

**Inexperienced young adults' assessment of major household
appliances for personal use**

by

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Study leader: Dr Alet C Erasmus (University of Pretoria)

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NOTIFICATION



This research project formed part of a larger research project that was done in the Department of Consumer Science as part of a particular research focus on CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND CONSUMER FACILITATION.

The larger research project was sponsored by **Whirlpool SA** and was led by the study leader, Dr Alet C Erasmus. Three different samples were involved:

- > **Sample A** involved **137 young inexperienced consumers** from **previously disadvantaged backgrounds** with limited product related socialization. They were targeted in the Sunnyside area in Pretoria and were recruited through snowball sampling. Ms Mphatso Kachale led this part of the research project as part of the pre requisites for her Master's degree. The main objective was to describe **INEXPERIENCED YOUNG ADULTS' ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES FOR PERSONAL USE**.
- > **Sample B** involved **124 older, inexperienced consumers** from **previously disadvantaged backgrounds** with limited product related socialization. They were recruited through stratified sampling in Temba, a predominantly black community in the metropolitan of Tshwane. Ms Meriam Makgopa led this part of the research project to fulfil the requirements for her Master's degree. The main objective was to describe **INEXPERIENCED ADULTS' RELIANCE ON EXTRINSIC PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES TO JUDGE THE QUALITY OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES**.
- > **Sample C** involved **385 experienced consumers** who were recruited through snowball sampling in various parts of Pretoria. This sample was used to draw comparative groups to the fore mentioned samples so that the product evaluation of inexperienced and experienced groups could eventually be compared to describe the influence of product related consumer socialization on consumers' product knowledge and product evaluation.

The larger research project was reported titled:

THE PARADOX OF PROGRESS: INEXPERIENCED CONSUMERS' CHOICE OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

Two publications have been prepared and presented to scientific journals:

- > **THE PARADOX OF PROGRESS: INEXPERIENCED CONSUMERS' CHOICE OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES** by Alet C Erasmus, Meriam Makgopa & Mphatso Kachale is under review by the Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences.
- > **INEXPERIENCED CONSUMERS' JUDGMENT OF THE QUALITY OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES** by Alet C Erasmus, Mphatso Kachale & Meriam Makgopa has been accepted for publication in EUROPEAN ADVANCES IN CONSUMER RESEARCH 2005 (VOL 7) and will be reported at the EACR annual conference in Gotenborg, Sweden, in June 2005.



ABSTRACT



Inexperienced young adults' assessment of major household appliances for personal use
by

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The objective with this research project was to contribute to existing theory on product related consumer socialization, more specifically concerning young upcoming consumers in a third world country like the Republic of South Africa. Problems that are experienced by inexperienced consumers were discussed within the context of changing socio political conditions in recent years, which have resulted in the adoption of different lifestyles and spending patterns of previously disadvantaged consumers. During the past decade the living conditions of especially black consumers have improved considerably. Better jobs and higher incomes have resulted in access to home ownership and consequently also the acquisition of expensive, durable commodities such as household appliances to support and reflect their new lifestyles. Unfortunately limited product related exposure and experience might contribute to specific problems that need to be addressed by professionals in Consumer Science in order to contribute to informed, responsible buyer decisions in the market place. The intention was to suggest strategies through which inexperienced consumers could be assisted to cope in a very competitive and materialistic world.

The research was positivistic in nature and was conducted within a quantitative paradigm although qualitative methods were included to verify the content and structure of the questionnaire. The geographic area in which the study was conducted, was conveniently located

near the University of Pretoria. Unfortunately difficult access to potential participants because of security issues made it difficult to recruit participants. Most of the contacts were made during the evenings. Financial constraints were experienced: participants were unwilling to participate without an incentive and the researcher had to make provision for small gifts as a token of appreciation. Time was another limiting factor: data collection had to be done within a limited period because this study formed part of a larger research project that involved other students and different samples. Field workers were trained to assist with the data collection.

The system's theory was used to direct the content and discussions of the study: product related consumer socialization (i.e. appliance ownership and product experience) was thus considered as an *input* that affected consumers' product knowledge and their consequent ability to *transform* product cues in terms of product decisions which would reflect informed, responsible buyer decisions, or the contrary (*outcome*). Findings confirmed participants' limited product related consumer socialization. Limited experience with appliances was evident from limited ownership of most of the appliances over time, except for refrigerators and stoves. Participants' impression of the usefulness of appliances in households was confirmed by their apparent enthusiasm to acquire almost all of the major appliances that were listed in the future. The product knowledge test confirmed participants' limited ability to conclude informed buyer decisions and explicated their unrealistic expectations of the service life of appliances as well as their apparent reliance on surrogate indicators to judge the quality of appliances. When participants were confronted with a product complaint scenario, most of the complaints could be ascribed to incorrect use of appliances and/or ignorance, which supported the notion that these consumers would not be able to conclude responsible buyer decisions.

A concerted effort by retail to provide augmented customer service in the retail environment so that consumers could be facilitated at point of purchase is recommended. It is also proposed that consumers' limited product knowledge and the problems that they have indicated concerning the use of appliances should be addressed to enhance informed and responsible buyer and user behaviour.



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Chapter 1

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY



This chapter presents the motivation for the study. It introduces the research problem as well as important concepts that were used throughout the study.

INTRODUCTION

Limited research on the buyer behaviour of previously disadvantaged black Africans and their efforts to cope in modern materialistic societies initiated this study. Extant research largely reflects on consumer socialization in the United States of America while limited evidence exists about consumer socialization elsewhere, especially in developing countries (James, 1983:2; Rose, 1999:105).

The twenty-first century is characterised by globalism and an open market economy (World Trade Organisation) that enables the distribution of information, products and services all over the globe, regardless of location - provided that access is granted. The South African consumer that forms part of a third world economy is therefore exposed to the same global pressures that are experienced in the so-called first world (Hipkin, 2004:245), which presents major challenges to consumers in RSA (Wang & Chen, 2004:391). It must be remembered that developments in the wider globe (supra system) have an effect on the market forces in the South African economy as a subsystem of the global village (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:331). When, for example, the prices of imported appliances are quoted and calculated, it is done in terms of the cost in American dollars although prices might not necessarily be in relation to local products or local income patterns. In the same manner the price of oil on the international market influences the prices of consumer goods in South Africa.

With the advent of a more democratic government in South Africa, the economy has experienced a gradual increase in the middle-income market (Euromonitor International, 2003:1) and an increase

in the disposable income of many South African consumers, especially those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. Sales figures *inter alia* reveal an increased interest in certain consumer goods and services such as household appliances (LeBlanc, 1998:228; Mindbranch, 2004:1) since a new political dispensation has resulted in major efforts to supply electricity to the country as a whole in an effort to increase standards of living and quality of life (Spalding-Fecher *et al*, 2002:1099). Consumer goods such as electrical appliances and services have thus penetrated into areas that have never had access to it before, which is typical of an open system as explained by Whitchurch and Constantine (1993:333) in their explanation of a systems approach.

The situation in South Africa is further complicated by the fact that the consumer market has been flooded with imported products from different corners of the world (Euromonitor International, 2003:1) because of a decline in international trade barriers across the globe (Lin *et al*, 2000:277). South Africans thus have make their buyer decisions from a large assortment of household appliances (Simonson, 1999:347), which increases the demand on one's cognitive abilities in terms of ability to evaluate and to discriminate product differences (Chernev, 2003:171). A large assortment of products generally complicates consumer decision-making because it contributes to confusion and increases risk perception, which makes it particularly difficult to consider different evaluative criteria (Chernev, 2003:170). The aspirations of young inexperienced adult consumers who are faced with improved opportunities in terms of education and home ownership may thus be in conflict with their real life circumstances mainly because they in all probability have little or no experience to go by. This would be even more significant for certain buyer decisions, for example, when complex durable products such as household appliances are purchased.

It is safe to say that young adult female consumers from previously disadvantaged communities who migrate to urban areas in search of better opportunities (which has been a typical reaction in South Africa after 1994), will find it particularly difficult to conclude informed, responsible buyer decisions. This would be as a result of limited knowledge and experience that was gained through interaction in their communities that had little to offer in terms of potential exposure in affluent communities. Another noteworthy consideration is that new products such as household technology and particularly major household appliances are almost always developed in affluent countries. These new products are thus designed and developed for the socio-economic conditions that prevail in

these countries (James, 1983:v) and exported to developed countries despite the difference in their levels of economic and technological development (Wang & Chen, 2004:391).

Apart from an increased interest in household appliances by previously disadvantaged communities, ownership of imported products is regarded as a status symbol - even in developing countries (Wang & Che, 2004:391). Solomon (2004:463) explains this in terms of the theory of conspicuous consumption that is not confined to the highest LSM segments only. Apparently all consumers from the richest to poorest fall prey to it (Wang & Chen, 2004:393). Socio-economic status and lifestyle segments in the Republic of South Africa scenario are determined inter alia by the possession and ownership of certain durables (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:87). Durables that are used to place consumers into the different segments include household appliances such as stoves, refrigerators and microwave ovens (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:87-91). Currently, ten different living standard measure (LSM) segments are used in the Republic of South Africa, with LSM 10 being the highest and LSM 1, the lowest category. Consumers are further grouped into the different segments depending on their socio-economic similarities based on occupation, possessions and neighbourhood (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:76; 89-90).

Apart from having certain functional attributes, household appliances are thus used as a way of conspicuous consumption to express status in society (Wang & Chen, 2004:392). Williams (2002:249) reports that variations in attitudes, communication style, education and values across the different LSM segments could lead to differences in decision-making style as well as consumer information processing. Consumers in the different LSM groups would thus differ in terms of the importance of certain evaluative criteria such as durability, reliability and brands (Williams, 2002:249). Reports on the buyer behaviour and consumer decision-making that relate to higher socio economic groups and to first world countries can thus not be generalised to indicate the behaviour patterns in third world countries and previously disadvantaged communities although the acquisition of household appliances involves high-involvement decision-making across all segments (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:125-126).

