your Age?

Question 12: What is your Race?

Question 13: What year of study are you in?

Question 14: What degree are you currently studying?

Questions 10 to 14 asked the respondents to reveal various demographic characteristics which were used by the researcher in evaluating the degree to which the focus group sample was representative of the sampling frame to be used in the next stage of the triangulated research process, namely the questionnaire stage.

Upon completion of the demographic questions, the researcher closed the discussion and the respondents were thanked for their participation and cooperation.

5.6 Focus Group Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is “to interpret and draw conclusions from the mass of collected data” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 79-80). Each focus group session was recorded using a Digital Voice Recorder from which the researcher was able to prepare transcripts and write-ups, which were then coded “to analyse and make sense of the data that have been collected” (Welman *et al.* 2005: 214). Once the codes were established, the data was entered onto a Microsoft Office Excel 2007 spreadsheet, thereby “converting the information to a form that can be read by a computer” (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 490). Subsequently, the statistical analysis of the data involved “determining the frequencies and percentages of occurrences of the chosen content” (Welman *et al.* 2005: 224) and this was graphically presented in both table and pie chart format. By doing so, the researcher ultimately made use of Content Analysis, a research technique which “follows a systematic process for coding and drawing inferences from texts” (Cooper and Schindler 2006), a method which has often been described as “a quantitative analysis of qualitative data” (Welman *et al.* 2005: 221). Finally, the qualitative data analysis was used to enhance the researcher’s understanding of the terms used by the focus group participants.

The close-ended questions of the focus group questionnaire were also analysed and the relevant mean and frequency data for these responses were also calculated and presented in graphical form. The focus group findings were ultimately used to formulate and refine the questionnaire to later be distributed in Stage 2 of the triangulated research design. A major outcome of the focus group data analysis was the identification and articulation of the top attributes which exert the strongest influence over the respondents’ choice of clothing store, using mean ratings. The top attributes influencing garment selection were also identified in the same manner and were subsequently included in the questionnaire to be pre-tested in the next stage of the data collection process. The analysis of the focus group data also revealed certain patterns relating to specific clothing stores and the reasons for the popularity of these stores which were included in the Stage 2 questionnaire to “provide validation for the qualitative findings” (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 237), thus enhancing the triangulated research design.

The aim of this chapter was to explain the rationale for using the chosen research design, namely that of triangulation. Accordingly, the two-stage research design has been divided into two separate research methodology chapters, with the first chapter (Chapter 5) focussing on the first stage of this triangulated design, and in so doing, provided explanations regarding the qualitative element of the research, including a description and justification of the focus group questionnaire, procedure and data analysis used, which lead to the focus group results presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6:
FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

This chapter provides the empirical findings which were obtained from Stage 1 of the triangulated research design, namely the focus groups.

6.1 Profile of the Focus Group Sample

The original objective was to conduct four focus group sessions, each consisting of ten participants. However, poor response rates rendered this methodology ineffective and this resulted in the first focus group consisting of 8 participants, the second of 6, the third of 20, and the fourth and final focus group session involved only 3 participants. Unfortunately, however, 5 of the focus group participants in focus group 3 arrived late to the session and subsequently merely completed a questionnaire and were thus not able to participate in the group discussion. Despite this, a total response rate of 64.9% was achieved, which was calculated using the percentage of actual focus group participants (37) of those who had previously agreed to participate (57).

6.1.1 Gender

Table 6. 1 Gender of the Focus Group Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	16	43.2	43.2	43.2
	Female	21	56.8	56.8	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

A total of 56.8% of the respondents were female.

6.1.2 Age

Figure 6. 1 Age of the Focus Group Participants

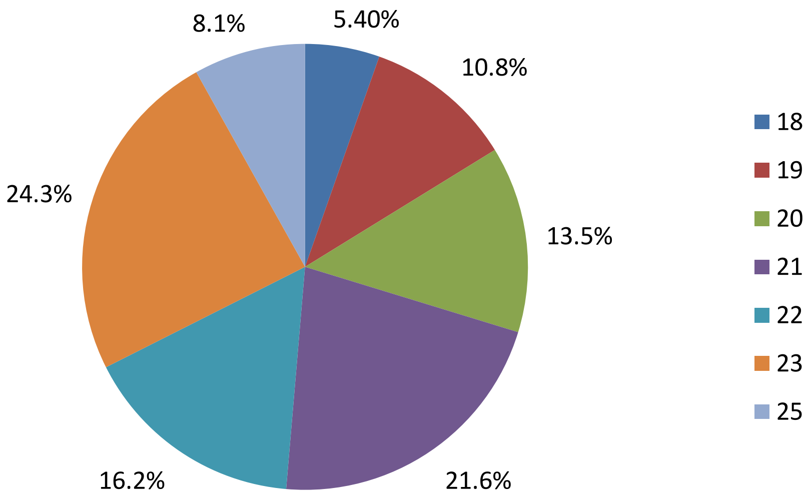


Table 6. 2 Age of the Focus Group Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18	2	5.4	5.4	5.4
	19	4	10.8	10.8	16.2
	20	5	13.5	13.5	29.7
	21	8	21.6	21.6	51.4
	22	6	16.2	16.2	67.6
	23	9	24.3	24.3	91.9
	25	3	8.1	8.1	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

The majority (86.4%) of the focus group participants fell within the 19-to-23-year-old age group, thus demonstrating its representativeness of the 'Twixter' subgroup of Generation Y, which includes individuals between the ages of 18 and 25. This is also representative of the sampling frame which will be utilised for the quantitative component of this research as the focus is on the 'Twixter' segment of Generation Y.

6.1.3 Race

Figure 6. 2 Race of the Focus Group Participants

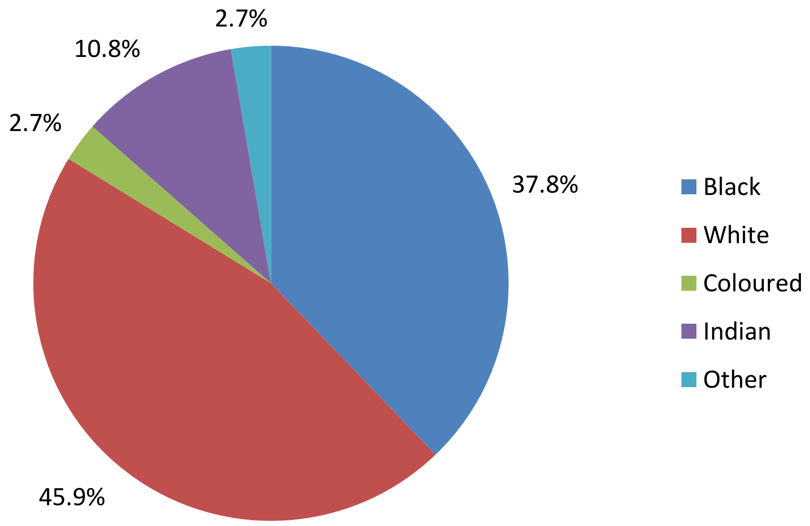


Table 6. 3 Race of the Focus Group Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Black	14	37.8	37.8	37.8
	White	17	45.9	45.9	83.8
	Coloured	1	2.7	2.7	86.5
	Indian	4	10.8	10.8	97.3
	Other	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

The majority of the focus group participants were White (45.9%), Black (37.8%) and Indian (10.8%). This, however, is not representative of the UKZNP population which comprises 69% Black students, 15.8% Indian students, 12.2% White students and 2.6% Coloured students (DMI Requests 2010). This failure to achieve accuracy with regard to representativeness may be attributed to the poor response rates as well as the sampling method employed by the researcher. Despite this limitation, however, valuable input was obtained from each of the races.

6.1.4 Year of Study of the Focus Group Participants

Figure 6. 3 Year of Study of the Focus Group Participants

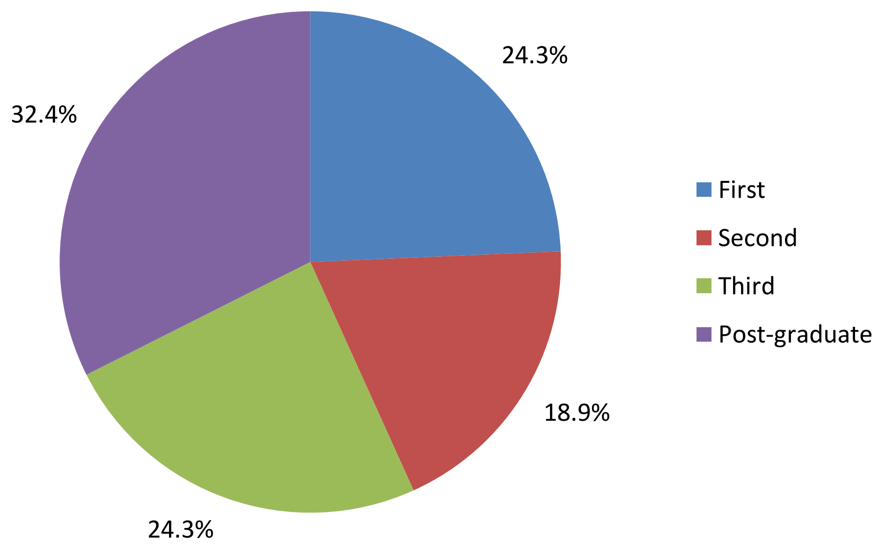


Table 6. 4 Year of Study of the Focus Group Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	First	9	24.3	24.3	24.3
	Second	7	18.9	18.9	43.2
	Third	9	24.3	24.3	67.6
	Post-graduate	12	32.4	32.4	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Of the students in the focus group sample, 32.4% were in their post-graduate year of study, while 24.3% were in their first year and a further 24.3% were in their third year of study, therefore 67.5% of the sample were under-graduate students. With regard to the UKZNP student population, 80% of the students are in the under-graduate years of study, while 20% are post-graduates. Therefore, the focus group sample does fail to accurately represent the UKZNP student population, however, all groups were qualitatively represented which was the most important objective.

6.1.5 Degree being studied by the Focus Group Participants

Figure 6. 4 Degree being studied by the Focus Group Participants

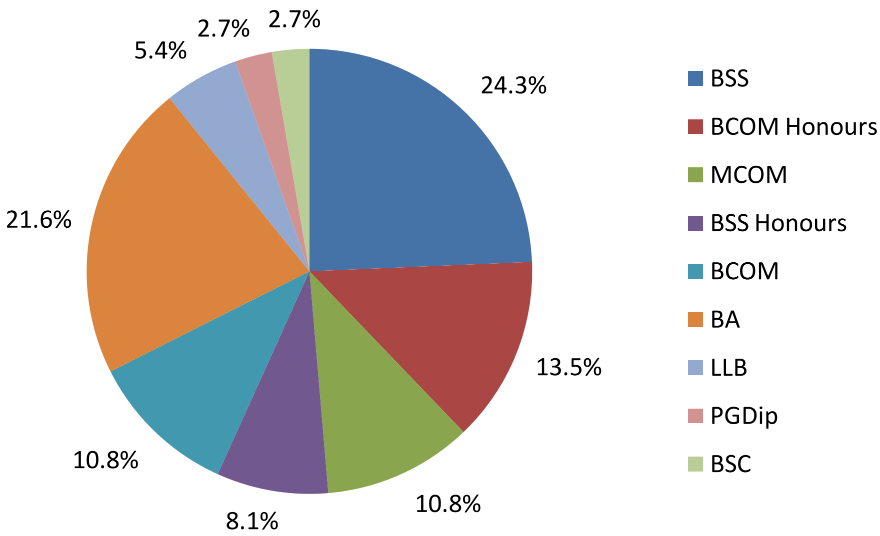


Table 6. 5 Degree being studied by the Focus Group Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BSS	9	24.3	24.3	24.3
	BCOM Honours	5	13.5	13.5	37.8
	MCOM	4	10.8	10.8	48.6
	BSS Honours	3	8.1	8.1	56.8
	BCOM	4	10.8	10.8	67.6
	BA	8	21.6	21.6	89.2
	LLB	2	5.4	5.4	94.6
	PGDip	1	2.7	2.7	97.3
	BSC	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Twenty-four point three percent of the focus group participants are studying a BSS degree, while 21.6% and 13.5% are studying a BA and BCOM Honours degree respectively. The inclusion of such a variety of degrees ensures that students with potentially different mindsets and preferences regarding clothing were incorporated into the study.

6.2 Shopping Habit Questions

6.2.1 Where do you purchase your clothing?

The aim of this question was to provide the researcher with the data necessary to achieve the first research objective, namely to identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.

Figure 6. 5 Most Patronised Clothing Stores

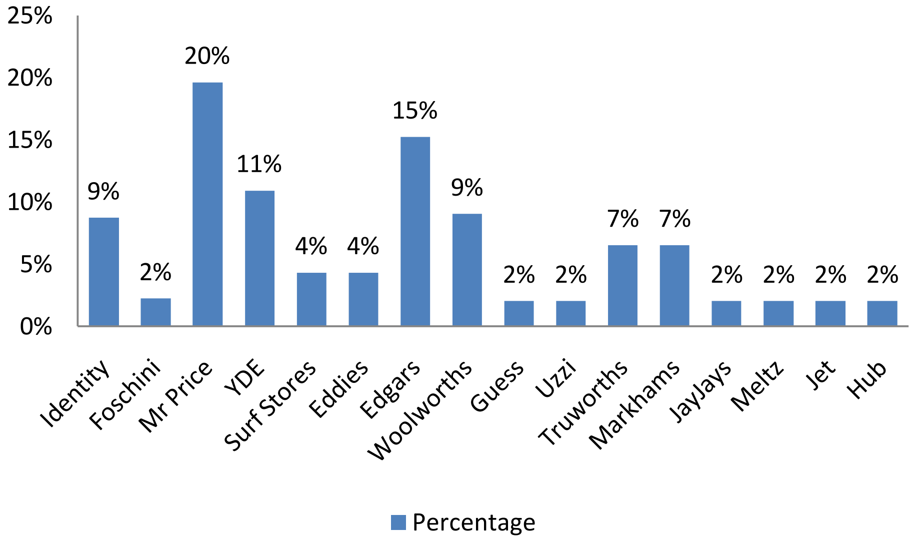


Table 6. 6 Most Patronised Clothing Stores

Store	Frequency	Percentage
Mr Price	9	20
Edgars	7	15
YDE	5	11
Woolworths	4	9
Identity	4	9
Truworths	3	7
Markhams	3	7
Surf Stores	2	4
Eddies	2	4
Foschini	1	2
Guess	1	2
Uzzi	1	2
JayJays	1	2
Meltz	1	2
Jet	1	2
Hub	1	2
	TOTAL	100

The most patronised clothing stores according to the focus group participants were Mr Price with a frequency of 20%, Edgars with a frequency of 15%, YDE with 11%, Woolworths and Identity both with a frequency of 9%.

6.2.2 Frequency of Clothing Purchases

Figure 6. 6 Frequency of Clothing Purchases

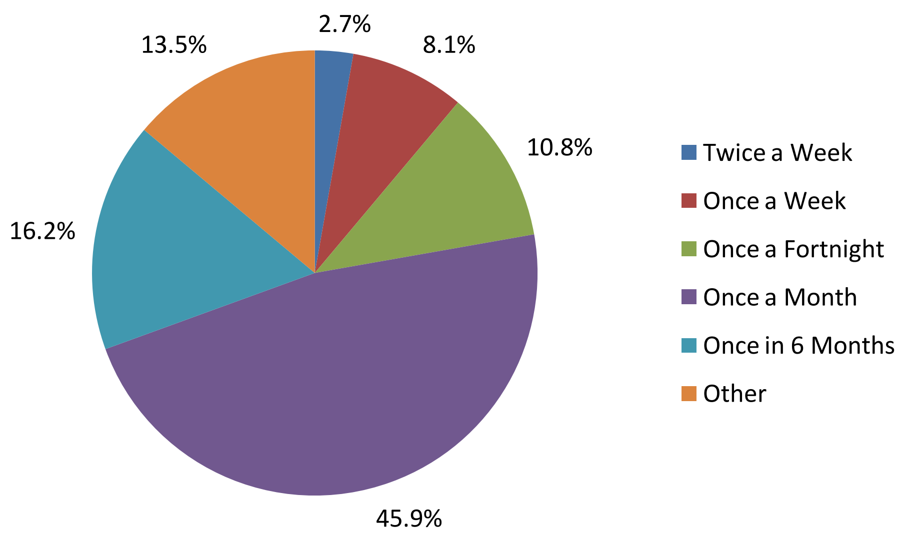


Table 6. 7 Frequency of Clothing Purchases

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Twice a week	1	2.7	2.8	2.8
	Once a week	3	8.1	8.3	11.1
	Once a fortnight	4	10.8	11.1	22.2
	Once a month	17	45.9	47.2	69.4
	Once in 6 months	6	16.2	16.7	86.1
	Other	5	13.5	13.9	100.0
	Total	36	97.3	100.0	
Missing	0	1	2.7		
Total		37	100.0		

The most common response and mode for this question was **Once a Month** with 45.9% of the respondents indicating this as their response.

6.2.3 Reasons for Shopping at the Preferred Clothing Store

The purpose of this question was to examine the buying motivations of the respondents and, in so doing, identify various attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers.

During each of the four focus group sessions, participants were, as suggested by Aaker *et al.* (2004: 196) "encouraged to express views in each topic and to elaborate on or react to the views of the other participants". This was achieved to some degree, however, a few of the research participants were very reserved and withdrawn and thus found it difficult to participate and express their views. Nevertheless, a Dictaphone was used throughout the discussions to compile field notes, and this raw data was subsequently transcribed into the write-ups presented below, along with the relevant codes for each of the transcript quotes. The codes act as "tags or labels that attach meaning to the raw data or notes collected during field work" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 214) and are thus essentially used to "make sense of the data that have been collected" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 214). The codes used to analyse the qualitative findings of this study were formulated by the researcher upon reviewing the field notes, and were then discussed with and validated by the research supervisor. Upon completing the coding list, a frequency table and pie chart was constructed to clearly "illustrate the results" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 217).

The points below briefly describe each of the 8 codes used to analyse the question of "Why do you shop at this store?"

1. Fashionable: These stores were perceived to have merchandise that is modern and up-to-the-minute in terms of the latest trends in apparel.

2. Status: A couple of participants explained that higher prices signify a higher degree of fashionability and authenticity in terms of brands which results in a higher status or social standing and therefore, although the prices may be slightly inflated, it is worth it as they were purchasing clothing which is trendy, up-to-date and judged as reputable with regard to quality. For example, one respondent said that "what I know for Black guys is that, the girls are going to look at the type of clothes you're wearing so you can't afford to wear something that's fake, you can but it's a bit you know, uncool".

3. Unique Merchandise: Some participants explained that "I'd rather shop at an expensive shop once a month than shop at a cheap shop every week and get something (lots of) people are going to wear", thus indicating that they would be willing to pay a little bit extra for clothing which is unique and original, even if it meant shopping on a less frequent basis.

4. Merchandise for smarter occasions: Participants clarified that certain stores are preferred over others when shopping for smarter, more formal apparel to be worn when going to church, going out in the evenings or for delivering presentations. For instance, a respondent explained that she buys her "clothes for church from Edgars", while another said she shops at "Woolies for smart stuff".

5. High Quality Merchandise: Participants disclosed that many stores are preferred because they are known for and associated with, offering merchandise which is of a very high quality, an attribute which is very important to many participants as they want clothing and apparel-related items which will be durable and reliable in terms of lasting through many seasons. For example, a participant revealed that "I enjoy Woolies 'cause of the quality of the clothing". This is particularly the case for items such as jeans and shoes where they prefer to buy only a few, good quality pairs, as illustrated by a respondent saying that "for guys, you only buy two pairs of jeans, you never need more than two pairs of jeans, and those you buy them nice jeans".

6. Age Appropriate: A participant felt that the 18-to-25-year-old age group is particularly interested in brands, and thus individuals within this age category will choose to patronise stores which meet their brand requirements, as indicated by the following quote: “branded stores for our age in particular”.

7. Low Prices: Many participants explained that the price of the store’s merchandise plays a significant role in impacting their choice to patronise the store, for instance, participants said that Mr Price is most patronised “cause it’s cheap and affordable”. Participants explained that since they are students, they generally shop at stores which are cheap and affordable and which offer various sales and promotions, however, this may change when they have been saving money or when their parents are paying, in which case they would patronise the more expensive clothing retailers, for example, a respondent said that Markhams is preferred “when your parents are paying”, while another said that “you can go to Mr Price since you are students, then on a good day when you have money or you’ve saved up you could go to Edgars and Jet”.

Figure 6. 7 Reasons for Shopping at the Preferred Clothing Store

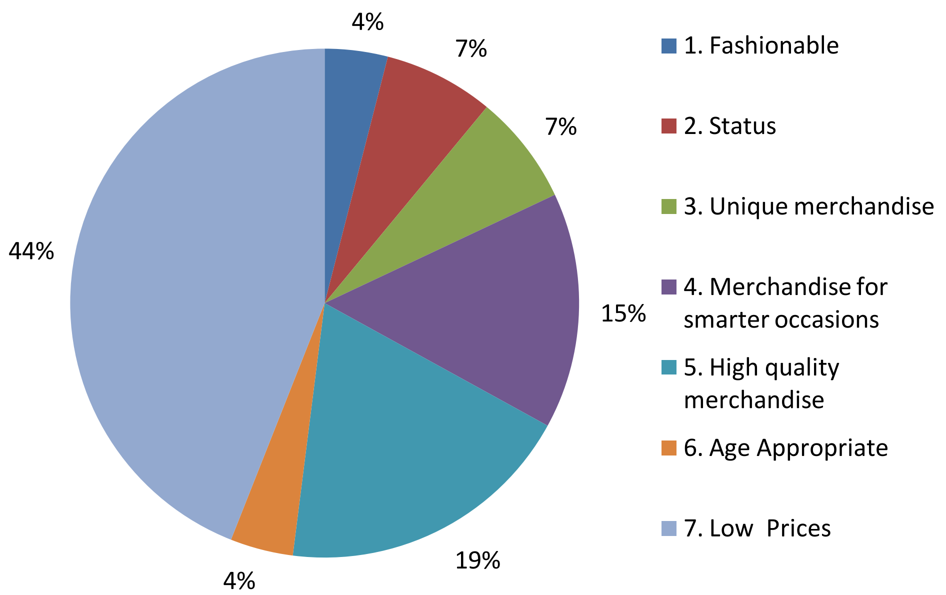


Table 6. 8 Frequency of Reasons for Shopping at the Preferred Clothing Store

Code	Frequency	Percentage
1. Fashionable/Trendy/Modern	1	4
2. Status	2	7
3. Unique merchandise	2	7
4. Merchandise for smarter occasions	4	15
5. High quality merchandise	5	19
6. Age Appropriate	1	4
7. Low Prices	12	44

Code **7. Low Prices** occurred repeatedly throughout the focus group discussion with a frequency of 44%. This indicates that the participants shop at their preferred clothing retailers mainly because these retailers offer merchandise which is of a reasonable price and generally is cheap and affordable. It is important to note that when students identified Mr Price as their preferred clothing retailer, the main motivation was its low prices and affordability. Woolworths was, however, chosen as a preferred retailer for offering merchandise of a very high quality, as well as merchandise which is more suitable and appropriate for smarter occasions. Edgars too was selected as a preferred retailer when shopping for smart or formal clothing.

6.2.4 What are the attributes which you use when choosing between clothing retailers?

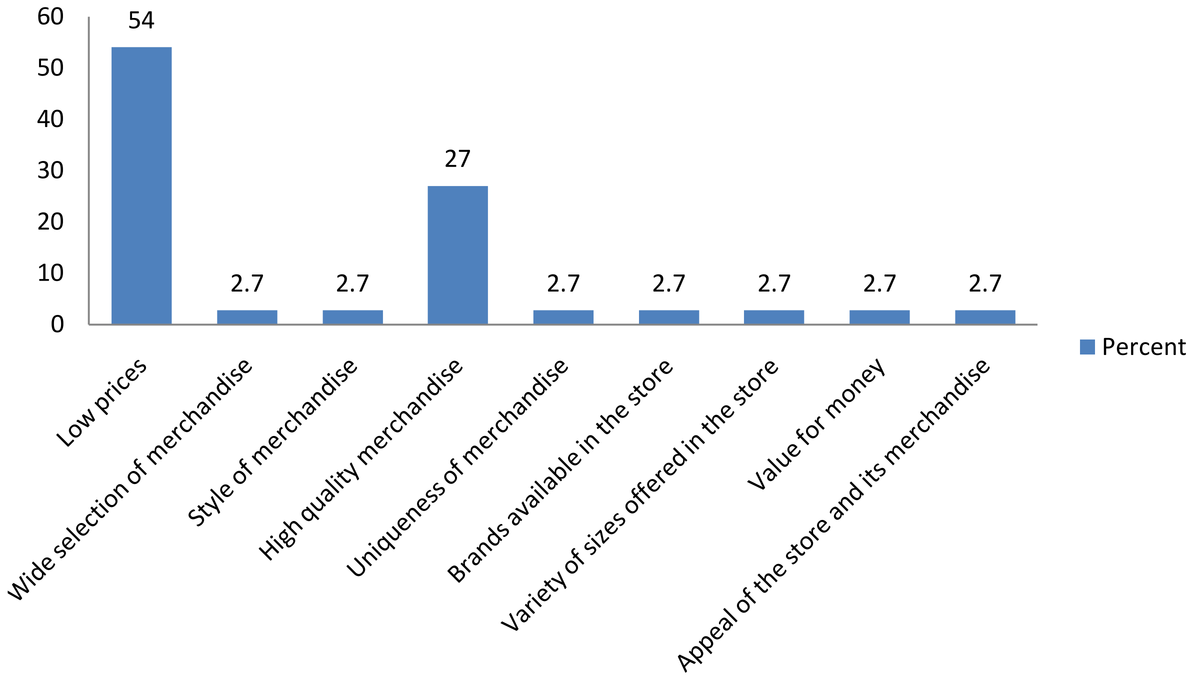
The main intention of this question is to provide the data necessary to achieve the second research objective, by identifying the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing a clothing retailer. This question was left open-ended in order to identify the respondents' 'top-of-mind' attributes influencing clothing store selection.

6.2.4.1 Most Important Attribute

Table 6. 9 Most Important Attribute used when choosing a Clothing Retailer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low prices	20	54	54	97.3
	Wide selection of merchandise	1	2.7	2.7	56.8
	Style of merchandise	1	2.7	2.7	59.5
	High quality merchandise	10	27.0	27.0	86.5
	Uniqueness/originality of merchandise	1	2.7	2.7	89.2
	Brands available in the store	1	2.7	2.7	91.9
	Variety/availability of sizes offered in the store	1	2.7	2.7	94.6
	Value for money	1	2.7	2.7	97.3
	Appeal of the store and its merchandise	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

Figure 6. 8 Most Important Attribute used when choosing a Clothing Retailer



The attribute which occurred most regularly as the most important attribute used by the focus group participants when choosing a clothing retailer was the attribute of Low Prices with a frequency of 54%, which was followed by the attribute of High Quality Merchandise with a frequency of 27%.

In order to formulate descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation data, the attributes were then allocated scores according to the rank order assigned by the research respondents. Therefore, attributes which were ranked as the most important were allocated a score of 5, second most important obtained a score of 4, third most important a score of 3, fourth most important a score of 2 and the fifth most important attribute was allocated a score of 1. The following table and graph represents these findings, from which the attributes were finally ranked in order of importance, starting with those attributes which received the highest means:

Table 6. 10 Mean and Standard Deviation for Clothing Store Attributes presented by the Focus Group Participants

Attribute	Mean	Standard Deviation
Low Prices	3.9	1.7
Wide selection of merchandise	1.1	1.5
Style of Merchandise	1.5	1.7
High quality merchandise	2.5	2.1
Uniqueness of merchandise	0.7	1.4
Brands available in the store	0.8	1.4
Variety of sizes in the store	0.2	0.9
Appeal of the store	0.1	0.3
Fashionable merchandise	0.9	1.5
Fit of clothing	0.2	0.7
Easy to find what I'm looking for	0.3	0.9
Reputation of the store	0.3	1
Value for money	0.4	1.3
Durability of merchandise	0.1	0.7
Store is liked by friends	0.1	0.7
Flexible return policies	0.2	0.7
Store location	0.2	0.6
Comfort of merchandise	0.2	0.7
Convenient shopping hours	0.1	0.5
Cleanliness of the store	0.1	0.4
Store ambiance and atmosphere	0.1	0.4
Store service	0.1	0.3
Ethical issues	0.03	0.2

Accordingly, the five most important attributes, with a mean score of 0.9 and more, were:

1. Low Prices (3.9)

2. High Quality of Merchandise (2.5)

3. Style of Merchandise (1.5)

4. Wide Selection of Merchandise (1.1)

5. Fashionable Merchandise (0.9)

6.2.5 Why is Attribute 1 the most important to you when choosing a clothing store?

An important objective of the focus group sessions was to discuss the respondents' reasons and rationale for identifying a specific attribute as being the most important when choosing a clothing retailer. Therefore, this question was included to guide and facilitate a discussion among the focus group members.

The points below briefly explain each code as used in the analysis of the question “Why is Attribute 1 the most important to you when choosing a clothing store?”

1. Students/limited budget: Many of the focus group participants explained that Price is the most important attribute influencing their choice of clothing retailer as they are students and are thus usually on a tight budget. For example, a participant said that “students are gonna say price, affordability is a big thing”, while another further explained that price is the most important because “we’re students, we’re on a budget, most of us are being funded by our parents so you have a specific amount for the month so you can’t go over budget”.

2. Quality/ Clothing Durability: Many participants chose High Quality as the attribute which was the most significant to them in terms of impacting their clothing store selection, as they are willing to pay a slight price premium for clothing that will be durable and long-lasting. This is illustrated by a few of the quotes from various respondents, such as: “quality because when you go buy something, you want to buy something that will last forever...that won’t shrink or something like that”; “Quality, I’m willing to pay a little bit more if it’s worth it”; and “Quality, what if you can only wear it once and it falls apart?”.

3. Wide Selection of Merchandise: A focus group participant explained that she goes to Edgars because “I’m small so I go to Edgars Petite”, thus meaning for her, a Wide Selection of Merchandise is the most important attribute as she is small in stature and thus requires clothing ranges such as the Edgars Petite range to meet her apparel requirements.

4. Value for Money in terms of Quantity: A few of the participants believed that Low Prices are the most important attribute influencing their choice of clothing retailer as this enables them to essentially get “more bang for their buck” and buy larger quantities of clothing without breaking the bank. For example, a respondent said that “the cheaper you buy the more you can buy”, while another prefers “quantity over quality”.

5. Clothing Fit: A focus group participant explained that “it depends how well you look in it” and thus the fit of the clothing offered by the store is highly influential in terms of affecting clothing store selection and that regardless of the price of the item, clothing fit is paramount.

Figure 6. 9 Frequency of Reasons for Attribute 1 being the Most Important

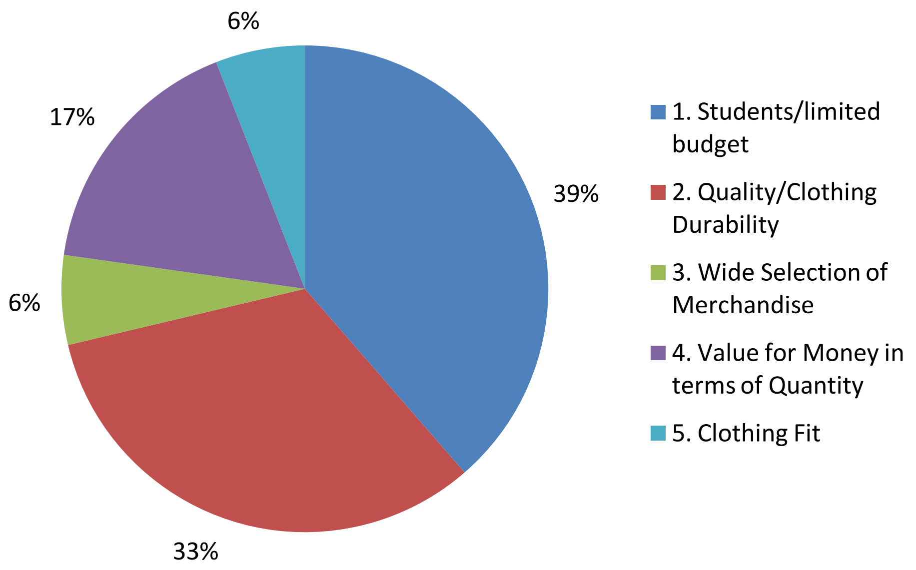


Table 6. 11 Frequency of Reasons for Attribute 1 being the Most Important

Code	Frequency	Percent
1. Students/limited budget	7	39
2. Quality/ Clothing Durability	6	33
3. Wide Selection of Merchandise/Availability of Sizes	1	6
4. Value for Money in terms of Quantity	3	17
5. Value for Money in terms of Clothing Fit	1	6

The codes **1. Students/limited budget**, with a frequency of 39%, and **2. Quality/ Clothing Durability**, with a frequency of 33%, appeared regularly as reasons for why attribute 1, namely Price and High Quality, were the most influential with regard to impacting clothing store selection. As students explained, “affordability is a big thing” and they’re “on a budget” and thus only “have a specific amount for the month”. In terms of quality, students said they “want to buy something that will last forever” and that “won’t shrink or fall apart” and thus want to get their money’s worth in terms of quality clothing.

6.2.6 Clothing Store Attributes

The purpose of this question also relates to the second research objective of this study, namely to identify the relative importance of the attributes that influence clothing store selection among Generation Y consumers. The student respondents were therefore asked to rate the attributes presented below in terms of their importance when choosing a clothing retailer, according to a 1 to 10 scale where 1 indicated that the attribute had no influence over the respondent and 10 that the attribute had a strong influence over the respondent. The table below thus presents the average importance ratings for each of the attributes as rated by the focus group sample, as well as the standard deviation.