It was thought that an understanding of how young adult female consumers who have undergone limited product related consumer socialization (which results in limited product knowledge and product related experience) evaluate/assess major household appliances for personal use (as an

example of a complex buyer decision), would contribute to efforts to improve consumer facilitation and to provide augmented customer service in the retail environment.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Young urban consumers from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are particularly vulnerable in the market place. On the one hand, high aspirations in terms of lifestyle and an increased exposure to an array of consumer goods and services encourage the acquisition of certain products for personal use. On the other hand, limited product related knowledge and experience create fertile ground for exploitation in the market place because it reduces consumers' ability to negotiate during consumer decision-making and negatively affects the ability to conclude informed, responsible buyer decisions. This is especially relevant when buying complex, durable products such as household appliances. To complicate matters even further, certain products such as household technology change and develop at a rate at which even more experienced consumers, find it difficult to deal with. It would thus be enlightening to know how inexperienced young adults from previously disadvantaged backgrounds who have undergone limited product related consumer socialization would assess household appliances during decision-making for personal use. This would refer to selecting certain types of appliances as well as a consideration of the usefulness of appliances, in other words a selection of appliances that would - in their opinion – best serve their needs. The academic contribution of this research would be in terms of an enhanced understanding of the decision-making behaviour of inexperienced consumers in terms of durable, expensive products. This would also be beneficial in terms of efforts towards consumer facilitation and improvement of customer service in the retail environment that would result in informed, responsible buyer behaviour and ultimately, consumer satisfaction.



Chapter 2

SUPPORTING LITERATURE and CONCEPTUALIZATION



This chapter provides a review of literature that provided the theoretical background for the study. It introduces the main concepts and the conceptual framework and concludes with the objectives for the study.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Literature that would provide the supportive theory for this study include the theory of consumer socialization, product related consumer socialization and the basic theory of consumer decision-making - more specifically the evaluation of household appliances.

CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION AND PRODUCT RELATED CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION

Consumer socialization and product related consumer socialization are important for young adult consumers to enable them to make informed, responsible buyer decisions regarding selection and acquisition of electrical household appliances. Their choice behaviour will depend inter alia on their previous experience, education level and personal expectations. These factors will influence their product evaluation of the functional and performance attributes of the electrical household appliances.

Consumer socialization is defined as the process by which people acquire skills and knowledge relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace (Assael, 1992:712; Hawkins *et al*, 2001:212). Consumer socialization is an on going process and is not confined to childhood. It has two components: consumer socialization directly related to consumption and consumer socialization indirectly related to consumption. Consumer socialization directly related to consumption is concerned with acquisition of skills and knowledge relevant to budgeting, pricing and brand

attitudes, for instance, shared shopping experiences that would give children an opportunity to acquire shopping skills. Consumer socialization indirectly related to consumption is generally internal in kind and deals with the underlying motivations that would, for example, spur someone to seek information and to purchase products even though one has not been exposed to them before. Both types of consumer socialization are significant in terms of the potential contribution to a consumer's eventual knowledge and skills that would enable independent functioning in the marketplace (John, 1999; Rose, 1999; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:346–351; Solomon, 2004:426-427).

When young adults establish their own households, their decision-making behaviour will be based on what they know and are familiar with because anything other than that would probably create tension due to increased risk perception (Fox *et al*, 2000:46; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:19-20; Solomon, 2004:294-296). Although consumer socialization never ceases and young adults still have the opportunity to learn, most consumer learning takes place informally over time, which means that existing knowledge frameworks will be very prominent in consumer decision-making (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:576-578; Solomon, 2004:328-330). This is the effect of product related consumer socialization.

Product related consumer socialization refers to opportunities through out one's life (the young adult female consumer's) that facilitates learning and that increases/allows involvement through which an individual acquires skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to specific products. This would eventually affect one's knowledge and experience regarding product characteristics, consumer behaviour and product use. Product related consumer socialization is further affected by the decision-making strategies implemented in a family/household in terms of how members of the family/household's are involved and participate in decision-making concerning certain products and services (Assael, 1992:467- 470; Du Plessis *et al*, 1994:177; Hawkins *et al*, 2001:212-217). This eventually determines an individual's expectations/anticipations about products as it is based on what is familiar/known.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PRODUCT RELATED CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION

A multitude of factors influence product related consumer socialization. For the purpose of this study, certain prominent influences are discussed.

Family

The family is one of the most important influences in terms of attitude formation and in structuring and conditioning consumer behaviour since the most basic principles of consumer behaviour is learned as a child in the home environment. The family environment is seen as the major context within which children are socialized about consumer behaviour (Carlson *et al*, 1992: 31-40; Carruth & Skinner, 2001:290). Parents function as role models to their children in the process of consumer socialization: they teach their children how to spend, consume and save. Families' buyer behaviour patterns thus affect and even determine consumer socialization (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994:354-355). Consumer learning is closely related to patterns of communication, buying and consumption of the home environment. Parents create direct learning opportunities by interacting with their children about purchase requests, giving them allowances, allowing them to participate in consumer decisions, allowing them to use products and taking them on shopping excursions (John, 1999:183-185).

Young adult consumers continue to be influenced by norms and attitudes that they have developed and which their parents have directly influenced. The financial and social well being as well as management styles and composition of the household inevitably affects a child's exposure to, and involvement in consumer related issues while growing up. Conditions in the household are instrumental in teaching children consumer related knowledge and skills as well as providing opportunities for children to imitate. The possessions in a household, for example ownership or non-ownership of household appliances will thus contribute to, or inhibit a child's learning experience (Solomon, 1994:404-405; Hawkins *et al*, 2001:212-217). Mothers' co-shopping with their children also contributes to children's consumer socialization. Mothers may for example allow children to decide what to buy or grant child-initiated requests for certain products (Carruth & Skinner, 2001:290). Mothers' materialistic tendencies, shopping preferences and consumption motivations influence their offspring's consumer socialization. Mothers generally also control

children's money. It is thus assumed that mothers play a primary role in the consumer socialization as well as the product related consumer socialization of their children because they, to a great extent control or allow product exposure and experience in the home (Carlson *et al*, 1994:24-26).

Advertising and media

An important means by which children learn consumption-related behaviour and attitudes is through exposure to media such as television, magazines and newspapers whereby a child witnesses certain consumption related aspects that is not necessarily directly accessible or available at home. Access to media and literature will contribute to a child's potential to have an increased knowledge about products (Hawkins *et al*, 2001:215; North & Kotze, 2001: 91-95). Television viewing is said to lead to the acquisition of a wide variety of consumer orientations such as development of materialistic values, social motivations for consumption (acquisition of major household appliances is considered conspicuous consumption) and consumer affairs knowledge (Kamaruddin & Mokhlis, 2003:147). Amount of television viewing thus affects social motivations for consumption and materialism (Flouri, 1999:709). It has been reported that an eagerness on the part of adolescents to undertake the active role as consumers is demonstrated by increased participation in the purchasing of a variety of consumer products (Kamaruddin & Mokhlis, 2003:146). Acquisition of major household appliances would be an example of these consumer products.

Geographic location

Changing environmental circumstances in the life of a young adult might contribute to a need for certain commodities such as major household appliances for their new home (Loudon & Della Bitta, 1993:559-560). An individual who has moved out of the family system, would want to conform to his/her new status as an independent consumer when in a more affluent environment such as a city with increased exposure to alternative lifestyles and access to a variety of stores. The need to identify with new reference groups will further influence and determine a consumer's consumption patterns (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:112, 201, 372 –373; Goodwin & Sewall, 1992: 32; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:329, 334 – 338; Solomon, 2004:366 –374).

Education level

Education affects our standard of living and our acquisition of consumer goods such as major household appliances (Solomon, 2004:441). Higher education levels generally lead to higher incomes

that increase discretionary income and consequently one's buying power (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:380). An individual with a higher education level will thus probably be able to afford major household appliances for his/her home. In South Africa in recent years, the education level of especially the black population has increased considerably as a result of improved education opportunities and therefore this particular consumer group may be considered a viable target market for the acquisition of major household appliances.

Income/financial status

Income influences consumption in the sense that it affects discretionary income (thus affordability and purchasing power) as well as financial status. Limited income in the homes of previously disadvantaged consumers affect ownership and exposure to products and more so, of expensive durables such as household appliances. The consequent acquisition of consumer goods when one's situation improves and financial ability increases, often reflects a need to follow a different lifestyle, expressing one's ability to purchase certain goods that conform to what is used by your peers (Solomon, 2004:451). Higher income is associated with higher status (Hawkins *et al*, 2001:486, 487) while income is also used to forecast expenditures (Solomon, 2004:451)

Lifestyle

Lifestyle is determined by demographics, subculture, social class, motives, personality, emotions, values, household life cycle, culture and past experiences, which in turn affect how we live. Lifestyle *inter alia* refers to activities, interests, likes/dislikes, attitudes, consumption, expectations and feelings (Hawkins *et al*, 2001:436, 509). Lifestyle affects consumers' purchase motivations and consumers' consumption patterns (Fournier *et al*, 1992:330; Solomon, 2004:198) consequently also the purchase intentions for major household appliances. This would probably be even more significant for consumers from previously disadvantaged communities who move to urban areas and then move into apartments with electricity that allows for a different lifestyle.

THE EFFECT OF PRODUCT RELATED CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION ON CONSUMERS' DECISION-MAKING BEHAVIOUR

Although consumer socialization and product related consumer socialization never cease and young adults still have the opportunity to learn later in life, consumer learning generally takes place

informally over time. In the case of a young adult who comes from a disadvantaged background, existing knowledge frameworks that are based on limited product related exposure and experience in certain product categories, will be very prominent during consumer decision-making (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:576-578; Solomon, 2004:328-330) in terms of limiting or facilitating responsible buyer decisions. When young adults thus set up their own households, their consumer decision-making behaviour will be determined by they know and are familiar with. Any stimulus other than that would probably create tension due to increased risk perception (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:19-20; Solomon, 2004:294-296).

ASSESSMENT OF THE VALUE/USEFULNESS OF APPLIANCES IN A HOUSEHOLD

The potential value/usefulness of appliances in a household

Functional value

The functional value of appliances in terms of faster accomplishments of tasks, labour saving properties as well as maintaining higher standards (greater efficiency) of effectiveness may be important considerations for the acquisition and use of household appliances (Collins, 1987:9; Ehrenkranz & Inmann, 1973; Elias, 1987:7; Hittman, 1987:3). The functional value of appliances represents the rational deliberation of alternatives in terms of performance characteristics, affordability and durability. Oropesa (1993:569) observed that time constraints motivate the acquisition of household appliances that would help the household to enhance its production. This would be more likely in dual income households considering the added income of working women. It might thus be considered important for a household to acquire household appliances that would help it to maximise its resources, both human and non-human (Oropesa, 1993:568-569).

Improvement of quality of life

Acquisition of appliances in the home may be intentional to improve quality of life of the household members (Collins, 1987:10; Elias, 1987:6). Household appliances may do so by alleviating time constraints that working women (or any other members of the household) face when they still have to deal with household chores after a long busy day away from home (Oropesa, 1993:567). Appliances may thus be used to simplify workloads (Elias, 1987:7) and may even come to the mercy of individuals who experience physical discomfort while doing the tasks by hand (Collins, 1987:10;

Elias, 1987; Oropesa, 1993:568). Here, the functional value as well as the emotional consequences of a purchase will be regarded relevant.

Indication of social status

Possession of household appliances may alternatively also be positional by being used intentionally to “position” a household in terms of social strata (Abdel-Ghany *et al*, 2002:2). Schiffman and Kanuk (2004:372) explain this as a form of conspicuous consumption, which implies the intentional use of possessions as an extension of the “self” to impress others. This particularly occurs when the financial status of an individual or household improves and they consequently wish to convey this message to others to make themselves more acceptable in certain social circles. In this instance less tangible features such as brand name may be used to identify a product of choice. In dual income households, appliances are often used as a resource to save time and energy while simultaneously contributing to the image of the home and its owners (Oropesa, 1993:568-569; Toivonen, 1994:321). In South Africa, because of socio political changes in the past decade, more of the previously disadvantaged consumers have had the opportunity to buy their own homes and to get better jobs and earn better salaries and therefore the acquisition of household appliances to reflect improved social status could also be applied to this market group.

CONSUMERS’ ASSESSMENT OF HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES WITHIN A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Major household appliances refer to all cooling, cooking, baking and laundry appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, washing machines and dishwashers that are popularly known as white goods. These are the more expensive household appliances used in kitchens and laundries and are generally considered long-term purchases due to their expected service life (Cox *et al*, 1983:395). Consumers’ choice of household appliances will be discussed in terms of a system’s approach to indicate how stimuli are transformed in terms of outputs/product decisions (see Figure 2.1).

Inputs

Within a systems approach, the inputs of the system represent factors that “guide” the interpretation of a product decision. For this research an individual’s product knowledge (schemata in memory) gained through exposure to appliances and involvement with appliances over time during product

related consumer socialization, represented the inputs of the system. Product exposure *inter alia* refers to **ownership** of appliances and consequent **experience** with major household appliances developing a familiarity with certain major household appliances, which could imply direct contact with major household appliances (Engel *et al*, 1990:365). Exposure could however also be indirect in the sense that an individual not necessarily uses the appliances personally but has seen others using them, e.g. in a work environment. **Product involvement** refers to personal, first hand experience with major household appliances through personal use and participation in the acquisition and use of major household appliances over time. This involvement contributes to a learning process that eventually determines the perceived relevance of product features during the evaluation of product characteristics and this involvement could be indicated on a continuum of low to high (Engel *et al*, 1990:258; Solomon, 2004:128, 131).

Transformation

Cognitive activity during the transformation process

The transformation process is considered an overruling internal process whereby external stimuli are translated in memory into information that makes sense to the individual/ consumer (Thang & Tan, 2003:194). Existing knowledge, however imperfect and incomplete is thus used to assess a situation (Shiffman & Kanuk, 2000:445). An individual's existing product knowledge inevitably involves cognitive activity. This necessitates acknowledgement of the basic assumptions of the cognitive perspective as a theoretical perspective during the transformation of product knowledge during product evaluation. Cognitive activity is thus recognised during the transformation of actual stimuli/product characteristics within existing schemata in memory (familiar knowledge structures), into outputs (anticipated product characteristics) (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004: 520 – 523; Solomon, 2004: 306 – 308). A consumer's knowledge of product features refers to the presence or absence of relevant schemata in memory that will provide the means to acknowledge/recognize/assess and deduce (transform) actual product characteristics in terms of anticipated product characteristics (i.e. product characteristics that make sense to the individual) that will affect buyer decisions and might result in responsible buyer decisions, or the contrary. Existing product knowledge (acquired during the childhood) will determine/guide the transformation of actual product characteristics (i.e. characteristics of an entire range of products that are offered in the market place) (Hornby, 2000:14) during a young adult's evaluation of major household appliances in terms of anticipated product characteristics (developed through product related consumer socialization). The cognitive

perspective further hypothesizes that consumers prefer constancy in their evaluation and interpretation of situations: if one characteristic (e.g. brand name) changes, this would probably affect other characteristics (e.g. guarantee). Previous experiences gained through product related consumer socialization (in memory) will determine the over all evaluation of the appliance as positive/negative. In terms of the systems approach, the collective contribution of several product characteristics will determine the outcome of the decision (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003: 254 –257, 263; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004: 226 – 239, 331, 333; Solomon, 2004:65; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:325).

During the transformation of stimuli, a young adult may follow different routes to conclude a decision, which assumes equifinality (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:334): the young adult consumer could for example ask for information about the existence and availability of various types of major household appliances and services offered or she could gather useful information to assist with the assessment of alternatives. In the latter case, the individual could look for information e.g. on how many programmes the appliance (washing machine, for example) has, apart from many other attributes. This external search, however, depends on a consumer's knowledge and experience as well as previous involvement, potential costs in terms of commitment to time, frustrations involved as well as actual monetary expenditures, among other factors (Hawkins *et al*, 1995:201-203; Loudon & Della Bitta, 1993:507-508). Much effort that goes into a purchase decision occurs at this stage where the young adult will have to weigh the consequences of different decisions considering all the available alternatives (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004: 559 – 568; Solomon, 2004:308 -310).

A consumer may also apply different decision rules during product evaluation (the principle of equifinality) (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:334). The young adult consumer could either apply compensatory decision rules or non-compensatory decision rules. Compensatory process will allow perceived favourable brand evaluative criteria to counterbalance unfavourable evaluations. Being a complex decision, the young adult consumer is likely to use these compensatory rules since it will allow her to consider each alternative's good and bad points more carefully to arrive at the overall best choice. This is another element of equifinality (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:334). Non-compensatory decision rules are used when good performance on one evaluative criterion does not make up for poor performance on another evaluative criterion of the brand (Loudon & Della Bitta, 1993:522 - 523; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:563 – 565; Solomon, 2004:319 - 321).

Assessment of appliances for personal use

In terms of the assessment of appliances during the transformation process, a multitude of product characteristics could influence the buyer decision, such as perceived usefulness of appliances, aesthetics, social and psychological indicators. In terms of a decision that would represent a rational, informed choice that is based on product knowledge that relate to performance attributes, however, functional, durability and financial indicators would be considered highly relevant.

Functional characteristics Functional characteristics relate to the perceived usefulness of appliances and performance factors, i.e. the ability of an appliance to perform as expected. This would inter alia include characteristics such as the washing cycles of a washing machine and the heat production of a tumble dryer. The guarantee could also serve as an indicator of functionality (Hornby, 2000:547; Peet *et al*, 1975:17). This could further include ergonomic factors such as the depth of a top loader washing machine and the noise levels produced by an appliance.

Durability characteristics Durability characteristics refer to quality indicators that would have bearing on an appliance's potential service life, i.e. the time that an appliance will be functional until replacement or at least be in an acceptable condition in terms of appearance (Hornby, 2000:773, 1215; Peet *et al*, 1975:8). This would include knowledge about the materials used for the drum of a washing machine, the strength of the electrical motor, etcetera and durability of finishes such as external materials and strength of control dials.

Financial characteristics Financial characteristics refer to the financial consequences of the purchase, i.e. the relative cost and affordability of an appliance in the short and long-term (Peet *et al*, 1975:10). This would thus refer to existing and realistic price categories for appliances including running and maintenance costs (Hornby, 2000:497).

Outputs

Anticipated characteristics refer to an individual's assessment of product characteristics in terms of whatever is expected/ assumed/ familiar within one's frame of reference. Anticipated product characteristics in terms of a product decision represent the output of assessment of appliances (the system) and may thus be unrealistic, idealistic or limited, depending on the individual's knowledge

and experience and involvement. The product decision may reflect an informed, responsible product decision (or the contrary). Responsible choice behaviour illustrates that the consumer realizes the consequences of the decision, i.e. a final product decision that reflects a consideration of the consequences of the consumer decision. This would for example demonstrate some form of maturity/responsibility with respect to price, quality indicators (Assael, 1992:711; Hornby, 2000:1134; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004:13-15, 41, 223; Solomon, 2004:348-352).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

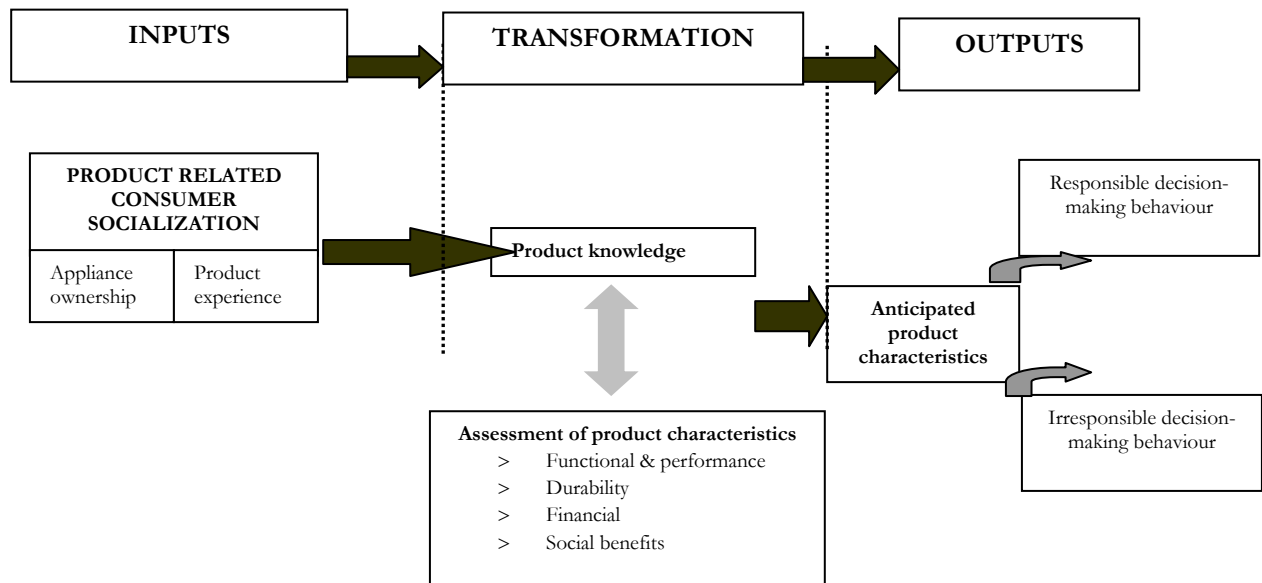


FIGURE 2.1: A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO THE ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES FOR PERSONAL USE

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND SUB OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to determine how young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds who have consequently undergone limited product related consumer socialization, assess major household appliances for personal use. The intention was to describe their present and anticipated ownership of appliances as an indication of perceived importance/usefulness of appliances as well as their knowledge of certain basic product attributes and service life expectations to infer their ability to assess appliances and to conclude responsible buyer decisions.