Table 6. 12 Mean and Standard Deviation for each Clothing Store Attribute

Attribute	Mean	Std Dev	n (No. of Respondents)
Store has the type of clothing I like	9.2	0.8	37
Reasonable Prices	8.7	1.7	37
Style of Merchandise	8.4	1.4	37
High Value for Money	8.1	2.2	37
High Quality Merchandise	8	1.7	37
Wide Selection of Merchandise	7.8	1.6	37
Fashionable Merchandise	7.7	2	37
Uniqueness of Merchandise	7.6	2.1	37
Low Prices	7.4	2.5	37
Easy to find what I'm looking for	7.2	1.7	37
Fully Stocked Store	7.2	2.2	37
Advertising is Appealing	7	2.3	37
Convenient Store Location	6.9	2.4	37
Easy to Travel to Store	6.9	2.3	37
Helpful Sales Personnel	6.9	2.5	37
Friendly Sales Personnel	6.9	2.2	37
Ease of Movement through Store	6.7	2	37
Many Sales Promotions	6.6	2.5	37
Store Reputation	6.6	2.9	37
Convenient Shopping Hours	6.5	2.7	37
Short Travel Time to Store	6.5	2.4	37
Clean Store	6.4	2.1	36
Post-transaction Satisfaction	6.4	2.4	37
Advertising is Believable	6.4	2.2	37
Speedy Checkout Lanes	6.3	2.4	37
Many Brands available in the store	6.2	2.9	37
Pleasant Dressing Rooms	6.2	2.8	37
Store Ambiance and Atmosphere	6.1	1.7	37
Advertising is Informative	6.1	2.3	37
Outside Appearance of the Store	6.1	2.2	37
Nice In-Store Displays	6	2.4	37
Store Layout	6	2.3	37
Well-known Brands in the Store	5.9	2.6	37

Attractive Store Decor	5.6	2.1	37
Availability of Parking	5.4	2.7	37
Company operates many Stores	5.1	2.8	37
Store is Liked by Friends	5.1	2.6	37
Flexible Return Policies	5.1	2.6	37
Adequate Rest Rooms	4.8	2.8	37
Time in operation	4.7	2.8	37
Friends shop at the same store	4.6	2.8	37
Low Parking Costs	4.6	3	37
Company owning store well-known	4.2	2.8	37
Packaging of Merchandise	3.4	2.4	37
Availability of Credit Facilities	3.2	2.6	37
Availability of Delivery	2.7	2.1	37

The attributes which were the most important to the focus group participants when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing were identified by comparing the mean ratings of importance for each of the attributes. The attributes with the highest average ratings, with a mean of 7 or more, were:

1. Store has the type of clothing I like (9.2);

2. Reasonable Prices (8.7);

3. Style of Merchandise (8.4);

4. High Value for Money (8.1);

5. High Quality Merchandise (8);

6. Wide Selection of Merchandise (7.8);

7. Fashionable Merchandise (7.7);

8. Uniqueness of Merchandise (7.6);

9. Low Prices (7.4);

10. Fully Stocked Store (7.2);

11. Easy to find what I'm looking for (7.2);

12. Advertising is Appealing (7).

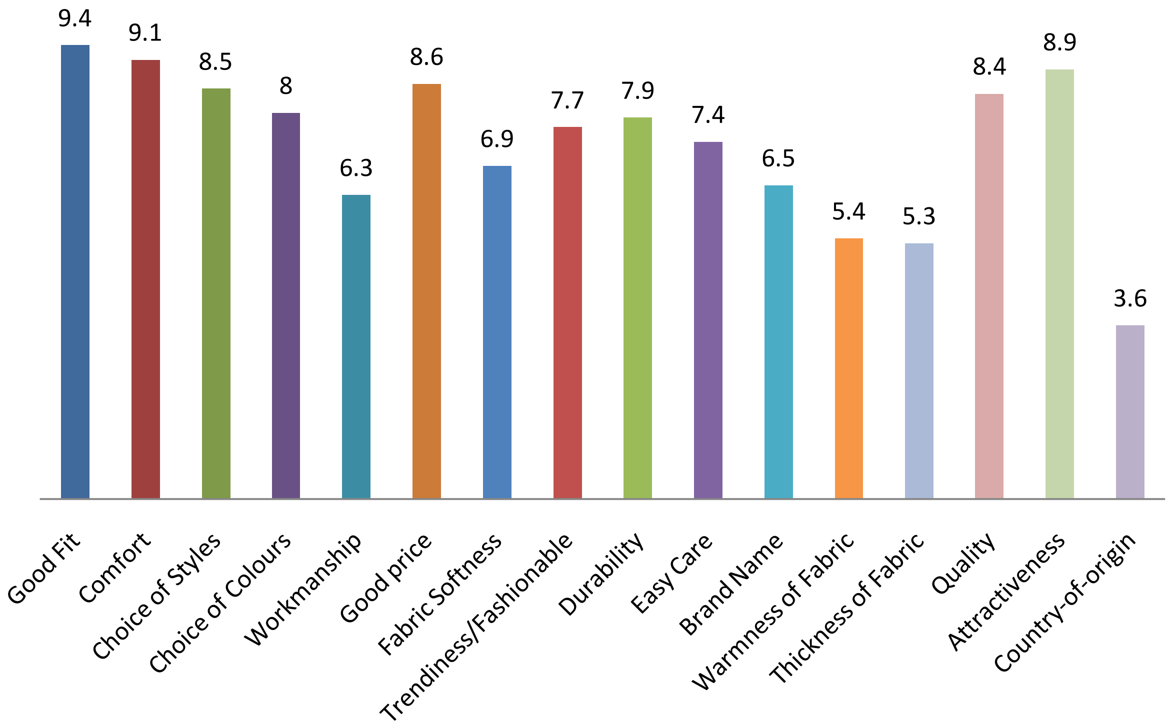
6.2.7 Clothing Attributes

This question required the respondents to rate the importance of various intrinsic attributes relating specifically to the merchandise offered by the clothing retailers and, in so doing, aimed to identify the relative importance of the attributes that influence clothing selection among Generation Y consumers as the chosen sample for this study. The mean importance rating and standard deviation for each of these attributes are presented in the table below:

Table 6. 13 Mean and Standard Deviation for each Clothing Attribute

Attribute	Mean	Standard Deviation	n (No. of Respondents)
Good Fit	9.4	0.8	37
Comfort	9.1	1	37
Attractiveness	8.9	1.1	36
Good Price	8.6	1.5	37
Choice of Styles	8.5	1.3	37
Quality	8.4	1.5	37
Choice of Colours	8	1.6	37
Durability	7.9	1.7	37
Trendiness/Fashionableness	7.7	1.9	37
Easy Care	7.4	2	36
Fabric Softness	6.9	1.8	37
Brand Name	6.5	2.7	37
Workmanship	6.3	2	35
Warmness of Fabric	5.4	2.2	37
Thickness of Fabric	5.3	2.4	37
Country-of-Origin	3.6	2.4	37

Figure 6. 10 Clothing Attribute Means



The clothing attributes which were the most important to the focus group participants in terms of influencing their choice of clothing to purchase, with an average rating of 7.9 or more, were as follows:

1. Good Fit (9.4)

2. Comfort (9.2)

3. Attractiveness (8.9)

4. Good Price (8.6)

5. Choice of Styles (8.5)

6. Quality (8.4)

7. Choice of Colours (8)

8. Durability (7.9)

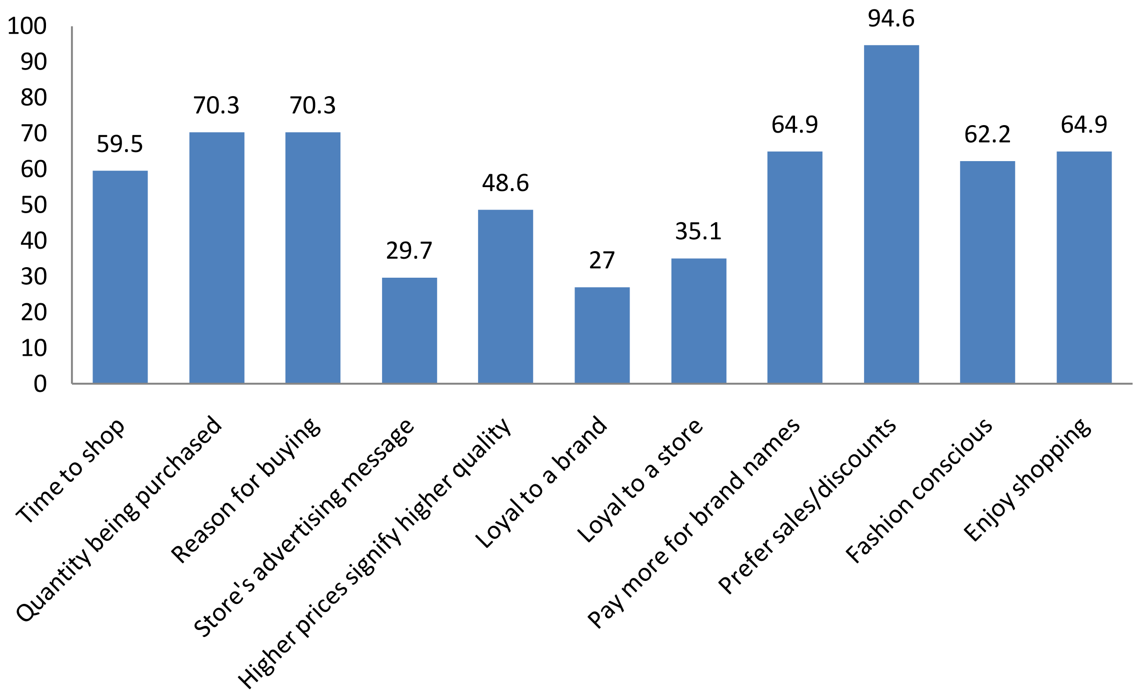
6.2.8 Dichotomous Questions about Clothing Purchases

The following questions required research participants to answer either yes or no and were included to test whether various situational factors influenced the choice of which store to patronise, as well as serving as a type of 'checking system' to verify that the attributes previously indicated as important correlated with a yes response in this section of the focus group questionnaire.

Table 6. 14 Percentage of 'Yes' Responses to the Questions about Clothing Purchases

Question	**% of Yes Responses**
1. Is your choice of store affected by how much time you have to shop?	60%
2. Is your choice of store affected by how much you are buying?	70%
3. Is your choice of store affected by whether you are buying a gift or shopping for yourself?	70%
4. Is your choice of store affected by the messages used in the stores' advertising?	30%
5. Do higher prices signify higher quality?	49%
6. Are you loyal to a specific brand?	27%
7. Are you loyal to a specific store?	35%
8. Are you willing to pay more for brand names?	65%
9. Do you prefer sales/discount prices?	95%
10. Are you fashion conscious?	62%
11. Do you enjoy shopping?	65%

Figure 6. 11 Percentage of 'Yes' Responses to Questions about Clothing Purchases



The yes/no questions about clothing purchases with the highest frequency of 'yes' responses were regarding whether the students prefer sales or discount prices, with 95% yes responses; whether their choice of clothing retailer is affected by the quantity being purchased as well as whether they are buying a gift or shopping for themselves, both with 70.3% yes responses. It also seems that the majority of the focus group participants, a total of 64.9%, are willing to pay more for brand names and ultimately do enjoy shopping for clothing.

6.2.9 What discourages you from purchasing clothing from a particular store?

The purpose of this question was to give the researcher further insight into what is regarded as very important to the focus group sample in terms of influencing their choice of clothing store and hence further identify attributes which these Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. By asking the participants what discourages them from patronising certain retailers, and by asking them to think from a negative perspective, in other words what they do not like, the researcher is able to identify what they do look for when choosing a store. Furthermore, the researcher was also able to make connections between certain stores and attributes, enhancing the findings of this study.

The points below briefly describe each code as part of the analysis of the question "What discourages you from purchasing clothing from a particular store?"

1. Too popular/Common: Many of the focus group participants strongly asserted that a store being too popular definitely acts as a deterrent when choosing a clothing retailer. The students explained that they find it embarrassing and frustrating to be wearing items of clothing which seem to be worn by everyone. Accordingly, they avoid purchasing obvious pieces from such stores. For example, in this case Mr Price, "everybody wears the same thing from Mr Price", making the merchandise too common and widespread. A few other quotes were as follows: "Mr Price, everyone shops there, mainly students as well, the people you see everyday, because it's affordable"; "I would never buy something that says anything because everyone would wear it, or I'd never buy something like a dress, you want a nice dress but every girl will wear the same dress, I hate it"; "everybody wears the same thing from Mr Price"; and "I'll never buy a dress from Mr Price to go out in because guaranteed like three other people will have on the same one...and then I'll just be embarrassed".

2. High Price: Many students explained that High Prices play a very significant role in their avoidance of certain clothing retailers, such as Woolworths, YDE and Truworths. This is particularly the case when they feel they may be able to get similar merchandise, if not the same, from cheaper stores. For example, a respondent said that "Woolworths is expensive for me personally", while another said "YDE, it's a no-go area for me because of price".

3. Proximity/Location Convenience: A student felt that the location of the clothing retailer and its proximity to you is a very important attribute which influences whether or not he/she will patronise that retailer, so much so that the stores which are regarded as being too far away will not be visited, even if a specific item from the store is required. This is illustrated by the quotes: "position is a big thing, sometimes there's a store in the Pavilion where you need to get something but you not going to go to the Pavilion 'cause it's far away", and "location is crucial".

4. Parking Availability: A focus group participant explained that the availability of parking or the lack thereof often causes him to avoid certain clothing retailers, for example he said that "to go to 50 Durban Road some days is just a nightmare 'cause there's no parking".

5. Store Reputation: A few of the participants felt that the reputation of a store and word-of-mouth can exert a strong influence with regard to clothing retailer selection. For instance, the students may visit those stores which are recommended by their peers and ultimately avoid those they oppose.

6. Poor Quality Clothing: Participants also explained that they regard poor quality merchandise very discouraging and tend not to patronise stores selling clothing of such a low quality, as was said by a respondent "poor quality, if you know its gonna be cheap but you going to wash it once and the colours are going to fade, I wouldn't want to go to a store like that". This is especially the case as they do not want to be spending and wasting money on items which are going to rip, tear, fade or discolour. For instance, a participant said that "if somebody says to you it's really bad quality, it looks fine but you wear it once and it runs or it fades very easily, whether it looks good or not, you know you what you're getting".

7. Too Trendy: One of the focus group participants said that, with regard to YDE, "some of their ridiculous fashion things that they do, it's beyond me, I don't understand it" and added that YDE was a "no-go" area for him as its merchandise is too trendy and outlandish and he therefore finds it very perplexing and ultimately avoids this clothing retailer altogether.

8. Bad Layout: Certain focus group participants disclosed their aversion to stores with poor layouts which are messy and untidy and "you don't know where to start looking", making it very difficult for them to find what they are looking for.

9. Poorly Fitting Clothing: A couple of the focus group participants asserted that they regard poorly fitting clothing as an important attribute discouraging them from patronising certain retailers, such as Mr Price where the clothing "never fits properly" and YDE which doesn't seem to cater for "bigger people, they always sell these skimpy low tops".

10. Low Value for Money: A focus group participant explained that he avoids stores where he knows that he is being 'ripped off' in that he is not prepared to purchase expensive merchandise when "you know you can get something just as good somewhere else".

11. Overly Helpful Sales Personnel: A few of the respondents find it irritating when they are bothered by salespeople and generally only want help when they ask for it, in which case the sales person must be able to assist them. This is indicated by a few of the respondents saying things such as "I dislike in-your-face salespersons, I know what I want, I don't need some person on my back" and "they mustn't follow you around" "or "rash you".

12. Lack of Cleanliness: Participants also find a lack of store cleanliness to be very discouraging in terms of impacting their choice to patronise a store and thus tend to avoid stores which are "dirty" and untidy, as was said by a participant "if you walk into a store and it's a complete mess, and a bit dirty and stuff, that's a bit discouraging as well".

13. Unhelpful Sales Personnel: A few of the respondents tend to keep away from certain retailers where the personnel are not able or willing to help when asked for assistance. Respondents said that "if you ask them for help, they can't just look at you" and "if you ask then they must be able to help you".

14. Overbearing Security: Two focus group participants find it offensive and frustrating when they feel they are being followed by the store's security, so much so that it will cause them to leave the store, as illustrated by the following quote from the focus group discussion, "the worst was when the security guard follows you around, I am not staying in the shop if the security guard is following me".

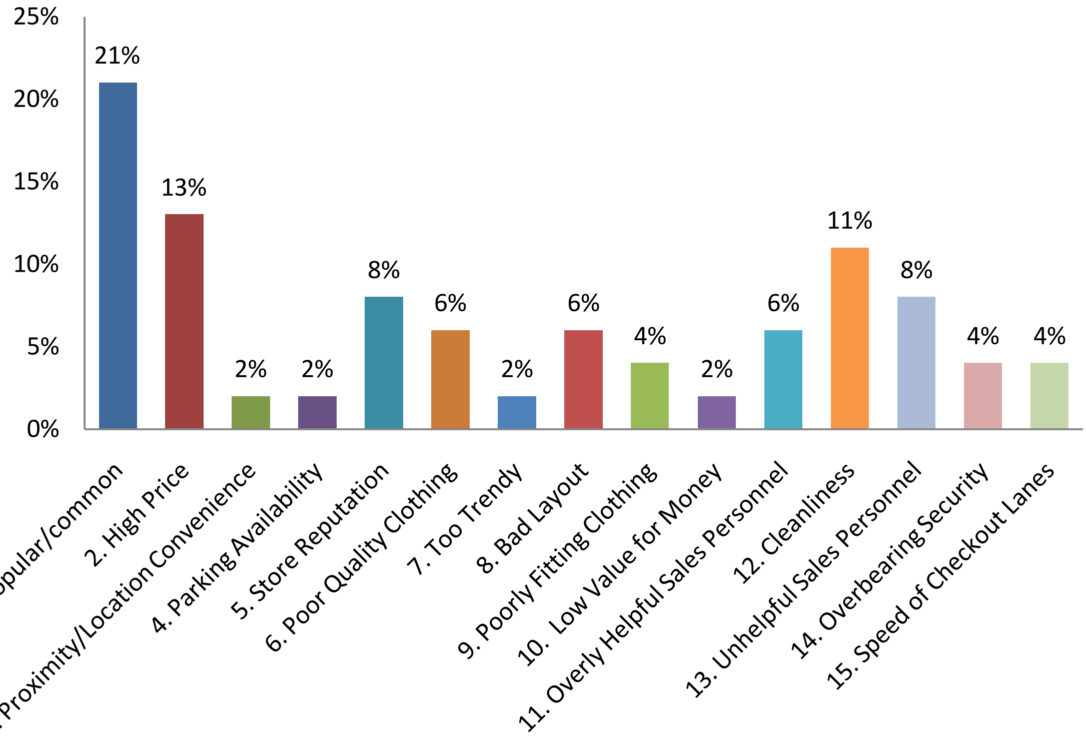
15. Speed of Checkout Lanes: A couple of the male respondents regard the speed of the store's checkout lanes to be highly important in that they "want to go in, buy it and then leave" and thus will tend to avoid stores which do not offer such a speedy checkout service.

16. Intimidating Sales Personnel: A few students felt that the sales personnel of certain stores can be very "snobby" and intimidating and such stores are thus often steered clear of. For example, some respondents said that "if you looking for stuff for a formal function, some shops can be intimidating" and that "in-store employees sometimes can be quite snobby if you going into a fancy place", while another added "I'll go out if they act like that, so I just walk out and I'm like, I'll find it elsewhere".

Table 6. 15 Frequency of Attributes Discouraging Clothing Store Patronisation

Code	Frequency	Percent
1. Too popular/common	10	21
2. High Price	6	13
3. Proximity/Location Convenience	1	2
4. Parking Availability	1	2
5. Store Reputation	2	4
6. Poor Quality Clothing	3	6
7. Too Trendy	1	2
8. Bad Layout	3	6
9. Poorly Fitting Clothing	2	4
10. Low Value for Money	1	2
11. Overly Helpful Sales Personnel	3	6
12. Cleanliness	5	11
13. Unhelpful Sales Personnel	2	4
14. Overbearing Security	2	4
15. Speed of Checkout Lanes	2	4
16. Intimidating Sales Personnel	3	6

Figure 6. 12 Frequency of Attributes Discouraging Clothing Store Patronisation



The code **1. Too popular/common** had the highest frequency of 21%. The focus group participants clearly did not like being seen wearing the same clothing as their peers and thus avoid stores which are regarded as overly popular and thus selling merchandise which is too common and not unique enough for the participants. Code **2. High Price** was also a fairly popular reason or attribute for evading certain clothing retailers with a frequency of 13%, illustrating the students' dislike of paying price premiums for items which they felt they could acquire more cheaply somewhere else. The analysis of this question revealed a few key findings: firstly, Mr Price may be avoided by Generation Y consumers because it is too popular and they find it embarrassing to be wearing the same clothing items as their friends; and secondly, stores such Edgars and YDE are regarded by some of the Generation Y respondents as too expensive, causing them to overlook these retailers.

The findings discussed in this chapter were obtained from the qualitative, first stage of the two-stage triangulated research design and ultimately served to enhance and develop the researcher's understanding of the topic at hand, with particular reference to clothing store attributes and the meanings thereof. This understanding and the relevant findings were subsequently used to formulate and refine the questionnaire to be used in the quantitative, second stage of this two-stage triangulated research design, the methodology for which will be discussed and explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7:
STAGE TWO RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the methodology applied in the formulation and design of Stage two of the triangulated research design. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of the focus group findings presented in the previous chapter. In order to provide a clear description of the particular methodology applied in this study, a discussion of the following sections in relation to the questionnaire and quantitative component of this research is included in this chapter, namely: the sampling plan, questionnaire design and distribution, pilot testing, data analysis, and finally, reliability and validity testing.

Stage 2: Quantitative Data Collection

7.1 Questionnaire Sampling and Sample Size

7.1.1 Sampling

With regard to the sampling process utilised during the second stage of triangulation, a non-probability technique was used which is a "subjective sampling procedure where each population element does not have a known, nonzero chance of being included" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 439). The non-probability sampling technique was chosen to assist the researcher to obtain as representative a sample as possible with regards to both genders, as well as the various ages of UKZNP students across the years of both under- and post-graduate study. The researcher, thus, chose to distribute the questionnaires in a manner that would reach and include a representative number of males and females in addition to an even number of students across the 18-to-25-year-old age group, thus meeting the subjective requirement of this sampling method.

Consequently, purposive quota sampling was the specific non-probability technique used. This is a method "in which relevant characteristics are used to stratify the sample" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 456), and in this case, age was used as the control factor and characteristic for sample stratification. It is important to note, however, that there are certain disadvantages associated with the use of non-probability sampling techniques, and a few of these include: 1) "sampling error cannot be computed; 2) the researcher does not know the degree to which the sample is representative of the population from which it was drawn; 3) the results of non-probability samples cannot be projected to the total population" (McDaniel and Gates 2001: 335). Furthermore, the "subjective approach" applied in this methodology also results in a "greater opportunity for bias to enter the sample selection procedure and to distort the findings of the study" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 455). Despite these shortcomings, the researcher was unfortunately unable to make use of random sampling as this technique is likely to yield poor response rates. This is because such a sampling procedure would require the researcher to compile a list of all the students studying at UKZNP, randomly select students from the list and subsequently contact them via e-mail to participate in the study and complete a questionnaire. Since participation is voluntary and students cannot be forced to take part, response rates were expected to be very low. Ultimately, the main implication of not being able to use probability, random sampling is that the sample will not be exactly representative of the student population as a whole. Nevertheless, as McDaniel and Gates (2001: 336) state, "non-probability samples can produce samples of the population that are reasonably representative if executed properly" and thus the researcher aimed to make the sample as representative as possible using non-probability, purposive quota sampling. Furthermore, non-probability sampling is less time consuming, as the data can generally be gathered more quickly, as well as being less costly (McDaniel and Gates 2001: 336). These were important considerations for the researcher and thus this technique and the chosen sample have mostly been chosen for the associated economy, with regard to both monetary and time concerns, as well as convenience.

7.1.2 Sample Size

As Shiu *et al.* (2009: 64) explain, "sample size affects data quality and generalisability" and the researcher must therefore accurately determine "how many people to include" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 64). In addition, in order to "determine the appropriate sample size, decisions have to be made concerning (1) the variability of the population characteristic under investigation, (2) the level of confidence desired in the estimates, and (3) the precision required" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 486). Furthermore, the researcher must also consider "how many completed surveys are needed for data analysis, recognising that initial sample size often is not equal to the final sample size" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 486).

According to the university statistics, the UKZNP student population is made up of 8625 students in total, of which 3673 students are male and 4952 are female (DMIRequests 2010). Ultimately, a sample size of 368, with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval (margin of error) of 5 (Creative Research Systems 2007: para 4), was required. According to the total number of male versus female students, there are approximately 37 male students for every 50 female students (DMIRequests 2010), thus the sample required was split with 157 male respondents and 211 female respondents being sought.

7.2 Stage 2 Data Collection

7.2.1 Questionnaire Design

The second stage of the triangulated research design entailed the use of a questionnaire which was designed to assist the researcher in quantitatively achieving the research objectives. In order to accomplish this, the questionnaire did comprise various response strategies, namely structured responses, free responses and rating responses (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 401-406).

The researcher aimed to achieve a high response rate by ensuring that the questionnaire was short and simple to complete and hence required minimal time and effort on the part of the respondents. The questionnaire employed a funnel-approach as the sensitive demographic questions were included at the end of the questionnaire to again, encourage participation and avoid any negative sentiment from the outset.

7.2.2 Explanation of the Questions in the Questionnaire (Refer to Appendix D)

Question 1: When buying clothes, which clothing stores do you shop at MOST OF THE TIME?

Question 2: On average, how often do you purchase clothing?

The purpose of Question 1 relates to the first step in the positioning process which involves identifying the relevant set of competitors within a specific industry, which in this case, requires identifying the clothing retailers which are in competition in the South African clothing industry. The objective of these first two questions was to enable the researcher to determine the patronage behaviour of the Generation Y respondents in terms of where and how often they purchase their clothing. This question is similar to a study conducted by Du Preez *et al.* (2007: 9) "where respondents were requested to indicate at which of the stores and how often they bought apparel" in order to ascertain their patronage behaviour. Edgars (15%), Mr Price (20%), YDE (Young Designers Emporium) (11%), Woolworths (9%) and Identity (9%) were included in Question 1 as these were mentioned on numerous occasions during the focus group sessions. Therefore, it is necessary to further investigate and ratify these findings by verifying whether these stores are the leading clothing retailers, and thus important competitors, as per the chosen sample. An 'Other' option was included for those respondents who do not shop at any of these clothing retailers. Consequently, Question 1 provided the researcher with the necessary data to achieve the first research objective, which was to identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.

Question 3: What attributes do you find important when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

1 = the factor had NO influence over you; 10= the factor had a STRONG influence over you

Using the Stage 1 quantitative and qualitative findings, as well as the literature, the following attributes were included in Question 3 of the questionnaire:

Table 7. 1 Clothing Store Attributes included in Stage 2 Questionnaire

Attribute	Mean Rating in the Stage 1 Questionnaire
1. Value for Money	8.1
2. High Quality Merchandise	8
3. Wide Selection of Merchandise	7.8
4. Fashionable Merchandise	7.7
5. Uniqueness of Merchandise	7.6
6. Low Prices	7.4
7. Fully Stocked Store	7.2
8. Appealing Advertising	7
9. Helpful Sales Personnel	6.9
10. Convenient Location	6.9
11. Store Cleanliness	6.4
12. Good Store Layout	6

The researcher did, however, use her own discretion as well as help from the research supervisor in adjusting the wording of some of these attributes to be included in the final questionnaire, based on a review of the literature as well as the qualitative data and focus group discussions.

The inclusion of each attribute will now be explained:

- **Low Prices** was included as this attribute was identified as the most important attribute when the focus group participants were asked an open-ended question requiring them to indicate their top 5 most important attributes when choosing a clothing retailer. Low Prices was also the main attribute which motivated the participants' specific store preferences. It received a high average rating of 7.4 and *High Prices* was revealed as a discouraging attribute during the focus group discussion and thus low prices was identified again as a potential determinant attribute. Low prices also replaced the attribute of *Reasonable Prices,* which had a mean rating of 8.7, as it would be too confusing to decipher should both have been included. Furthermore, the attribute of Low Prices was one of the attributes found to be important in the literature by authors such as Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Arnold, Oum and Tigert (1983); Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998); and Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001).

- **High Quality Merchandise** was identified as the second most important attribute in clothing store choice by the focus group participants. It was also indicated by 33% of respondents as a main reason for choosing their preferred retailer and received a high mean rating of 8. The quality of a store's merchandise also played a role in influencing the store choice of respondents in the studies by Jolson and Spath (1973); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Redding (2009); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); and Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001).
- **Wide Selection of Merchandise** received a high mean rating of 7.8 and was included by the focus group participants as one of the main attributes influencing store selection. The attribute of *Assortment of Merchandise* was also identified as an important attribute in the literature review by authors such as Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Redding (2009); Sinha and Banerjee (2004); and Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001).
- *Store has the type of clothing I like* received the highest mean rating of 9.2. It was decided, however, that this attribute was very similar in meaning to *Style of Merchandise* and was thus replaced by the latter. *Style of Merchandise* was also identified as a common attribute impacting choice of retailer, as well as receiving a high mean rating of 8.4. However, this attribute was believed to be too vague and was thus replaced with the attributes of **Fashionable Merchandise** and **Unique Merchandise**. The attribute of **Fashionable Merchandise** obtained a high mean rating of 7.7, and was also evident in the findings of Hansen and Deutscher (1977) and Arnold, Ma and Tigert (1978) as a significant attribute. **Unique Merchandise** was identified as an important attribute in the focus group discussion as well as receiving a high average rating of 7.6. It was also found to be an important attribute by Gehrt and Yan (2004).
- The attribute of *Easy to find what I'm looking for* received a high average rating of 7.2, however, was replaced with **Good Store Layout**, which scored a mean rating of 6, because being able to find what you are looking for is essentially a component of a good store layout. Good Store Layout was also found by Thang and Tan (2003), as well as Kleinhans,

Visser, Van Aardt and Du Preez (2001) as an important attribute influencing consumers' decision process.

- **Value for Money, Fully Stocked Store** and **Appealing Advertising** were included for the high mean ratings allocated to these attributes by the focus group participants, namely 8.1, 7.2 and 7 respectively. These three attributes were also mentioned by authors such as Thang and Tan (2003); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); and Sinha and Banerjee (2004).
- **Store Cleanliness** and **Helpful Sales Personnel** were included as the converse of these attributes, namely dirtiness and unhelpful sales staff, were included by many respondents as attributes discouraging their patronisation of certain clothing retailers, as well as receiving a fairly high average rating of importance of 6.4 and 6.9 respectively. In addition, Helpful Sales Personnel was also frequently mentioned throughout the literature as an important attribute affecting store selection by the following authors: Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Tigert and Arnold (1981); Redding (2009); Jolson and Spath (1973); Thang and Tan (2003); Gehrt and Yan (2004); Nguyen (2009); Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998); Arnold, Ma and Tigert (1978); Mahoney and Sternquist (1989); Thorpe and Avery (1983); Terblanche and Boshoff (2004); and Kleinhans, Visser, Van Aardt and Du Preez (2001).
- Lastly, **Convenient Location** was included as this attribute was also commonly cited in the literature as a store selection criterion by authors such as Jolson and Spath (1973); Hansen and Deutscher (1977); Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002); Pan and Zinkhan (2006); Nguyen (2009); and Paulins and Geistfeld (2003). This attribute also received an importance mean rating of 6.9 by the focus group participants.

Question 3 of the Stage 2 survey asked respondents to indicate which attributes they regard as exerting the strongest influence in terms of impacting their choice of clothing retailer. This question thus makes use of the direct-rating method, a method suggested by Van Ittersum *et al.* (2007: 1180) for measuring the attribute-importance dimension of relevance. Accordingly, the aim of this question was to achieve the second step in the positioning process, which involves identifying the determinant attributes from the consumers' perspective. The data collected from Question 3 was used to answer the second research objective of determining the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. This in turn facilitated the achievement of Objective 4, which involves identifying the determinant attributes that influence clothing store selection among this group of consumers.

Question 4: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

4.1 My choice of clothing store is affected by how much I am buying, in terms of quantity.

4.2 My choice of clothing store is affected by whether I am buying a gift or shopping for myself.

4.3 My choice of clothing store is affected by how much time I have to shop.

Likert Scales from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree were used to determine the respondents' level of agreement with the statements. As Welman *et al.* (2005: 157) explain, the Likert Scale is a "summated attitude scale which consists of a collection of statements about the attitudinal object", in this case, the purchasing of apparel. With regard to each statement, the research respondents are required to "indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with its contents" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 157). As in the Focus Group, this question was included to investigate the findings of Van Kenhove *et al.* (1999) and Gehrt and Yan (2004) which stated that task definitions and situational conditions often influence the importance assigned to various store attributes. Furthermore, these statements were also presented in the focus group questionnaire in a question format, which required the respondents to answer yes or no, and received a very high percentage (70%) of affirmative responses, confirming the influence of the quantity being purchased, the reason for purchase and time availability on store choice.

4.4 I enjoy shopping.

4.5 I prefer stores that offer discount prices/sales.

4.6 I am willing to pay more for brand names.

4.7 I am fashion conscious.

A total of 65%, 95%, 65% and 62% of the Focus Group participants agreed with the statements 4 to 7 when these were presented during the first stage of this research. By including these statements, the findings of Sullivan and Heitmeyer (2008: 287) and Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 100), which stated that Generation Y females "enjoy shopping, want quality goods, are brand loyal, willing to pay more for brand names" and generally "associate higher prices with improved quality and worth" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98), could also be further investigated.

4.8 Edgars is the best store for formal clothing.

4.9 Woolworths is the best store for high quality clothing.

4.10 Mr Price is the best store for low prices.

4.11 YDE is too expensive.

4.12 Woolworths is too expensive.

4.13 I do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there.

The last seven statements were formulated from the findings obtained during the focus group sessions and were thus included to enhance the triangulation of the research design and validate the qualitative findings. The statements were developed from several key patterns which emerged during the focus group discussions. More specifically, it was found that certain clothing retailers were associated with certain attributes, by the focus group participants. This relates to steps 3 and 4 of the positioning process, which involve determining the customers' perceptions and analysing the current positions of the competitors respectively. It is important for marketers to identify how the target consumers perceive the competitors and their offerings in order to develop an understanding of what the customer prefers and thus better satisfy their wants, needs and expectations (Levy and Weitz 2009: 547). The focus group findings revealed, for instance, that Mr Price is strongly associated with the attribute of Low Prices, Woolworths with High Quality Merchandise and YDE with High Prices. By including these statements in the Stage 2 questionnaire, it is possible to test the extent of these associations between the clothing store and particular attribute and, in so doing, test the extent of these positions.

Question 5: Rate each clothing store in relation to the selected attributes on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

1 = Very POOR; 3 = Poor; 5 = Average; 7 = Good; 10 = Very GOOD

In order to classify an attribute as determinant, dual questioning was used, which involved asking the respondents firstly, "what factors they consider important in a purchasing decision", then secondly, "how they perceive these factors as differing among the various products or brands" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 359). Thus, "attributes judged high in combined importance and differences are selected as determinant" (Alpert 1971: 185). The purpose of this question was to gather the data necessary to measure the attribute-importance dimension of determinance using Discriminant Analysis. This technique involves collecting "data from a sample of consumers concerning their ratings of each product or brand", in this case, Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity, on those attributes previously identified as most important to the target consumer when evaluating various options within the relevant competitive set (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166), as identified during the qualitative stage of this research (see Table 7.1).

Question 6: Please rate the following attributes in terms of their importance when choosing clothing to purchase? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

1 = the factor had <u>NO</u> influence over you; 10= the factor had a <u>STRONG</u> influence over you

This question focused specifically on clothing selection, as opposed to clothing retailer choice, in order to obtain a full and comprehensive understanding of the apparel buying motivations of Generation Y consumers and thus develop an understanding of their clothing buying behaviour as a whole.

The attributes identified as being the most important for specific clothing choice during the focus groups were: Good Fit (9.4), Comfort (9.1), Attractiveness (8.9), Good Price (8.6), Choice of Styles (8.5), Quality (8.4) and Choice of Colours (8).

In so doing, the third research objective of determining the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between various pieces of clothing was achieved.

Sample Profile Questions:

The following variables were used to describe the demographic profile of the sample, namely: the degree being studied by the research respondent, as well as the respondents' age, gender and race. The data on these variables was also collected to check the representativeness of the sample in relation to the larger UKZNP student population.

It was also vital for the researcher to obtain demographic statistics in terms of gender in order to achieve the fifth and final research objective, namely to determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection.

7.3 Pilot Testing

Conducting a pilot test is an important aspect of the research process and thus should not be omitted, as is confirmed by Cooper and Schindler (2006: 88) who explain that pilot testing is essential "to identify and change confusing, awkward, or offensive questions". Pre-testing the questionnaire involves asking individuals representative of the chosen sample to complete the questionnaire, following which the researcher will ask them if there was any question or instruction which they did not understand, or which they found to be "difficult or confusing"

(Shiu *et al.* 2009: 65). Ultimately, the purpose of the pre-test is to "ensure that the questionnaire meets the researcher's expectations in terms of the information that will be obtained" (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 327). In order to achieve this, the researcher conducted a pilot study on the 3 May 2011 where the questionnaire was distributed to 10 UKZNP students in a purposive, non-random manner, thus employing a convenience sampling technique and ensuring that the sample included input from all the races, both genders as well as across the 18-to-25-year-old age group.

Upon completing the questionnaire, each pilot study participant was asked if he or she understood everything in the survey and if there was any question or instruction which left him or her feeling confused or uncertain in any way. The participants had no problems regarding the questions and instructions of the questionnaire and understood both perfectly. They did, however, complain about the length of the survey, which despite the researcher's best efforts, could not be shortened without losing valuable data needed to answer the research objectives. Subsequently, no changes were made to the questionnaire.

7.4 Questionnaire Distribution

The questionnaires were distributed to the participants during their lectures as this is the most convenient and efficient way to administer large quantities of surveys simultaneously. Before commencing the survey distribution process, however, ethical clearance for the research study was approved and granted by the University (Refer to Appendix A). This was then followed by visiting various lecturers and obtaining their permission to hand out the questionnaires to the students during their allocated lecture times. The questionnaires were distributed between 4 and 19 May 2011 to the following classes:

- Philosophy 1st Year
- English 2nd Year
- Finance 2nd Year
- Media 3rd Year
- Supply Chain 3rd Year
- Marketing Honours Post-graduate Class
- Marketing Management Post-graduate Diploma Class
- Education Post-graduate Class

The above-mentioned classes were chosen for three reasons: firstly, the researcher was able to gain access to these classes with the help of the relevant lecturers; secondly, these classes represent a wide spread of students studying a variety of degrees, including BA, BCOM, PPL, LLB, PGCE and BSS and is thus, more representative of the UKZNP student population at large; and lastly, these classes included both genders and ages ranging from 18 to 25.

Before handing out the questionnaires, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the students, as well as providing the students with an incentive or motivation to participate, in this case, a Liberty Midlands Mall voucher to the value of R200, which was placed in a 'lucky draw'. This prize was, however, only available to those students who fully completed a questionnaire and thus any incomplete surveys did not go into the 'lucky draw'. The questionnaires were distributed to the students, with some assistance from a fellow Masters student to accelerate the process so as to avoid frustrating the students or lecturers by taking up too much of their time. The students took approximately 7-8 minutes to complete the questionnaire, upon which time the researcher and the researcher's assistant quickly collected the surveys. The lecturer and entire class were then thanked for their participation and cooperation.