Several sub objectives have been formulated:

1. To determine participants' *extent of product related consumer socialization* based on
 - *experience with* electricity in their households over time
 - *ownership* of a range of appliances over time
2. To determine participants' *assessment of the usefulness of major appliances* through
 - an indication of *present ownership* figures
 - their indication of their *intention to purchase* certain appliances in the future
3. To determine participants' *knowledge of product attributes* as an indication of their consequent potential to conclude responsible buyer decisions
4. To determine *the type of problems experienced* by participants during their use of appliances to come to some conclusion of whether problems may be attributed to an inability to assess relevant product attributes.
5. To identify *shortcomings in consumers' assessment and use of appliances* that could be attended to by retail as well as professionals in Consumer Science that would enhance informed, responsible buyer decisions

**all refer to young adults from previously disadvantaged communities who have since migrated to urban areas*



Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



This chapter describes the research approach in terms of the research methodology that was used and the data collection procedures

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research style

The research approach was positivistic in its nature (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:22-28) and was designed within the quantitative paradigm (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:47-49). Participants were identified from the world of everyday life and lay knowledge (scientifically referred to as world one) (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:5-7).

Sample and sampling

The unit of analysis was young adults who reside in the Sunnyside area of Pretoria. Sunnyside is a high-density residential area that is within reach of various retail outlets that sell household appliances. It is characterised by relatively affordable housing (high rise apartments) where many young people, especially those from previously disadvantaged communities, have flocked to recent years. It was thus decided to target this area to recruit younger individuals from previously disadvantaged communities for participation in the research project (Assael, 1992:477, Hornby, 2000:1567). It was decided to include young adults who were students at tertiary (any post-secondary) institutions or those who have secured jobs and were staying on their own or sharing apartments with peers (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:84; 164 - 194).

After discussions with the statistician, it was decided to recruit a minimum of 100 individuals for participation (Mouton, 2002:110,112). Difficult access and safety issues necessitated the use of convenient sampling. At the outset, participants were recruited from a church community in

Sunnyside (Cornerstone Assembly of God) that is within a reasonable distance from campus where the researcher is based and because the researcher had access to this group. The researcher is a Malawi resident and because of her inability to speak any of the African languages, four assistants (fellow post graduate students) who were fluent in the African languages were trained to assist with the recruitment of participants. It was emphasized that participants had to fit the profile in terms of the age group and it was further required for them to have had limited experience and limited exposure to appliances in their homes during childhood years. It was assumed that these individuals would, because of their present living conditions probably have elevated aspirations in terms of possessions for their future homes. Snowball sampling was applied to gain access to potentially suitable candidates: 137 individuals eventually participated.

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected in two phases. A projective technique was used as an initial phase with 20 participants to ensure that the wording and content of the questionnaire were relevant. Having analysed the responses to the projective technique, the questionnaire was finalized.

Phase 1: Projective technique

Participants were requested to describe in written format exactly how they would go about to select appliances given a specific scenario. The wording of the task that they had to complete in written format, in their own time, read as follows (see Appendix A):

*“Imagine that your friend wants you to assist her to select household appliances because she has been informed that she has won a competition that allows her to spend R15 000 on any major household appliances from any of the stores in a specific shopping complex. Identify the appliances that you would recommend to her and describe the chosen appliances in as much detail as possible. Also identify the store/s where you would go. **Explain your recommendations”.***

This technique provided an opportunity to enter into their private worlds of participant to uncover their inner perspectives in a non-threatening manner (Donoghue, 2000:47). This technique also provided an opportunity to check the theoretical content of the questionnaire and to allow for inclusion or change of constructs if necessary (Fern, 1982:18). The completed tasks were collected later the same day, or the following morning.

Phase 2: Questionnaire

A questionnaire provided a systematic and structured way to obtain information that would be easily quantifiable and accurate (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:74-75). The questionnaire was only finalized after interpretation of the content of the projective technique.

The questionnaire consisted of seven sections:

- Section A: Demographic data
- Section B: Experience with appliances
- Section C: Evaluation of appliances
- Section D: Service life of appliances
- Section E: Product characteristics
- Section F: Open ended questions on consumer complaint behaviour
- Section G: Buyer behaviour.

The initial questionnaire was assessed by two specialists in the field of study for the purpose of clarification (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:244-245; Rose, 1999:110). They checked the wording, content and use of concepts. A professional statistician was involved to ensure that the content of the questionnaire reflected the objectives of the study and favoured the statistical analysis regarded most suitable and relevant (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:124-125). Suggestions and amendments were incorporated where necessary and the questionnaires were then handed to ten young adult female consumers as a pre test. The intention with this exercise was to attend to ease of completion and the clarity of wording and concepts. It was consequently decided that it would be preferable for the questionnaires to be completed under supervision in an interview format to assist inexperienced consumers to fill in the details correctly.

Having considered their reaction to the task in terms of time required for completion, understandability and ease of completion of the questionnaires, the final version was distributed to willing participants to complete under the supervision of the researcher or a well-trained assistant (Mouton, 2002:156, 157). Confidentiality was promised in the sense that names, addresses and

telephone details of participants were not required. It was also promised that personal information would not be disclosed for any reason.

DATA ANALYSIS

Phase 1: Projective technique

The content of the projective technique was analysed to identify constructs of importance and to verify the content of the questionnaire. Participants' reactions were used to adapt wording and concepts to include concepts used in everyday language to prevent confusion. Data was typed and then coded according to the pre determined data definitions that were assembled through a thorough literature review (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:583), for example to identify all concepts that refer to aesthetics or status or functionality (see Appendix B).

Phase 2: Questionnaire

In terms of the questionnaire, statistical analysis was used to include descriptive statistics and correlations. Means and modes were calculated to help explain the tendencies of given variables of the data that will be collected (e.g. in the case of service life expectancy and years of experience) (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:421 - 425).

QUALITY OF THE STUDY

The quality of the study was attended to through the elimination of potential error in the following ways:

Before finalizing the structured questionnaire, a projective technique was employed to verify the wording, concepts and the questions that were to be included in the questionnaire and to confirm the broad categories of concepts of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 275-276, 277; Mouton, 2002:156, 157; Neuman, 2003:137-138, 167).

In the questionnaire, multiple questions were included on specific aspects to ensure validity of the data. For instance, participants were required to fill in data on ownership of appliances and later on, they had to indicate experience with the service life of appliances that had been replaced. This served as a cross check for truthful responses with reference to the previous questions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:276-278).

Two specialists in the study field assessed the questionnaire to ensure that the content covered the scope of the problem. The questionnaire was thereafter pre tested by a small number of participants to identify potential problems that might be encountered during the final phase, such as clarity of constructs, time needed to complete the task (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:244 - 245; Neuman, 2003:243-244, 247, 261; Rose, 1999:110).

The questionnaires were completed under supervision (but without assistance) in an interview format to ensure that questionnaires were completed correctly.

The assistance of a professional statistician was used with the compilation of the final questionnaire, data analysis and interpretation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:124-125).



Chapter 4

RESULTS



This chapter presents the data that was collected during the data collection stages in the order required to address the study objectives; the operationalization as well as a brief discussion of what seems evident from the individual tables and figures

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The initial intention was to recruit young, single females between the ages of 25 and 35 years for participation who lived on their own or with peers in the Sunnyside area of Pretoria. Females were targeted initially because it was assumed that inexperienced consumers would stereotype household appliances as products of relevance to women rather than men (Bakewll & Mitchell, 2003:95, 98). A pre requisite for participation was limited experience with electricity and limited ownership of major household appliances in their households during their lives, especially prior to moving to the city (the norm used for participation was a maximum experience of half of their age in years). The assumption was made that limited access to, and experience with electricity would result in limited ownership of major appliances over time and consequently limited personal experience and involvement with appliances. When households were approached, however, a few men showed interest and requested to participate, hence the inclusion of 19 men. For the same reason the questionnaires of the twelve participants (all female) who were slightly older, single and confirmed limited experience with electricity and appliances during childhood years, were not discarded (see Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1).

TABLE 4.1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

	Age				Gender	
	25-35	36-40	46-55	56+	Male	Female
(n=137)	125	12	0	0	19	118

FIGURE 4.1: AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS ($n=137$)

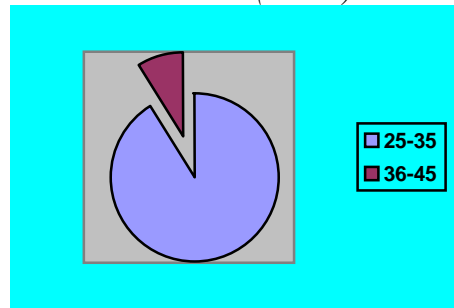
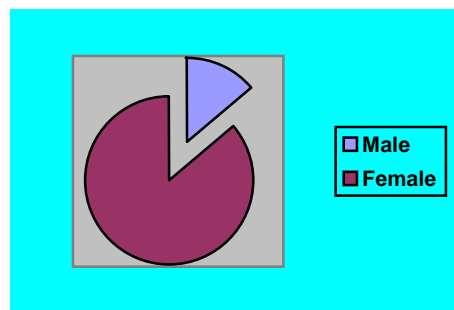


FIGURE 4.2: GENDER OF THE PARTICIPANTS ($n=137$)



EXTENT OF PRODUCT RELATED CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION (Objective 1)

Extent of product related consumer socialization was determined in terms of various indicators, namely

- prior experience with electricity in their own homes (as an indication of opportunity to acquire electrical household appliances and knowledge of the use of electricity)
- ownership of major household appliances in their household at the time of the study
- experience with appliances through use of appliances in their own homes over time.