7.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis stage of the research process is where "the researcher begins the process of turning raw data into useful information" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 67). During this study, data analysis was achieved using SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences) which was used to generate the relevant descriptive statistics, including mean and frequency data. The following statistical techniques were employed to aid in achieving the research objectives, namely:

- Principal Component Factor analysis. This analysis was conducted "to uncover underlying factors through summarising the information contained in a large number of variables into a smaller number of subsets called factors" (Shiu *et al.* 2009: 630). In this study, factor analysis was used to summarise the many attributes potentially influencing clothing store selection into "a relatively small number of factors that can represent relationships among sets of many interrelated variables" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 58).
- Independent Samples T-Test. According to Nunez (2005: 146), "to analyse your data with a t-test, the data need to comply with the assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variance and independence". With regard to the first assumption, that of normality, "there has been much debate about whether a lack of normality should lead one to use the non-parametric equivalent of the Independent Samples T-Test. The Mann-Whitney test uses ranks rather than the original problematically distributed scores, but it has less power than the t-test. Since the t-test is quite robust to threats of normality, we may choose to use this more

powerful parametric statistic" (Palmary and Durrheim 2005: 436). With regard to the second assumption, Nunez (2005: 149) confirms that "it is important to ensure that the assumption of homogeneity of variance is not violated for this test", and thus the Sig. value for Equal Variances Assumed has been used to interpret the results. Finally, with regard to the third assumption of independence, it is important to ensure that the "samples the means were calculated from did not influence each other's scores in any way" (Nunez 2005: 147), which is the case for the samples in the research study at hand. Therefore, it was concluded that an Independent Samples T-Test could be, and was conducted on the data obtained during the current research. The Independent Samples T-test was, therefore, utilised to obtain the data needed to achieve the fifth research objective, which is to determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes used by male and female Generation Y consumers with regard to clothing store selection

- In addition, a Mann-Whitney U-test, the non-parametric equivalent to the Independent Samples T-test, was also conducted to compare and "measure any statistically significant difference between" (Welman *et al.* 2005: 230) the responses of male and female Generation Y consumers with regard to the attributes which determine their choice of clothing retailer. The findings of this test were thus used to ratify the results of the Independent Samples T-test.
- Discriminant Analysis. Walker and Mullins (2008: 166) suggest Discriminant Analysis as a technique for measuring the attribute dimension of determinance. Accordingly, data was collected from the sample of Generation Y consumers regarding their performance ratings of the clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity, on each of the clothing store attributes. SPSS was then used to run the Discriminant Analysis to determine "which attributes best differentiate, or discriminate, among brands" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166), in this case, among the clothing retailers.

7.6 Reliability

Reliability is defined as "the degree to which measures are free from random error and, therefore, provide consistent data" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 313). With regard to the reliability of this research instrument, this was tested using Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency of a measurement tool (Welman *et al.* 2005: 147) and "involves computing mean reliability coefficient estimates for all possible ways of splitting a set of items in half" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 316). According to McDaniel and Gates (2010: 315), internal consistency reliability refers to the "ability of an instrument to produce similar results when used on different samples during the same time period to measure a phenomenon".

Therefore, a score which reflects a high level of internal consistency ultimately "implies a high degree of generalisability across the items within the measurement/test" (Welman *et al*. 2005: 147). According to Nunnally (1978 cited in Finchilescu 2005: 216), "reliability co-efficients of 0.70 are adequate for research instruments".

The results of the reliability testing were as follows:

For the clothing store attributes, the reliability was calculated as:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.670	16

For the clothing attributes:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.787	10

For the questions relating to clothing stores:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.888	80

Lastly, the reliability for the full questionnaire:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.685	100

Therefore, from the above reliability calculations, it is clear that the scores relating to the clothing attributes and questions concerning the clothing stores were above 0.70, and were thus concluded to be reliable. The reliability scores for the clothing store attributes and the questionnaire as a whole, however, fell slightly short of the 0.70 mark with 0.67 and 0.68, although is close enough to ensure reliability of the research instrument was, for the most part, achieved.

7.7 Validity

The concept of validity refers to "the degree to which what the researcher was trying to measure was actually measured" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 316). A major prerequisite for achieving validity of a research instrument is that it is reliable as "an instrument that is not reliable will not yield consistent results when measuring the same phenomenon over time" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 316). There are four main types of validity, each of which will now be explained and discussed in turn:

- Face Validity. This refers to the "degree to which a measurement seems to measure what it is supposed to measure" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 316). The assessment of face validity is fairly subjective in nature and may involve a "subjective agreement of researchers, experts, or people familiar with the market or industry that a scale logically appears to be accurately reflecting what it is supposed to measure" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 317). In this case, face validity was assessed and agreed upon by the researcher and research supervisor who has extensive knowledge of the subject matter at hand. In addition, the Stage 2 questionnaire was also designed and formulated in keeping with the stages in the positioning process and methodology. For example, the respondents were asked where they purchase their clothing most of the time, which relates directly to the first step in the positioning process, which is to identify the set of competitors, and also further answers the first research objective. This was done throughout the questionnaire design.
- Content Validity. This form of validity refers to the "extent to which the measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the investigative questions guiding the study" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 349). According to Cooper and Schindler (2006: 349), content validity is assessed by determining "if the data collection instrument adequately covers the topics that have been defined as the relevant dimensions". In this case, a thorough literature search and review was conducted, as well as conducting focus groups, which together, helped to "identify all possible items for inclusion on the scale" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 318). Therefore, it may be deduced that the measurement instrument has good content validity (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 349).
- Criterion-related Validity refers to the ability of a measurement instrument to "predict an outcome or estimate the existence of a current behaviour or condition" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 350). This form of validity was, however, not applicable to the research study at hand which was exploratory in nature, and thus aimed to understand apparel buying behaviour rather than to predict it.
- Construct Validity is defined as "the degree to which another variable, measured at the same point in time as the variable of interest, can be predicted by the measurement instrument" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 319). This type of validity, however, is not

frequently "consciously addressed by many marketing researchers on a day-to-day basis" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 319) and was not addressed in this study.

Lastly, a pilot study was conducted to certify the validity of the research measurement as failing to identify "research errors, such as faulty research procedures, poor samples, and inaccurate or misleading measurement, can undermine validity" (Welman *et al*. 2005: 142).

The aim of this chapter was to provide the foundation and rationale for the second stage of the triangulated research design, namely the quantitative component. Accordingly, the sampling methods and procedures were discussed and explained, along with the questionnaire, reliability, validity, as well as the data analysis techniques used to generate the quantitative findings presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 8:

QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

This chapter presents the data collected from the quantitative, second stage of the triangulated research design, namely the questionnaires.

8.1 Profile of the Questionnaire Sample

8.1.1 Age

A total of 400 completed questionnaires were collected, however, 20 surveys had to be excluded from the final sample as they did not fall within the sample parameters of 18-to-25, a sub-generation within Generation Y, referred to as the 'Twixters', and the focus of this study. Of these 20 questionnaires, 15 of the respondents were aged 26 and over, while 5 respondents were aged 17.

The respondents who were included in the final sample are represented in the following pie chart.

Figure 8. 1 Age of the Questionnaire Respondents

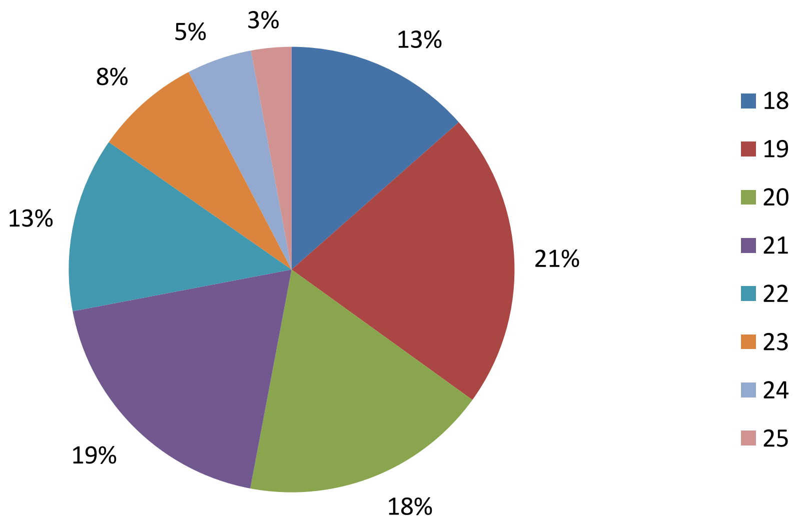


Table 8. 1 Age of the Questionnaire Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18	51	13.4	13.4	13.9
	19	81	21.3	21.3	35.3
	20	68	17.9	17.9	53.2
	21	72	18.9	18.9	72.1
	22	48	12.6	12.6	84.7
	23	29	7.6	7.6	92.4
	24	18	4.7	4.7	97.1
	25	11	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	380	100.0	100.0	

The majority (70.7%) of the questionnaire respondents were aged 19 to 22. This age group therefore does represent the ‘Twixter’ group.

<u>8.1.2 Gender</u>

Table 8. 2 Gender of the Questionnaire Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	150	39.5	39.5	39.5
	Female	230	60.5	60.5	100.0
	Total	380	100.0	100.0	

The majority of the respondents (60.5%) were female. This is more-or-less representative of the UKZNP population, of which 57.4% of students are female and 42.6% are male (DMI Requests 2010).

8.1.3 Race

Figure 8. 2 Race of the Questionnaire Respondents

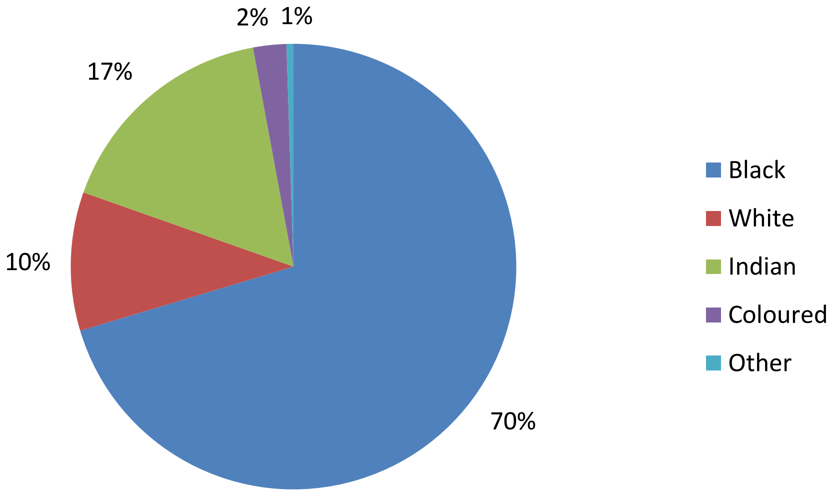


Table 8. 3 Race of the Questionnaire Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Black	266	70.0	70.0	70.5
	White	38	10.0	10.0	80.5
	Indian	63	16.6	16.6	97.1
	Coloured	9	2.4	2.4	99.5
	Other	2	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	380	100.0	100.0	

A large percentage of the questionnaire respondents were Black, with 70% indicating this as their race group. The race of the questionnaire respondents is very representative of the UKZNP student population, of which 69% of the students are Black, 12.2% are White, 15.8% are Indian and 2.6% are Coloured (DMI Requests 2010)

8.1.4 Degree being studied by the Questionnaire Respondents

Figure 8. 3 Degree being studied by the Questionnaire Respondents

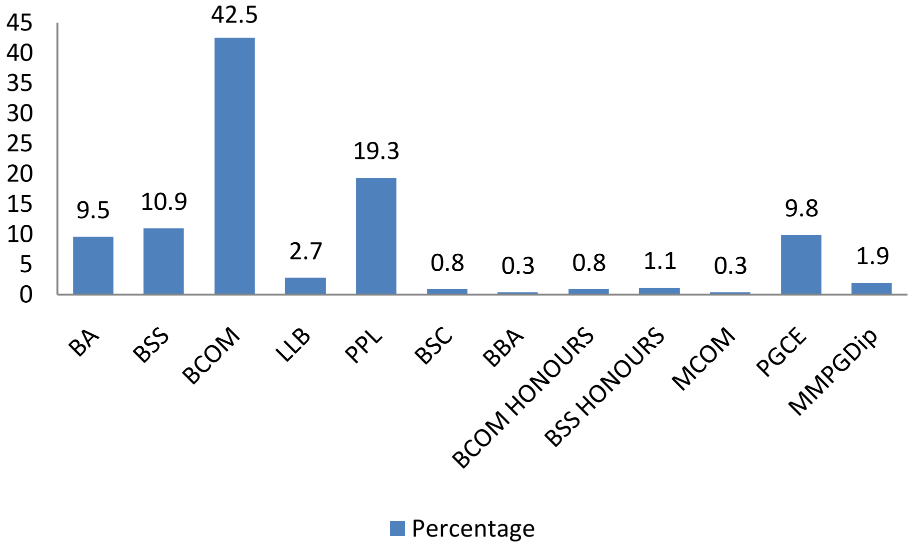


Table 8. 4 Degree being studied by the Questionnaire Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BA	35	9.2	9.5	9.5
	BSS	40	10.5	10.9	20.4
	BCOM	156	41.1	42.5	62.9
	LLB	10	2.6	2.7	65.7
	PPL	71	18.7	19.3	85.0
	BSC	3	.8	.8	85.8
	BBA	1	.3	.3	86.1
	BCOM HONS	3	.8	.8	86.9
	BSS HONS	4	1.1	1.1	88.0
	MCOM	1	.3	.3	88.3
	PGCE	36	9.5	9.8	98.1
	MMPGDip	7	1.8	1.9	100.0
	Total	367	96.6	100.0	
Missing	0	13	3.4		
Total		380	100.0		

BCOM students were the most common in the final questionnaire sample, with 42.5% of the respondents studying a BCOM degree. Although there was a bias towards Commerce students, with 44.2% of the respondents studying a Commerce degree, all faculties on the Pietermaritzburg campus had representation in the sample.

8.2 Shopping Habit Questions

8.2.1 Frequency of Clothing Purchases

Figure 8. 4 Frequency of Clothing Purchases

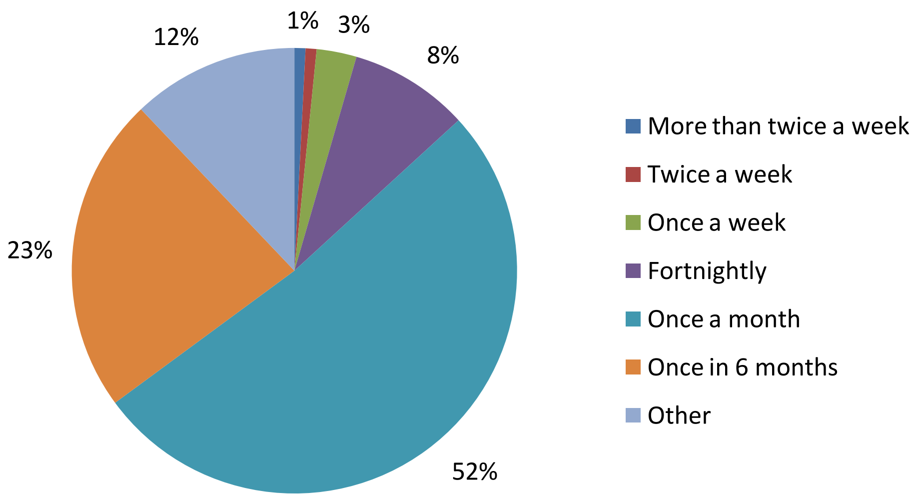
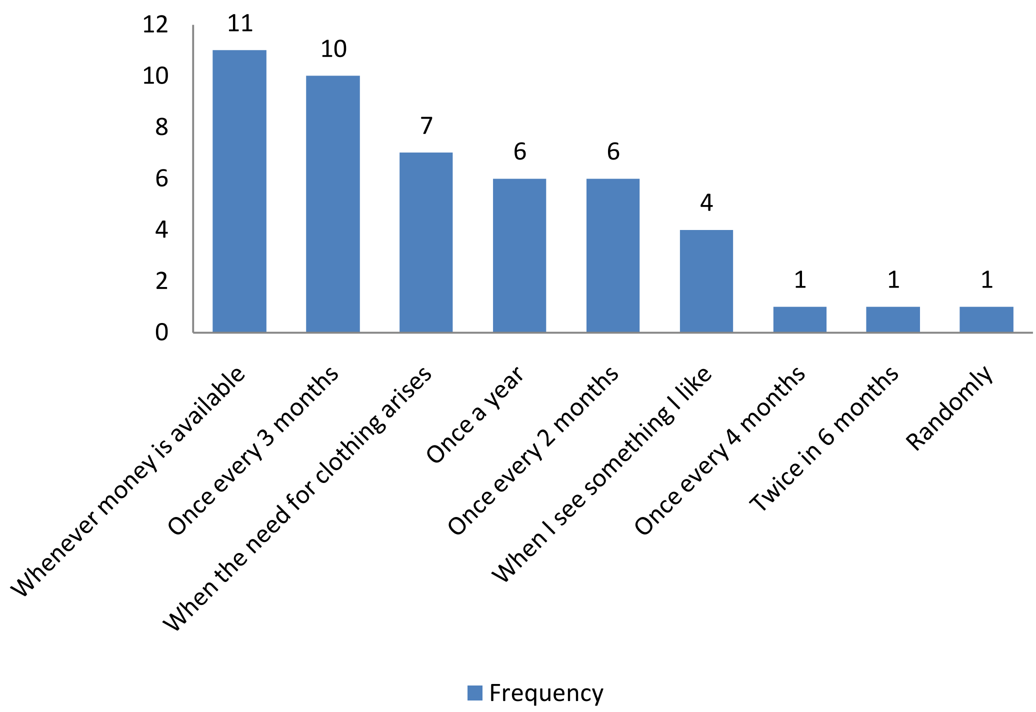


Table 8. 5 Frequency of Clothing Purchases

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than twice a week	3	.8	.8	.8
	Twice a week	3	.8	.8	1.6
	Once a week	11	2.9	2.9	4.5
	Fortnightly	33	8.7	8.7	13.2
	Once a month	196	51.6	51.7	64.9
	Once in 6 months	87	22.9	23.0	87.9
	Other	46	12.1	12.1	100.0
	Total	379	99.7	100.0	
Missing	0	1	.3		
Total		380	100.0		

Most of the respondents, a total of 64.9%, indicated they shop for clothes at least once a month. Du Preez *et al.* (2007: 9) asked a similar question in their study in order to ascertain the patronage behaviour of the respondents, by asking where and how often they purchase apparel, with the aim of investigating the influence of these variables on the importance placed on store attributes.

Figure 8. 5 Frequency of Clothing Purchases, 'Other' Option



Some of the questionnaire respondents (12.1%) chose the 'Other' option when answering how often they purchase clothing, of which 11 respondents stated that they shop whenever they have the available funds to do so and 10 respondents said they shop for clothing once every 3 months.

8.2.2 When buying clothes, which stores do you shop at most of the time?

The Stage 2 Questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate which clothing stores they shop at most of the time when buying clothing. This was a closed question as the respondents were given a choice of 5 clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, Identity, Young Designers Emporium (YDE) and Woolworths, which were identified as the most patronised during the qualitative, first stage of this two-stage triangulated research design. Accordingly, the following graph and table summarise the percentage of respondents who indicated to shopping at these relevant stores.

Figure 8. 6 Most Patronised Clothing Stores

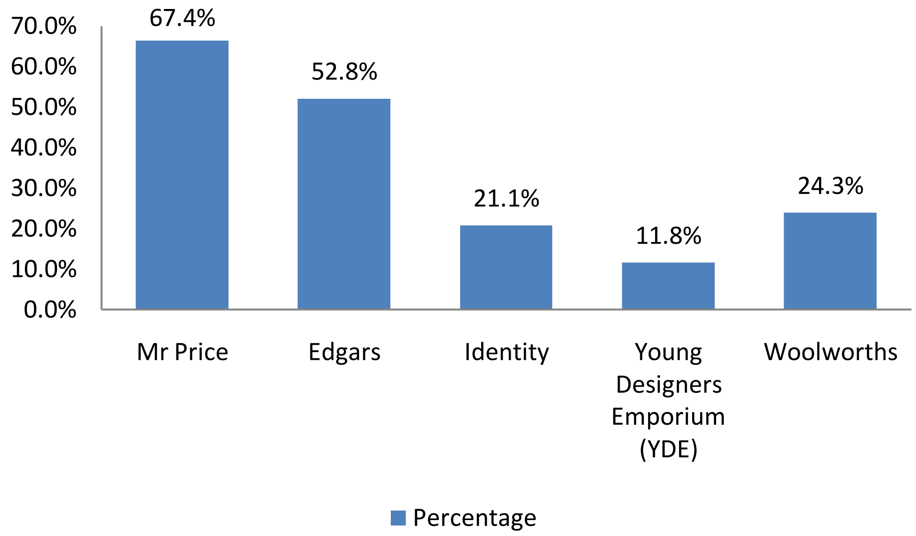


Table 8. 6 Most Patronised Clothing Stores

Clothing Store	Frequency of Respondents who shop there	Percentage of Respondents who shop there
Mr Price	252	67.4%
Edgars	198	52.8%
Identity	79	21.1%
Young Designers Emporium (YDE)	44	11.8%
Woolworths	91	24.3%

The most patronised stores amongst the questionnaire respondents were Mr Price and Edgars, with 67.4% and 52.8% of the respondents indicating they shop at these two retailers respectively.

A further 20% of the student respondents also indicated they shop at the following apparel retailers in response to the ‘Other’ option provided in Question 1.

Figure 8. 7 'Other' Stores Shopped At

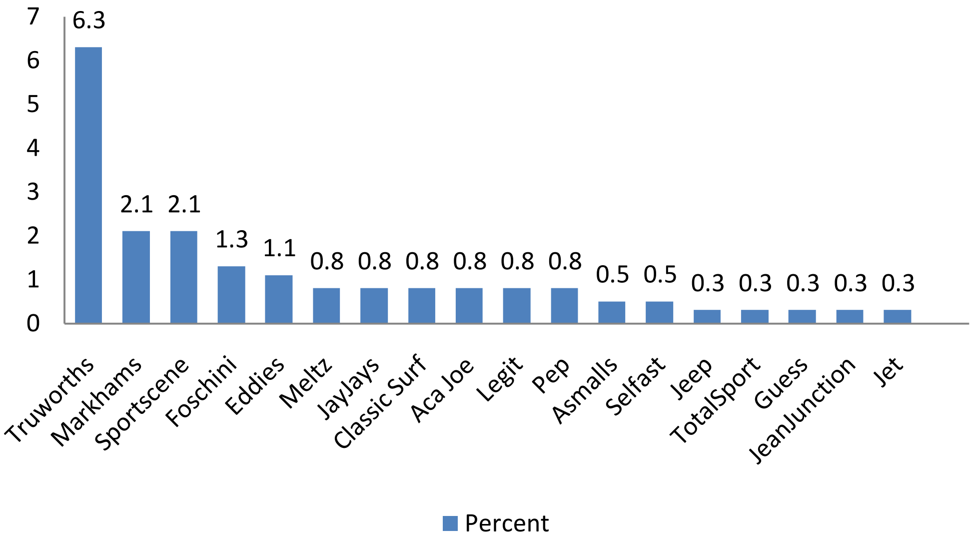


Table 8. 7 'Other' Stores Shopped At

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Meltz	3	.8	3.9	3.9
	Foschini	5	1.3	6.6	10.5
	JayJays	3	.8	3.9	14.5
	Markhams	8	2.1	10.5	25.0
	Truworths	24	6.3	31.6	56.6
	Sportscene	8	2.1	10.5	67.1
	Jeep	1	.3	1.3	68.4
	Classic Surf	3	.8	3.9	72.4
	TotalSport	1	.3	1.3	73.7
	Eddies	4	1.1	5.3	78.9
	Aca Joe	3	.8	3.9	82.9
	Asmalls	2	.5	2.6	85.5
	Legit	3	.8	3.9	89.5
	Guess	1	.3	1.3	90.8
	Pep	3	.8	3.9	94.7
	Selfast	2	.5	2.6	97.4
	JeanJunction	1	.3	1.3	98.7
	Jet	1	.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	76	20.0	100.0	
Missing	0	304	80.0		
Total		380	100.0		

Of the 'Other' stores students indicated to shopping at, Truworths was the most popular with 31.6% of these respondents shopping there most of the time, followed by Markhams and SportScene, both with 10.5% of the 'Other' respondents shopping there for clothing.

The following stores appeared a maximum of five times throughout the 380 questionnaires:

Foschini, Eddies, Meltz, JayJays, Classic Surf, Aca Joe, Legit, Pep, Asmalls, Selfast, Total Sport, Jeep, Guess, Jet and Jean Junction. These clothing retailers, despite rarely being mentioned, may still be considered as competitors and potential threats within the clothing industry, although such stores will not necessarily be regarded as the major competitors within this sector.

In summation, the most patronised clothing stores according to this sample, were Mr Price (67.4%), Edgars (52.8%), Woolworths (24.3%) and Identity (21.1%).

8.2.3 Statements about Clothing Purchases

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements on a scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

8.2.3.1 My Choice of clothing store is affected by how much I am buying, in terms of quantity.

Figure 8. 8 Choice of Store is affected by Quantity being purchased

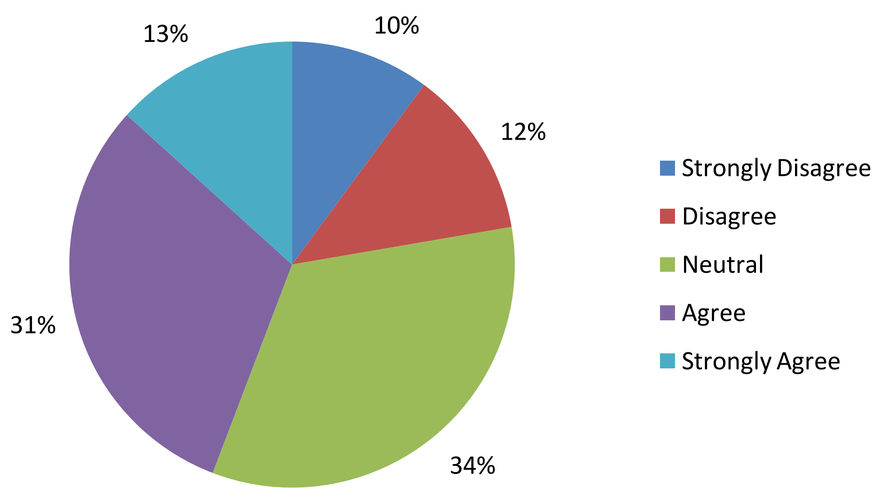


Table 8. 8 Choice of Store is affected by Quantity being purchased

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	38	10.0	10.1	10.1
	Disagree	46	12.1	12.2	22.3
	Neutral	126	33.2	33.5	55.9
	Agree	116	30.5	30.9	86.7
	Strongly Agree	50	13.2	13.3	100.0
	Total	376	98.9	100.0	
Missing	0	4	1.1		
Total		380	100.0		

A total of 44.2% of the questionnaire respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their choice of clothing store is affected by the quantity being purchased. 33.5% of the respondents indicated a neutral response to the statement of whether their choice of clothing store is affected by the quantity being purchased. They may, for instance, feel that this does not apply to the purchase of clothing, and rather relates to products such as groceries, or they may be unsure if this statement applies to them or not and thus chose the non-committal, neutral response.

Van Kenhove *et al.* (1999: 125) investigated the impact of task definitions, such as the purchase of larger quantities, on the importance assigned to store attributes, as well as its affect on store choice. The focus of their study was primarily on the DIY product sector which is, however, similar to clothing in that both these product categories involve higher consumer involvement (Van Kenhove *et al.* 1999: 128). Van Kenhove *et al.* (1999: 131) consequently found that, when purchasing larger quantities, low prices and sufficient stock were the most important factors influencing store selection. In this study, it was found that a substantial percentage of both the Stage 1 focus group participants, as well as the Stage 2 questionnaire respondents felt that their clothing store choices are impacted by the quantity being purchased, which serves to ratify the findings of Van Kenhove *et al.* (1999: 131).

8.2.3.2 My choice of clothing store is affected by whether I am buying a gift or shopping for myself.

Figure 8. 9 Choice of Store is affected by the Reason for the Purchase

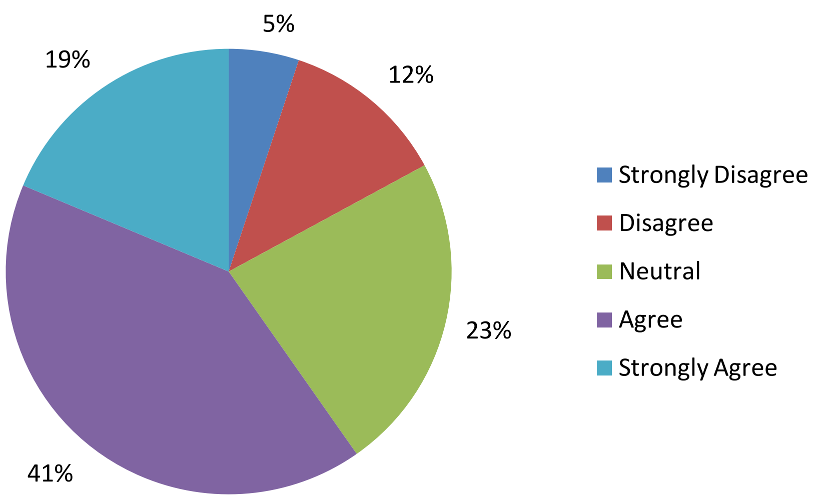


Table 8. 9 Choice of Store is affected by the Reason for the Purchase

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	19	5.0	5.1	5.1
	Disagree	45	11.8	12.0	17.1
	Neutral	87	22.9	23.2	40.3
	Agree	154	40.5	41.1	81.3
	Strongly Agree	70	18.4	18.7	100.0
	Total	375	98.7	100.0	
Missing	0	5	1.3		
Total		380	100.0		

Numerous respondents (59.8%) indicated that they do agree to some extent with the statement that their choice of clothing retailer is affected by whether they are buying a gift or shopping for themselves.

A study conducted by Gehrt and Yan (2004: 7) suggested that the consumers' patronage behaviour was also influenced by "whether individuals are shopping for a gift or for themselves". This was confirmed by the current research findings, however, further investigation is necessary to link which attributes are important when buying a gift versus the most important attributes when shopping for yourself.

8.2.3.3 My choice of store is affected by how much time I have to shop.

Figure 8. 10 Choice of Store is affected by Time Availability

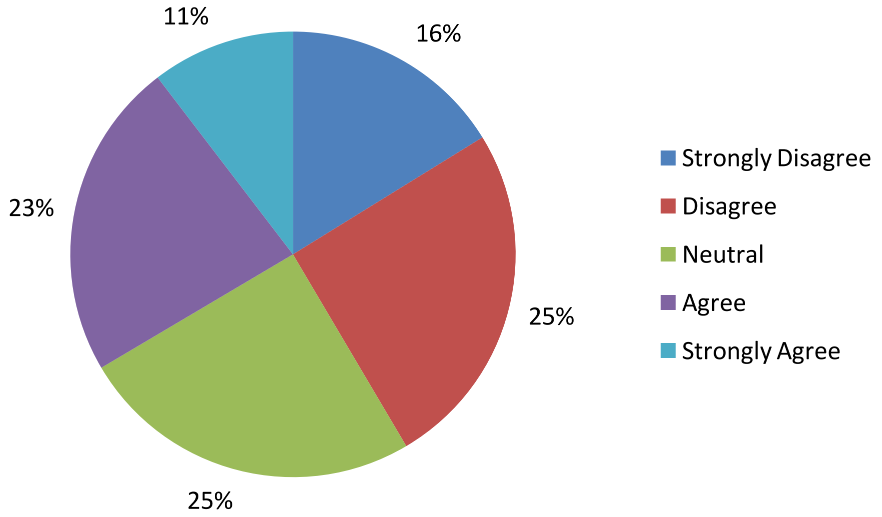


Table 8. 10 Choice of Store is affected by Time Availability

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	61	16.1	16.2	16.2
	Disagree	95	25.0	25.3	41.5
	Neutral	94	24.7	25.0	66.5
	Agree	87	22.9	23.1	89.6
	Strongly Agree	39	10.3	10.4	100.0
	Total	376	98.9	100.0	
Missing	0	4	1.1		
Total		380	100.0		

A total of 41.5% of the questionnaire respondents believed that their choice of clothing store is not affected by how much time they have to shop as opposed to 33.2% who said it did. A quarter of the respondents (25%) chose the Neutral response suggesting they are perhaps not certain if their choice of clothing store is affected by the time they have to shop. This may also be because clothing shopping is often either spontaneous, or carefully planned as a leisure activity and thus, for most of the time, time availability does not come into account when choosing a clothing store.

The study of Van Kenhove *et al.* (1999: 131), which investigated the impact of various task definitions on attribute importance and store choice, also revealed that the consumers choice of retailer was impacted by whether or not the consumer was experiencing time constraints, in which case the attributes of proximity, quick service and availability of stock were the most important when choosing a store. The findings of this study, however, seem to contradict this as the respondents indicated, for the most part, that their choice of clothing retailer is not influenced by the time available to shop. This may be due to the different product categories in the two studies. DIY products, for example, are generally needed more urgently, whereas clothing shopping is usually not a pressing matter.

8.2.3.4 Edgars is the best store for formal clothing.

Figure 8. 11 Edgars is the best store for Formal Clothing

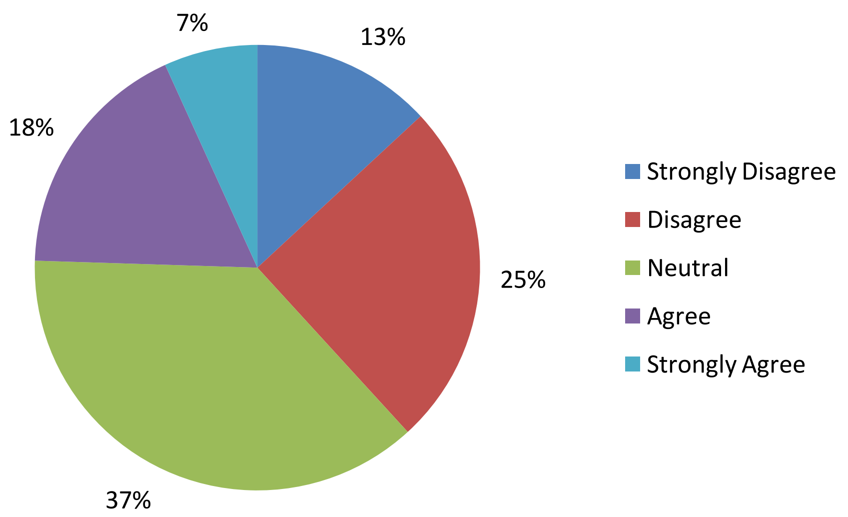


Table 8. 11 Edgars is the best store for Formal Clothing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	48	12.6	13.1	13.1
	Disagree	92	24.2	25.1	38.1
	Neutral	137	36.1	37.3	75.5
	Agree	65	17.1	17.7	93.2
	Strongly Agree	25	6.6	6.8	100.0
	Total	367	96.6	100.0	
Missing	0	13	3.4		
Total		380	100.0		

A number of respondents (38.2%) disagreed that Edgars is the best store for formal clothing, while a 37.3% indicated to be Neutral in response to this statement and only 23.7% agreed. This may be explained by the fact that the respondents are all students and thus dress casually on a daily basis, and since they do not generally need formal clothing, are not sure if Edgars is the best for meeting such clothing requirements. Hence, the vague response hints at their uncertainty regarding clothing of this nature.

8.2.3.5 Woolworths is the best store for high quality clothing.

Figure 8. 12 Woolworths is the best store for High Quality Clothing

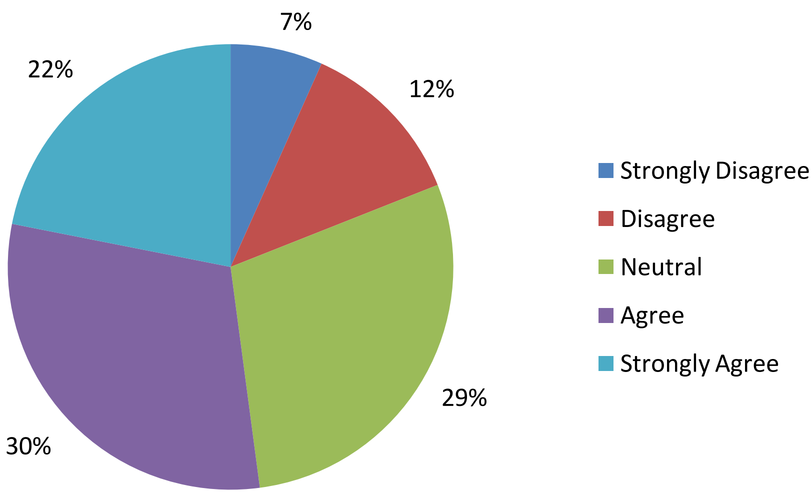


Table 8. 12 Woolworths is the best store for High Quality Clothing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	25	6.6	6.7	6.7
	Disagree	46	12.1	12.3	19.0
	Neutral	108	28.4	28.9	47.9
	Agree	113	29.7	30.2	78.1
	Strongly Agree	82	21.6	21.9	100.0
	Total	374	98.4	100.0	
Missing	0	6	1.6		
Total		380	100.0		

The majority of the respondents, 51.3%, agreed that Woolworths is the best store for high quality clothing as opposed to 18.7% who disagreed. A substantial number of respondents (28.9%), however, again chose a Neutral response to this statement, suggesting perhaps that they do not shop at Woolworths ever or often and thus cannot say whether this store offers merchandise of the highest quality. This may be supported by the fact that only 24.3% of the respondents indicated they shop at Woolworths most of the time when buying clothing.