Prior experience with electricity (Objective 1.1)

Participants’ experience with electricity as a household commodity is reflected in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.3.

TABLE 4.2: PARTICIPANTS’ PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH ELECTRICITY IN THE HOME

Years of experience with electricity (n=137)		
5 or less	6 to 10	11 to 15
24	22	91
17.6%	16.1%	66.3%

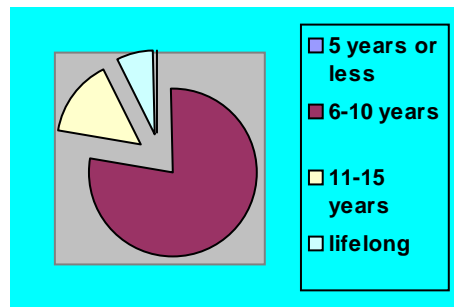


FIGURE 4.3: PARTICIPANTS’ PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH ELECTRICITY IN THE HOME

In terms of the research project as a whole, it was decided to operationalize participants’ years of experience with electricity as follows:

TABLE 4.3: OPERATIONALIZATION OF PARTICIPANTS’ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH ELECTRICITY

Experience interpretation	Portion of sample	Prior experience with electricity
Good	75% and more	More than 10 years
Above average	50% and more	More than 10 years
Below average	50% and more	10 years or less
Limited	50% and more	5 years or less

Experience figures in terms of exposure to electricity in their households, when interpreted thus indicated that the largest percentage of the sample had had *above average experience with electricity* as a commodity in their households at the time of the study. Exposure to electricity unfortunately not necessarily encompasses experience with household appliances (financial status and affordability would for example be an important determinant) and consequently product related experience.

Actual ownership of appliances in their households during their lives, were therefore used as a further consideration.

Ownership of – and experience with major household appliances (Objective 1.2; 2)

Experience with appliances Participants’ experience was determined through the indication of ownership of a selected range of appliances at the time of the study, as well as previous ownership to determine participants’ experience with a range of appliances over time.

Present ownership

Present ownership of appliances and anticipated acquisitions were used as an indication of participants’ assessment of the usefulness of appliances (for whatever reason) in their households over time assuming that the appliances acquired first, would be considered a greater priority or more useful than those purchases later on. Participants also had the opportunity to indicate which appliances they would not be interested in for the future (see Table 4.4). Reasons for preferences (for example functional characteristics, social factors and individual preferences) were not required because of the already lengthy questionnaire.

TABLE 4.4: PRESENT OWNERSHIP FIGURES

Appliance	n	Current ownership	Previous ownership	Have never owned one	Not interested	Would like to have
Refrigerator	137	94.9	1.5	0.7	0.7	2.2
Separate freezer	130	24.6	15.4	14.6	10.8	34.6
Stoves (all types)	134	97.5				
Integrated stove	137	88.3	1.5	5.1	0.7	4.4
Separate oven & hob	131	9.2	4.6	29.0	40.5	16.8
Cooker hood	128	6.2	1.6	38.3	14.1	39.8
Washing machines (all types)	132	69.3				
Washer: top loader	133	37.6	2.3	22.6	11.3	26.3
Washer: front loader	129	22.5	2.3	24.8	37.2	13.3
Washer: twin tub	131	9.2	7.6	21.4	48.1	13.7
Dishwasher	132	6.1	0.8	17.4	17.4	58.3
Tumble dryer	133	38.9	2.3	13.7	13.0	32.1
Microwave oven	133	81.2	2.3	3.8	1.5	11.3
Vacuum cleaner	135	59.3	5.9	9.6	1.5	23.7

It was decided to operationalize ownership data as follows to put experience on a continuum from very low to very high. The same norm was used for the larger research project:

TABLE 4.5: OPERATIONALIZATION OF PRESENT OWNERSHIP FIGURES

Ownership figures for the sample	Ownership interpretation	
Figures of 85% and above	Very high	6
Figures between 71% and 85%	High	5
Figures between 56 and 70%	Above average	4
Figures between 45 and 55%	Average	3
Figures between 25 and 44%	Below average	2
Figures between 11 and 24%	Low	1
Figures of 10% and lower	Very low	0

The figures for present ownership were used to get some notion of participants' assessment of the desirability/usefulness of appliances in households, assuming that they would purchase them in order of priority/perceived usefulness when the opportunity came by. For the range of appliances listed, using the numeric ownership interpretation, present ownership was eventually calculated as below average: [(refrigerators) 6+ (freezers) 2+ (stoves, all types) 6+ (washing machines, all types) 4+ (dishwashers) 0+ (tumble dryers) 2+ (microwave oven) 5+ (vacuum cleaner) 4 = 25; 25/9=2.8].

Of the nine different types of appliances listed:

- only two were owned by more than 80% of participants (refrigerators, stoves);
- four were owned by less than 50% of the sample (separate freezer; cooker hood; dishwasher and tumble dryer);
- four of the listed appliances were owned by less than 20% of the participants (separate oven and hob; cooker hood, twin tub washing machine and dishwasher) (See Table 4.4).

TABLE 4.6: APPLIANCES PRESENTLY OWNED BY MORE THAN 50% OF SAMPLE

Appliance	%
Stoves (all types)	97.5
Refrigerator	94.9
Microwave oven	81.2
Washing machines (all types)	69.3
Vacuum cleaner	59.3

In terms of individual appliances owned by the majority of the participants, present ownership figures revealed stoves and refrigerators to be on top of the list, followed by microwave ovens, washing machine and vacuum cleaners (see Table 4.4). Ownership of the other appliances was *below average* to *very low*, probably because of financial constraints. The only appliances presently owned by a *very high* percentage of the participants, were refrigerators and stoves (of which the integrated type seems more popular). This is understandable considering that these two appliances are generally

regarded a high priority in any household and are used on a daily basis. In both cases the percentage of participants that indicated *no interest* in these two appliances was almost negligible.

Prior and anticipated ownership of appliances

When participants had to indicate whether they had owned any of the appliances before (thus including and allowing for replacement purchases), responses revealed that for 11 of the 12 appliances listed, and following the same as in Table 4.5, a *very low* percentage have indeed had prior experience with appliances. This confirms limited experience with major household appliances over time (limited product related socialization) and consequently limited experience with the range of major appliances on the market. One has to take into consideration that limited ownership and experience would negatively influence consumers' expectations regarding the performance of appliances (unrealistic expectations) as well as the attributes that need to be considered during evaluation of alternatives (Santos & Boote, 2003:145; Simonson, 1999:347).

Stoves Assuming that a household would very seldom possess more than one stove, the figures for the various types of stoves (integrated and separate units) (present ownership) were totaled (see Table 4.4 Stoves, all types; Washing machines, all types). This revealed a *very high* ownership of stoves for the sample and a higher ownership of integrated stoves. Almost 40% indicated no desire to have separate ovens and hobs in their households.

Microwave oven Interestingly a high percentage of participants indicated ownership of microwave ovens and those who apparently did not own them, indicated a desire to acquire microwave ovens. A *very low* percentage of the sample was not interested in ever having one. Oropesa (1993:567) reports that consumers have gone through major socio-economic changes during recent years in terms of the participation of women in the formal market economy which has increased household incomes on the one hand, but has also increased time pressure to the extent that modern working women find it difficult to cope with household chores. No wonder then that household appliances are purchased increasingly to alleviate work and time pressure. Microwave ovens that have initially been described as *luxury appliances* are now considered *essential* in modern kitchens and are evaluated as such.

Present economic conditions of a strengthening rand against the US dollar, increased job opportunities for previously disadvantaged South Africans, improved education and the opportunity of home ownership are all conducive to the purchase of household appliances, especially those that are considered particularly useful in terms of time and energy saving. In addition, microwave ovens have become more affordable over time as more models have become available in the market.

Vacuum cleaners An *above average* percentage owned vacuum cleaners, which presents another product category that is considered essential if a house is fitted with carpets that cannot be maintained in any other way. Although the percentage for *would like to have one*, was low, the totals for *present ownership* and *would like to have one*, is *high*, which indicates that vacuum cleaners are also considered important/useful acquisitions. A *very low* percentage (less than 2%) was *not interested* in ever owning a vacuum cleaner.

Washing machines Assuming that a household would very seldom have more than one washing machine, the figures for the various types of washing machines (present ownership) were totaled. This revealed an *above average to high* ownership of washing machines and a higher ownership of top loaders, confirmed by a higher ownership as well as a higher percentage indicating that they would like to have a top loader rather than a front loader or twin tub type. In fact, present ownership of twin tub machines was *very low* and a *low* percentage indicated a desire to acquire this type of washing machine. From the data, top loaders thus seem to be preferred and twin tub machines the least preferred. Preference for top and front loaders could also be ascribed to a preference for modern technology as twin tub machines were described as *old fashioned/out dated* during focus group discussions

Tumble dryers and dishwashers Tumble dryers were owned by a *below average* percentage of participants while a *very low* percentage owned dishwashers. An *above average* percentage indicated a desire to purchase dishwashers in the future, while a *below average* percentage did so for tumble dryers. Dishwashers thus seem to be considered more desirable/advantageous/sought-after than tumble dryers.

Not interested in ownership

The calculations were repeated for the *not interested* figures. Confirming the former, stoves and refrigerators seemed to be equally desirable because a negligible percentage indicated that they were *not interested* in ever owning them. The same could be said about microwave ovens and vacuum cleaners although slightly more were not interested in them, the percentages were insignificant. A high interest in the possession of major household appliances was revealed through an indication that a *high to very high* percentage of participants in general eventually desired ownership of the whole list of appliances. Judging by the percentages, their assessment of appliances in order of priority seemed to be stoves and refrigerators; followed by microwave ovens and vacuum cleaners; separate freezers; washing machines; tumble dryers; cooker hoods and lastly, dishwashers.

TABLE 4.7: PARTICIPANTS NOT INTERESTED IN EVER OWNING CERTAIN APPLIANCES

Appliance	Not interested %
Stoves (all types)	0.7
Refrigerator	0.7
Microwave oven	1.5
Vacuum cleaner	1.5
Separate freezer	10.8
Washing machines (all types)	11.0
Tumble dryer	13.0
Cooker hood	14.1
Dishwasher	17.4

Ownership of appliances over time

Years of ownership of specific appliances over time were tabled (see Table 4.8). It was assumed that extensive ownership of appliances in terms of *time* as well as *variety* of appliances would result in increased experience.

TABLE 4.8: OWNERSHIP OF APPLIANCES OVER TIME

Appliances	Ownership over time (n=137) (indicated in %)				
	None	Max 3 years	4-5 years	6-10 years	More than 10 years
Refrigerator	2.2	9.6	11.8	36.0	40.4
Separate freezer	60.3	3.1	15.3	10.7	10.7
Stove: freestanding	12.5	8.1	14.0	25.7	39.7
Oven & hob separate	83.1	3.1	4.6	5.4	3.9
Cooker hood	93.9	0	3.1	3.1	0
Washer: top loader	54.6	12.3	23.1	5.4	4.6
Washer: front loader	67.9	5.3	20.0	4.6	2.3
Washer: twin tub	80.5	7.5	6.8	4.5	0.8
Dishwasher	89.3	6.9	2.3	0.8	0.8
Tumble dryer	55.3	6.1	29.6	6.1	3.0
Microwave oven	15.9	22.0	39.4	18.9	3.8
Vacuum cleaner	32.6	9.9	21.2	24.2	12.1

Ownership of individual appliances over time was operationalized as follows:

TABLE 4.9: OPERATIONALIZATION OF OWNERSHIP OF INDIVIDUAL APPLIANCES

Interpretation	% of sample	Period of ownership by the sample
Good	more than 50%	Owned a particular appliance for more than 10 years
Above average	More than 50%	Owned a particular appliance between 6 and 10 years
Average	More than 50%	Owned a particular appliance between 4 and 10 years
Limited	More than 50%	Owned a particular appliance less than 5 years
Very limited	More than 50%	Owned a particular appliance for 3 years or less

Ownership of individual appliances as an indication of participants' experience with individual appliances over time was consequently interpreted as follows:

TABLE 4.10: INTERPRETATION OF EXPERIENCE WITH INDIVIDUAL APPLIANCES OVER TIME

Appliance	Interpretation of ownership over time
Refrigerator	Above average
Separate freezer	Very limited
Stove: freestanding	Above average
Oven & hob separate	Very limited
Cooker hood	Very limited
Washer: top loader	Very limited
Washer: front loader	Very limited
Washer: twin tub	Very limited
Dishwasher	Very limited
Tumble dryer	Very limited
Microwave oven	Average
Vacuum cleaner	Average

Participants' ownership with appliances over time, was

- *above average*, only for stoves and refrigerators
- *very limited* for the majority of appliances

Ownership of the array of major household appliances as an indication of experience with an assortment of appliances was operationalized as follows:

TABLE 4.11: OPERATIONALIZATION OF OWNERSHIP OF AN ASSORTMENT OF APPLIANCES

Interpretation	Norm	% of sample
Good	4 or more appliances owned for 10 years or more	more than 50%
Above average	4 or more appliances owned for 6 years or more	More than 50%
Average	4 or more appliances owned for 4 years or more	More than 50%
Below average	Maximum 3 appliances owned for 4 years or more	More than 50%
Limited	1 or 2 appliances owned for 4 years or more	More than 50%

From Table 4.8 it could be concluded that the group of participants, who indicated that more than 50% of participants had owned four or more appliances for more than four years, could be described as having had *average experience* with an assortment of major appliances (in this case the four appliances mentioned were refrigerators, stoves, microwave ovens as well as vacuum cleaners). Limited experience with appliances indicated that these young inexperienced consumers' ability to assess major household appliances for personal use would probably be inadequate. This can be evident in their assessment of the functional and performance characteristics of the major household appliances. This was confirmed and reflected in their service life expectations: participants had unrealistic service life expectations (refer to Tables 4.15 and 4.16). This further impedes on the participants' ability to conclude informed decisions hence the ability to make responsible choices.

It is important to note however that, ownership of an array of appliances/an assortment of appliances would consequently influence the participants' ability to assess appliances for personal use. Ownership of appliances contribute to product related consumer socialization and hence experience with the major household appliances (refer to Chapter 2: Conceptualisation and supporting literature). The findings reported in Table 4.8 indicated that participants' product related consumer socialization could be described as *average* (Table 4.11). The four appliances generally owned, were stoves, fridges, vacuum cleaners and microwave ovens.

PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE AS AN INDICATION OF ABILITY TO ASSESS PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES (OBJECTIVE 3)

Consumers' knowledge of functional and performance attributes of appliances

Participants' potential to make responsible buyer decisions was determined in terms of their *knowledge of product characteristics* (limited to functional, durability and financial aspects).

In the larger research project, three different samples were involved that involved *younger inexperienced consumers* from previously disadvantaged communities (i.e. this specific part of the research); an *older inexperienced group* (that was focussed on by a fellow student and where the emphasis was on quality judgment in the absence of relevant product related consumer socialization) as well as a larger third group of experienced consumers that was intentionally selected to provide sub samples that could be compared to the two inexperienced consumer groups . Experienced groups were thus drawn from the larger sample that fit the demographic profile of each of the two inexperienced groups:

- Table 4.12.1 reveals the mean score for the product knowledge test for the inexperienced young consumers that formed the sample for this specific part of the research project.
- Table 4.12.2 reveals the mean scores for the product knowledge test for the different groups in terms of *experience with electricity* in the larger project. This revealed that the mean score for this sample was very similar to the score obtained for individuals with 6 to 10, and 11 to 15 years of experience.
- Table 4.13 reveals the mean scores for the product knowledge test for the different groups in terms of product related consumer socialization.

TABLE 4.12: MEAN SCORES FOR THE PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE TEST

TABLE 4.12.1					TABLE 4.12.2			
Sample	Mean % correct	Std dev	Rank sum	Maximum % correct	Years of Experience with electricity irrespective of area	Mean % correct	Std dev	Maximum % correct
n=137	32.21	10.4199	3 0618.0	52.38	5 years and less (n=32)	27.83	13.0331	61.90
					6-10 years (n=105)	30.06	9.2994	57.14
					11-15 years (n=92)	32.25	12.9422	61.90
					Lifelong (n=407)	44.17	16.3686	100

TABLE 4.13: A COMPARISON OF THE MEAN SCORES FOR THE PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE TEST OF YOUNG CONSUMERS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PRODUCT RELATED CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION

Group	Mean score (%)	Std dev	Max %
Young inexperienced consumers (n=137)	32.21	10.4199	52.38
Young experienced consumers (n=137)	44.70	17.21	100

The effect of **product related consumer socialization** on consumers' knowledge of the properties of appliances was compared through the Mann-Whitney test. The mean score obtained by the young consumers with limited experience (the sample of this part of the project) was compared to a similar group with extensive product related consumer socialization drawn from the larger experienced group of consumers. The experienced consumers performed significantly better than the comparative younger age group of this sample ($p=0.0000$). This confirms an increase in product knowledge with increased product related socialization. It must be noted, however, that even the experienced group of young consumers' knowledge of product attributes (mean score: 44.7%) was disappointingly low - to the extent that it would not necessarily result in informed buyer behaviour.

CONSUMERS’ ASSESSMENT OF APPLIANCES IN TERMS OF PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES (OBJECTIVE 3)

Quality judgment of appliances in terms of surrogate indicators of quality

Participants were also confronted with a list of so-called surrogate indicators of quality, i.e. indicators that could/may be used in the absence of relevant product knowledge as a presumption of quality.

TABLE 4.14: USE OF SURROGATE INDICATORS FOR QUALITY JUDGMENT.

Indicator	% of n=137		
	Always	Sometimes	Never
Price (more expensive considered better)	44.1	51.5	4.4
Country of origin (imported preferred)	22.1	*63.2	14.7
Salespeople’s recommendations	11.1	*60.7	28.2
Brand names	*62.5	32.4	5.2
Friends’ and family’s recommendations	32.4	*59.6	8.1
Guarantee/ warranty	*61.0	26.5	12.5
Design elements	14.0	*50.0	36.0
Trendy	6.6	48.5	44.9
Widely advertised products	10.4	*64.4	25.2
Locally manufactured	27.9	*64.0	8.1
Retailers reputation/image	*66.9	26.5	6.6

* More than 50% of the participants.

More than 60% of the participants admitted to ALWAYS using *brand name* and/or *country of origin* and/or *the reputation of retailers* as indication of the quality of appliances. The majority indicated that they SOMETIMES used *country of origin*, and/or *salespeople’s recommendations*, *friends’ and family’s recommendations*, *design features*, *advertisements*, and/or *locally manufactured brands* to discriminate quality. Considering the responses in terms of the ALWAYS and SOMETIMES scales, it seems as if *price*, *brand names* (probably *local brands*), *friends’ and family’s recommendations*, and the *reputation of retailers* are depended on more frequently to discriminate quality. This emphasizes the importance and potential contribution of the retail environment to facilitate buyer decisions (Iacobucci *et al*, 1995:278). Interestingly, this sample indicated a preference for locally manufactured appliances while consumers sometimes perceive imported goods to be superior (Al-Sulaiti & Baker, 1998:150; Feltham, 1998: 373). All of the indicators that were identified, are subjective in kind, which suggests

that more could be done to educate consumers and to facilitate buyer decisions that would be indicative of informed buyer behaviour.

Reported and expected service life figures for appliances (Objective 3)

Average reported and expected service life figures for appliances

The service life of household appliances is generally used to describe these products as long-term purchases and consequently as durable products that have implications for the household in terms of durability, performance characteristics, maintenance and running costs over a period of ten to twenty years. The relatively long service life of major appliances would inevitably influence a consumer's purchase criteria and the factors considered during the evaluation process. Consumers would probably be more willing to pay higher prices for appliances because they are expected to last for a considerable length of time, consumers would probably also consider capacity of appliances and design features in terms of long term ownership. Participants' indication of the service life of appliances was thus used as an indication of their awareness of the potential and actual service life of appliances as well as their ability to make a realistic assessment of major household appliances.