8.2.3.6 Mr Price is the best store for low prices.

Figure 8. 13 Mr Price is the best store for Low Prices

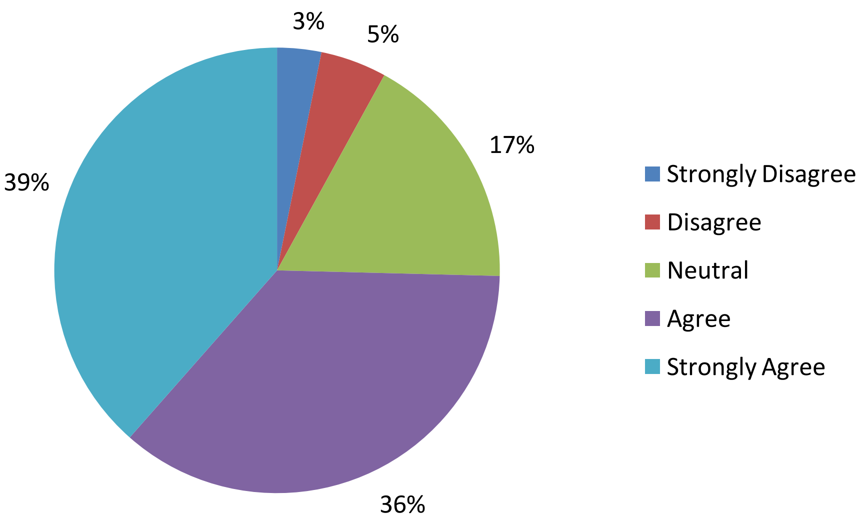


Table 8. 13 Mr Price is the best store for Low Prices

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	18	4.7	4.8	8.0
	Neutral	65	17.1	17.4	25.4
	Agree	135	35.5	36.1	61.5
	Strongly Agree	144	37.9	38.5	100.0
	Total	374	98.4	100.0	
Missing	0	6	1.6		
Total		380	100.0		

A large majority of the respondents, a total of 74.6%, agreed that Mr Price is the best store for low prices. Mr Price was also found to be the most patronised clothing retailer, with 67.4% of the questionnaire respondents shopping there for their clothing.

8.2.3.7 YDE is too expensive.

Figure 8. 14 YDE is too expensive

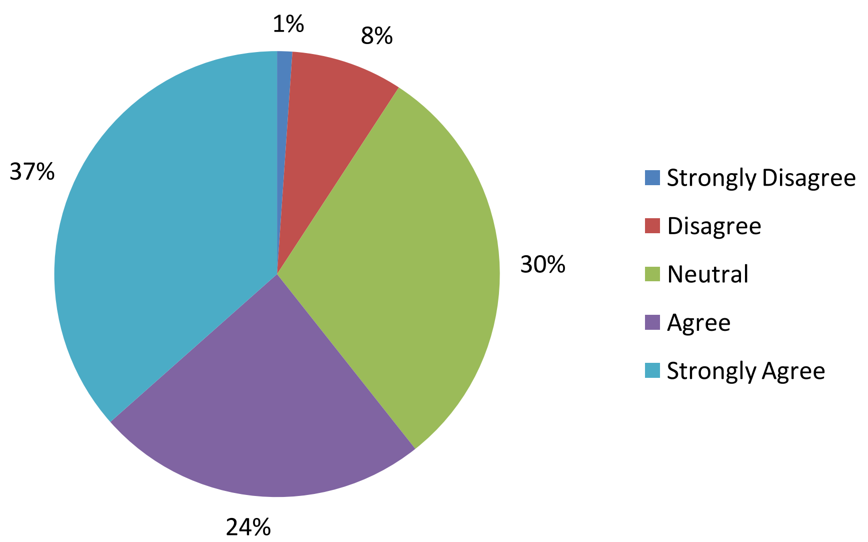


Table 8. 14 YDE is too expensive

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	30	7.9	8.1	9.2
	Neutral	112	29.5	30.3	39.5
	Agree	89	23.4	24.1	63.5
	Strongly Agree	135	35.5	36.5	100.0
	Total	370	97.4	100.0	
Missing	0	10	2.6		
Total		380	100.0		

A total of 58.9% of the sample of Generation Y respondents agreed to some extent that Young Designers Emporium (YDE) is too expensive for them to patronise as opposed to only 9% who disagreed. During the focus group discussions in the first, qualitative stage of this research, 13% of the participants said that High Prices, such as those charged by YDE discourage them from patronising such stores, which correlates with the findings obtained in the second, quantitative stage which indicated that only 11.8% of the respondents patronise YDE most of the time when buying clothing. Furthermore, 30.3% of the respondents, however, chose the Neutral response, which again suggests they may not patronise YDE stores and are thus unsure of the prices charged by this clothing retailer, hence the elusive response. The Neutral response may also suggest that the statement itself is ambiguous and the responses may vary depending on particular circumstances. For example, YDE may be perceived as being too expensive for everyday wear and for students on a tight budget, but is not too expensive when purchasing clothing for a special occasion or when the individual is working and earning an income.

8.2.3.8 Woolworths is too expensive.

Figure 8. 15 Woolworths is too expensive

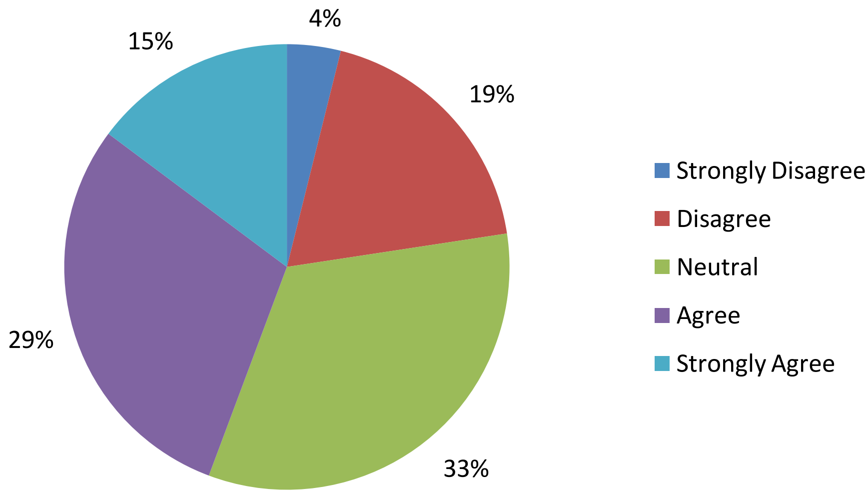


Table 8. 15 Woolworths is too expensive

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	3.7	3.9	3.9
	Disagree	67	17.6	18.7	22.6
	Neutral	119	31.3	33.1	55.7
	Agree	106	27.9	29.5	85.2
	Strongly Agree	53	13.9	14.8	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	0	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		

Numerous respondents, 44.3%, believed that Woolworths is too expensive for them to shop at, while 17.6% disagreed. A further 33.1% were Neutral on this statement which may again be explained by the ambiguity of the statement, in other words, what is Woolworths too expensive for? Therefore, the respondents chose the Neutral response as their answer is circumstantial to other factors relating to budget and occasion. In addition, a comparatively lower number of respondents shop at Woolworths on a regular basis (24.3%) and thus may not know if the prices are too expensive.

8.2.3.9 I do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there.

Figure 8. 16 I do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there

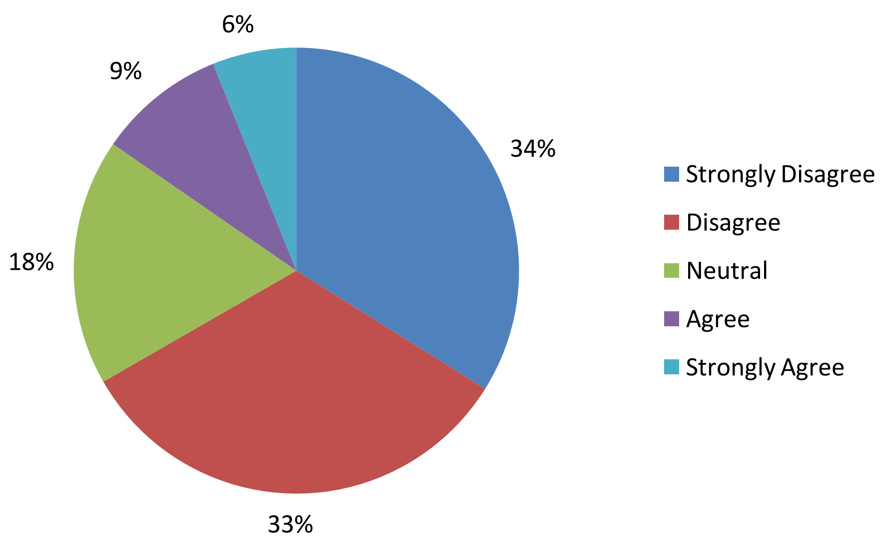


Table 8. 16 I do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	127	33.4	33.9	33.9
	Disagree	123	32.4	32.8	66.7
	Neutral	67	17.6	17.9	84.5
	Agree	35	9.2	9.3	93.9
	Strongly Agree	23	6.1	6.1	100.0
	Total	375	98.7	100.0	
Missing	0	5	1.3		
Total		380	100.0		

This statement was included in the questionnaire as 21% of the Focus Group participants said they do not shop at Mr Price because its merchandise is too popular and too common, especially amongst students, the people they see every day and they do not like to be seen wearing the same items of clothing as their peers. However, the majority of the questionnaire respondents (66.7%) disagree that they do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there which aligns with the patronage data, namely that 67.4% of the questionnaire respondents do shop at Mr Price most of the time when buying apparel.

8.2.3.10 I enjoy shopping.

Figure 8. 17 I enjoy Shopping

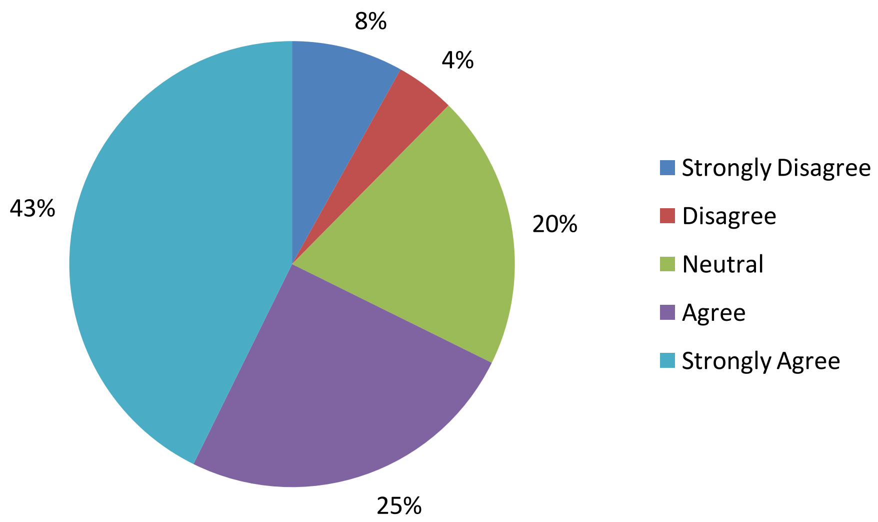


Table 8. 17 I enjoy Shopping

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	30	7.9	8.1	8.1
	Disagree	16	4.2	4.3	12.4
	Neutral	74	19.5	19.9	32.3
	Agree	93	24.5	25.0	57.3
	Strongly Agree	159	41.8	42.7	100.0
	Total	372	97.9	100.0	
Missing	0	8	2.1		
Total		380	100.0		

A total of 67.7% of the questionnaire respondents do enjoy shopping. This confirms the findings of Moore and Carpenter (2008: 333) who stated that Millennials display "the highest degree of shopping enjoyment" compared to previous generations (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 333). Furthermore, a study conducted by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 103) indicated that, for this age cohort, "shopping is a form of leisure and enjoyment".

8.2.3.11 I am willing to pay more for brand names.

Figure 8. 18 I am willing to pay more for Brand Names

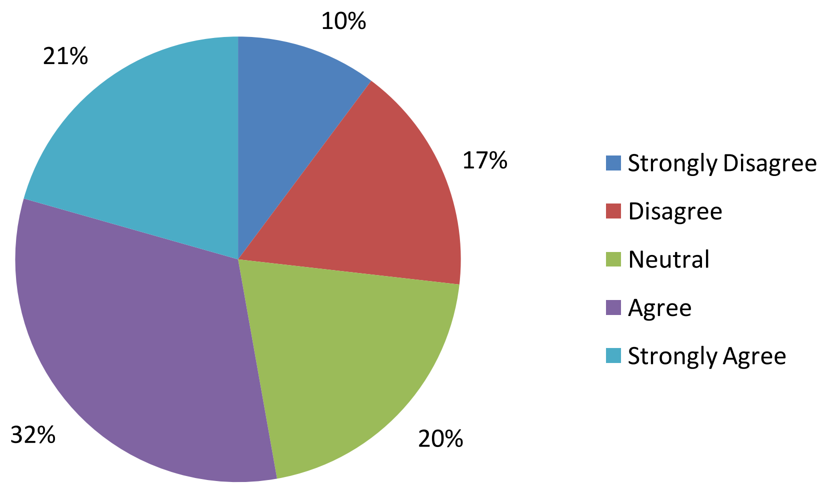


Table 8. 18 I am willing to pay more for Brand Names

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	38	10.0	10.2	10.2
	Disagree	62	16.3	16.6	26.8
	Neutral	76	20.0	20.4	47.2
	Agree	120	31.6	32.2	79.4
	Strongly Agree	77	20.3	20.6	100.0
	Total	373	98.2	100.0	
Missing	0	7	1.8		
Total		380	100.0		

A total of 52.8% of the sample of Generation Y respondents were willing to pay more for brand names. This corresponds with the Focus Group findings, namely that 65% of the Focus Group participants said that they were willing to pay more for brand names which may further relate to the 7% of the Focus Group participants who believed that higher prices signify a higher degree of authenticity in terms of brands which results in a higher status or social standing, and thus would be willing to pay more to achieve this. This confirms the theory and one of the main characteristics of Generation Y's, namely that these consumers are very brand conscious (Hawkins *et al.* 2007: 132). Generation Y is also known to be very conscious of the "price/value relationship" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212), as well as being highly knowledgeable of investments (Farris *et al.* 2002: 90). Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 44), explain that Generation Y consumers “are big spenders when they think it’s worth it”, as well as preferring clothing which is considered to be ‘prestigious’ (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 333). These consumers may thus perceive certain brands and the promises they deliver, and associations of prestige as good investments, thus justifying their willingness to pay more for brand names, as long as it is worth the extra expenditure and represents some sort of investment for the future.

8.2.3.12 I am fashion conscious.

Figure 8. 19 I am Fashion Conscious

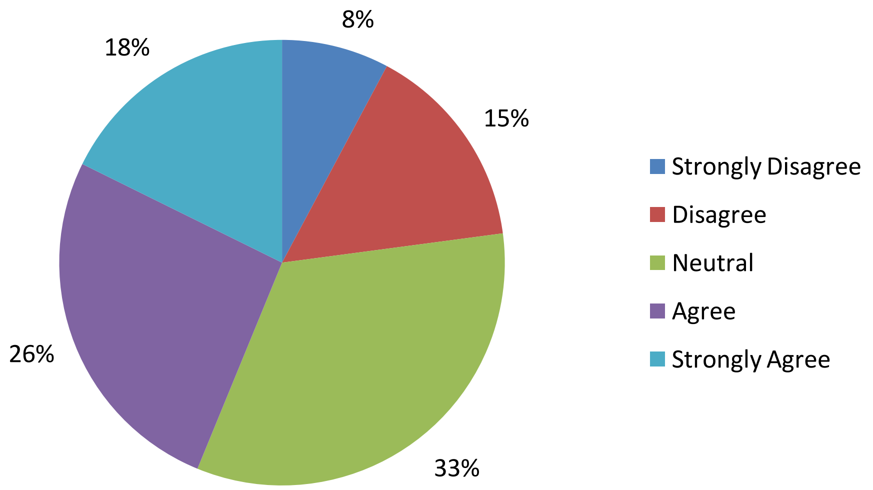


Table 8. 19 I am Fashion Conscious

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	29	7.6	7.8	7.8
	Disagree	56	14.7	15.1	22.8
	Neutral	124	32.6	33.3	56.2
	Agree	97	25.5	26.1	82.3
	Strongly Agree	66	17.4	17.7	100.0
	Total	372	97.9	100.0	
Missing	0	8	2.1		
Total		380	100.0		

A total of 43.8% of the quantitative respondents agreed that they are fashion conscious. This ratifies the theory that the current growth in and importance placed on appearance has resulted in both male and female Generation Y consumers being more aware of fashion trends and shopping for clothing (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 129). The large percentage of Neutral responses (32.6%) may be attributed to respondents being in a rush and becoming bored and lazy while completing the questionnaire, resulting in them selecting the easiest option. Respondents may also have chosen the Neutral option as perhaps they do not like to admit that they are conscious of fashion trends, which relates to the theory which states that these consumers want to be perceived as unique, despite their contradictory desire to conform and belong to a group (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 111).

8.2.3.13 I prefer stores that offer discount prices/sales.

Figure 8. 20 I prefer stores that offer Discount Prices/Sales

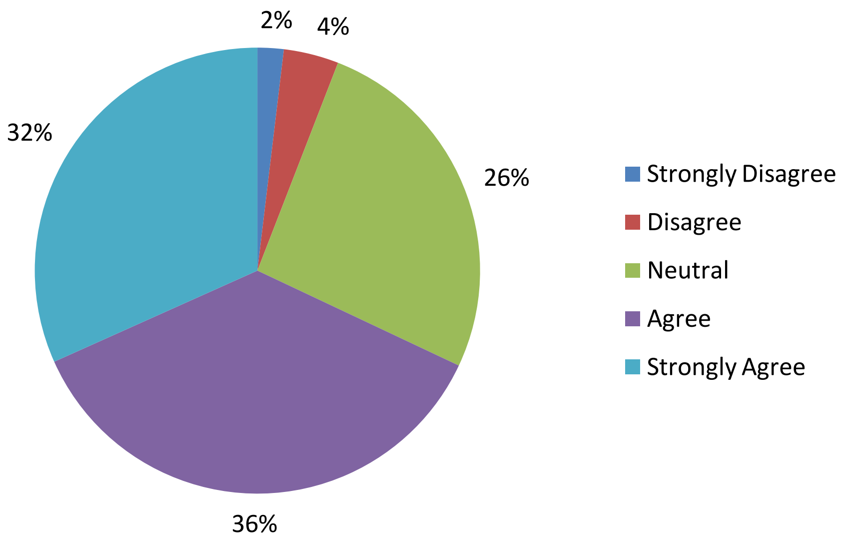


Table 8. 20 I prefer stores that offer Discount Prices/Sales

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	1.8	1.9	1.9
	Disagree	15	3.9	4.0	5.9
	Neutral	98	25.8	26.1	32.0
	Agree	136	35.8	36.3	68.3
	Strongly Agree	119	31.3	31.7	100.0
	Total	375	98.7	100.0	
Missing	0	5	1.3		
Total		380	100.0		

The majority (68%) of the questionnaire respondents do prefer stores that offer sales and/or discount prices. A further 26.1% again chose the Neutral response, possibly displaying response bias in that they do not wish to admit that sales or discount prices influence where they purchase their clothing.

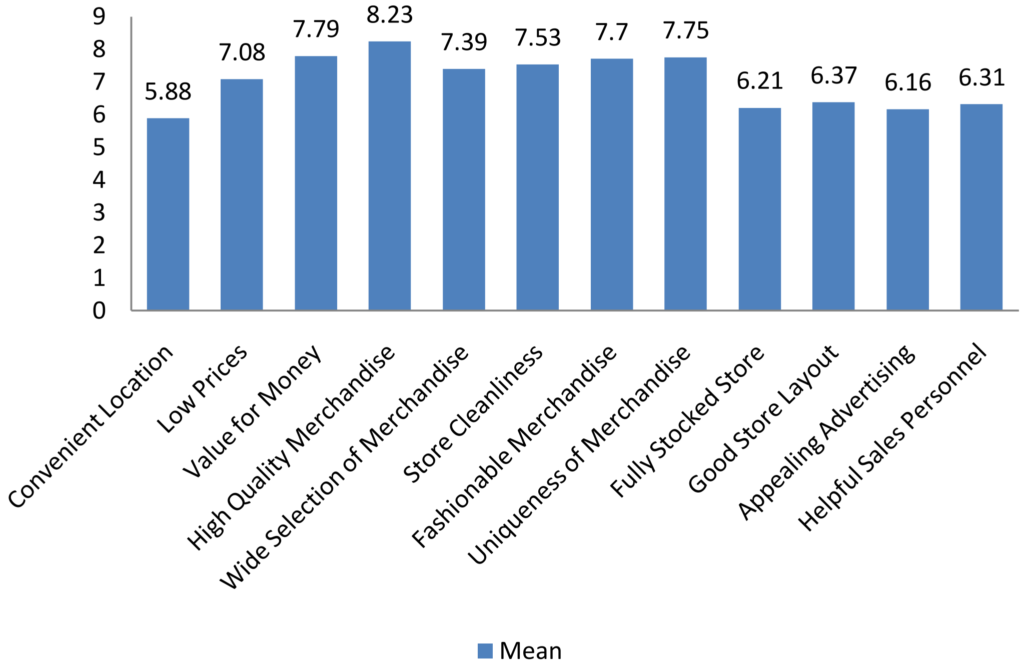
8.3 Clothing Store Attributes

The respondents were asked to rate each of 12 attributes according to the attribute's strength of influence over clothing store selection. A scale of 1 to 10 was used, with 1 indicating that the factor had no influence over clothing store choice and 10 indicating that the factor had a strong influence over choice of clothing retailer.

Table 8. 21 Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Clothing Store Attributes

Clothing Store Attribute	Mean Rating	Standard Dev.	Ranking
High Quality Merchandise	8.23	2.256	1
Value for Money	7.79	2.617	2
Uniqueness of Merchandise	7.75	2.597	3
Fashionable Merchandise	7.70	2.596	4
Store Cleanliness	7.53	2.643	5
Wide Selection of Merchandise	7.39	2.676	6
Low Prices	7.08	2.904	7
Good Store Layout	6.37	2.915	8
Helpful Sales Personnel	6.31	3.183	9
Fully Stocked Store	6.21	3.041	10
Appealing Advertising	6.16	2.988	11
Convenient Location	5.88	3.272	12

Figure 8. 21 Mean Ratings of Clothing Store Attributes



The attribute of High Quality Merchandise received the highest mean rating of 8.23, and it can thus be assumed to be the most important to the respondents. This attribute also had the lowest standard deviation of all the clothing store attributes, demonstrating consensus amongst the respondents regarding the importance of High Quality Merchandise when choosing a clothing retailer. The attributes of Value for Money and Uniqueness of Merchandise received the second and third highest means respectively, with average ratings of 7.79 and 7.75. The attributes of Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices all received mean ratings of more than 7, suggesting these attributes were all relatively important and exert a fairly strong influence over their choice of clothing retailer.

8.4 Factor Analysis of the Clothing Store Attributes

Principal Component Factor Analysis, using varimax rotation, was conducted using SPSS Version 18 Software. This analysis was performed with the aim of "reducing to a manageable number many variables that belong together" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 633). For the purpose of this study, factor analysis was used to determine the general factors that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. As Aaker, Kumar and Day (2004: 563) explain, "one measure of the amount of information conveyed by each factor is its variance". When using the Principal Component Factor Analysis, the first factor represents the best combination of the variables and is thus the "first principal component" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 633). Furthermore, the "second principal component is defined as the best linear combination of variables for explaining the variance *not* accounted for by the first factor" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 633), with each of the subsequent factors representing the best linear combination of variables "not accounted for by the previous factors" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 633). Accordingly, as is shown in Table 8.22 below, "the factors are arranged in order of decreasing variance" (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 563), with the first factor being the most informative, as well as having the "maximum explained variance", while the last factor is the least informative.

Table 8. 22 Total Variance Explained for Clothing Store Attributes

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.836	23.636	23.636	2.836	23.636	23.636	2.321	19.338	19.338
2	1.503	12.526	36.162	1.503	12.526	36.162	1.455	12.121	31.459
3	1.207	10.060	46.222	1.207	10.060	46.222	1.421	11.842	43.301
4	1.045	8.709	54.931	1.045	8.709	54.931	1.396	11.630	54.931
5	.841	7.011	61.942						
6	.819	6.826	68.768						
7	.793	6.609	75.377						
8	.709	5.908	81.285						
9	.670	5.581	86.866						
10	.600	4.999	91.865						
11	.532	4.435	96.300						
12	.444	3.700	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

It is evident from the above table that four factors explained 54.9% of the cumulative variance among the items, an acceptable amount according to Cooper and Schindler (2006: 637), with the first factor accounting for 23.6% of the variance. Furthermore, each of these factors have an Eigenvalue over 1. As Aaker *et al.* (2004: 568) explain, "an eigenvalue represents the amount of variance in the original variables that is associated with a factor". Furthermore, "a factor with an eigenvalue less than 1.0 is no better than a single variable" and therefore, "only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 are retained" (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 568).

The technique of Rotation was used to "provide a more simple and interpretable picture of the relationships between factors and variables" (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 633). The rotated loadings (Table 8.23) were then examined to determine which attributes are not loading on the factors and could thus be eliminated from the data set.

Table 8. 23 Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Good Store Layout	.765	-.013	-.009	.140
Appealing Advertising	.722	.083	.061	.007
Fully Stocked Store	.618	.143	.023	.359
Helpful Sales Personnel	.614	.048	.077	.092
Store Cleanliness	.550	-.133	.394	-.013
Low Prices	-.059	.798	-.163	.068
Convenient Location	.248	.625	.090	-.229
Value for Money	-.034	.513	.483	.140
Wide Selection of Merchandise	.216	.185	.704	-.002
High Quality Merchandise	-.009	-.281	.687	.210
Uniqueness of Merchandise	.130	-.058	.126	.755
Fashionable Merchandise	.152	.000	.060	.739

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

A factor loading is defined as the "correlation between factor scores and the original variables" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 618). Therefore, "because the loadings are correlation coefficients, values near +1 or -1 indicate a close positive or negative association" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 618). The factor loadings are thus used to assess the extent to which the "original variables are correlated with each factor" and "this information then is used to identify and label the unobservable factors subjectively" (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 570). This is illustrated below:

FACTOR 1: Store Features

- Good Store Layout
- Appealing Advertising
- Fully Stocked Store
- Helpful Sales Personnel
- Store Cleanliness

FACTOR 2: Shopping Economy and Efficiency

- Low Prices
- Convenient Location
- Value for Money

FACTOR 3: Merchandise Features

- Wide Selection of Merchandise
- High Quality Merchandise

FACTOR 4: Modernity and Exclusivity of Merchandise

- Uniqueness of Merchandise
- Fashionable Merchandise

When compared with the importance scores in Table 8.21, Factor 1, which has been termed Store Features and has the "maximum explained variance" (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 563) of 23.6%, includes the attribute of Store Cleanliness, the fifth most important clothing store attribute influencing clothing store selection. The other attributes in this factor all had importance scores of less than 7. Factor 2 accounted for 12.5% of the explained variance and relates to attributes such as Value for Money and Low Prices, which received the second and seventh highest average importance ratings. Factor 3, accounting for 10% of the total explained variance, includes the attributes of Wide Selection of Merchandise and High Quality Merchandise, both of which are in the set of most important clothing store attributes affecting store choice. Lastly, Factor 4, which accounted for only 8.7% of the variance, has been named Modernity and Exclusivity of Merchandise as this factor includes the important attributes of Uniqueness of, and Fashionable Merchandise. All the attributes of importance were included in the factors indicating that they all have some relevance to the clothing store selection of the Generation Y research respondents.

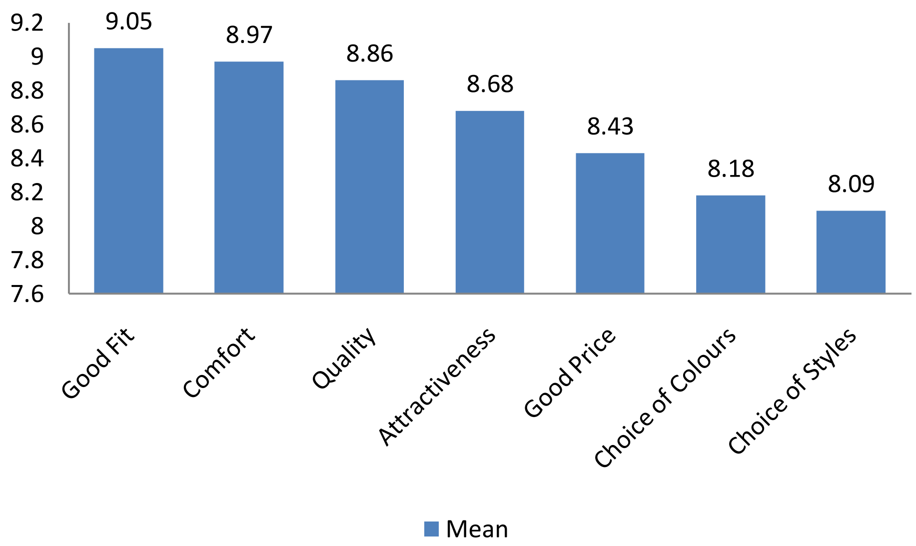
8.5 Clothing Attributes

As with the clothing store attributes, respondents were asked to rate each of 7 attributes according to the attribute's strength of influence over clothing selection. A scale of 1 to 10 was again used, with 1 indicating that the factor had no influence over clothing choice and 10 indicating that the factor had a strong influence over clothing selection and preference.

Table 8. 24 Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Clothing Attributes

Clothing Attribute	Mean Rating	Standard Dev.	Ranking
Good Fit	9.05	2.139	1
Comfort	8.97	1.797	2
Quality	8.86	1.868	3
Attractiveness	8.68	2.101	4
Good Price	8.43	2.211	5
Choice of Colours	8.18	2.315	6
Choice of Styles	8.09	2.344	7

Figure 8. 22 Mean Ratings of Clothing Attributes



The attribute of Good Fit received the highest mean rating of 9.05, implying this attribute exerts a very strong influence over the respondents' choice of clothing store and is the most important of the 7 clothing attributes. It is important to note, however, that all 7 clothing attributes received a mean rating of more than 8, suggesting that each of the attributes all play an important role in influencing the respondents' clothing selection process.

'Other' attributes mentioned as potential influencers of clothing selection included Brand of the clothing, Uniqueness of the clothing and the Trendiness of the clothing. The 'Other' category represented a total of 3.4% of the respondents.

8.6 Factor Analysis of the Clothing Attributes

A Principal Component Factor Analysis, using varimax rotation, was again conducted. This time, the factor analysis was used to determine the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing clothing to purchase.

Table 8.25 presents the total variance among the seven attributes rated by the respondents in Question 6 of the questionnaire, which asked them to rate the clothing attributes in terms of their importance when choosing clothing to purchase.

Table 8. 25 Total Variance Explained for Clothing Attributes

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.375	33.924	33.924	2.375	33.924	33.924	1.982	28.318	28.318
2	1.229	17.552	51.476	1.229	17.552	51.476	1.621	23.158	51.476
3	.947	13.531	65.007						
4	.766	10.942	75.949						
5	.676	9.659	85.608						
6	.550	7.858	93.466						
7	.457	6.534	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

It is apparent from the above table that two factors explained 51.47% of the cumulative variance among the items, with the first factor accounting for 33.9% of the variance. Again, each of these factors have an Eigenvalue over 1.

The rotated loadings (Table 8.26) were then examined.

Table 8. 26 Rotated Component Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
Comfort	.790	.115
Good Fit	.744	.221
Quality	.703	-.123
Attractiveness	.526	.353
Choice of Colours	.167	.770
Choice of Styles	.047	.747
Good Price	.051	.519

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

FACTOR 1: Fit and Look

- Comfort
- Good Fit
- Quality
- Attractiveness

FACTOR 2: Variety and Affordability

- Choice of Colours
- Choice of Styles
- Good Price

Ultimately, it is important to identify factors such as these as they exert an influence over the consumer's purchasing process and decisions regarding whether to purchase or not, what to purchase and where to purchase it. Terblanche (1998: 6) explains that such factors inevitably "contribute to and influence a retailer's image", which in turn plays a role in the consumer's evaluation of alternatives and decision to purchase (Varley and Rafiq 2004: 91). Factor 1, Fit and Look, accounts for the highest percentage of explained variance, with 33.9%, while Factor 2, Variety and Affordability accounts for much less of the total explained variance with 17.6%.

8.7 Rating of Selected Clothing Stores on Key Attributes

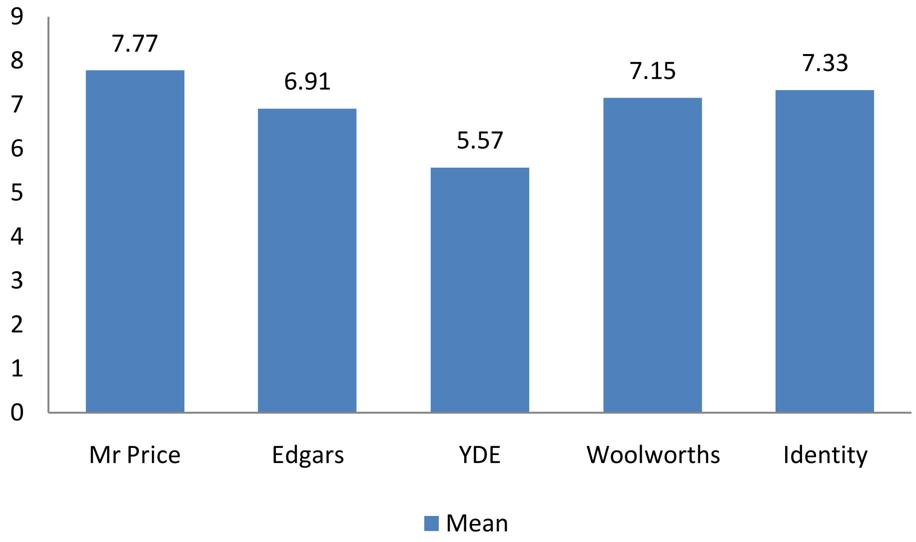
Question 5 asked the respondents to rate the five clothing stores, namely; Mr Price, Edgars, Young Designers Emporium (YDE), Woolworths and Identity on the attributes using a scale of 1 to 10 where: 1=Very Poor; 3=Poor; 5=Average; 7=Good; 10=Very Good.

The questionnaires distributed to the respondents contained the following list of attributes: Convenient Location, Low Prices, Value for Money, High Quality Merchandise, Wide Selection of Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Fashionable Merchandise, Uniqueness of Merchandise, Fully Stocked Store, Good Store Layout, Appealing Advertising and Helpful Sales Personnel. For the purpose of this study, the means were first used for comparing the clothing stores on the specific attributes. These means indicate the average ratings of the clothing stores on the various attributes and thus indicate which clothing stores scored higher than the others.

Table 8. 27 Convenient Location

Convenient Location	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	1.1%	2.7%	14.5%	2.7%	1.7%
2	0.3%	0.3%	0%	0.5%	0%
3	3.5%	4.6%	14.2%	4.1%	2.5%
4	0.3%	1.1%	1.1%	1.4%	0.6%
5	15.4%	22.3%	25.4%	20%	20.4%
6	0.3%	1.3%	0.3%	0.8%	1.4%
7	34.5%	41.4%	24.9%	36.4%	39.2%
8	1.6%	1.1%	1.1%	2.7%	1.9%
9	0.5%	1.1%	1.1%	0.5%	1.7%
10	42.6%	24.2%	17.3%	30.7%	30.7%
Missing	2.4%	2.1%	5.8%	3.9%	4.7%
Mean	**7.77**	**6.91**	**5.57**	**7.15**	**7.33**
Std. Dev	2.225	2.237	2.866	2.348	2.150

Figure 8. 23 Convenient Location



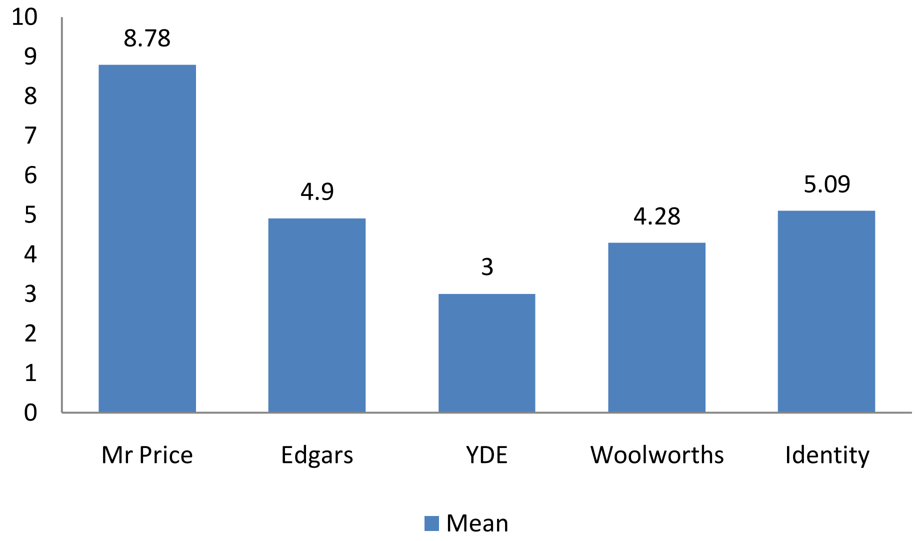
Mr Price received the highest average rating for the attribute of Convenient Location, with a mean of 7.77, followed closely by Identity (7.33) and Woolworths (7.15). YDE scored the lowest mean rating of 5.57, suggesting this store to be perceived as the worst with regard to providing a convenient store location. This may be because Mr Price, Woolworths and Identity are all located within close proximity to the University and are thus more easily accessible and conveniently located compared to YDE, the closest branch of which is at Liberty Midlands Mall, which is much further from the University campus.