Reported service life figures Participants had to indicate the service life of appliances that had been replaced in the past. Because of relative low ownership figures (Table 4.8), responses to some of the appliances (n) were very low and were of little value.

TABLE 4.15: AVERAGE REPORTED SERVICE LIFE OF APPLIANCES

Appliance	Reported service life of appliances (years)			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Max
Refrigerator	80	6.69	3.31	22.00
Separate freezer	19	5.53	3.15	15.00
Stove (hob & oven combined)	72	6.15	2.12	15.00
Separate oven plus hob	6	8.17	4.35	15.00
Extractor /cooker hood	3	6.00	3.00	9.00
Washing machine: top loader	12	6.17	3.95	15.00
Washing machine: front loader	4	6.75	2.87	10.00
Washing machine: twin tub	6	8.00	8.92	26.00
Dishwasher	4	5.00	2.44	8.00
Tumble dryer	5	6.80	4.65	15.00
Microwave oven	38	4.18	2.19	10.00
Vacuum cleaner	46	5.13	2.90	20.00

Expected service life of appliances Participants also indicated what they expected in terms of the service life of the list of appliances (Table 4.16). More of the participants responded to this question and interestingly, the means for the various appliances differed. Participants therefore did not anticipate all of the appliances to perform the same over time.

TABLE 4.16: AVERAGE EXPECTED SERVICE LIFE OF APPLIANCES

Appliance	Average expected service life of appliances (years)			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Max
Refrigerator	127	9.93	4.99	30.00
Separate freezer	104	9.17	4.78	30.00
Stove (hob & oven combined)	124	9.92	6.38	37.00
Separate oven plus hob	50	9.38	5.80	27.00
Extractor /cooker hood	82	8.52	4.05	25.00
Washing machine: top loader	104	7.87	3.97	27.00
Washing machine: front loader	69	7.30	2.95	15.00
Washing machine: twin tub	51	7.29	3.71	17.00
Dishwasher	89	6.20	3.56	20.00
Tumble dryer	103	6.93	2.62	15.00
Microwave oven	118	6.38	4.46	30.00
Vacuum cleaner	111	6.42	4.38	27.00

A comparison of mean expected and reported service life figures for major appliances

The *reported* service life figures were alarmingly low especially for refrigerators that are supposed to be functional for 20 years or more. The *expected* service life figures could also be described as unrealistically low, taking into consideration that 10 to 15 years (for major appliances in general) and up to 20 years for appliances such as refrigerators is considered the norm (refer to Tables 4.15 and 4.16) (Cooper, 1994; Consumer Reports, 1994:35). This indicates two-fold problem i.e. unreal expectations that could lead to premature replacements and/or incorrect use of appliances that would contribute to short service life figures (Adler & Hlavacek, 2001:634). These unrealistic expectations could lead to negative disconfirmation of expectations (dissatisfaction). Unrealistic service life expectations could result in a distorted ability to assess major household appliances and consequent uninformed/irresponsible choice behaviour, which calls for proper consumer facilitation.

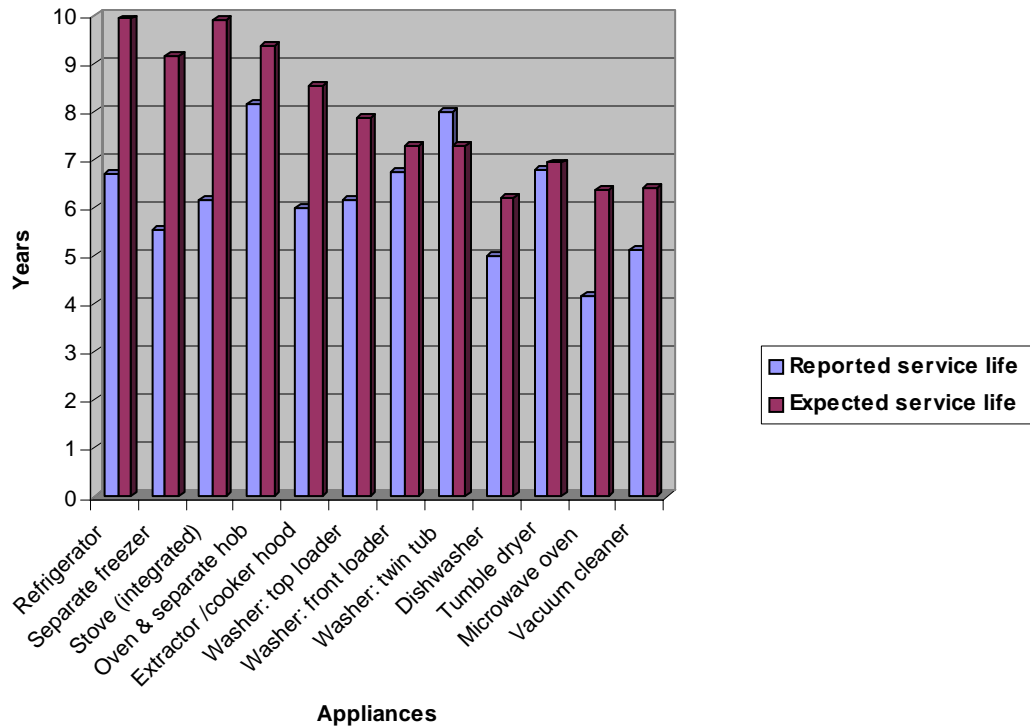


FIGURE 4.4: COMPARISON OF MEAN EXPECTED AND REPORTED SERVICE LIFE FIGURES FOR MAJOR APPLIANCES

Reported service life figures were generally lower than anticipated service life of appliances. This indicates that the participants had higher expectations of appliances than what was experienced. This should be investigated further and should be considered as an important aspect during consumer facilitation and consumer education.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT APPLIANCES (OBJECTIVE 4)

In another open-ended question, participants were given the opportunity to indicate *what kind of complaints they would expect to hear if someone was complaining about a washing machines' performance*. This was included in the questionnaire as a projective technique to find out what kind of problems they were familiar with and what these problems could be attributed to. The responses were coded and categorized in the same manner as the previous section. Results are reflected in Table 4.18.

Most of the problems mentioned were PERFORMANCE RELATED. A closer analysis of the type of complaints mentioned, indicated that almost all of the problems could be related to incorrect use

and improper handling of washing machines, e.g. inefficient cleaning, blocked pipes, poor spinning and fluff on clothes could all be attributed to overloading of machines. Complaints about excessive use of water and electricity and long washing cycles refer to probable ignorance, i.e. unawareness of the properties and performance characteristics of certain types of machines. Although a relatively small percentage complained about service facilities, this should be attended to in terms of the premature replacement of appliances that was reported earlier. QUALITY related problems should be considered in conjunction with the PERFORMANCE related complaints: problems listed may be attributed to lack of knowledge on the part of consumers rather than product related issues.

The problems mentioned clearly emphasize the need for consumer education and proper facilitation of buyer decisions in retail so that consumers are better informed and more confident about product characteristics before they make purchase decisions. This is even more crucial considering their current limited ownership of appliances and participants' expressed need to acquire more appliances for their homes in the future. Prevention of dissatisfaction and complaints about appliances would also be beneficial for retailers and manufacturers in the long term: findings have also revealed a reliance on friends and family for product recommendations, which confirms the potential negative influence of negative word of mouth communication (Broadbridge & Marshall, 1995: 8, 12; Phau & Sari, 2004: 408).

TABLE 4.17: INDICATION OF COMPLAINTS

More than 50% of any group	Between 10% to 50% of a group	Less than 10% of all groups	%
PERFORMANCE RELATED COMPLAINTS			
Inefficient cleaning			51.8
	Cycles too long		8.8
	Clothes damaged, fluff deposit on textiles		5.8
	Broken in guarantee period		16.8
	Leaks water		2.9
	Poor spinning		1.5
		Water temp: too hot/cold	1.5
		Poor draining	1.5
		Blocked pipes	2.2
		Not steady	8.0
		Difficult to operate	4.3
QUALITY RELATED COMPLAINTS			
	Regular break downs		8.8
	Poor performance		1.5
	Inferior materials that deteriorate		10.2
	Disappointing value for money		19.7
		Second hand machine: inferior	0.7
		Electrical problems	1.5
SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE RELATED COMPLAINTS			
		Incompetent servicemen	0.7
	Poor dealer service		2.2
ERGONOMIC RELATED COMPLAINTS			
		Heats the room	2.2
	Noise levels		40.1
SOCIAL ASPECTS			
	Old fashioned machine		2.2
		Disapproval of others as inferior	8.0
FINANCIAL AND COST RELATED PROBLEMS			
	High electricity consumption		27.7
	High water consumption		23.4
		Uses too much washing powder	10.9
WRONG CHOICE			
		Too big/too small	1.5

PRODUCT INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR PRODUCT EVALUATION (OBJECTIVE 5)

In an open ended question, participants were given the opportunity to indicate *what type of information they would like to have in order to make a purchase decision*. Through this question they were given the opportunity to indicate specific product attributes that would be useful to conclude a product decision. No indication/hints were given. This information was used to determine the relevance of the information that was indicated in terms of informed and responsible decision-making behaviour.

Open coding was used to identify the constructs and *axial coding* was consequently used to organize the constructs in terms of the various dimensions of product attributes. Results are revealed in Table 4.18. The information was eventually categorized in terms of FUNCTIONAL and PERFORMANCE ATTRIBUTES; FINANCIAL ASPECTS; SAFETY ASPECTS; DURABILITY; AESTHETICS; SURROGATE INDICATORS OF QUALITY. A further discrimination was made in terms of constructs mentioned by the *majority of participants*, those mentioned by *between 10 and 50%* and information required by *less than 10%* of participants. Because this information was spontaneously mentioned in an open question in a rather lengthy questionnaire, it was expected that frequencies per construct mentioned would not necessarily be high.

The only information required by the majority, was DURABILITY related (information regarding the reputation of various brands; information regarding guarantees). Most of the information that was required was categorized as FUNCTIONAL AND PERFORMANCE related which indicates a need for guidance in terms of operating principles of appliances; criteria that would enable a valid comparison of different brands and even an explanation of technical information that is available in manuals of appliances. A major problem is that manuals are not always available in store: manuals are usually sealed in the containers because consumers tend to take them when they are displayed with the appliances in the stores. This makes product comparisons extremely difficult. Price related issues were also prominently mentioned.