Table 8. 28 Low Prices

Low Prices	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	1.3%	8.9%	38.6%	16.1%	7.8%
2	0%	1.1%	0.6%	0.5%	0.3%
3	0.3%	18.3%	31.5%	25.4%	18.3%
4	0%	1.1%	2.3%	1.4%	1.1%
5	5.4%	41.1%	19.2%	40.2%	43.2%
6	0%	1.6%	0%	1.6%	1.1%
7	25.2%	24.5%	5.6%	9.3%	21.1%
8	2.1%	0.8%	0.3%	0.8%	0.3%
9	1.6%	0%	0.3%	0%	0.6%
10	64.1%	2.7%	1.7%	4.6%	6.4%
Missing	1.8%	2.1%	6.6%	3.7%	5.0%
Mean	**8.78**	**4.9**	**3.00**	**4.28**	**5.09**
Std. Dev	1.855	2.000	2.062	2.184	2.138

The majority of the respondents, 64.1%, allocated Mr Price a rating of 10 out of 10 for the attribute of Low Prices, indicating this store to offer prices which are very good in terms of being low and cheap. Most of the ratings for Woolworths, a total of 81.7%, fell on and between the scores of 1 and 5 out of 10, suggesting this store is perceived as charging prices which are very poor to average regarding economy and affordability. YDE received very low ratings for this attribute of Low Prices, with 70.1% of the ratings allocated to the scores of 1 to 3, implying this store charges prices which are seen as expensive.

Figure 8. 24 Low Prices



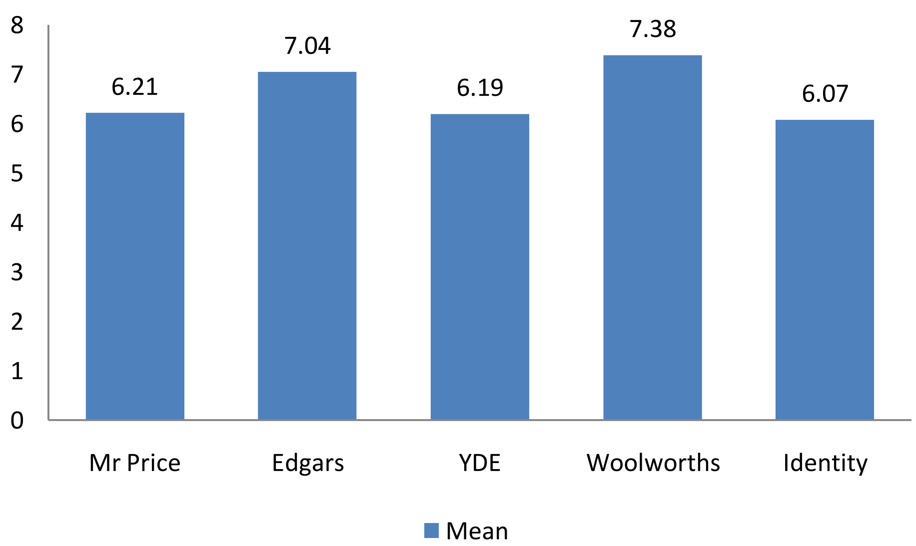
Mr Price, again received the highest average rating for the attribute of Low Prices, with a mean of 8.78. According to the respondents, therefore, of the five clothing retailers, Mr Price is perceived to charge the lowest prices while YDE, on the other hand, is perceived to charge the highest prices, as is clear from the very low mean of 3. The standard deviation of the ratings for Mr Price with regard to Low Prices was the lowest of the five clothing retailers, suggesting the respondents were in general agreement with Mr Price’s performance on this attribute. This is consistent with the previously mentioned findings in Sections 8.2.3.6 and 8.2.3.7 which stated that 74.6% of the respondents agreed that Mr Price is the best clothing retailer for low prices, while 58.9% agreed that YDE is too expensive. This also correlates with the qualitative findings which indicated that 44% of the focus group participants shop at their preferred clothing retailer because these retailers charge low, affordable prices. Accordingly, Mr Price was frequently identified as being preferred because of its low price strategy. In addition, 13% of the focus group participants also explained that they avoided and were discouraged from patronising stores such as YDE because they perceive this retailer as being too expensive.

Table 8. 29 Value for Money

Value for Money	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	4.6%	1.9%	7.7%	3.0%	4.5%
2	0%	0.3%	1.4%	.6%	0.3%
3	10.3%	4.9%	12.2%	5.5%	9.5%
4	0.5%	0.8%	1.7%	0.3%	2.0%
5	33.9%	18.1%	23.3%	16.6%	32.5%
6	1.6%	1.6%	0.6%	2.2%	2.0%
7	27.4%	45.1%	27.8%	30.9%	32.5%
8	1.6%	1.9%	0.6%	1.7%	1.7%
9	0.8%	1.4%	1.7%	1.9%	0.8%
10	19.2%	24.1%	23.0%	37.3%	14.3%
Missing	2.9%	2.6%	7.4%	4.7%	6.1%
Mean	**6.21**	**7.04**	**6.19**	**7.38**	**6.07**
Std. Dev	2.429	2.142	2.769	2.479	2.278

A total of 69.2% and 68.2% of the respondents allocated Edgars and Woolworths respectively, scores between and including 7 to 10 out of 10, indicating these stores to offer good to very good Value for Money. The ratings for Mr Price (61.3%) and Identity (65%), however, fell mostly on and between the scores of 5 and 7, suggesting these store offer average to good Value for Money.

Figure 8. 25 Value for Money



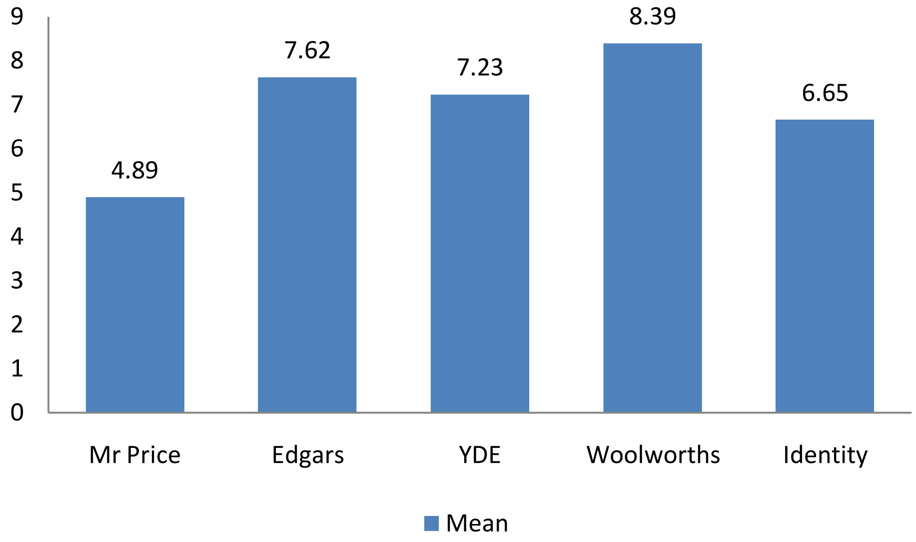
The mean ratings for the attribute of Value for Money were very similar among the five clothing stores, with Woolworths receiving the highest mean of 7.38 and Identity obtaining the lowest mean of 6.07. Although Woolworths is perceived by the questionnaire respondents as being relatively expensive, with a fairly low mean rating of 4.28 on the attribute of Low Prices, the merchandise of this retailer must be perceived by the respondents as being 'worth it' to receive the highest average rating for the Value for Money attribute.

Table 8. 30 High Quality Merchandise

High Quality Merchandise	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	8.7%	1.6%	2.3%	1.1%	2.0%
2	0.8%	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%
3	22.8%	1.6%	6.8%	1.4%	7.0%
4	2.2%	0.5%	0.9%	0%	0.8%
5	38.6%	11.2%	17.3%	6.9%	27.7%
6	0.8%	1.6%	1.1%	0.8%	1.7%
7	18.2%	45.5%	33.8%	30.6%	37.2%
8	0.8%	2.7%	2.8%	3.6%	2.0%
9	0.8%	1.9%	1.1%	2.5%	1.4%
10	6.3%	33.0%	33.2%	52.8%	20.1%
Missing	3.2%	3.4%	7.4%	5.3%	5.8%
Mean	**4.89**	**7.62**	**7.23**	**8.39**	**6.65**
Std. Dev	2.214	2.031	2.421	1.988	2.205

The majority (52.8%) of the respondents gave Woolworths a rating of 10 out of 10 for the factor of High Quality Merchandise, indicating a perception that this store offers merchandise which is of a very good, high quality. Conversely, the majority of the ratings for Mr Price fell between, and including, the scores of 3 (22.8%) and 5 (38.6%), suggesting this store offers poor to average quality clothing. This supports the previous finding that Woolworths is perceived to be fairly expensive but due to the perceived high quality of its merchandise, is perceived to offer high value for money.

Figure 8. 26 High Quality Merchandise



The above findings are reinforced by the average ratings calculated for each store on the attribute of High Quality Merchandise. Accordingly, Woolworths received the highest mean rating of 8.39, while Mr Price received the lowest average score of 4.89. This is consistent with and reinforces the finding that the majority of the respondents, a total of 51.3%, believe that Woolworths is the best store for High Quality Merchandise.

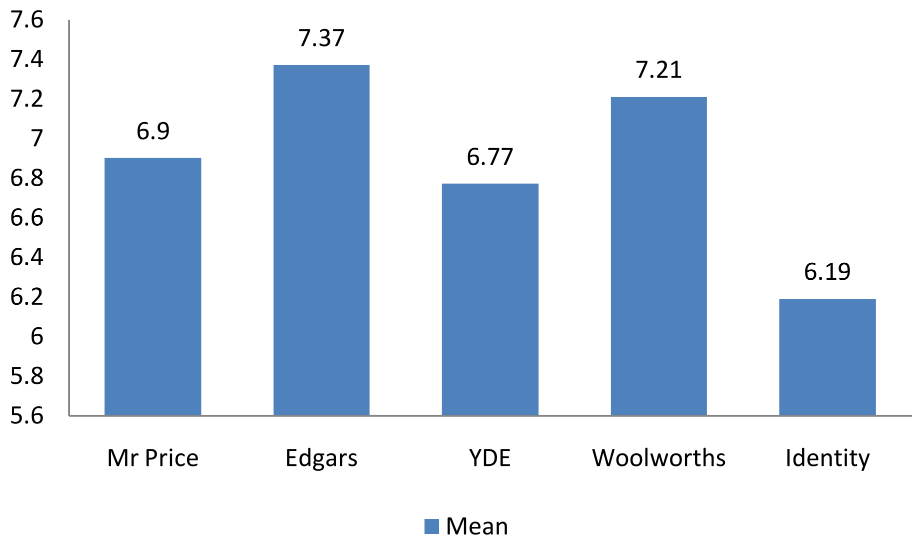
Table 8. 31 Wide Selection of Merchandise

Wide Selection of Merchandise	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	2.5%	0.5%	2.9%	1.7%	4.5%
2	0%	0.5%	0%	0.6%	0.3%
3	7.6%	3.3%	7.2%	5.0%	8.7%
4	0.8%	0.3%	0.6%	0.6%	1.4%
5	23.2%	15.8%	22.9%	17.3%	30.3%
6	1.9%	3.3%	2.9%	2.5%	2.2%
7	33.5%	43.2%	37.8%	39.6%	34.8%
8	1.6%	2.4%	0.9%	1.9%	0.6%
9	1.9%	2.7%	2.0%	2.5%	2.2%
10	27.0%	28.0%	22.9%	28.4%	14.9%
Missing	3.4%	3.2%	8.2%	5.5%	6.3%
Mean	**6.90**	**7.37**	**6.77**	**7.21**	**6.19**
Std. Dev	2.377	2.016	2.300	2.227	2.290

The ratings, and corresponding means, with regard to the attribute of Wide Selection of Merchandise were very similar across all five stores. 28.4% of the respondents allocated

Woolworths with a rating of 10 out of 10, however, this was very closely followed by Edgars, Mr Price and YDE with a corresponding 28%, 27% and 22.9% of the respondents also giving these stores a score of 10.

Figure 8. 27 Wide Selection of Merchandise



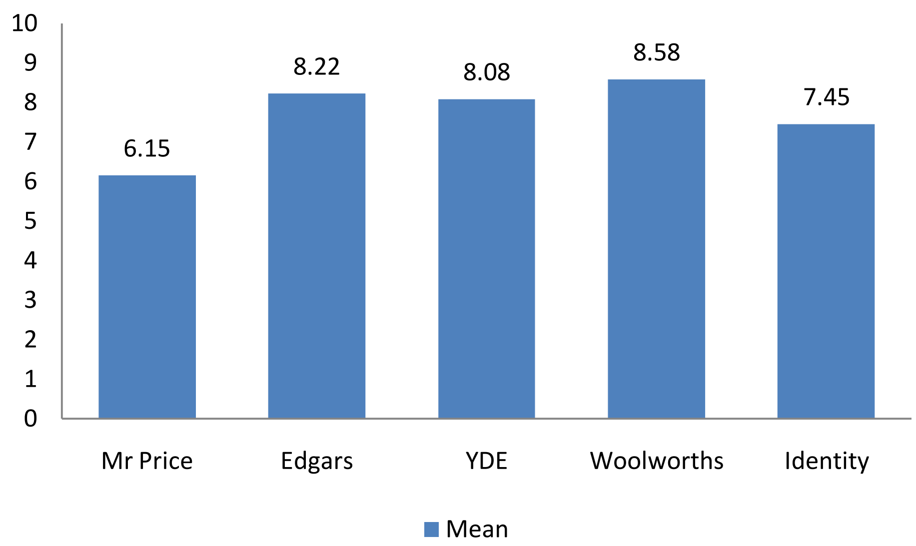
In terms of the means for this attribute, Edgars scored the highest with 7.37, followed closely by Woolworths with 7.21 and Mr Price with 6.90. This suggests that each of these three stores are perceived as providing a good selection of merchandise. Identity received the lowest mean rating of 6.19 implying this store to be perceived as the worst of all five clothing retailers in terms of offering a wide assortment of merchandise.

Table 8. 32 Store Cleanliness

Store Cleanliness	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	3.0%	0.5%	1.1%	1.1%	2.0%
2	0.3%	0	0%	0%	0%
3	11.4%	0.8%	1.1%	1.9%	3.6%
4	1.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0%	0.8%
5	34.8%	6.2%	9.4%	5.3%	16.0%
6	1.4%	1.6%	1.4%	0.3%	2.0%
7	28.5%	39.8%	36.6%	27.4%	38.1%
8	1.6%	2.7%	3.4%	2.5%	1.4%
9	1.6%	3.0%	2.6%	4.2%	2.5%
10	16.3%	45.0%	44.0%	57.3%	33.6%
Missing	3.2%	2.9%	7.4%	5.0%	6.1%
Mean	**6.15**	**8.22**	**8.08**	**8.58**	**7.45**
Std. Dev	2.304	1.824	1.986	1.949	2.231

Woolworths scored the highest for the attribute of Store Cleanliness with 57.3% of the respondents giving it a rating of 10 out of 10, while Mr Price was perceived as being the least clean of the four clothing stores with only 16.3% of the respondents rating this store as a 10 out of 10. Edgars and YDE were also considered by the respondents as being very clean, with 45% and 44% of the respondents correspondingly rating these stores as a 10.

Figure 8. 28 Store Cleanliness

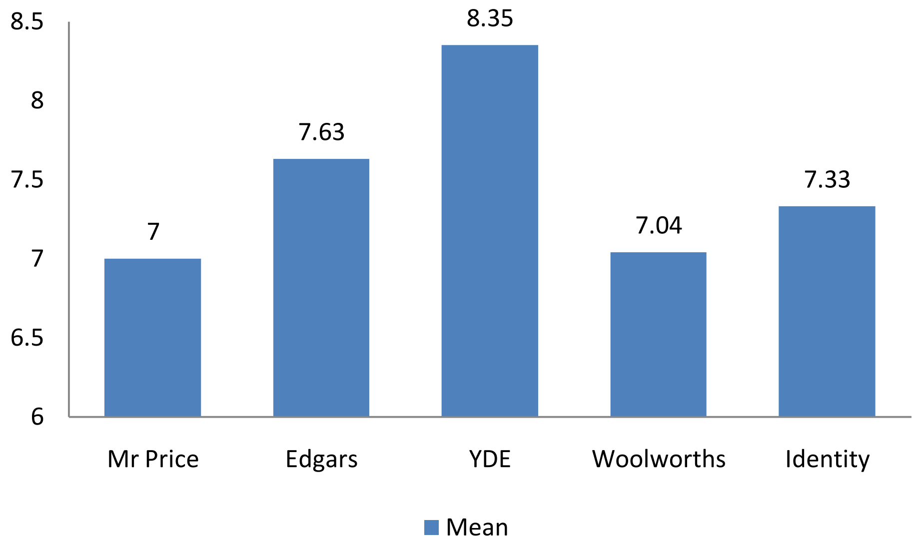


The calculated means for the stores according to store cleanliness reflect the perceived differences between the stores, as Woolworths, Edgars and YDE scored the highest means of 8.58, 8.22 and 8.08 respectively, while Mr Price scored the lowest with 6.15.

Table 8. 33 Fashionable Merchandise

Fashionable Merchandise	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	2.7%	1.4%	1.1%	1.7%	3.7%
2	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3	6.0%	1.9%	2.3%	6.1%	3.7%
4	1.1%	0.3%	0%	0.3%	0.3%
5	19.8%	12.5%	8.8%	22.8%	17.7%
6	1.9%	2.2%	0.6%	1.9%	1.4%
7	38.2%	42.5%	27.8%	35.4%	35.5%
8	0.8%	4.9%	3.4%	2.5%	2.0%
9	2.2%	1.6%	2.6%	2.8%	1.7%
10	27.1%	32.8%	53.4%	26.5%	34.1%
Missing	2.9%	2.9%	7.4%	5.5%	6.6%
Mean	**7.00**	**7.63**	**8.35**	**7.04**	**7.33**
Std. Dev	2.335	2.004	2.067	2.252	2.390

Figure 8. 29 Fashionable Merchandise



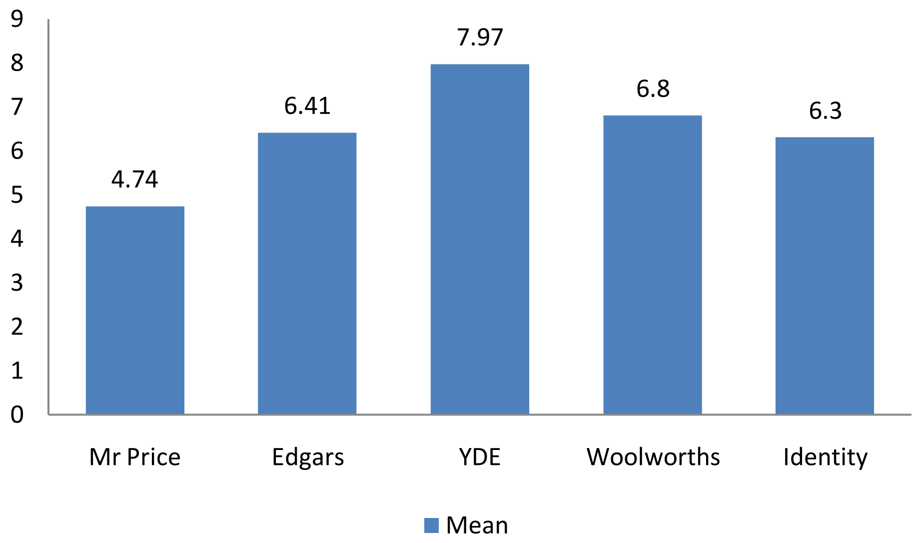
With regard to both the ratings and the calculated means for each of the five clothing retailers, YDE was most obviously the best at offering merchandise which is perceived by the respondents as being highly trendy and fashionable. This is evident in the 53.4% of respondents who allocated YDE a rating of 10 out of 10, as well as a mean rating of 8.35. The remaining four stores, namely Edgars, Identity, Woolworths and Mr Price, each also received high mean ratings of 7.63, 7.33, 7.04 and 7.00 respectively. This suggests that, although YDE is slightly superior in terms of Fashionable Merchandise, the high means and parity between them of the other stores indicates that all of the five clothing stores are fairly good at providing customers with fashionable merchandise.

Table 8. 34 Uniqueness of Merchandise

Uniqueness of Merchandise	**Mr Price**	**Edgars**	**YDE**	**Woolworths**	**Identity**
1	15.6%	1.6%	0.6%	2%	6.2%
2	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0%	0%
3	22.4%	6.8%	3.7%	4.8%	10.7%
4	1.4%	0.8%	0%	0.6%	0.8%
5	30.9%	32.2%	14.9%	28.0%	26.8%
6	1.1%	1.9%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
7	18.3%	38.3%	27.4%	37.0%	29.7%
8	1.1%	2.2%	2.9%	4.5%	2.3%
9	0.8%	1.1%	2.6%	1.7%	1.4%
10	7.9%	14.8%	46.6%	20.4%	20.9%
Missing	3.7%	3.7%	7.9%	6.1%	6.8%
Mean	**4.74**	**6.41**	**7.97**	**6.80**	**6.30**
Std. Dev	2.521	2.048	2.207	2.139	2.571

46.6% of the respondents allocated YDE a rating of 10 out of 10, indicating that this store offers merchandise which is highly unique and exclusive, according to the respondents. The majority of the ratings for Edgars, Woolworths and Identity were, however, concentrated between and including the scores of 5 and 7, suggesting that the uniqueness of the merchandise offered by these stores is only average to good. The majority of ratings for Mr Price (53.3%) on the attribute of Uniqueness of Merchandise were concentrated on the scores of 3 and 5, implying this store's merchandise is poor to average in terms of being unique and distinctive.

Figure 8. 30 Uniqueness of Merchandise



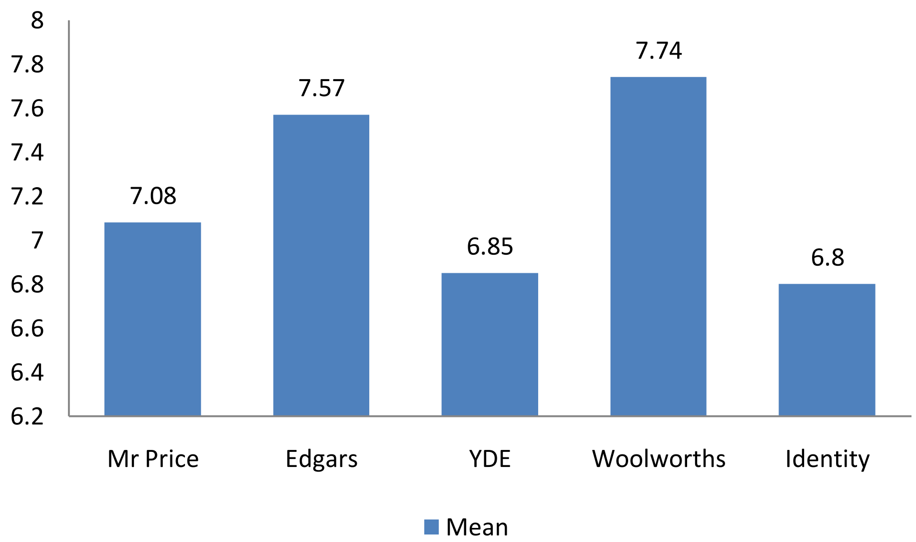
YDE received the highest mean of 7.97, further reinforcing and supporting the finding that YDE offers the most unique merchandise. Conversely, Mr Price appears to offer the least unique merchandise, with a mean of 4.74. This seems to contradict the previous finding that the majority of the questionnaire respondents (66.7%) disagreed that they do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there. This may imply that, despite the popularity and lack of uniqueness of this clothing retailer, many of the respondents still shop there.

Table 8. 35 Fully Stocked Store

Fully Stocked Store	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.7%	2.8%
2	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3	5.4%	2.5%	7.5%	2.5%	4.3%
4	0.5%	0%	0.6%	0%	0.3%
5	25.1%	15.0%	25.6%	15.1%	26.8%
6	2.7%	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%	1.4%
7	31.3%	39.9%	34.5%	34.5%	40.2%
8	1.9%	3.8%	2.6%	2.5%	0.3%
9	2.2%	2.7%	1.4%	2.5%	2.3%
10	29.2%	32.5%	24.4%	39.5%	21.7%
Missing	3.4%	3.7%	8.4%	6.1%	7.6%
Mean	**7.08**	**7.57**	**6.85**	**7.74**	**6.80**
Std. Dev	2.291	2.067	2.254	2.186	2.199

The ratings for all five of the clothing retailers were very similar, with scores falling mostly on 7 and 10 out of 10. 39.5% of the respondents allocated Woolworths with a rating of 10 out of 10, however, this was closely followed by Edgars, Mr Price, YDE and Identity with a corresponding 32.5%, 29.2%, 24.4% and 21.7% of the respondents also giving these stores a score of 10.

Figure 8. 31 Fully Stocked Store



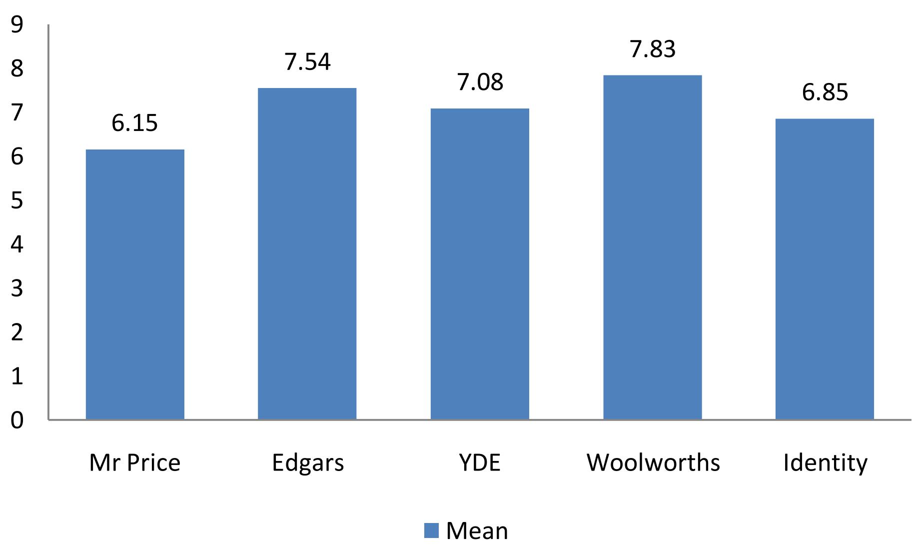
The variance between the calculated means for each of the five clothing retailers on the attribute of Fully Stocked Store was very low, with Woolworths receiving the highest mean rating of 7.74 and Identity receiving the lowest of 6.80. Therefore, it appears that Woolworths is perceived as being slightly better with regard to having a fully stocked store with available merchandise in comparison to the other four clothing retailers.

Table 8. 36 Good Store Layout

Good Store Layout	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	3.0%	2.2%	2.3%	0.8%	2.8%
2	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0%	0.6%
3	15.0%	1.9%	5.4%	2.5%	5.4%
4	0.3%	0.8%	0.3%	0.6%	0%
5	28.4%	15.3%	22.5%	12.9%	24.9%
6	2.2%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	1.4%
7	31.4%	38.5%	35.3%	37.0%	36.5%
8	1.4%	2.5%	3.1%	3.6%	2.8%
9	0.8%	3.3%	1.4%	2.8%	1.7%
10	17.2%	34.2%	28.5%	38.9%	23.8%
Missing	3.7%	3.7%	7.6%	6.1%	7.1%
Mean	**6.15**	**7.54**	**7.08**	**7.83**	**6.85**
Std. Dev	2.373	2.208	2.314	2.064	2.294

The ratings for Edgars, YDE and Woolworths, in relation to the attribute of Good Store Layout, were mostly allocated to the scores of 7 to 10, with 78.5% of the respondents giving Edgars a rating of 7 to 10 out of 10, 68.3% of the respondents rating YDE as 7 to 10, 82.3% assigning Woolworths with a score of between and including 7 to 10 out of a possible 10.

Figure 8. 32 Good Store Layout

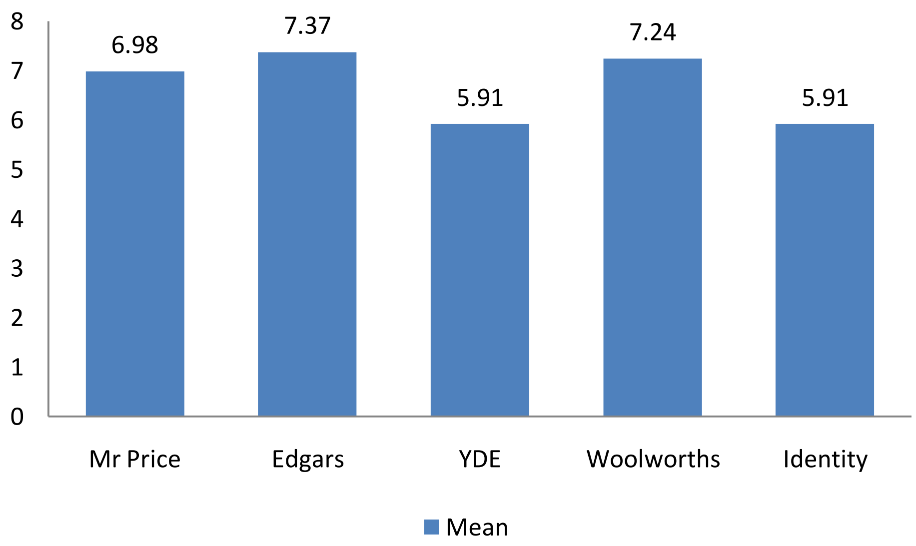


The corresponding means calculated for each store clearly reflected the finding that all the stores are more or less on a par in terms of offering a good store layout, with Woolworths obtaining a mean of 7.83, Edgars 7.54, YDE 7.08, Identity 6.85 and Mr Price a mean of 6.15.

Table 8. 37 Appealing Advertising

Appealing Advertising	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	1.9%	1.6%	9.5%	3.7%	6.8%
2	0%	0%	1.7%	0%	0.9%
3	6.3%	5.7%	10.9%	5.9%	12.3%
4	0.3%	0.8%	1.7%	1.4%	1.7%
5	23.4%	18.9%	26.7%	15.2%	28.8%
6	1.9%	0.8%	2.0%	0.8%	2.8%
7	36.2%	32.2%	25.9%	36.0%	29.1%
8	2.5%	4.1%	1.4%	2.5%	0.9%
9	1.1%	1.1%	1.4%	1.1%	0.9%
10	26.4%	34.7%	18.7%	33.4%	16.0%
Missing	3.4%	3.7%	8.4%	6.3%	7.6%
Mean	**6.98**	**7.37**	**5.91**	**7.24**	**5.91**
Std. Dev	2.265	2.331	2.722	2.457	2.504

Figure 8. 33 Appealing Advertising



A total of 34.7% of the research respondents allocated Edgars a score of 10 out of 10 for the attribute of Appealing Advertising. This, coupled with the highest mean rating of 7.37, suggests that Edgars has the most Appealing Advertising of the five clothing stores. The ratings for YDE and Identity were very similar, with the majority of the scores being allocated to 5 and 7.

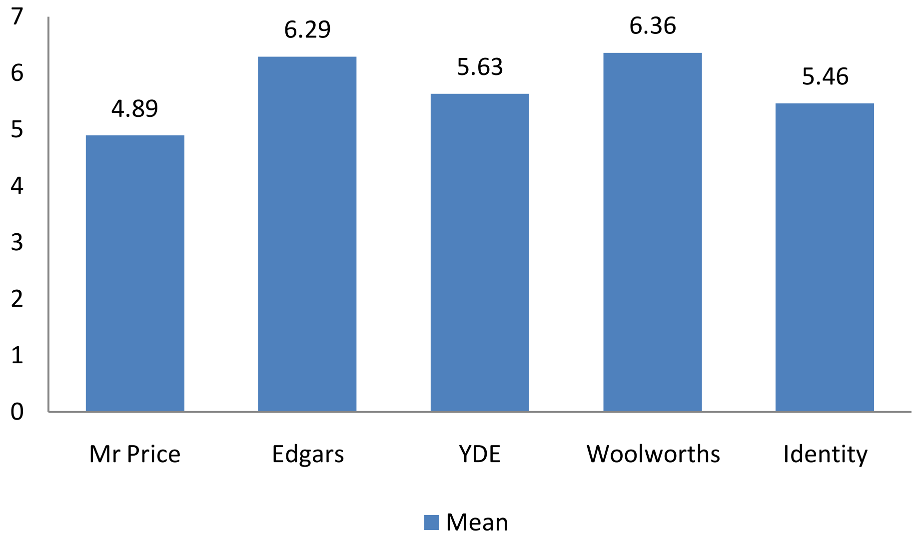
Furthermore, the mean ratings for these stores are identical at 5.91, the lowest of the five clothing retailers. This indicates that YDE and Identity's advertising is perceived as being on a par, as well as being average to good with regard to its appeal, despite being the least appealing of all the clothing retailers in this questionnaire.

Table 8. 38 Helpful Sales Personnel

Helpful Sales Personnel	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
1	14.7%	6.3%	7.5%	5.9%	9.3%
2	0.8%	0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%
3	21.5%	8.8%	14.7%	8.1%	14.2%
4	0.8%	1.9%	2.0%	1.1%	3.4%
5	29.7%	25.5%	31.7%	29.1%	33.4%
6	1.9%	2.2%	0.9%	2.2%	1.1%
7	19.6%	33.2%	28.2%	28.3%	24.1%
8	0.5%	2.2%	1.4%	2.2%	0.3%
9	0.5%	1.4%	0.6%	1.4%	1.7%
10	9.8%	18.6%	12.4%	21.3%	11.9%
Missing	3.4%	3.9%	8.7%	6.1%	7.1%
Mean	**4.89**	**6.29**	**5.63**	**6.36**	**5.46**
Std. Dev	2.587	2.480	2.437	2.525	2.491

The majority of the respondents rated the Helpful Sales Personnel of the clothing stores as being between average and good, using a 5 to 7 out of 10 rating. A total of 60.9%, 60.9%, 59.6% 58.6% of the respondents gave Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity scores of between, and including, 5 to 7 respectively. Conversely, the scores for Mr Price were concentrated on and between the ratings of 3 to 5 (52%), suggesting that the personnel of this clothing retailer are poor to average in terms of being helpful.

Figure 8. 34 Helpful Sales Personnel



The means calculated for the clothing stores were all relatively low, indicating that, in general, the respondents perceived the sales personnel as average in terms of their support and helpfulness. Woolworths, however, obtained the highest mean rating of 6.36 suggesting the sales personnel of this clothing retailer are more helpful in comparison to the sales personnel of the other four clothing stores. This is especially apparent in comparison to Mr Price which received the lowest mean of 4.89, implying this store's personnel to be the most unhelpful of the five clothing retailers.

Table 8.39 summarises the five clothing stores with regard to the average ratings (means) for each of the attributes.

Table 8. 39 Mean Ratings for each Clothing Store according to each Attribute

Attribute	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
Convenient Location	7.77	6.91	5.57	7.15	7.33
Low Prices	8.78	4.9	3.00	4.28	5.09
Value for Money	6.21	7.04	6.19	7.38	6.07
High Quality Merchandise	4.89	7.62	7.23	8.39	6.65
Wide Selection of Merchandise	6.90	7.37	6.77	7.21	6.19
Store Cleanliness	6.15	8.22	8.08	8.58	7.45
Fashionable Merchandise	7.00	7.63	8.35	7.04	7.33
Uniqueness of Merchandise	4.74	6.41	7.97	6.80	6.30
Fully Stocked Store	7.08	7.57	6.85	7.74	6.80
Good Store Layout	6.15	7.54	7.08	7.83	6.85
Appealing Advertising	6.98	7.37	5.91	7.24	5.91
Helpful Sales Personnel	4.89	6.29	5.63	6.36	5.46

8.8 Discriminant Analysis

Question 5 of the Stage 2 questionnaire, as explained earlier, required the respondents to rate each of the five clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity, according to the 12 clothing store attributes on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 represents that the store is very poor in relation to a specific attribute, and 10 that the store is very good. In addition to analysing the mean ratings for each of the stores according to the attributes, a Discriminant Analysis was also conducted to determine the respondents' perceptions of each of the stores according to the attributes and thus determine "which attributes best differentiate, or discriminate, among (the stores)" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166).

Table 8. 40 Eigenvalues

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	1.405[a]	81.5	81.5	.764
2	.248[a]	14.4	95.8	.446
3	.061[a]	3.6	99.4	.241
4	.011[a]	.6	100.0	.103

a. First 4 canonical discriminant functions were used in the analysis.

Table 8. 41 Wilks' Lambda

Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1 through 4	.311	1994.741	48	.000
2 through 4	.747	497.465	33	.000
3 through 4	.932	119.861	20	.000
4	.989	18.037	9	.035

The Group Statistics of the Discriminant Analysis are presented in Appendix E. As is clear from Table 8.40, four functions are statistically significant in discriminating or differentiating between the five clothing retailers. This is clear from the Sig. values which are all less than 0.05. Furthermore, Functions 1 and 2 account for the highest percentage of the total variance, with 81.5% and 14.4% respectively. Conversely, however, Functions 3 and 4 only account for 3.6% and 0.6% of the total variance explained. Furthermore, Dimension 1 had a canonical correlation of 0.76 between the clothing retailer and clothing store attribute and is thus the most relevant and discriminating between the clothing retailers, while for dimensions 2, 3 and 4, the canonical correlation was much lower at 0.45, 0.24 and 0.1 respectively.

Table 8. 42 Standardised Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

	Function			
	1	2	3	4
Convenient Location	.160	.119	-.664	.093
Low Prices	.781	.036	.018	-.159
Value for Money	.021	.238	.237	-.220
High Quality Merchandise	-.306	.476	-.246	-.060
Wide Selection of Merchandise	.054	.084	.569	-.064
Store Cleanliness	-.212	.206	-.054	.182
Fashionable Merchandise	.090	-.668	.163	.788
Uniqueness of Merchandise	-.293	-.371	.071	-.816
Fully Stocked Store	.088	.168	.013	-.223
Good Store Layout	-.036	.096	-.195	.147
Appealing Advertising	.195	.392	.490	.016
Helpful Sales Personnel	-.172	.059	-.035	.453

The discriminant functions represent a latent or underlying dimension, while the discriminant loadings indicate the degree of correlation between the original attribute and the latent discriminant function. According to the very high loading of 0.781 on Function 1, Low Price is a variable which differentiates the five clothing retailers. The loading score serves to ultimately indicate the distance of a store from the other stores. With regard to Function 2, Fashionable Merchandise is the strongest differentiator in this function which, as explained earlier, accounts for 14.4% of the variance. Functions 3 and 4 may also be regarded as potential differentiators between the clothing retailers, which are dominated by the attributes of Convenient Location and Uniqueness of Merchandise with loadings of -.664 and -.816 respectively.

8.9 Analysis of Gender Differences in Perceptions of Clothing Store Attributes

8.9.1 Independent Samples T-Test

As explained earlier (in Section 7.5), in order to conduct a t-test, a statistical technique generally associated with probability samples, the data needs to meet three requirements, the first of which is the assumption of normality (Nunez 2005: 146). Much debate has surrounded the topic of whether to use the less powerful Mann-Whitney U-Test instead of the more robust t-test, particularly when a lack of normality is present. In this case, however, Cooper and Schindler

(2006: 712) explain, “when n>20 in one of the samples, the sampling distribution approaches the normal distribution”. This applies to the research study at hand as both the male and female samples exceeded 20, with 150 and 230 respondents in each sample respectively. The Independent Samples T-Test was therefore “used to find a difference between the means of two independent samples” (Nunez 2005: 149), in this case, males and females with respect to the attributes applied when choosing between clothing retailers.

Table 8. 43 Independent Samples T-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Convenient Location	Equal variances assumed	.004	.950	-4.496	348	.000	-1.582	.352	-2.274	-.890
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.477	270.071	.000	-1.582	.353	-2.277	-.886
Low Prices	Equal variances assumed	13.506	.000	-3.693	352	.000	-1.153	.312	-1.767	-.539
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.517	240.828	.001	-1.153	.328	-1.799	-.507
Value for Money	Equal variances assumed	.267	.606	-.376	351	.707	-.108	.288	-.675	.459
	Equal variances not assumed			-.382	289.714	.703	-.108	.284	-.667	.450
High Quality Merchandise	Equal variances assumed	5.738	.017	2.024	353	.044	.497	.246	.014	.980
	Equal variances not assumed			2.104	318.067	.036	.497	.236	.032	.962
Wide Selection of Merchandise	Equal variances assumed	.411	.522	-1.484	348	.139	-.438	.295	-1.018	.142
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.465	262.391	.144	-.438	.299	-1.027	.151

Store Cleanliness	Equal variances assumed	.116	.733	-.309	349	.757	-.090	.292	-.665	.484
	Equal variances not assumed			-.311	276.828	.756	-.090	.291	-.663	.482
Fashionable Merchandise	Equal variances assumed	.394	.530	-.563	353	.574	-.160	.285	-.720	.399
	Equal variances not assumed			-.563	280.798	.574	-.160	.285	-.720	.400
Uniqueness of Merchandise	Equal variances assumed	.559	.455	.921	351	.358	.263	.285	-.298	.824
	Equal variances not assumed			.925	282.129	.356	.263	.284	-.297	.822
Fully Stocked Store	Equal variances assumed	.825	.364	-1.013	348	.312	-.341	.336	-1.002	.321
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.001	260.125	.318	-.341	.341	-1.012	.330
Good Store Layout	Equal variances assumed	.264	.608	-1.300	348	.194	-.418	.322	-1.051	.214
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.292	268.343	.197	-.418	.324	-1.055	.219
Appealing Advertising	Equal variances assumed	.280	.597	-2.189	348	.029	-.720	.329	-1.366	-.073
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.172	264.232	.031	-.720	.331	-1.372	-.067
Helpful Sales Personnel	Equal variances assumed	.377	.540	-.155	350	.877	-.055	.351	-.745	.636
	Equal variances not assumed			-.154	267.549	.878	-.055	.354	-.752	.643

The results of the T-test presented in Table 8.43 above, reveal that significant differences were found in the level of importance attributed by the male and female respondents to the attributes of Convenient Location, Low Prices, High Quality Merchandise and Appealing Advertising.

Nevertheless, a Mann-Whitney U-test, the “nonparametric alternative” (Welman *et al.* 2005: 230) to the T-test, was also conducted to serve as validation of the Independent Samples T-test results.

8.9.2 Mann-Whitney U-Test

Subsequently, a Mann-Whitney U-Test was conducted to determine whether a significant difference exists between the determinant attributes influencing retail store selection of the male and female Generation Y respondents.

The results of the Mann-Whitney U-test were as follows in Table 8.44 below:

Table 8. 44 Mann-Whitney U-Test

Attribute	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Assymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Convenient Location	10437.000	19083.000	-4.319	.000
Low Prices	11864.000	21044.000	-3.184	.001
Value for Money	13855.500	22633.500	-.819	.413
High Quality Merchandise	13172.000	37482.000	-1.893	.058
Wide Selection of Merchandise	13032.500	21678.500	-1.461	.144
Store Cleanliness	13990.500	22636.500	-.468	.640
Fashionable Merchandise	14263.000	23308.000	-.597	.550
Uniqueness of Merchandise	13612.500	37922.500	-1.129	.259
Fully Stocked Store	13449.500	21964.500	-.939	.348
Good Store Layout	13180.000	21826.000	-1.284	.199
Appealing Advertising	12294.000	20809.000	-2.213	.027
Helpful Sales Personnel	14424.500	23202.500	-.104	.917

According to Table 8.44 above, the following is evident:

The attributes of **Convenient Location, Low Prices and Appealing Advertising** are not considered equally important across both genders.

Therefore, male and female Generation Y respondents differed in their perceptions of the importance and strength of influence of Convenient Location, Low Prices and Appealing Advertising with regard to impacting their choice of clothing retailer. Therefore, a significant difference does exist between the clothing store attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents.

To further determine exactly how the male and female respondents differ according to the attributes of Convenient Location, Low Prices, Appealing Advertising and High Quality Merchandise, the means for each of these factors were compared across the genders. This is represented in Table 8.45 below:

Table 8. 45 Male versus Female Attribute Mean Ratings

Gender		Convenient Location	Low Prices	Appealing Advertising	High Quality Merchandise
Male	Mean	4.89	6.36	5.71	8.53
	N	131	135	130	135
	Std. Deviation	3.218	3.211	3.028	2.018
Female	Mean	6.47	7.52	6.43	8.04
	N	219	219	220	220
	Std. Deviation	3.166	2.610	2.938	2.375
Total	Mean	5.88	7.08	6.16	8.23
	N	350	354	350	355
	Std. Deviation	3.272	2.904	2.988	2.256

As is evident from Table 8.45 above, the female Generation Y respondents regard and perceive the attributes of **Convenient Location, Low Prices and Appealing Advertising** as being significantly more important compared to their male counterparts, while the male respondents perceived **High Quality Merchandise** as more important.

This chapter focused on the findings obtained during Stage 2 of the research design, namely the quantitative, questionnaire data. The findings were presented using various frequency tables, as well as pie and bar graphs. The results of the statistical tests, more specifically the Factor Analyses, Independent Samples T-Test, Mann-Whitney U-Test and Discriminant Analysis, were also presented. A discussion of these findings in relation to the data obtained during Stage 1 of the research, namely the qualitative focus group data, as well as the literature and the research objectives will follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 9:
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the previously presented findings obtained from both the focus group and questionnaire stage of this two-stage triangulated research design, in relation to the research objectives and relevant literature. This chapter is thus structured in terms of the research objectives.

9.1 To identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.

The first step in the positioning process is to identify the set of competitors within the relevant industry or sector, including both current and potential competitors, as well as any latent substitutes (Walker and Mullins 2008: 155). When conducting a competitor analysis, firms must recognise all other firms seeking to or actually meeting the same consumer need, as competition. This fundamental step in the positioning process is vital to ensure that all competitors are truly acknowledged as possible threats to the achievement of the firm's objectives and overall success, and thus prevent a myopic view of the competitive marketplace (Lamb *et al.* 2004: 110). This is especially salient as the ultimate development of a position depends on and is relative to the consumers' perceptions of the relevant competitors (Peter and Olson 2010: 374). Furthermore, today's market is characterised by intense competition and an abundance of alternatives to meet every consumer need. This is confirmed by Terblanche (1998: 26-27) who explains that the number of retail formats within the South African clothing industry has grown exponentially, including the emergence of "informal traders selling branded goods on the city streets" and "value centres, flea markets and factory shops" (Terblanche 1998: 26), as well as "the noteworthy growth in the development of shopping malls in South Africa" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 7). It is, therefore, imperative for firms to adopt a tactical marketing mix and positioning strategy in order to 'stand out' from the mass of competitors and achieve a definite brand image. The attainment of such a distinctive image or position is particularly a must as consumers tend to base their buying decisions more on the image of the product than its actual physical attributes (Solomon *et al.* 2010: 5).

Accordingly, Hawkins *et al.* (2007: 608) explain that "the selection of a specific retail outlet involves a comparison of the alternative outlets on the consumer's evaluative criteria" and in order "to develop a program for attracting customers, the retailer must do market research" to identify the "alternative stores that customers consider". Du Preez and Visser (2003: 16) also add that an understanding of the selection of which clothing retailer to patronise is highly important. In this particular study, the first research objective was to determine the competitors in the South African clothing industry according to a sample of Generation Y consumers.

Question 1 of the focus group questionnaire was open-ended and asked the participants to disclose where they purchase their clothing. The discussion on this question was transcribed, coded and analysed and the findings revealed that the most preferred clothing stores according to the focus group participants were Mr Price with a frequency of 20%, Edgars (15%), YDE (11%), Woolworths and Identity both with a frequency of 9%. Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity were thus identified as the most patronised clothing stores according to the focus group sample of Generation Y consumers, and were thus used to formulate Question 1 of the questionnaire for the second, quantitative stage of the triangulated research design.

Further relevant focus group findings relating to this objective included the responses to Question 8 of the focus group questionnaire, which involved a list of various sub-questions relating to apparel buying behaviour and required the respondents to answer **Yes** or **No**. The questions with the highest frequency of **Yes** responses were regarding whether the focus group participants' choice of clothing retailer is affected by the quantity being purchased as well as whether they are buying a gift or shopping for themselves, both with 70.3% **Yes** responses. Another interesting finding was that only 35% of the focus group participants said **Yes** to being loyal to a specific clothing store. This correlates with the finding obtained by Cheng (1999 cited in Wolburg and Pokrywcznski 2001: 38) who found that Generation Y consumers can potentially be very "brand-loyal if they trust the brand; however, if they don't trust the brand, they run away screaming". Therefore, in summary, the focus group findings and analysis uncovered the following: the most patronised clothing retailers according to the focus group participants were Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity. However, it is also worth noting that the focus group consumers' choice of clothing retailer is frequently dependent on and influenced by the quantity of clothing being purchased, as well as whether the consumer is purchasing a gift or shopping for themselves.

Question 1 of the Stage 2 questionnaire was a close-ended question which asked the respondents to choose which clothing retailers they shop at most of the time when buying clothing, with Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity as their options, as identified from the focus group findings, as well as an **Other** choice. The choices were, however, not mutually exclusive and thus respondents were able to select more than one clothing retailer should that be applicable to their apparel purchase behaviour. The data collected from the responses to Question 1 was analysed to determine who the major and most prominent competitors are according to this particular research sample. Thus, this data was used to achieve the first research objective. The respondents' answers to Question 1 revealed four clothing retailers as the most patronised according to this research sample, namely Mr Price (67.4%), Edgars (52.8%), Woolworths (24.3%) and Identity (21.1%), which were most frequently chosen from the provided list of clothing retailers. This correlated to some extent with the findings of Datamonitor (2005 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 9) which referred to Edgars, Mr Price, Truworths and Foschini as the "leading retailers in South Africa"

Question 4 of the Stage 2 questionnaire also involved a set of statements regarding the buying behaviour of clothing and required the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the statement on a scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Further interesting findings which may be used to explain the stores most frequently chosen by the sample of Generation Y consumers included the following:

- A total of 58.9% of the sample of Generation Y respondents agree and strongly agree that YDE is too expensive for them to patronise.
- 41.8% of the questionnaire respondents believe that Woolworths is too expensive for them to shop at.

The above-mentioned findings may serve to explain the exclusion of stores such as YDE and Woolworths as the most patronised by the respondents as these clothing retailers seem to be perceived as being 'too expensive' for them to purchase their clothing from. This correlates with the findings obtained during the focus group discussion which revealed that 13% of the participants are discouraged by high prices and thus avoid certain clothing retailers based solely on this attribute.

- The majority of the questionnaire respondents (65.8%) disagree and strongly disagree that they do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there.

A further finding obtained during the focus group sessions, namely that 21% of the participants avoid Mr Price because 'everyone shops there', has successfully been disproved as 65.8% of the respondents disagree with this statement and are thus not discouraged by the popularity and commonness of this clothing retailer, as is clearly evident from the large percentage (67.4%) of respondents who indicated to shopping at Mr Price. 73.4% of the questionnaire respondents agree and strongly agree that Mr Price is the best store for low prices, an important attribute to this sample of Generation Y consumers, as is clear from the high mean importance rating of 7.08. This aids in explaining the popularity of this clothing retailer, particularly amongst the student, Generation Y consumer segment. This is confirmed by Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 43) who explain that, during the economic recession, for instance, many older generations significantly altered their buying behaviour while Generation Y consumers "have carried retailers of affordable fast fashion safely through the tough early months of 2009" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 43). This is a result of the important role that shopping plays in the lives of Generation Y consumers as they engage "in clothing shopping for its entertainment value" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 332), as is apparent from the 66.3% of questionnaire respondents who said they do enjoy shopping. This in itself represents a major opportunity for marketers and retailers "to be a central part of these consumers' lives" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 75). By achieving this, retailers will be equipped to remain competitive and profitable within the highly competitive market that is retailing. Du Preez and Visser (2003: 19) add that "all stakeholders in the apparel industry could benefit from an understanding of the youth market", particularly since these segments "are extremely lucrative, with high expenditure on apparel" (Du Preez and Visser 2003: 19).

In conclusion, the most patronised stores according to this sample of Generation Y consumers are Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths and Identity. Assael (1995 cited in Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 55), however, further states that "consumers in each market segment form images of various stores based on their perceptions of the attributes they consider important and will use these criteria to select a store". The aim of the next research objective is to investigate this by identifying the criteria Generation Y consumers use when selecting a clothing retailer.

9.2 To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers.

The second step in the process of positioning involves the identification of determinant attributes according to the customers' perspective (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). Arnold *et al.* (1978: 663) explain that a determinant attribute exhibits two specific characteristics. The first and fundamental step in identifying determinant attributes is to distinguish those which are perceived by the consumer as highly important and salient to their patronage behaviour. This is the aim of the second research objective, namely to determine the important attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers. The term 'important' implies that the consumer will be "extremely offended" (Foote 1961 cited in Myers and Alpert 1968: 14) "by the attribute's absence" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663) and that the presence of the attribute will provide the consumer "much satisfaction" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663). The second step in identifying a determinant attribute involves examining whether the attribute serves to differentiate the offering from that of its competitors. This will, however, be addressed later in response to the fourth research objective.

As Paulins and Geistfeld (2003: 371) explain, the increase in competition and the intensity thereof has rendered the need to clearly understand consumers' and their important attributes "more important than ever" and therefore, all firms require "a clear understanding of what attributes affect consumers' store preferences" (Paulins and Geistfeld 2003: 371). As previously explained, it is essential to acknowledge that consumers belonging to different market segments will inherently adopt different opinions and preferences regarding the attributes they use when choosing between brands, or in this case, clothing retailers, with some attributes receiving higher assessments of importance compared to others (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). This serves to confirm the need to recognise Generation Y, including the 'Twixter' sub-segment, as a market segment on its own, with a unique set of preferences and buying behaviour (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 2). Furthermore, and even more importantly, firms wishing to achieve and maintain long-term success must be "aware that the buying habits that Generation Y establish now will likely have a significant impact in the retail world in years to come" (Wolburg and Pokrywczynski 2001: 35). This market segment has been described as highly profitable and lucrative (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114), and as extremely influential in terms of impacting both the buying decisions of their friends and family (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114), and exerting their power to "make or break" retailers or brands (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 12).

With regard to the clothing retail sector specifically, Du Preez (2003: 11) asserts that an understanding and deeper comprehension of the apparel customer is essential as "apparel shopping is a phenomenon influenced by a very large number of variables" (Du Preez 2003: 11), and thus each of these variables potentially influencing buying behaviour and retailer selection must be investigated and acknowledged in their own right (De Klerk 1999; Du Plessis and Rousseau 1999 cited in Du Preez 2003: 11). Du Preez (2003: 11) further adds that the scarcity of knowledge concerning "apparel shopping behaviour in South Africa" renders this topic more important than ever in order to ensure profitability and longevity within this industry (Du Preez 2003: 11). Ultimately, a firm or retailer cannot influence buying behaviour in any way without first understanding the "variables that influence behaviour" (Du Preez 2003: 11).

In the context of positioning, various attributes may be used by the firm as the basis and definition of the chosen positioning strategy (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 282). Walker and Mullins (2008: 157) further explain, however, that the attributes selected as the foundation of the positioning plan must be carefully scrutinised in terms of the importance allocated to these factors as this often varies between consumers and market segments. The findings of this study revealed the following attributes to be the most important according to the sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.

Table 9. 1 Mean Rating and Ranking of Clothing Store Attributes

Attribute	Mean Rating	Rank
High Quality Merchandise	8.23	1
Value for Money	7.79	2
Uniqueness of Merchandise	7.75	3
Fashionable Merchandise	7.7	4
Store Cleanliness	7.53	5
Wide Selection of Merchandise	7.39	6
Low Prices	7.08	7
Good Store Layout	6.37	8
Helpful Sales Personnel	6.31	9
Fully Stocked Store	6.21	10
Appealing Advertising	6.16	11
Convenient Location	5.88	12

As is evident from the table above, the following attributes received the highest mean ratings and were thus revealed as the most important to the Generation Y respondents when choosing a clothing retailer, namely: High Quality Merchandise (8.23); Value for Money (7.79); Uniqueness of Merchandise (7.75); Fashionable Merchandise (7.7), Store Cleanliness (7.53), Wide Selection of Merchandise (7.39) and Low Prices (7.08). Each of these attributes will now each be discussed in relation to the relevant literature and past empirical studies.

Firstly, with regard to the attribute of **High Quality Merchandise**, this attribute has been found to be important in influencing consumer choice of a variety of store formats (Lindquist 1974-1975 cited in Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663; Hansen and Deutscher 1977: 69; Jolson and Spath 1973: 49; Gehrt and Yan 2004: 17; Pan and Zinkhan 2006: 238; Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 487). The findings of the current research study therefore confirm and validate the findings of these previous studies, and vice versa.

With regard to the attributes influencing the selection of clothing retailers in particular, Arnold *et al.* (1978: 66) found that offering the highest quality women's fashions was one of the top three most important attributes impacting the selection of women's clothing retailers. Torres, Summers and Belleau (2001: 207) also found the attribute of the quality of the merchandise to be the second most important and significant in terms of affecting the apparel purchase decisions of the American University student respondents included in their sample. These authors further concluded that "fashion shoppers are not as concerned about physical convenience" and instead, require factors such as "value, quality, wide assortments, and up-to-date fashions as they appear to be willing to travel to whatever location is required to find what they want" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 66). This is supported by the findings obtained from the current research study where the most important clothing store attributes have been identified as High Quality Merchandise and Value for Money, as well as the Uniqueness and Fashionableness of the Merchandise. In addition, the attribute of Convenient Location was found to be the least important of all 12 clothing attributes, with a low mean rating of 5.88. It appears therefore that the Generation Y consumers in this research sample are also less perturbed by the physical location of the clothing retailer and more interested in the quality, uniqueness and fashionableness of the merchandise, as well as getting value for their money.

Looking specifically at Generation Y consumers, Levy and Weitz (2009: 96-97) state that Generation Y consumers will be loyal to a specific retailer unless it fails to meet their standards in terms of quality. The current research findings thus serve to validate and support this statement, as is clear from the very high mean rating of 8.23 for the High Quality Merchandise attribute, further reinforcing the strength of influence and importance of this factor to this consumer segment. Furthermore, 19% of the Stage 1 focus group participants revealed the attribute of High Quality Merchandise as the main reason when asked why they prefer a particular clothing retailer over others. Also, when the focus group participants were asked which attributes they employ when choosing between clothing retailers, 27% cited High Quality Merchandise as the most important and influential attribute. When explaining why this attribute was so important and influential, the focus group participants stated that the quality of the clothing is very important as they want to spend their money on clothing which will be durable and worth the money spent on purchasing it. Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 98) conducted a study in which they found that younger generations are "more likely to associate higher prices per se with improved quality and worth" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98) and that "one in two adult female Generation Ys pursue quality, even if it implies higher prices" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103). Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 102) also found that Generation Y consumers generally seek high quality products and these authors believe this to be caused by the media which "portray affluent and opulent lifestyles" which "Generation Ys have been acculturated by" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 102). Millennials also "appear to be less price conscious compared to their parents, the boomer cohort" (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 333). This serves as an explanation for the high mean rating received by the attribute of High Quality Merchandise and conversely, the substantially lower mean rating of importance received by the attribute of Low Prices (7.08), ranked seventh out of 12 attributes in terms of importance and strength of influence over retail store selection.

The second most important attribute according to this sample of male and female Generation Y respondents was found to be **Value for Money**, with a high mean rating of 7.79. This provides a validation of many previously conducted studies on the same, or similar topic. For instance, as with the attribute of High Quality Merchandise, Jolson and Spath (1973: 49) also found the factor of Price/Value Relationship highly influential to the consumers' in their study when choosing where to shop. Westbrook (1981: 78) argued that the value-price relationship offered by the store was one of the most influential components of retail satisfaction (Westbrook 1981: 78), and was thus also a determinant of retail store selection. In their study of attribute importance in retail store selection, Hansen and Deutscher (1977: 69) also found High Value for Money to play a very important and significant role in shaping consumers' department store selection. Value for Money was again in the top three most important attributes influencing the choice of Supermarkets in a study conducted by Redding (2009: 134), which involved University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg students. As mentioned earlier, Sinha and Banerjee (2004: 487) found in their study that, when purchasing durable products, such as apparel, the consumer is more concerned with the actual, physical merchandise which they are buying, and thus seek offerings which represent value for money, as was found in this study.

With regard to clothing retailers specifically, Arnold *et al.* (1978: 66) found that the attribute of giving the best value for money was the most important and central to the selection of women's clothing retailers. The findings of the current research study, although over 30 years later, concurs with this as Value for Money does seem to play a pivotal role in the store selection process of specifically Generation Y consumers. Terblanche and Boshoff (2004: 9) also found that the merchandise value dimension exerted the strongest impact overall on customer retention. These findings thus substantiate the theory of authors such as Black (2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212), who refer to Generation Y consumers as being 'cash conscious' and 'money savvy', as well as a consumer segment which clearly understands and appreciates the "price/value relationship" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212). Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 44) add that Generation Y consumers "may want some fashion that's cheap and fast, but Millennials are also big spenders when they think it's worth it".

The attribute of **Uniqueness of Merchandise** with a mean importance score of 7.75 was also found by previous studies to be very important in influencing retail store selection and this research thus validates these previous findings. Gehrt and Yan (2004: 17) conducted a factor analysis to reveal the most important factors affecting consumer store selection. The factor of merchandising was one of the four identified factors, which included the attribute of unique merchandise. The importance of this attribute, along with that of **Fashionable Merchandise** with a mean rating of 7.7, supports Johnson's (2006 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4) assertion that the South African consumer uses apparel as a status indicator, as they do not have the means to express their social standing through so-called 'traditional' indicators such as motor vehicles and housing. Consumers have, therefore, resorted to judging one another's status based on the clothing worn by the individual, with features such as uniqueness and fashionability mostly used to evaluate the social standing of the individual and subsequently formulate social comparisons (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4). For example, the more fashionable and unique the apparel worn by a consumer, the more prestigious the individual is perceived to be. Furthermore, Black consumers, which make up 70% of this research sample, are especially prone to and associated with this type of consumer behaviour and, as a group, are "characterised by their great need for products associated with personal status and conspicuous consumption" (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4). This serves to explain the finding of the attributes of Uniqueness and Fashionableness of the Merchandise being so important and influential to the respondents in this study with regard to clothing store selection and preference.

A further explanation for the high mean rating for the attribute of Uniqueness of Merchandise is the fact that most Generation Y consumers want to be seen as unique and individualistic (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 111), and thus often express this through their clothing. This is supported by the findings obtained during the focus group discussions which revealed that 21% of the focus group participants quoted the store characteristic of being 'too popular/common' as highly discouraging when choosing a clothing store. The focus group participants explained that they did not like being seen wearing the same clothing as their peers, and thus choose to avoid the obviously popular stores which they perceive as selling common merchandise which is not unique enough for them. Despite this, however, these consumers still grapple with their need to feel 'included' and part of a group as they often battle with their desire to be individuals and independent which "conflict(s) with their need to conform to group standards" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 111). This explains the high mean rating of Fashionable Merchandise, as although these consumers want to be different, they do not want to be too different, in other words they still like to follow current trends and fashions which helps them achieve their sense of belonging, as well as being accepted by a group, namely consumers in general who acknowledge and understand fashion fads and trends. Furthermore, the Generation Y market is, in itself, unique, with unique characteristics and behaviour (Chhabra 2010: 796; Wolburg and Pokrywczynski 2001: 33; Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 22) and thus it comes as no surprise that these consumers would value an attribute such as unique merchandise.

With regard to the attribute of **Fashionable Merchandise**, Arnold *et al.* (1978: 66) also found this to be in the top five most important factors influencing the selection of women's clothing retailers.

The attribute of **Store Cleanliness** was found to be the fifth most important to the Generation Y consumers in this study with a mean rating of 7.53. In addition, 11% of the focus group participants indicated to being discouraged by a lack of store cleanliness when choosing between clothing retailers. Hansen and Deutscher (1977: 69) also found the cleanliness of the retailer to be one of the top ten factors influencing consumers' choice of a department store. It is interesting, however, that Store Cleanliness is perceived by the respondents as this important as most past studies with similar findings have concentrated on the retail food sector, and not clothing retail. For example, Tigert and Arnold (1981 cited in Arnold *et al.* 1983: 156), conducted numerous different studies investigating the retail food sector in which store cleanliness was found to be a very important store feature or characteristic which consumers require when choosing a grocery/food store (Arnold *et al.* 1983: 156). Redding (2009: 133) also examined the food sector with the aim of identifying the main factors and attributes "that cause University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg students to choose their preferred supermarkets to buy their groceries from". The study found cleanliness to be the second most important when choosing a supermarket (Redding 2009: 134). Ultimately, only three past studies revealed Store Cleanliness to be highly important and influential to consumers when choosing a retailer, two of which related only to the food sector. It is therefore very interesting and unexpected for this attribute to receive such a relatively high mean rating compared to attributes such as Low Prices, which past studies particularly relating to the apparel sector have shown to be more significant.

The attribute of **Wide Selection of Merchandise** was also found in past research to exert an influence over consumer's purchasing process and retail store selection (Lindquist 1974-1975 cited in Arnold *et al.* 1978: 66; Hansen and Deutscher 1977: 64-65; Leszczyc and Timmermans 2001: 508; Thang and Tan 2003: 199; Gehrt and Yan 2004: 17; Pan and Zinkhan 2006: 238; Tigert and Arnold 1981 cited in Arnold *et al.* 1983: 156; Sinha and Banerjee 2004: 487; Arnold *et al.* 1978: 66; Torres, Summers and Belleau 2001: 207). The importance of this attribute to the sample of respondents correlates with the theory that Generation Y consumers are accustomed to an "overwhelming array of choices" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 11), a direct result of the "internet and portable, digital technology" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 16). These consumers have also been described as a generation which is easily bored and generally "want what they want when they want it" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 8), and thus require a wide assortment of merchandise to meet their every need. This is reflected in the importance rating of 7.39 for the attribute of Wide Selection of Merchandise.

In this study, **Low Prices** received a relatively lower mean rating compared to the other attributes, with an average importance score of 7.08, and was thus ranked seventh of all 12 attributes in order of importance. Conversely, however, 44% of the focus group participants quoted Low Prices as the main reason for choosing their preferred clothing store. When asked which attributes they use when choosing between clothing retailers, 54% of the focus group participants ranked Low Prices was the most important attribute influencing their store selection. A total of 13% of the focus group participants also explained that high prices discouraged them from patronising certain clothing retailers as they are students and are thus generally restricted by a limited budget. With regard to previous studies, Torres *et al.* (2001: 207) found price to be the most important and influential in terms of affecting the apparel purchase decisions of their respondents, the most of which were University students, as is the case with the respondents in this study. Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001: 495) also concluded that consumers tend to prefer a certain type of store or specific retail format over others when "prices were lower". Klein (1998 cited in Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008: 286) found that the vast majority of men and women (86% and 87% respectively) regard reasonable prices as the most important factor impacting their choice of retailer. Chen-Yu and Seock (2002: 50) also conducted a study to investigate clothing purchase motivations of young male and female consumers, aged between 13 and 19, which revealed that, "for both male and female participants, price was the most important store selection criterion" (Chen-Yu and Seock 2002: 66). A discrepancy is thus evident between the Stage 1 qualitative findings as well as those of past studies compared to that of the Stage 2 quantitative results, according to which Low Prices is not the most important attribute influencing clothing store selection. However, it is also worth noting that the majority (67.1%) of the questionnaire respondents indicated to preferring stores that offer sales and/or discount prices. This suggests that although price may not be the most important factor affecting their patronage behaviour, it does certainly play a role and is taken into consideration when choosing where to shop. This is also evident in the mean rating of the Low Prices attribute (7.08), which in itself is not low, and according to the scale provided in the questionnaire, implies that this factor had a fairly strong influence over the respondents' choice of clothing retailer.

An interesting anomaly within the findings is evident and worth noting. Namely, the attribute of High Quality Merchandise was found to be the most important and influential over the respondents' choice of clothing retailer, while conversely, the attribute of Low Prices received the lowest mean importance rating of the top 7 clothing store attributes. This seems to be inconsistent with the finding that Mr Price is the most patronised store according to the respondents, with 67.4% of the respondents shopping there for their clothing, despite offering merchandise which is perceived to be of the lowest quality according to this sample of students. This is clear from the substantially lower mean of 4.89 Mr Price received with regard to the attribute of High Quality Merchandise compared to the other clothing retailers, which received means of 6.6 and higher. The attribute of Value for Money was found to be the second most important attribute, with a mean rating of 7.79, while Mr Price received a low mean of 6.21 on this attribute. The massive popularity of Mr Price, despite the low means regarding these two attributes, presents an interesting anomaly.

A Principal Component Factor Analysis was also conducted with the aim of identifying relationships between the attributes and hence determine if a latent factor may be used to describe and summarise the set of 12 clothing store attributes. Consequently, four factors were identified as doing exactly so. The attributes previously identified as being the most important to the Generation Y respondents, appear in each of the four factors identified by the factor analysis. It can therefore further be concluded that there are four factors which are the most salient in impacting the clothing store selection of the Generation Y student respondents in this study. These four factors were: Store Features, Shopping Economy and Efficiency, Merchandise Features and Modernity and Exclusivity of Merchandise. Factor 1, Store Features, however, is known as the "first principal component" and represents the best combination of the variables (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 633), which in this case, are: Good Store Layout, Appealing Advertising, Fully Stocked Store, Helpful Sales Personnel and Store Cleanliness. Factor 1 also represents the factor with the "maximum explained variance" (Aaker *et al.* 2004: 563), which in this case, was 23.6%.

More specifically, however, the most important attributes of these underlying factors were found to be: High Quality Merchandise; Value for Money; Uniqueness of Merchandise; Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices. These attributes obtained average ratings of 8.23, 7.79, 7.75, 7.7, 7.53, 7.39 and 7.08 respectively which, according to the scale presented in the questionnaire, suggests that these attributes were, on average, relatively important in the respondents' choice of clothing store.

9.3 To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when purchasing various garments and pieces of clothing.

As discussed earlier, it is essential for all retailers, producers and marketers to gain an in-depth understanding and appreciation of consumers in the 21st century as "they exert their spending power within a marketplace, thereby influencing the success of all stakeholders in that marketplace" (Du Preez 2003: 11). Du Preez (2003: 11) adds that this is particularly important in the clothing sector, as the apparel customer is influenced by numerous attributes and factors, which may either relate to the clothing retailer, as explained in Section 9.2, or to the actual garments and pieces of clothing. According to Hyllegard *et al.* (2009: 113), "there is much evidence to indicate that apparel attributes contribute in important ways to consumers' product evaluations and intent to purchase". The aim of the third research objective was to determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when purchasing various garments and pieces of clothing.

As is evident from the findings in Section 8.5, the following clothing attributes were identified as the most important to the sample of Generation Y respondents when choosing clothing to purchase, namely: Good Fit, Comfort and Quality, with very high mean ratings of 9.05, 8.97 and 8.86 respectively. It is important to note, however, that all 7 attributes received a mean importance rating of more than 8, implying that all these clothing attributes were perceived as very important and influential with regard to impacting the respondents' choice of clothing.

A study conducted by Beaudoin *et al.* (1998: 194), ultimately found that American fashion leaders preferred imported apparel, as opposed to locally produced clothing, because they perceived foreign apparel as being superior in terms of quality (Beaudoin *et al*. 1998: 203). Accordingly, it may be deduced that the quality of the merchandise plays a determining role in the fashion leaders' selection criteria and process when choosing clothing to purchase as it has lead them to develop a preference for exotic apparel. The sample of the study of Beaudoin *et al.* (1998: 194) comprised female consumers, aged 18 to 25 which is the same age cohort focused on in the research study at hand. This, along with the previously mentioned finding of High Quality Merchandise being the most important attribute to the Generation Y respondents when choosing between clothing retailers, with the highest mean rating of 8.23, suggests that, when purchasing clothing, consumers belonging to the 18 to 25 year-old age group (the 'Twixter' segment of Generation Y) are highly influenced by the quality of the product offerings which frequently shapes and determines their choice of both clothing retailer and clothing items.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Zhang *et al.* (2002: 53) which aimed to identify "the importance of product attributes of casual wear for Chinese consumers", found that fit and comfort were also the two most important attributes influencing the Chinese consumers' choice of clothing (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 53), while price was found to be "relatively less important" (Zhang *et al.* 2002: 55). This was also evident in the findings obtained from the current research study where, with both the clothing store attributes and clothing attributes, Low or Good Price was found to be fairly important, but substantially less important relative to the other attributes.

A Principal Component Factor Analysis, using varimax rotation, was again conducted, to determine the underlying factors that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing clothing to purchase. The results of the factor analysis revealed 2 factors, Fit and Look, and Variety and Affordability, accounting for 51.5% of the total variance.

All three of the most important attributes discussed earlier are contained in the first factor named Fit and Look, which accounts for most of the variance (33.9%), and thus this appears to be the most important factor in clothing purchases of Generation Y consumers in this sample.

9.4 To identify the determinant attributes that influence clothing store selection among Generation Y consumers.

When developing a positioning strategy and determining which attributes or features should form the basis for the positioning approach, Aaker (2008: 46) explains that, traditionally, the firm should initiate the process with a qualitative investigation of the consumer perceptions regarding the firm and its brands or products, as well as how these are understood and recognised by the consumer. This was the first step in the research project at hand, as the research commenced with conducting four focus groups, which included using the free-elicitation method where participants were asked open-ended questions regarding which attributes they deem as important when, for instance, evaluating a particular product or brand. The purpose of this approach was to measure the first dimension of attribute importance, namely that of salience which “represents the importance of the attribute in memory” (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180). The attributes which were thus revealed by the focus group participants as being the most important were subsequently used to design the Stage 2 questionnaire. Question 3 of the questionnaire employed the direct-rating method and required the respondents to rate each of the 12 clothing store attributes, identified during the focus groups as the most important, in terms of how important they find each of the attributes when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing. A scale of 1 to 10, with 1 implying the attribute has no influence over the respondent and 10 that the factor exerts a very strong influence over the respondent’s choice of clothing retailer, was used. The purpose of this question was to measure the second dimension of attribute importance, namely that of relevance, which “represents the importance of the attribute to the individual based on personal values and desires” (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180). As discussed in relation to the second research objective, the attributes which were revealed to be the most important, with the highest mean ratings, with regard to influencing the Generation Y respondents’ choice of clothing retailer, were found to be: High Quality Merchandise, Value for Money, Uniqueness of

Merchandise, Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices. This thus satisfies the second dimension of attribute importance.

With regard to the third and final dimension of attribute importance, namely the dimension of determinance, which "represents the importance of the attribute in judgement and choice" (Van Ittersum *et al.* 2007: 1180), this was measured using the statistical test known as Discriminant Analysis, which "determines consumers' perceptual dimensions on the basis of which attributes best differentiate, or discriminate, among brands" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166). In this case, the Discriminant Analysis was used to identify which of the clothing store attributes best differentiated between the 5 clothing retailers. Ultimately, positioning may be based on one or a combination of attributes, however, when choosing which attributes to highlight, it is vital to select those which are highly important and salient to the specific target consumer (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157), as well as choosing attributes which clearly differentiate the firm and its offerings from those of competitors. It is important to remember that "even an important attribute may not greatly influence a consumer's preference if all the alternative brands are perceived to be about equal on that dimension" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157). Therefore, differentiation is "the key to winning" (Aaker 2008: 46) and achieving success.

The first step in Discriminant Analysis involved identifying the most important attributes used by the target consumer when evaluating the various options within the particular competitive set (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166), in this case, the researcher identified the attributes Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers during both the focus group sessions, as well as from the data collected from Question 3 of the Stage 2 questionnaire. The next step in conducting this statistical test involved collecting "data from a sample of consumers concerning their ratings of each product or brand on all attributes" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166), which was achieved using Question 5 of the Stage 2 questionnaire.

Question 5 of the questionnaire comprised the same 12 clothing store attributes and 5 clothing retailers which the questionnaire respondents were asked to rate in terms of how well each clothing store performs on each of the 12 clothing store attributes, using a 1 to 10 scale, with 10 representing very good and 1 signifying very poor. This methodology is suggested by authors such as Walker and Mullins (2008: 157) who explain that the qualitative, first stage of the research investigating consumer perceptions should then be supplemented and followed by quantitative techniques, such as questionnaires and surveys, to establish the consumers' perceptions "on how competing products score on these attributes" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 157).

Four statistically significant Discriminant Functions were revealed by the Discriminant Analysis. Function 1 accounts for 81.5% of the total variance, Function 2 accounts for 14.4%, while Functions 3 and 4 account for only 3.6% and 0.6% of the total variance explained. According to the canonical correlations, Function 1 with the highest canonical correlation of 0.764, was found to be the most differentiating between the 5 clothing retailers, however, all four discriminant functions do play a role in differentiating between the stores.

According to the Discriminant Loadings, which indicate the degree of correlation between the original attribute and the latent discriminant function, each of the four Discriminant Functions are dominated by a particular clothing store attribute, which is evident by the highest discriminant loading for each function. Therefore, dimensions 1, 2, 3 and 4 are dominated by the attributes of Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise, Convenient Location and Uniqueness of Merchandise respectively, with discriminant loadings of 0.78, -0.67, -0.66 and -0.82. These findings thus suggest that these four clothing store attributes serve to discriminate or differentiate the 5 clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity.

These findings were then compared to the previous conclusions that the most important attributes to the sample of Generation Y consumers when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing were found to be: High Quality Merchandise (8.23); Value for Money (7.79); Uniqueness of Merchandise (7.75); Fashionable Merchandise (7.7), Store Cleanliness (7.53), Wide Selection of Merchandise (7.39) and Low Prices (7.08). Bearing in mind positioning theory which states that in order for an attribute to be classified as determinant, it must exhibit two characteristics (Arnold *et al.*1978: 663). Firstly, the attribute must be considered as important in terms of influencing patronage behaviour (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663). Secondly, the attribute must be "perceived as being differentiated with respect to the presence of the important attribute" (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663) in terms of the various alternatives being considered as part of the choice process (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 663). Consequently, one can conclude that the determinant attributes, namely those which are both important to the Generation Y respondents in terms of influencing their choice of clothing retailer, as well as differentiating between the clothing retailers, are: Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise.

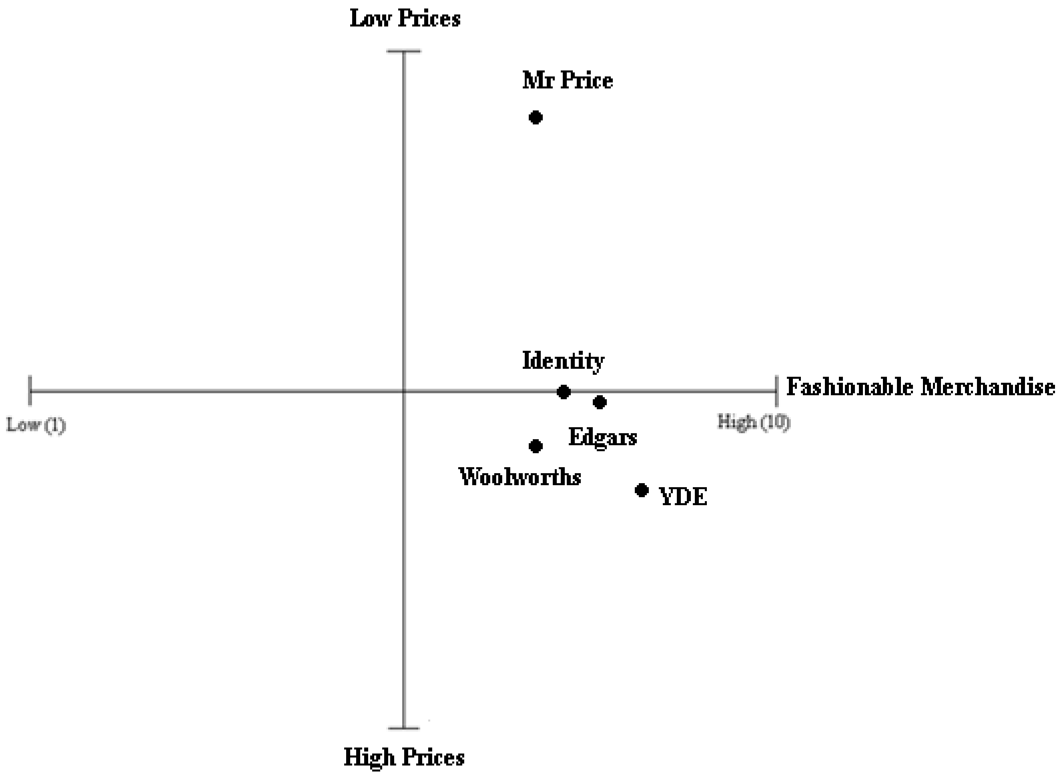
This information was subsequently used to create perceptual maps of the 5 clothing retailers according to these determinant attributes. According to McDaniel and Gates (2010: 622), discriminant analysis is a technique frequently used for generating perceptual maps. Perceptual mapping is a method regularly used to establish determinant attributes and is "constructed by surveying consumers about various product attributes and developing dimensions and a graph indicating the relative positions of competitors" (Peter and Olson 2010: 378-379). The perceptual map is thus a "visual representation of consumer perceptions of a product, brand, company, or any other object in two or more dimensions" (McDaniel and Gates 2010: 621).

The perceptual map presented below was constructed using the determinant attributes of Low Prices and Fashionable Merchandise, and the mean ratings each of the 5 clothing retailers received on these 2 attributes, as shown in Table 9.2 below:

Table 9. 2 Mean Ratings for Clothing Stores on Low Prices and Fashionable Merchandise

Attribute	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
Low Prices	8.78	4.9	3.00	4.28	5.09
Fashionable Merchandise	7.00	7.63	8.35	7.04	7.33

Figure 9. 1 Perceptual Map for Low Prices and Fashionable Merchandise



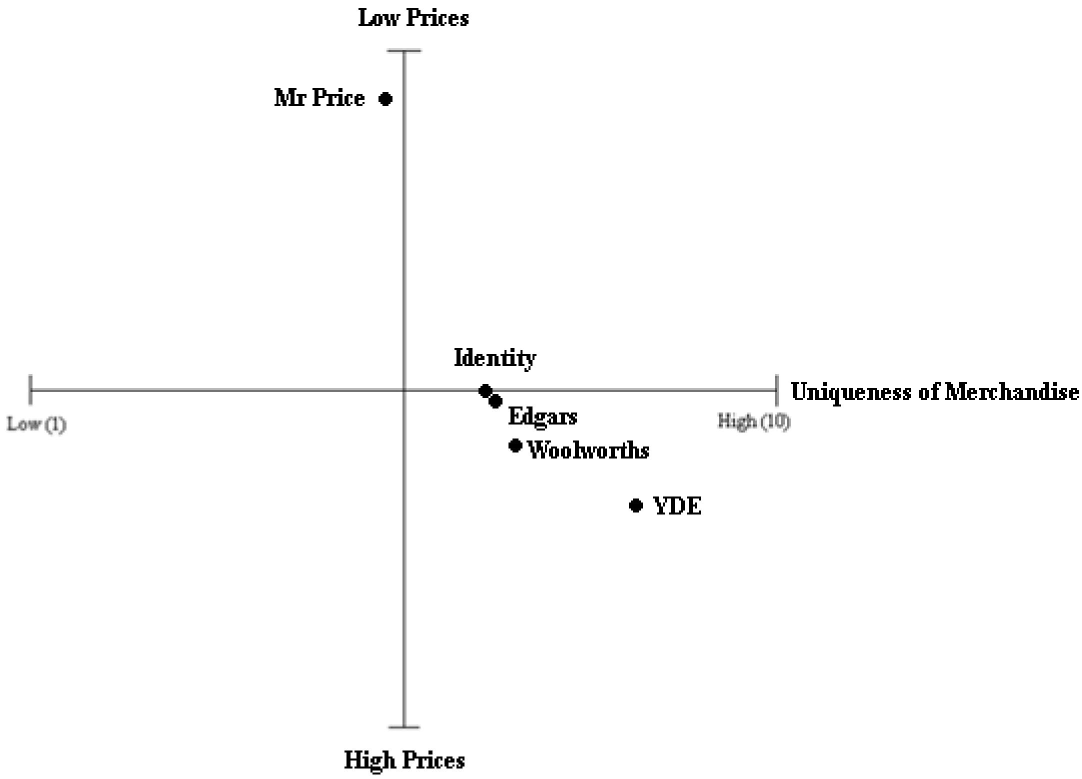
As is evident from the perceptual map above, a high score on the attribute of Low Prices represents the existence of low prices whereas a low score represents high prices. Accordingly, the attributes of Low Prices and Fashionable Merchandise mostly differentiate Mr Price from the other four clothing retailers. Identity, Edgars, Woolworths and to a slightly lesser degree, YDE, appear together in the same quadrant on the map which implies that they are perceived in a similar manner. Mr Price is perceived as offering the lowest priced merchandise which is very similar to the merchandise of Woolworths in terms of fashionability. YDE, on the other hand, is perceived as offering the most fashionable merchandise but at the highest prices.

The second perceptual map was created using the attributes of Low Prices and Uniqueness of Merchandise, and the mean ratings each of the 5 clothing retailers received on these attributes, as shown in Table 9.3 below:

Table 9. 3 Mean Ratings for Clothing Stores on Low Prices and Uniqueness of Merchandise

Attribute	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
Low Prices	8.78	4.9	3.00	4.28	5.09
Uniqueness of Merchandise	4.74	6.41	7.97	6.80	6.30

Figure 9. 2 Perceptual Map for Low Prices and Uniqueness of Merchandise



As is clear from the perceptual map above, Mr Price is again highly differentiated from the other four clothing stores as it appears as an outlier in a separate quadrant. As explained earlier, Mr Price is perceived as charging the lowest prices of the five clothing retailers, while YDE is seen as being the most expensive and charging the highest prices. Conversely, YDE is perceived as offering merchandise which is the most unique and original of the five clothing stores, while

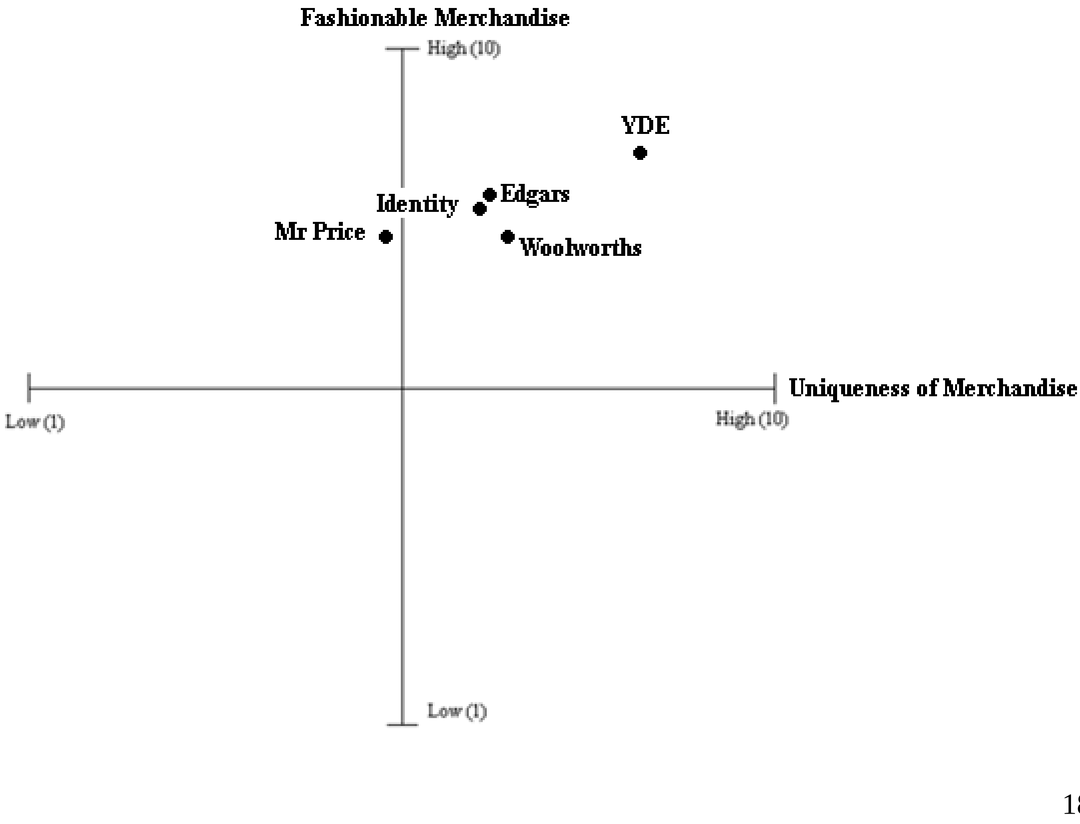
Mr Price is perceived as offering the least unique and thus the most common merchandise. Edgars, Identity and Woolworths appear together in close proximity suggesting these stores are perceived in a similar manner regarding the attributes of Low Prices and Uniqueness of Merchandise, and thus may be regarded as close competitors and substitutes should consumers employ these attributes as their determinant attributes when choosing a clothing retailer. Identity especially occupies a favourable position as this clothing retailer offers merchandise which is cheaper compared to Edgars and Woolworths, but which is also perceived as only slightly less unique.

The third and final perceptual map was created using the attributes of Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise, and the mean ratings each of the 5 clothing retailers received on these attributes, as shown in Table 9.4 below:

Table 9. 4 Mean Ratings for Clothing Stores on Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise

Attribute	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
Fashionable Merchandise	7.00	7.63	8.35	7.04	7.33
Uniqueness of Merchandise	4.74	6.41	7.97	6.80	6.30

Figure 9. 3 Perceptual Map for Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise



As is evident from the perceptual map above, YDE offers merchandise which is both the most fashionable and the most unique of the five clothing retailers. YDE is thus the best positioned with regard to these clothing store attributes. Mr Price, on the other hand, is the worst positioned of the five clothing stores in terms of these attributes, being perceived as offering the least fashionable and unique clothing. This is graphically presented by Mr Price being located in a separate quadrant to the other clothing retailers. Identity, Edgars and Woolworths are again, positioned in close proximity to one another, suggesting these stores are also perceived in a similar manner regarding the attributes of uniqueness and fashionability of merchandise and thus represent close competitors in the eyes of these Generation Y consumers.

9.5 To determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection.

Varley and Rafiq (2004: 69-70) explain that consumers of different demographics, including that of gender, place varying levels of importance on the dimensions and attributes influencing buying behaviour. Consumers are thus described as being heterogeneous in terms of their specific requirements and preferences, resulting in a segmented market divided according to the different benefits and features various groups of consumers require when selecting a retailer (Terblanche 1998: 63-64). Zhang *et al.* (2002: 57) found that, of all the demographic variables, "gender is the one that has significant impacts on the importance of most of the attributes". With regard to the clothing industry in particular, gender plays a pivotal role in the overall segmentation of this sector where the act of shopping for clothing has frequently been described as a "gendered activity" (Dholakia 1999: 154), with male and female consumers differing according to the attributes and features which determine their choice of clothing store. The aim of this research was to investigate whether this theory of significant difference between the requirements of males and females applied to the clothing store attributes used by male and female Generation Y consumers.

The first step in achieving this research objective involved conducting an Independent Samples T-Test, a statistical technique generally associated with probability samples, but was, however, acceptable for the research study at hand as the male and female sample sizes exceeded 20, and thus the tested variables approached a normal distribution (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 712). In addition, the male and female samples were independent of each other, and the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated, thus satisfying all three of the assumptions needed to run a t-test. The results of the Independent Samples T-Test revealed that significant differences between the male and female Generation Y respondents were found with regards to the importance attributed to Convenient Location, Low Prices, High Quality Merchandise and Appealing Advertising.

A Mann-Whitney U-Test was then run to confirm the results obtained from the Independent Samples T-Test, which was achieved, with the exception of one attribute, namely High Quality Merchandise, which did not appear as being significantly different between the male and female respondents according to the Mann-Whitney U-Test. This may be due to the fact that the Mann-Whitney U-Test is generally accepted as having "less power than the t-test" (Palmary and Durrheim 2005: 436), as the High Quality Merchandise attribute was very close to being significant with a significant score of 0.058.

The next step in this analysis to achieve the fifth and final research objective involves comparing the means of the attributes found to be significantly different between the male and female Generation Y respondents.

An analysis of the means revealed that, female Generation Y respondents in this study place greater importance on the attributes of Low Prices, Appealing Advertising and Convenient Location, as important attributes impacting their choice of clothing retailer. Conversely, the male Generation Y respondents consider the attribute of High Quality Merchandise to be more important. Firstly, in terms of the attribute of Low Prices, an attribute also found to be determinant in influencing clothing store selection, a significant difference between the mean importance ratings of the male and female Generation Y respondents was evident, where the male versus female mean ratings of importance were 6.36 and 7.52 respectively. The current research findings appear to contradict what was previously found by authors such as Zhang *et al.* (2002: 57), who concluded from their research that males and females do not differ significantly in terms of their importance ratings of the factor of price. This research has found the opposite in that male and female Generation Y respondents do assign significantly different scores of importance and strength of influence to the attribute of price. However, a study conducted by Chen-Yu and Hong (2002 cited in Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2), which focused on South Korean male consumers, found that younger male apparel shoppers were less price sensitive than their female counterparts (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 2), as is also apparent and confirmed by the research findings of the study at hand. Smith (2008: 1) and Bakewell and Mitchell (2006: 1299) also found that female shoppers tended to be bargain seekers or hunters when it comes to fashion, where they purchase as much as possible at sale prices, which seems to be validated by the current research findings.

With regard to the attribute of High Quality Merchandise, this was perceived by the male Generation Y respondents as being more important and influential when choosing between clothing retailers, with a mean of 8.53, compared to the significantly lower female mean rating of 8.04. The findings of a study conducted by Cox and Dittmar (1995 cited in Bakewell *et al.* 2006: 170) found that male British students tend to focus more on the functional aspects of clothing, including warmth and durability (Cox and Dittmar 1995 cited in Bakewell and Mitchell 2006: 1297), which is confirmed by the findings of the research study at hand which found that male Generation Y student respondents do regard the attribute of High Quality Merchandise as more important compared to their female counterparts. This contradicts the findings of Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 103) which stated that 50% of “adult female Generation Ys pursue quality, even if it implies higher prices” (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103). This is clearly not the case for the female Generation Y respondents of this study, as they place greater importance on low prices and less, compared to the males, on high quality merchandise. The mean rating for High Quality Merchandise is still high, however, with an average importance rating of 8.04 according to the female respondents which suggests that these respondents generally do prefer high quality products but are not as willing as the male respondents to pay high prices for this type of merchandise. It is important to consider, however, the findings of a study conducted by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 100), which suggested that the importance of various attributes do differ depending on the decision-making style of the female generation Y consumer. For instance, the Recreational quality seekers place greater importance on quality products, are brand loyal and are willing to pay more for brand names; whereas the Recreational discount seekers are more concerned with price and generally “prefer sale and discount prices” (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103). Furthermore, the female Generation Y consumers termed the Shopping and fashion uninterested, are concerned with the price/value relationship of the items being purchased, while the Trend setting loyals are very fashion conscious and brand loyal. Lastly, the Confused time and money conserving shoppers are confused by too much of an assortment of merchandise, are also concerned with price versus value and usually prefer lower prices to higher quality items (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 102).

In terms of the attribute of Appealing Advertising, this was found to be significantly more important and influential to the female Generation Y respondents compared to their male counterparts, with mean ratings of 6.43 and 5.71 respectively. According to Arnold *et al.* (1978: 66), the attribute of having the best and most appealing fashion advertising is one of the most important store characteristics in the selection of women’s clothing retailers. These authors further concluded, however, that female “fashion shoppers are not as concerned about physical convenience and appear to be willing to travel to whatever location is required to find what they want” (Arnold *et al.* 1978: 666). This is challenged and contradicted by the current research findings, according to which female Generation Y respondents do assign significant importance to Convenient Location. Moreover, it is clear that, with a low mean of 4.89, this attribute has an average influence over the male Generation Y respondents' choice of clothing retailer. This is concluded using the questionnaire scale of 1 to 10, where a score of 1 indicates that the factor had no influence over the respondents when choosing a clothing retailer and 10 which represented that the attribute had a strong influence on the respondents' choice of clothing store. Conversely, the female Generation Y respondents assigned this attribute a mean rating of 6.47, which is higher in comparison to the male mean rating, and suggests that, to the female respondents, Convenient Location plays a stronger role in impacting their choice of clothing retailer. Another contradiction is evident between the findings of this study and those of a past investigation, namely that of Sinha *et al.* (2002: 25). According to Sinha *et al.* (2002: 25), "men give more prominence to proximity. Women tend to trade this off with merchandise offered by the store". Mulpuru, a Research Analyst, also argued that "men tend to value their time more" (Smith 2008: 1) and will thus be concerned with factors such as convenient location. The findings of the research study at hand seem to reveal the exact opposite, where the men, compared to the females, are more concerned with the actual merchandise as they prefer high quality products, while the women are more concerned with the locational convenience of the clothing retailer.

The data and findings relating to this fifth and final research objective reveal that there is, in fact, very little significant difference between the male and female Generation Y respondents regarding the attributes they utilise when choosing between different clothing retailers. Of the 12 attributes potentially differing between the two genders, only 4 attributes were found to be significantly different, namely: Low Prices, Convenient Location, Appealing Advertising and High Quality Merchandise. This slight disparity is also spoken about and confirmed in the literature where Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 128) discuss the lack of gender differences and the emergence of "gender convergence", a reality of today as male and female consumers become more and more alike in terms of their buying behaviour, preferences and requirements (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 128). The lack of distinctive gender differences with regard to shopping is also the result of an increased importance in appearance, as both men and women nowadays invest more time, money and effort into appearing a certain way which is perceived as being socially acceptable and desirable (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 129).

In conclusion, the findings of this research revealed that the most patronised clothing retailers, according to this sample of Generation Y respondents, are Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths and Identity. Furthermore, in terms of the attributes influencing the clothing store selection process of these consumers, the attributes of High Quality Merchandise, Value for Money, Uniqueness of Merchandise, Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices, are the most important and exert the strongest influence. Of these clothing store attributes, however, Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise and the Uniqueness of the Merchandise are the only determinant attributes differentiating between the five clothing retailers. In addition, with regard to gender differences, the male Generation Y respondents place greater importance on the attribute of High Quality Merchandise, whereas the female respondents perceive the attributes of Low Prices, Convenient Location and Appealing Advertising as more important and influential when choosing a clothing retailer. The following chapter therefore involves a discussion of various recommendations, formulated according to these conclusions, for each of the five clothing retailers to aid them in better satisfying and capturing the Generation Y consumer segment.

CHAPTER 10:
RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to present various recommendations, both general suggestions relating to the targeting of the Generation Y consumer market, as well as more specific recommendations for each of the clothing retailers should they wish to capture this market segment.

10.1 General Recommendations

Walker and Mullins (2010: 201) strongly assert that the ultimate success achieved by a brand depends heavily on how well it is positioned within the market segment it is targeting, in other words, how well does the brand perform "relative to competitive offerings and to the needs of the target audience?". Two key components are necessary to achieving such success, the first of which is differentiation, a major driving force and motivator of most buying decisions as consumers almost always choose an offering which is "different from others they could have chosen" (Walker and Mullins 2010: 202). Secondly, the firm must aim to match its product or service offering to the needs of the target consumer. In order to accomplish this, market research must be conducted to identify the image of the firm and furthermore to ensure that this image corresponds with what the target consumers need and desire. Essentially, the marketer must develop "a clear understanding of the criteria a target consumer uses to evaluate alternatives in a category" and should thus aim to place the product, service or firm in a positive way "along these dimensions" (Solomon and Stuart 1997: 281). This is particularly important within the current market climate, where competition is severe and intense, and where consumers base their buying decisions more on how they perceive the product, service or firm as opposed to any physical features (Solomon *et al.* 2010: 5). Ultimately, a product position which is differentiated from competitors, and which aligns with and satisfies the target consumers' needs and preferences is vital to achieve customer patronage and loyalty and thus reach long-term success (Schiffman and Kanuk 2000: 141).

This research focused primarily on the first three steps in the positioning process, namely identifying the relevant set of competitive products, identifying determinant attributes and determining the consumers' perceptions of these competitors. Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 380 Generation Y UKZNP students to ascertain who, according to this sample, the main competitors are within the retail clothing industry in South Africa and to determine the most important attributes which exert the strongest influence with regard to clothing store selection. The literature and ultimate findings obtained in this study have subsequently indicated and suggested various potential areas for improvement with regard to targeting Generation Y consumers, as well as specific suggestions for each of the five clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths, YDE and Identity, in terms of successfully differentiating themselves and satisfying this market.

Firstly, the following recommendations are made for clothing retailers targeting Generation Y consumers.

10.2 Recommendations for Targeting the Generation Y Market

It is important for marketers to recognise and take advantage of the many opportunities that the Generation Y consumer segment represents. Generation Y is characterised by unprecedented purchasing power, “of which two-thirds goes on clothing” (Ebenkamp 1999: 4), unique buying behaviour (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 2), more disposable income than previous generations at the same age, as well as exerting a powerful influence over the expenditures of friends and family (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114). Furthermore, Generation Y consumers represent a highly profitable and lucrative market for the future (Levy and Weitz 2001: 114), as many of their key behaviours and preferences remain embedded in “their lifelong culture” and will thus impact their buying behaviour as they enter adulthood. Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001: 35) explain that it is important for marketers to determine and understand the buying behaviour of Generation Y consumers now as these will “likely have a significant impact in the retail world in years to come”. All firms, including clothing retailers, should therefore pay careful attention to this market segment as, in a few years, these consumers have the potential to develop into loyal customers devoted to a particular retailer or brand which caught their attention and satisfied their needs and wishes when they were younger. In order to achieve this, firms wishing to target this consumer segment need to develop a comprehensive understanding of these customers, as well as building and maintaining strong relationships with them. By showing the Generation Y consumers at a young age that the clothing retailer is reliable and trustworthy, it may secure itself customers in the long-term.

With the aim of achieving this, the marketer must thoroughly evaluate the potential positions for the firm or retailer, remembering that “the key to winning and keeping target customers is to understand their needs better than competitors do and to deliver more value” (Kotler and Armstrong 2004: 259). It is important, therefore, to base the positioning strategy on those attributes identified through market research as the most significant and determinant in influencing the target consumers’ buying behaviour (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). This is essential as consumers in different market segments generally perceive different attributes as important when choosing a retailer or clothing in general (Walker and Mullins 2008: 162). With regard to the Generation Y, or 'Twixter', market in particular, these consumers have been described as "unquestionably unique" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 2) and will thus require a unique and original strategy in terms of "marketing and retailing to this cohort" (Phelps 1999 cited in Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 95). In addition, these consumers are accustomed to an "overwhelming array of choices" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 11), and thus the key to attracting their attention lies in differentiation. From this study, it is recommended that, in order to reach and satisfy the requirements of Generation Y consumers, the clothing retailers should focus on and emphasise the attributes which have been found to be the most important to this sample.

Firstly, with regard to the clothing attributes which were found to be the most important to this sample of Generation Y consumers, all seven attributes are important and exert a strong influence over these consumers' choice of clothing, with all attributes receiving a mean importance rating of more than 8. Clothing Retailers therefore wishing to target and satisfy these consumers must ensure that they provide clothing which meets these needs in terms of fit, comfort, quality and attractiveness, as well as charging a fair price and offering an assortment of apparel with regard to different colours and styles available.

Secondly, with regard to the clothing store attributes, their rank in terms of importance as well as how each of the four clothing retailers were perceived and rated according to these attributes. The top seven most important attributes that exert the strongest influence over the Generation Y respondents' choice of clothing store, with a mean rating of more than 7, are: High Quality Merchandise, Value for Money, Uniqueness of Merchandise, Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices. With regard to positioning strategy, it is essential for every clothing retailer to differentiate itself according to the features which are most important to that retailer's specific target segment. Therefore, should a clothing retailer wish to target this sub-segment of Generation Y, it must aim to provide superior products and services according to one or more of these seven identified attributes and according to those which match their own unique strengths.

Firstly, clothing retailers aiming to target Generation Y consumers should aim to offer merchandise which is of a high quality, as this attribute received the highest mean rating of importance of 8.23. This is especially important when targeting male Generation Y consumers as the findings revealed that the male Generation Y respondents placed greater importance on the attribute of High Quality Merchandise compared to their female counterparts. According to Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 102), Generation Y consumers generally seek high quality products, a finding most probably caused by the media which "portray affluent and opulent lifestyles" which "Generation Ys have been acculturated by" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003:

102). This, however, seems to contradict the findings, according to which Mr Price is the most patronised clothing store, despite receiving the lowest average rating of 4.89 for the attribute of High Quality Merchandise. It seems, therefore, that although Generation Y consumers prefer High Quality Merchandise, this is something to which they aspire as, at present, they are still students who have a limited budget to spend on apparel and thus patronise stores like Mr Price which are known for charging very low prices. This is clear from the 74.6% of respondents who agree that Mr Price is the best store for low prices, as well as the highest mean Mr Price received for the attribute of Low Prices (8.78) in comparison to the other four clothing retailers. According to Levy and Weitz (2009: 96), Generation Y is the "driving force behind the growth of masstige-products with prestige appeal but mass market prices" (Levy and Weitz 2009: 96). Thus it seems that, despite the substantial spending power of this generation in general, they do still enjoy 'bargain hunting' which is perhaps why Mr Price has been found to be so popular according to this sample of UKZNP students. With regard to students in particular, this market segment is usually known for the monetary constraints they have to face, and thus would be more attracted to those clothing retailers which charge lower, cheaper prices.

The attribute of Low Prices was further proven to be highly influential and determinant by the Discriminant Analysis, the most differentiating of the three determinant attributes, and thus plays a vital role in discriminating between the five clothing retailers. However, it would not be practical to recommend that all clothing retailers lower their prices simply to attract the student market, particularly since this study only focused on a sub-segment of Generation Y and not the age cohort as a whole. It would, however, be more realistic to recommend that clothing retailers aiming to target Generation Y consumers offer merchandise which represents Value for Money. This is very important to these consumers, as is apparent from the high mean rating of 7.79, the second most important and influential attribute of the 12 clothing store attributes presented in the Stage 2 questionnaire.

Generation Y is very knowledgeable of the "price/value relationship" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212) and generally "associate higher prices per se with improved quality and worth" (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98). Yarrow and O'Donnell (2009: 44) explain that Generation Y consumers "may want some fashion that's cheap and fast, but Millennials are also big spenders when they think it's worth it". Generally, Generation Y consumers seem to prefer low prices, however, they are prepared to spend more should they perceive it as being beneficial in terms of achieving some sort of prestige or status, or when purchasing products which are of a higher quality. Generation Y consumers therefore, place great importance on receiving value for their money and retailers aiming to satisfy these consumers should thus aim to offer this.

The attributes of Uniqueness of Merchandise and Fashionable Merchandise were the third and fourth most important attributes to the Generation Y respondents, with mean ratings of 7.75 and 7.7 respectively. In addition, these attributes were also found to be determinant and key differentiators between the five clothing retailers of Edgars, Mr Price, Woolworths, YDE and Identity. Generation Y is known for their sense of individualism and desire to be unique and original, with this individuality often being expressed through their clothing (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212). It is interesting for the attribute of Fashionable Merchandise to be so important to these consumers, particularly given their desire to stand out from the crowd, as well as the theory which states that Generation Y consumers do not feel restricted by stringent fashion rules (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212). This clearly illustrates this generation's conflict between wanting to be individualistic, as well as feeling a sense of unity and "conforming to group standards" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 111). In order to satisfy these apparent contradictory requirements, clothing retailers choosing to target this age cohort should aim to offer merchandise which is different and exclusive, but which also relates to and takes inspiration from current fashion trends and fads.

In addition, the retailer should seek to provide a Wide Selection of Merchandise, an important attribute to these consumers as is evident from the high mean rating of 7.39. Generation Y consumers are used to having a wide variety of choices and options available to them (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 11). Retailers striving to capture this market should thus ensure that this does not change and continue to offer a wide assortment of merchandise.

Lastly, Store Cleanliness was also found to be an important and influential attribute affecting the respondents' choice of retailer and clothing stores should thus use this finding and in turn, keep their store clean, neat and tidy to attract and retain this consumer segment.

These same top seven attributes which all received an average rating of over 7.00 will be focused on to aid in the formulation of specific recommendations for each of the five clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths, YDE and Identity.

10.3 Recommendations for Mr Price

A very large percentage of the Stage 2 questionnaire respondents, a total of 67.4%, indicated to shopping at Mr Price most of the time when purchasing apparel. Therefore, Mr Price appears to be very popular and a frequently patronised clothing retailer within this market of Generation Y UKZNP students.

Firstly, with regard to the attribute of High Quality Merchandise, which was found to be the most important attribute influencing clothing store selection according to this sample, Mr Price received a substantially lower average rating of 4.89 for this attribute. This was the lowest mean rating of all five clothing retailers, suggesting that, in comparison with the other clothing stores, Mr Price is perceived as offering the lowest quality merchandise. It is also evident, however, that Mr Price charges the lowest prices of the five clothing retailers with a mean of 8.78. It seems, therefore, that Mr Price has chosen a low quality-low price strategy and approach to positioning. As Lamb *et al.* (2004: 201) explain, this method of positioning may "emphasise low price as an indication of value". It is not advisable, therefore, for Mr Price to improve or increase the quality of its clothing as this would be detrimental to this positioning, a position which clearly differentiates Mr Price from the remaining four clothing retailers. This is apparent from the perceptual maps which were presented and discussed in the previous chapter, which illustrated that Mr Price is clearly separated and distinguished from Edgars, YDE, Woolworths and Identity according to the determinant attribute of Low Prices. With regard to the attribute of Value for Money, Mr Price received the third highest rating of 6.21, suggesting that, the respondents perceive the quality of Mr Price merchandise as fair and reasonable considering the low prices charged, thus they are achieving some value equivalent to the price they are paying. In order for Mr Price to retain and protect this positioning, it should continually evaluate the offerings of its competitors, ultimately ensuring that its' prices remain competitive and, if possible, always lower than those of its' competitors, especially those targeting the same market. Moreover, an increase in product quality will inevitably result in an increase in total costs to Mr Price which would directly translate into higher prices being charged for its' merchandise, again reinforcing the need to maintain the current position.

In terms of the attribute of Store Cleanliness, Mr Price again received a considerably lower mean of 6.15 in relation to the other clothing stores. Although Mr Price was rated as performing the worst of the five clothing retailers in terms of offering a clean and tidy store, this is easily rectifiable and requires minimal effort and resources to resolve, with maximum benefits and returns for the retailer. A few simple strategies which may be employed to achieve this include, for instance, training and instructing staff members to be more vigilant regarding the cleanliness of the store at all times, ensuring that all floors are swept and mopped, shelves are dusted and neatly packed, mirrors are cleaned, and the staff themselves should also be neatly dressed and well-presented. This would require minimal effort from Mr Price staff but would have a great impact on the overall perception of cleanliness of the store. Mr Price must remember that a messy and dirty store does not only fail to welcome or entice the general consumer to enter and patronise the retailer, but also makes it very difficult and frustrating for the consumer to find what they are looking for. This will, in turn, detract from the consumers' enjoyment of the shopping experience as a whole, an important factor for Generation Y consumers in particular, who regard shopping as “a form of leisure and enjoyment” (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 103). This is confirmed by 67.7% of the Stage 2 respondents who indicated that they do enjoy shopping. As Bakewell and Mitchell (2003: 103) suggest, “retailers should consider ways to improve the leisure experience for this group”, and therefore it is recommended that Mr Price pays careful attention to the cleanliness of its stores, a significant factor which will further enhance this Generation’s shopping enjoyment.

Mr Price also received the lowest average rating of 4.74 and 7.00 for the determinant attributes of Uniqueness of Merchandise and Fashionable Merchandise respectively. In terms of the Uniqueness attribute, this confirmed the focus group findings which revealed that many of the focus group participants (21%) did not purchase clothing from Mr Price because they felt the clothing at this store was too common and they do not like being seen in the same clothing as their peers. The opposite was, however, found from the Stage 2 questionnaire findings according to which 66.7% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that they do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there. Nevertheless, Mr Price was rated as the worst store with regard to offering unique merchandise, an attribute which was found by the discriminant analysis as being determinant and differentiating between the clothing retailers, and thus Mr Price should aim to improve this negative perception. This may serve to explain the comparatively lower mean rating of 6.21 Mr Price received for the attribute of Value for Money, despite offering the lowest prices. As the literature explains, Generation Y consumers are willing to spend more should they perceive it as being ‘worth it’ in terms of purchasing higher quality merchandise or merchandise which is associated with some prestige or status (Bakewell and Mitchell 2003: 98). With regard to Mr Price, however, the merchandise offered by this store was perceived by the respondents as neither prestigious or exclusive, as they believed that too many people shop there, nor of a high quality. Therefore, the perception is that Mr Price, compared to the other four clothing retailers, offers less Value for Money in terms of merchandise uniqueness and trendiness. In order to reverse this negative perception, Mr Price should aim to correct at least one of the components associated with value for money, namely that of unique or fashionable merchandise which Generation Y consumers recognise as prestigious. Recently, Mr Price has done exactly so by sponsoring events such as the new talent search, the winner of which will distribute his or her original, cutting edge designs exclusively through Mr Price stores. Mr Price should continue to organise events such as these on an annual basis as this will most certainly improve the perception of its merchandise in terms of being innovative and trendy. This should, in turn, enhance the opinion of Mr Price merchandise regarding the attribute of Value for Money.

Of the top seven most important attributes influencing clothing store selection, Mr Price scored the highest average ratings for only one attribute, namely that of Low Prices. Therefore, it is evident that this store is mostly perceived in terms of its' 'cheapness' and low, affordable prices. This is especially appropriate considering the student market in particular, a group of consumers who are known for suffering budget constraints and a lack of cash availability. This is a unique and completely differentiated position in comparison to the remaining top clothing retailers, Edgars, Woolworths, YDE and Identity and Mr Price should thus strive to maintain this position. In addition, it was also found that the female Generation Y respondents perceive the attribute of Low Prices as more important compared to the male respondents, with differing mean importance ratings of 7.52 and 6.36 respectively. Accordingly, it could be beneficial and profitable for Mr Price to focus its marketing and targeting efforts on the female Generation Y consumer segment in particular. Therefore, although minor recommendations and changes have been suggested, Mr Price is proving to be highly successful in terms of capturing the Generation Y UKZNP student market.

10.4 Recommendations for Edgars

Edgars was found to be the second most patronised store according to the sample of Generation Y respondents, with 52.8% of the research respondents shopping there most of the time when purchasing apparel.

Edgars received the highest average rating of all five clothing retailers for only one attribute, namely that of Wide Selection of Merchandise, with a mean of 7.37. This attribute was found to be very important to the sample of Generation Y consumers, as is clear from the high mean importance rating of 7.39. This is particularly pertinent as Generation Y in general are used to an "overwhelming array of choices" (Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 11), and would most likely not settle for anything less. Edgars should thus aim to maintain this positive perception, emphasise this attribute and strive to continue satisfying this requirement, should they wish to target Generation Y student consumers. It is recommended that Edgars carefully and closely monitor its product portfolio and ensure that a wide variety and assortment of both brands and products within the different brands are available at all times.

Edgars received the second highest ratings regarding their performance on the attribute of Value for Money, with a score of 7.04. This may be explained by the comparatively high rating this clothing retailer obtained for the attribute of High Quality Merchandise, with a mean of 7.62. For instance, Edgars is perceived by the respondents as offering merchandise which is of a higher quality compared to YDE, but which is also cheaper than that charged by the latter clothing retailer and thus represents more Value for Money. It is thus recommended for Edgars to emphasise the Value for Money attribute as a strong competitive advantage and potential differentiator, as consumers have the opportunity to purchase merchandise which is of a higher quality and which is less expensive in comparison to YDE. Edgars should develop and implement advertising strategies to emphasise this attribute of Value for Money and present it as an important benefit to consumers, especially to Generation Y consumers who are known for being "cash conscious" and appreciating the "price/value relationship" (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O'Donnell 2009: 212).

10.5 Recommendations for Woolworths

A total of 24.3% of the research respondents indicated Woolworths as the store which they most frequently patronise when buying clothing, and Woolworths was thus found to be one of the most patronised clothing stores according to this sample of Generation Y student respondents.

In terms of the High Quality Merchandise attribute, the most important attribute to this sample with a mean rating of 8.23, Woolworths scored the highest average rating of 8.39 of all five clothing retailers. The majority of the respondents, 51.3%, also agreed that Woolworths is the best store for high quality clothing. Woolworths is thus clearly perceived and positioned as the clothing retailer offering the highest quality merchandise, a position which differentiates this store from the remaining four clothing retailers, and a position which Woolworths should strive to protect and maintain. For example, Woolworths must ensure that Quality Control is thoroughly and meticulously carried out at all stages of the supply chain, especially once the merchandise is unpacked and presented to the final consumer. Any product which does not comply with Woolworths' strict quality standards must be rectified immediately as this may have detrimental effects on the consumers' perception of this store. This is especially crucial as the consumers' perceptions impact how the store is positioned in their mind, which in turn has a significant impact on their eventual buying behaviour. As Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003: 242) explain, the positioning of a product and how it is perceived by the consumer, is generally more influential on buying behaviour than its actual, physical features. It is ultimately, much easier and more efficient for Woolworths to expend resources in maintaining a positive perception, than it would be to reverse any negative sentiments regarding this store. Woolworths must thus aim to ensure that all aspects and components of its marketing mix are kept at a consistently high standard of quality, the best quality compared to its competitors, across all of its branches in South Africa. Woolworths also received the highest average rating for the attribute of Value for Money, with a mean of 7.38. This is an interesting finding given that 44.3% of the Stage 2 questionnaire respondents believe that Woolworths is too expensive for them to shop at, as well as Woolworths receiving the second lowest mean rating of 4.28 for the attribute of Low Prices.

This suggests that, in relation to the other four clothing retailers, Woolworths is one of the most expensive, however, the high quality of its merchandise generally implies that each purchase from Woolworths is seen as a type of investment and worth the money being spent as it will be highly durable.

Woolworths also received the highest average rating for the attribute of Store Cleanliness, with a mean of 8.58. This attribute was found to be important to the respondents when choosing a clothing retailer, with a mean importance rating of 7.53, and Woolworths should thus strive to maintain its positioning with regard to this attribute. This would be very simple to achieve, and by keeping every Woolworths store clean, neat and tidy, it would ultimately enhance its positioning of offering high quality, premium priced merchandise.

10.6 Recommendations for Young Designers Emporium (YDE)

A total of 11.8% of the Stage 2 questionnaire respondents indicated YDE as the clothing store which they most frequently patronise when purchasing apparel. Of the five clothing retailers included in the Stage 2 questionnaire, YDE was found to be the least patronised compared to Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths and Identity.

This may be explained by the very low, the lowest of all five clothing retailers, mean rating of 3.0 YDE received for the attribute of Low Prices. This suggests that, in terms of charging Low Prices, YDE is perceived by the respondents as being poor in this regard. This is also supported by the finding that 58.9% of the sample of Generation Y respondents agree that YDE is too expensive for them to patronise. This does appear to be disadvantageous and unfavourable given that the student market is confronted with very limited budgets and thus uses the attribute of Low Prices as a determinant and differentiating attribute when choosing between clothing retailers. However, the high prices which YDE is perceived to charge may be explained by the highly fashionable and unique nature of its merchandise. YDE received the highest average ratings for both the Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise determinant attributes, with mean ratings of 8.35 and 7.97, the highest of all five clothing retailers. This suggests that, with regard to these product features, YDE is perceived as offering the most fashionable, original and unique clothing and merchandise. This is very important to the Generation Y market in general, who like to express their individuality and uniqueness through their clothing, and who do not feel “encumbered with strict codes of fashion” (Black 2009 cited in Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 212), but rather use fashion and trends in a favourable way to enhance their sense of unity and “belonging to groups” (Yarrow and O’Donnell 2009: 111).

These consumers are thus the “most likely to purchase clothing when it is considered to be prestigious” (Moore and Carpenter 2008: 333).

YDE should thus strive to maintain this position of offering merchandise which is unique and fashionable and which is, in turn, potentially very prestigious and thus highly desirable by this Generation Y market, especially those Generation Yers who are not students and thus have more disposable income and may thus not be as affected by high prices when choosing a clothing retailer. This is particularly salient as both the Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise attributes were found to be determinant and differentiating between the 5 clothing retailers, a major advantage for YDE as differentiation is inevitably the key to success (Aaker 2008: 46). Ultimately, when marketing a brand or firm, and when choosing a positioning strategy, the marketer must focus on and accentuate the specific product attributes which are highly salient and relevant to the target consumer (Lamb et al. 2004: 182), as well as using the features as “competitive tools that can be employed to differentiate a firm’s product” (Lamb et al. 2004: 192). In this case, YDE should exploit its merchandise features of being unique and fashionable to obtain and retain a strong position in the minds of potential Generation Y customers. Market research should thus be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that the merchandise remains fashionable, modern and up-to-date, as well as ensuring that consumers’ needs and requirements in terms of fashionability are continuously being met and sufficiently satisfied. In addition, YDE must encourage all its designers to continuously stay at the forefront of fashion trends and should enforce various policies regarding the standard of the designs to be sold in the store, particularly in terms of uniqueness and fashionability. Clothing which does not meet these standards and requirements should not form part of YDE’s product portfolio.

With regard to the pricing strategy employed by YDE, the very low mean rating of 3.0 does suggest that there is room for improvement, despite the exclusive, modern nature of its merchandise. This store is perceived as being substantially more expensive than the other four clothing competitors, while Edgars and Woolworths in particular are further perceived to offer merchandise which is only slightly inferior in terms of being unique and fashionable, while actually offering merchandise which is superior in terms of quality. Therefore, YDE is perceived by the student Generation Y respondents as being too expensive to patronise, despite offering such sought-after merchandise in terms of being original and trendy. It is recommended that YDE strives to change this perception by charging prices which are more reasonable and similar to those charged by its closest competitors, Edgars and Woolworths. Alternatively, YDE may choose to rather emphasise and strongly differentiate itself according to its product features and benefits, namely unique and fashionable merchandise. YDE may thus choose to highlight its strengths and base its positioning on these, and thus strive to obtain a premium price, premium product position, in terms of prestige and exclusivity. Thus, YDE may forsake any alterations to its pricing strategy and rather focus on and differentiate itself in terms of its product. This second strategy will probably yield the most long-term success as the perceptual maps show in the previous chapter, YDE is the best positioned in terms of Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise and should thus aim to maintain and strengthen this position. Furthermore, although the student respondents may not be able to afford to shop at YDE stores at present, they will most likely be able to in the future, especially as they are in University and will thus be highly educated and potentially earn correspondingly high salaries. By capturing their attention now, YDE may potentially secure a steadfast clientele for the future.

10.7 Recommendations for Identity

Identity was the fourth most patronised clothing store according to the sample of Generation Y students, with 21.1% of the respondents shopping at Identity most often when purchasing clothing.

As the perceptual maps in the previous chapter reveal, Identity is mostly positioned in very close proximity to Edgars with regard to the determinant attributes of Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise. This is also highly evident upon comparison of the mean ratings both these clothing stores received on each of these three determinant attributes. For instance, Edgars received mean ratings of 4.9, 7.63 and 6.41 for the attributes of Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise respectively, while Identity received average ratings of 5.09, 7.33 and 6.3. Therefore, it is recommended for Identity to strive to differentiate itself, from Edgars in particular. In addition, of all seven attributes which were found to be the most important to the Stage 2 questionnaire respondents, Identity did not receive the highest rating for a single attribute. Identity thus needs to conduct market research in order to become even more familiar with its specific target audience, especially in terms of the specific benefits or features required by the consumers (Hooley *et al.* 2004: 576), in order to successfully meet their needs and desires. Identity should not only research its target consumers, but also its competitors with the aim of possibly identifying "weaknesses on relevant attributes (which) can represent an opportunity to differentiate and develop advantage" (Aaker 2008: 46). When developing the positioning strategy, Identity must be mindful of the recommendations of authors such as Etzel *et al.* (2001: 167) and Walker and Mullins (2008: 157), who explain that "the positioning effort must be kept as simple as possible and complexity should be avoided at all costs", and thus should generally be based only on a single attribute. For instance, the findings of this research has revealed that Mr Price is mostly positioned in terms of its Low Prices, while YDE is currently positioned in terms of its fashionable and unique merchandise, Woolworths is positioned according to its High Quality Merchandise and Value for Money potential, and Edgars appears to be positioned in terms of both its Wide Selection of Merchandise and also its Value for Money potential. Identity thus needs to determine how it can differentiate itself within the highly competitive clothing industry of South Africa.

With regard to a specific attribute, namely that of Value for Money, Identity received the lowest average rating for this clothing store characteristic. This suggests that, of the five clothing retailers, Identity offers merchandise which represents the least value for money, according to the respondents. There is certainly room for improvement for Identity on this attribute. For instance, Identity offers merchandise which is perceived to be of the second lowest quality of all five clothing stores, while charging prices which are the second best in terms of being low and affordable. Therefore, Identity could aim to slightly improve the quality of its merchandise, and most importantly, the perception of its merchandise quality, which would in turn enhance its Value for Money perception and positioning. Even though the increase in product quality would most likely result in higher prices, Identity can afford to do so as, currently, it is offering merchandise which is perceived to be of only slightly less quality compared to YDE but which is much cheaper. Identity should thus aim to take advantage of this apparent gap in the market, which calls for a clothing retailer which is reasonable in terms of price, for instance, more expensive than Mr Price but cheaper than YDE, while still offering merchandise which is of a competitive quality.

Identity also received the second lowest ratings for the important attributes of Store Cleanliness and Wide Selection of Merchandise, with means of 7.45 and 6.19 respectively. Again, there is room for improvement for Identity and an opportunity to improve its overall positioning on these attributes which the respondents regarded as being the most important when choosing between clothing retailers. With regard to Store Cleanliness, Identity must ensure that all its stores are kept neat and tidy at all times, and that the staff employed by the store are also well-presented. Shelves in the store must be dusted and wiped clean on a regular basis, while the floors must be swept and mopped regularly too. Windows and mirrors must also be kept clean and free of any dust or marks, while the fitting rooms must also be frequently inspected to ensure these also remain clean and fresh. With regard to the Wide Selection of Merchandise attribute, Identity should conduct market research to identify exactly which products its customers feel are missing from the store and add these to its existing product portfolio. A Wide

Selection of Merchandise also implies a variety of different sizes and styles, which Identity should keep in mind when purchasing stock for the store.

Ultimately, clothing retailers that choose to target Generation Y consumers, and the 'Twixter' sub-segment of this generation in particular, should aim to position and differentiate themselves according to the attributes found to be of the most importance to this consumer segment namely in relation to the attributes of High Quality Merchandise, Value for Money, Uniqueness of Merchandise, Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices. Accordingly, various recommendations were made to the clothing retailers, namely Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths, YDE and Identity, regarding each of these attributes and the improvements and enhancements needed to better reach and meet the potential Generation Y consumer. Although the research was very thorough and carefully executed, nevertheless, some limitations were present. These, along with recommendations for future research, will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 11:
LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The limitations and challenges faced in this study are discussed in this chapter, along with recommendations for future research.

11.1 Limitations of the Research

With regard to Stage 1 of the research, which involved the four Focus Group sessions, the researcher encountered numerous problems. Firstly, many of the students who had agreed to participate in the focus groups failed to arrive on the day, despite receiving reminder e-mails from the researcher. The researcher thus had to resort to asking participants to 'bring friends' to the discussion, to ensure that an adequate sample size would be achieved. Secondly, when the students did arrive to the focus group sessions, they all arrived to the same session, which in turn meant that the focus group discussion of the 'full' group was more difficult to control and moderate, and also to transcribe as many of the participants were talking at the same time. Furthermore, this resulted in a very poor turnout in the fourth and final focus group session, in which it was very difficult to facilitate and encourage discussion.

The researcher employed non-probability sampling for both stages of the research, an important limitation in itself. This is because the "researcher does not know the degree to which the sample is representative of the population from which it was drawn, and the results of non-probability samples cannot be projected to the total population" (McDaniel and Gates 2001: 335). The researcher was, however, not able to compile a list of all the UKZNP students in order to facilitate random, probability sampling as this would have been extremely time-consuming and would probably have yielded very poor response rates. Nevertheless, the researcher aimed to make the sample as representative as possible using non-probability, purposive quota sampling.

Another limitation was evident with regard to the both the geographic location at which the research took place, as well as the sample from which the data was gathered. More specifically, the study was based at one University in one Province and thus the findings of this research cannot be representative of 'Twixters' across the country. Furthermore, in terms of the sample, this was limited to University students who met the 'Twixter' 18-to-25-year-old age requirements, and thus the findings are not necessarily representative of all 'Twixters'.

11.2 Recommendations for Future Research

A future study on this topic using probability sampling is recommended as this would avoid the subjective sample selection associated with non-probability sampling. This would reduce the sampling bias in the research process, as well as enhancing the representativeness of the sample and the generalisability of the findings to the rest of the UKZNP student population. This could be achieved by obtaining a list of all the students registered at the University, randomly selecting students from the list and contacting them to invite them to participate in the study.

This study found Task Definitions do impact the store selection process, however, further research is needed to determine exactly how the different situational conditions affect the attributes employed when choosing between retailers. This research found, for instance, that 44.2% of the Stage 2 questionnaire respondents agreed with the statement that their choice of clothing store is affected by the quantity being purchased, while 59.8% of the respondents agreed that their choice of clothing retailer is affected by whether they are buying a gift or shopping for themselves. Further investigation is thus needed to ascertain the relationship between such Task Definitions and the corresponding importance placed on the clothing store attributes. For example, which attributes are perceived to be the most important when buying large quantities of products, or when buying a gift as opposed to shopping for oneself.

A similar study could be conducted with a focus on male Generation Y consumers only, as there is very little South African research on these consumers and their apparel buying behaviour.

Furthermore, it would also be interesting to investigate other Generations, such as the Baby Boomers and Generation X, to determine the differences in determinant attributes when buying apparel or choosing a clothing retailer, across the different age cohorts.

Further research could be conducted regarding the influence of the demographic of race over the attributes respondents indicated to being the most important when selecting a clothing store. A Kruskall-Wallis Test could be used for this purpose, to test whether there is a significant difference in the important attributes between the different race groups. Due to time and dissertation length constraints, this was beyond the scope of this research.

A similar study investigating clothing buying behaviour could be conducted with particular focus on Black Diamonds as the literature search revealed this consumer segment to be highly lucrative and potentially very profitable as they are responsible for approximately 20% of all consumer spending in South Africa (Du Preez *et al.* 2007: 4).

In order to remedy the limitation of this study being restricted to the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Pietermaritzburg campus, the study could be replicated and conducted in other provinces across the country at numerous University campuses, thus eliminating the variable of location.

Future research may also focus on a specific clothing store, for example, Identity, to determine why this store is so popular, with 21.1% of the respondents shopping there most of the time when buying clothing, despite receiving poor average ratings on each of the seven most important attributes according to the Generation Y student sample.

As an alternative to the Discriminant Analysis used in this study, a Conjoint Analysis could be conducted in a similar study to determine "which combination of a limited number of attributes consumers most prefer" (Walker and Mullins 2008: 166) and thus identify which attributes play a key role in the consumers' apparel buying behaviour. Conjoint Analysis, however, requires a specific computer program and would involve each respondent completing the questionnaire electronically on a computer or laptop. Due to time and budgetary constraints, this was not possible in this research study but would be interesting to explore should these restrictions not be an object.

Lastly, a similar study could be conducted investigating Generation Y consumers who are not or are no longer students. It would be interesting if the budgetary limitations which were clearly influential on clothing store choice during the focus group discussions remain as prevalent once these consumers enter the working world. Future research could investigate which attributes the working Generation Y consumers perceive as being the most important when choosing between clothing retailers.

CHAPTER 12:
OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004: 259), "a product's position is the way the product is defined by consumers on important attributes" and is "the place the product occupies in consumers' minds relative to competing products". The process of positioning is important for several reasons: firstly, the positioning of a product or service, and how it is perceived by the consumer, generally exerts a stronger influence on buyer behaviour, than its actual, physical features (Du Plessis and Rousseau 2003: 242); secondly, a key component of any successful positioning strategy is differentiation, which forms the foundation and is the final motivator for the majority of buying decisions (Walker and Mullins 2010: 202). This is particularly important in today's highly competitive and congested marketplace; thirdly, a successful positioning strategy is an important prerequisite to creating and developing a successful marketing mix, as it serves to enhance the chosen segmentation and target market plan (Schiffman and Kanuk 2000: 141). Of the seven steps in the Positioning Process, this research focused primarily on Steps 1 and 2, which involve identifying a relevant set of competitive products and identifying determinant attributes.

The objectives for the research were as follows:

1. To identify the most patronised stores according to a sample of male and female Generation Y consumers.
2. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when choosing between clothing retailers.
3. To determine the relative importance of the attributes that Generation Y consumers apply when purchasing various garments and pieces of clothing.
4. To identify the determinant attributes that influence clothing store selection among Generation Y consumers.
5. To determine whether a significant difference exists between the attributes of the male and female Generation Y respondents with regard to clothing store selection.

Overall, the findings indicated that the most patronised stores according to this sample of Generation Y consumers were: Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths and Identity.

The attributes which were found to be the most important and exert the strongest influence over clothing store selection were: High Quality Merchandise, Value for Money, Uniqueness of Merchandise, Fashionable Merchandise, Store Cleanliness, Wide Selection of Merchandise and Low Prices. With regard to gender differences, it was found that the male Generation Y respondents placed more importance on the attribute of High Quality Merchandise compared to their female counterparts, while the female Generation Y respondents perceived the attributes of Low Prices, Convenient Location and Appealing Advertising as the most important when choosing between clothing retailers. A Discriminant Analysis was also conducted to identify which attributes were determinant and most differentiate the clothing retailers, and these were found to be the attributes of Low Prices, Fashionable Merchandise and Uniqueness of Merchandise.

The most important attributes influencing clothing selection among the Generation Y respondents were found to be: Good Fit, Comfort and Quality of the clothing. However, all of the clothing attributes received a mean importance rating of more than 8.0 and thus each of the attributes, namely Good Fit, Comfort, Quality, Attractiveness, Good Price, Choice of Colours and Choice of Styles, all exert an influence on the Generation Y respondents' purchasing of various garments and pieces of clothing.

Furthermore, perceptual maps were constructed using the three determinant attributes to illustrate the position of each of the five clothing retailers, specifically Mr Price, Edgars, Woolworths, Identity and YDE, according to these attributes. From these perceptual maps it was established that Mr Price was mostly positioned in terms of its Low Prices, the lowest of all five clothing retailers, while Young Designers Emporium (YDE) was perceived as offering the most fashionable and unique merchandise.

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APPENDIX A:
ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF
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11 July 2011

Ms K Thompson
3 Ridgeford
103 Ridge Road
Scottsville
3201 PIETERMARITZBURG

Dear Ms Thompson

PROTOCOL: Buying Motivations for Apparel: A Comparative Study between Male and Female Generation Y Consumers
ETHICAL APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0426/2010 M: Faculty of Management Studies

In response to your application dated 22 June 2010, Student Number: **206515911** the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been given **FULL APPROVAL.**

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steve Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS COMMITTEE

SC/sn

cc: Prof. D Vigar-Ellis (Supervisor)
cc: Ms G Ponsford

Postal Address:

Telephone: **Facsimile:** **Email:** **Website:** www.ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

APPENDIX B:

FOCUS GROUP INFORMED CONSENT

I, Kim Thompson, am a student currently registered for the M. Com Degree on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). A requirement for the degree is a dissertation and I have chosen the following topic:

"Buying Motivations for Apparel: A Comparative Study between Male and Female Generation Y Consumers".

Please note that that this investigation is being conducted in my personal capacity. I can be reached on 206515911@ukzn.ac.za or 0823878142.

My academic supervisor is Professor Debbie Vigar-Ellis, based in the School of Management on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She can be contacted on Vigard@ukzn.ac.za or 033 2605899.

The purpose of this research is identify the buying motivations of male and female Generation Y consumers aged 18 to 25, as well as determine the specific attributes which determine their patronage behaviour in terms of clothing store selection. Information gathered in this study will include data retrieved from the interview that I request you to participate in. Please note that your name will not be included in the report as only summary data will be included. Your anonymity and confidentiality is of utmost importance and will be maintained throughout the study.

Your participation in completing the questionnaire is completely voluntary and you are in no way forced to complete the questionnaire. You have the right to withdraw at any time during the study.

I appreciate the time and effort it would take to participate in this study. I would be very grateful for your participation, as it would enable me to complete my dissertation and degree.

Please complete the section below:

I ………………………………………………………….. (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Participant……………………………….……….

Date………………………………………………………..……..

APPENDIX C:

STAGE 1 FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where do you purchase your clothing? (Discussion Question)

   ____

2. How often do you purchase clothing from the store identified in Question 1? Please indicate with a cross.

More than twice a week	
Twice a week	
Once a week	
Once a fortnight	
Once a month	
Once in 6 months	
Other (Please specify):	

3. Why do you shop at this store? What are your reasons for preferring this particular clothing retailer? (Discussion Question)

   ____

4. What are the factors or attributes which you use when choosing between clothing retailers? Please list them below in order of importance, with 1 being the most important:

   Factor 1: ____

   Factor 2:____

   Factor 3: ____

   Factor 4: ____

   Factor 5:____

5. Why is Factor 1 (in Question 4) the most important to you when choosing a clothing store? (Discussion Question)

   ____

6. Please rate the following attributes in terms of their importance when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

   1 = the factor had <u>NO</u> influence over you; **10**= the factor had a <u>STRONG</u> influence over you

High Quality Merchandise		Easy to find what I'm looking for	
Wide Selection of Merchandise		Speedy checkout lanes	
Style of merchandise		Store is liked by friends	
Reasonable Prices		Friends shop at the same store	
Low Prices		Many brands available in the store	
Uniqueness of Merchandise		Well-known brands in the store	
Flexible Return Policies		Fashionable Merchandise	
Availability of Credit Facilities		Convenient Shopping Hours	
Availability of Delivery		Store ambiance and atmosphere	
Packaging of Merchandise		Time in operation (how long store's been open for)	
Clean Store		Company owning the store is well-	

		known	
Attractive Store Decor		Company operates many stores	
Nice In-store Displays		Post-transaction Satisfaction	
Convenient Store Location		Advertising is Believable	
Easy to travel to store		Many Sales Promotions	
Short travel time to store		Helpful Sales Personnel	
Availability of Parking		Friendly Sales Personnel	
Low Parking Costs		Store Reputation	
Advertising is Informative		High value for money	
Advertising is Appealing		Fully Stocked Store	
Store Layout		Ease of Movement through Store	
Outside Appearance of the Store		Store has the type of clothing I like	
Pleasant Dressing Rooms		Adequate Rest Rooms	

7. Please rate the following attributes in terms of their importance when choosing clothing to purchase? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where:
   1 = the factor had NO influence over you; **10**= the factor had a STRONG influence over you

Good Fit		Durability	
Comfort		Easy Care	
Choice of Styles		Brand Name	
Choice of Colours		Warmness of fabric	
Workmanship		Thickness of Fabric	
Good Price		Quality	
Fabric Softness		Attractiveness	
Trendiness/Fashionableness		Country-of-origin (where the clothing is made)	

8. Please indicate Yes or No with a cross:

	YES	**NO**
1. Is your choice of store affected by how much time you have to shop?		
2. Is your choice of store affected by how much you are buying (large or small quantities)?		
3. Is your choice of store affected by whether you are buying a gift or shopping for yourself?		
4. Is your choice of store affected by the messages used in the stores' advertising?		
5. Do higher prices signify higher quality?		
6. Are you loyal to a specific brand?		
7. Are you loyal to a specific store?		
8. Are you willing to pay more for brand names?		
9. Do you prefer sales/discount prices?		
10. Are you fashion conscious?		
11. Do you enjoy shopping?		

9. What discourages you from purchasing from a particular store? (Discussion Question)

   ____

10. What is your Gender?

Male	Female

11. What is your age? _____________

12. What is your race?

Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Other

13. What year of study are you in?

First	Second	Third	Post-graduate

14. What Degree are you currently studying? ____

Thank you so much for your time and participation! It is greatly appreciated! ☺

APPENDIX D:

STAGE 2 QUESTIONNAIRE

1) When buying clothes, which stores do you shop at MOST OF THE TIME? (*Tick all that apply)*

Mr Price		Young Designers Emporium (YDE)	
Edgars		Woolworths	
Identity		Other (Please specify):	

2) On average, how often do you purchase clothing?

More than twice a week		Fortnightly (once every two weeks)	
Twice a week		Once a month	
Once a week		Once in 6 months	
If other, please specify:			

3) What attributes do you find important when choosing a clothing retailer from which to purchase clothing? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

1=the factor had <u>NO</u> influence over you; 10=the factor had a <u>STRONG</u> influence over you

Convenient Location		**Fashionable Merchandise**	
Low Prices		**Uniqueness of Merchandise**	
Value for Money		**Fully Stocked Store**	
High Quality Merchandise		**Good Store Layout**	
Wide Selection of Merchandise		**Appealing Advertising**	
Store Cleanliness		**Helpful Sales Personnel**	

4) Please indicate your level of agreement with the following sentences:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My choice of clothing store is affected by how much I am buying, in terms of quantity.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
My choice of clothing store is affected by whether I am buying a gift or shopping for myself.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
My choice of store is affected by how much time I have to shop.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
Edgars is the best store for formal clothing.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
Woolworths is the best store for high quality clothing.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
Mr Price is the best store for low prices.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
YDE is too expensive.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
Woolworths is too expensive.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
I do not shop at Mr Price because everyone shops there.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
I enjoy shopping.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
I am willing to pay more for brand names.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
I am fashion conscious.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**
I prefer stores that offer discount prices/sales.	**1**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**10**

5) Rate each clothing store in relation to the selected attributes on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

1 = Very POOR; 3 = Poor; 5 = Average; 7 = Good; 10 = Very GOOD

	Mr Price	Edgars	YDE	Woolworths	Identity
Convenient Location					
Low Prices					
Value for Money					
High Quality Merchandise					
Wide Selection of Merchandise					
Store Cleanliness					
Fashionable Merchandise					
Uniqueness of Merchandise					
Fully Stocked Store					
Good Store Layout					
Appealing Advertising					
Helpful Sales Personnel					

6) Please rate the following attributes in terms of their importance when choosing clothing to purchase? Rate the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10 where:

1=the factor had NO influence over you; 10=the factor had a STRONG influence over you

Good fit		Good Price	
Comfort		Choice of Styles	
Attractiveness		Quality	
Choice of Colours		Other (Please specify):	

7) What degree are you currently studying?

____

8) What is your age? ________________________

9) What is your gender?

Male	Female

10) What is your race?

Black	White	Indian	Coloured	Other

Thank you so much for your time and participation! It is greatly appreciated! ☺

APPENDIX E:
DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS GROUP STATISTICS

Store		Mean	Std. Deviation	Valid N (listwise)	
				Unweighted	Weighted
Mr Price	Convenient Location	7.77	2.214	354	354.000
	Low Prices	8.80	1.795	354	354.000
	Value for Money	6.29	2.402	354	354.000
	High Quality Merchandise	4.91	2.199	354	354.000
	Wide Selection of Merchandise	6.89	2.384	354	354.000
	Store Cleanliness	6.10	2.333	354	354.000
	Fashionable Merchandise	6.99	2.316	354	354.000
	Uniqueness of Merchandise	4.70	2.481	354	354.000
	Fully Stocked Store	7.06	2.277	354	354.000
	Good Store Layout	6.14	2.369	354	354.000
	Appealing Advertising	6.96	2.243	354	354.000
	Helpful Sales Personnel	4.85	2.582	354	354.000
Edgars	Convenient Location	6.92	2.233	350	350.000
	Low Prices	4.91	2.004	350	350.000
	Value for Money	7.09	2.145	350	350.000
	High Quality Merchandise	7.61	2.035	350	350.000
	Wide Selection of Merchandise	7.38	2.000	350	350.000
	Store Cleanliness	8.24	1.842	350	350.000
	Fashionable Merchandise	7.64	1.967	350	350.000
	Uniqueness of Merchandise	6.43	2.025	350	350.000
	Fully Stocked Store	7.57	2.063	350	350.000
	Good Store Layout	7.58	2.111	350	350.000
	Appealing Advertising	7.42	2.293	350	350.000
	Helpful Sales Personnel	6.29	2.470	350	350.000
YDE	Convenient Location	5.64	2.835	332	332.000
	Low Prices	2.95	2.000	332	332.000
	Value for Money	6.24	2.771	332	332.000
	High Quality Merchandise	7.26	2.395	332	332.000
	Wide Selection of Merchandise	6.77	2.291	332	332.000
	Store Cleanliness	8.08	1.972	332	332.000
	Fashionable Merchandise	8.33	2.104	332	332.000
	Uniqueness of Merchandise	8.01	2.132	332	332.000
	Fully Stocked Store	6.87	2.246	332	332.000
	Good Store Layout	7.11	2.296	332	332.000

	Appealing Advertising	5.92	2.696	332	332.000
	Helpful Sales Personnel	5.62	2.476	332	332.000
Woolworths	Convenient Location	7.13	2.341	343	343.000
	Low Prices	4.25	2.184	343	343.000
	Value for Money	7.40	2.479	343	343.000
	High Quality Merchandise	8.38	1.980	343	343.000
	Wide Selection of Merchandise	7.20	2.212	343	343.000
	Store Cleanliness	8.55	1.952	343	343.000
	Fashionable Merchandise	7.06	2.229	343	343.000
	Uniqueness of Merchandise	6.80	2.152	343	343.000
	Fully Stocked Store	7.73	2.167	343	343.000
	Good Store Layout	7.83	2.037	343	343.000
	Appealing Advertising	7.27	2.445	343	343.000
	Helpful Sales Personnel	6.30	2.525	343	343.000
Identity	Convenient Location	7.37	2.133	337	337.000
	Low Prices	5.07	2.138	337	337.000
	Value for Money	6.11	2.285	337	337.000
	High Quality Merchandise	6.65	2.218	337	337.000
	Wide Selection of Merchandise	6.15	2.308	337	337.000
	Store Cleanliness	7.43	2.256	337	337.000
	Fashionable Merchandise	7.30	2.403	337	337.000
	Uniqueness of Merchandise	6.26	2.572	337	337.000
	Fully Stocked Store	6.77	2.191	337	337.000
	Good Store Layout	6.89	2.287	337	337.000
	Appealing Advertising	5.92	2.537	337	337.000
	Helpful Sales Personnel	5.43	2.491	337	337.000
Total	Convenient Location	6.98	2.464	1716	1716.000
	Low Prices	5.23	2.820	1716	1716.000
	Value for Money	6.63	2.474	1716	1716.000
	High Quality Merchandise	6.95	2.467	1716	1716.000
	Wide Selection of Merchandise	6.88	2.279	1716	1716.000
	Store Cleanliness	7.67	2.256	1716	1716.000
	Fashionable Merchandise	7.46	2.259	1716	1716.000
	Uniqueness of Merchandise	6.42	2.516	1716	1716.000
	Fully Stocked Store	7.20	2.220	1716	1716.000
	Good Store Layout	7.11	2.299	1716	1716.000
	Appealing Advertising	6.71	2.526	1716	1716.000
	Helpful Sales Personnel	5.70	2.567	1716	1716.000