TABLE 4.18: INFORMATION REQUIRED TO CONCLUDE PRODUCT DECISIONS

FUNCTIONAL AND PERFORMANCE ASPECTS			
Requested by 50% and more	Requested by 10% to 50%	Requested by less than 10%	%
	Operating principles		21.1
	Water and electricity consumption		37.2
	Programmes and technical information		11.7
	Advantages & disadvantages of different brands		29.9
	Capacity		26.3
	Size, dimensions		12.4
		Time for cycles	0.7
		Demo's	1.5
		Technical information	0.7
		Maintenance	2.9
		Noise levels	7.3
FINANCIAL ASPECTS			
	Price		38.0
	Total cost plus interest, delivery etc		7.3
SAFETY ASPECTS			
		Safety aspects	6.6
DURABILITY			
Reputation of brands			19.7
	Durability		19.0
	Service providers		8.8
	Life span		13.1
AESTHETICS			
		Materials used and colours	4.4
SURROGATE INDICATORS OF QUALITY/RELIABILITY			
Guarantee			54.7
		Country of origin	1.5



Chapter 5

CONCLUSION



This chapter presents a discussion of the results in terms of the objectives for the study. Recommendations for further research are proposed.

INTRODUCTION

This reflects on the objectives that were set for the research project, namely to describe young inexperienced consumers' *product related consumer socialization* based on their *experience with* electricity in their households as well as their *ownership of a range of appliances over time* as basis for their assessment of major appliances for their own households in terms of usefulness and performance attributes. The research followed a quantitative approach and data collection was done through a structured questionnaire that was completed under supervision by willing participants who were recruited through snowball sampling. A projective technique was used to finalize the structure and content of the questionnaire, which was eventually completed under supervision by 137 individuals.

Although the same questionnaire was used for a larger research project, the reasoning of this particular part of the project was done within the systems perspective and the emphasis was placed on limited product related consumer socialization and the consequences in terms of *ownership of appliances, service life expectancies, knowledge of product attributes* as well as the *use of surrogate indicators of quality* during product evaluation. Participants' potential to conclude responsible buyer decisions was deduced from the means that were calculated for the *product knowledge test* as well as two open ended questions where they had the opportunity to describe the kind of information that they would require to make purchase judgments as well as another task that involved a complaint scenario. Shortcomings in consumers' assessment and use of appliances will be discussed for the attention of retail as well as for the attention of professionals in Consumer Science who could contribute to informed, responsible buyer decisions through the design of appropriate and relevant consumer education and –facilitation programmes.

PARTICIPANTS' PRODUCT RELATED CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION (OBJECTIVE 1)

Although findings revealed that participants' experience with electricity in their households was *above average*, actual ownership of appliances at the time of the study and over time confirmed limited product related consumer socialization. Because exposure to electricity not necessarily permits experience with household appliances (financial status and affordability would for example be important determinants), ownership of appliances was investigated in more detail. Actual ownership of appliances in their households during their lives revealed that a *very low* percentage of the participants could confirm prior experience with appliances.

PARTICIPANTS' PRESENT AND ANTICIPATED OWNERSHIP OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES (OBJECTIVE 2)

Participants' assessment of the usefulness of appliances was done through an assessment of current ownership of appliances as well as their intention to acquire major appliances in the future. Of the nine different types of appliances listed, only two, namely refrigerators and stoves were owned by more than 80% of the sample. Four others (separate freezer; cooker hood; dishwasher and tumble dryer) were however owned by just below 50% of the sample and participants seemed eager to acquire most of the appliances on the list in time. Ownership of the majority of the listed appliances was *below average* to *very low*, probably because of financial constraints. A high interest in the possession of major household appliances was revealed through an indication that a *high* to *very high* percentage of participants desired ownership of the whole list of appliances. It was clear that participants considered major household appliances useful for their future households, despite lack of personal experience in this regard. Their assessment of appliances in order of priority seemed to be stoves and refrigerators; followed by microwave ovens and vacuum cleaners; separate freezers; washing machines; tumble dryers; cooker hoods and lastly, dishwashers.

PARTICIPANTS' KNOWLEDGE OF PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES (OBJECTIVE 3)

In terms of the systems perspective, participants' limited product related consumer socialization thus indicated the likelihood that participants would be unable to transform product cues to conclude informed buyer decisions. Transformation of product cues is however done within a frame of reference that could be formed through particular interest in appliances and increased knowledge through intentional learning. Despite limited product related consumer socialization that suggest a limited ability to assess appliances objectively, participants could thus have acquired product knowledge in some way that could have increased their potential to make informed buyer decisions. To determine participants' ability to judge product attributes, they were thus subjected to a product knowledge test that included basic questions on all major appliances and were also asked to comment on the service life of appliances.

The inexperienced young consumers' mean score for the product knowledge test was 32.2%, which confirmed a lack of knowledge and a consequent inability to transform product information in terms of informed buyer decisions. Participants were also requested to indicate actual and anticipated service life figures for a list of major appliances: the expected service life figures that were indicated for the various appliances were alarmingly low and actual service life figures were even lower. Unrealistic expectations could lead to premature replacements and/or incorrect use of appliances that would contribute to limited service life figures. Unrealistic expectations could also lead to negative disconfirmation of expectations (dissatisfaction) and could result in a distorted ability to assess major household appliances.

It could be concluded that these consumers would indeed benefit from educational programmes and consumer facilitation in the retail environment to enhance informed and responsible buyer decisions.

An inability to objectively evaluate product attributes was confirmed through a strong reliance on surrogate indicators of quality during product evaluation. Over 60% of the participants admitted to ALWAYS using *brand name* and/or *country of origin* and/or as *the reputation of retailers* as indication of the quality of appliances. The majority indicated that they SOMETIMES used *country of origin*, and/or *salespeople's recommendations*, *friends' and family's recommendations*, *design features*, *advertisements*,

and/or *locally manufactured brands* to discriminate quality. It also seemed as if *price, brand names* (apparently *local brands*), *friends' and family's recommendations* and the *reputation of retailers* are depended on more frequently to discriminate quality. All of these indicators are subjective which suggests that more could be done to educate consumers and to facilitate buyer decisions that would be indicative of informed buyer behaviour.

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED DURING USE OF APPLIANCES (OBJECTIVE 4)

During the complaint scenario, participants' actually exposed their lack of product knowledge. Most of the problems that were listed could have been prevented had the users been better informed of product attributes. The problems mentioned were also explanatory in terms of the premature replacement of appliances that was reported.

The majority of the participants expressed a need for product information that is DURABILITY related (information regarding the reputation of various brands; information regarding guarantees). Most of the information that was required was categorized as FUNCTIONAL and PERFORMANCE related which indicates a need for guidance in terms of operating principles of appliances; criteria that would enable a valid comparison of different brands and even an explanation of technical information that is available in manuals of appliances. A major problem in this regard that should be attended to in retail, is that manuals are not always available in store for consumers to refer to: manuals are usually sealed in the containers because they tend to go missing when they are displayed alongside of the appliances in the stores. This makes product comparisons extremely difficult for consumers. Considering that technical, installation and user information are usually explained in these manuals, an effort should be made to make them more accessible. Price related issues such as service providers, running costs and financing costs were also prominently mentioned as information that is required.

SUGGESTIONS TO ENHANCE INFORMED, RESPONSIBLE BUYER DECISIONS (OBJECTIVE 5)

It is recommended that retailers and manufacturers of appliances, washing powders and the like, make a concerted, joint effort to assist current owners of appliances to use and maintain appliances responsibly. Informative advertising, information on packaging of detergents, leaflets in stores and even competitions could be launched to convey product information. Limited product related knowledge over the broad spectrum of consumers should be taken seriously. The interactive effect of the financial implications of the premature replacement of appliances, negative word-of-mouth communication, incorrect use of appliances and lack of support in the retail environment

Salespeople should be trained to facilitate consumer decisions: it is unacceptable that friends and family (who probably only have personal experience and preference as frame of reference) are consulted rather than salespeople.

Augmented customer service in retail should be promoted and encouraged.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The questionnaires had to be completed under supervision because they were quite lengthy: the pre test indicated that participants would probably find it difficult and frustrating to complete all the questions correctly. This data collection procedure was time consuming and expensive because field workers had to be paid and participants were given small incentives to encourage them to participate. It was difficult to recruit participants in the Sunnyside area because potential participants had to be contacted after working hours. Difficult access to buildings because of strict security measures complicated data collection.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

A small sample of participants (30) participated in qualitative study. It would be worthwhile if this study could be pursued further employing a qualitative study where the researcher would go into the participants' houses, observe and

record/capture information. Such information will be based on actual use of products and will assist in bringing in an understanding of exactly how participants go about using household appliances. Perhaps this would shed more light on why for example participants indicated low service life for household appliances like microwave ovens and stoves etc, and why they complained about inefficient cleaning of washing machines.

It is further suggested that retailers could employ strategies to train salespeople so that they could regain the confidence of consumers. Results of the projective techniques revealed that consumers view salespeople as not being honest but who are much more interested in profit. Consumer facilitation should be viewed pivotal during every purchase of major household appliances to reduce/minimize consumer complaints and dissatisfaction.



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APPENDIX 1

PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUE





Department of Consumer Science

WRITTEN TASK ON THE SELECTION OF MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

to be used in a research project as part of a Master's Degree in Consumer Science

Introduction and Notification

Dear participant,

Thank you for participating in this research project. The intention with this research is to gain an understanding of consumers' experience with, and evaluation of major household appliances to eventually suggest ways in which customer service in retail could be improved to provide augmented customer service. Please give your honest opinion through out.

Your participation is appreciated!

Mphatso Grace Kachale

Study leader: Dr Alet C Erasmus

All information will be treated as confidential. Participants' names will not be disclosed



TASK:

“Imagine that you have won a competition that allows you to spend R15 000 on major household appliances in any store in any shopping complex”.....

Explain how you would go about selecting appliances to the amount of R15 000. In your response. you must please

- First explain which appliances you already own and how you feel about their condition and performance.
- Then identify and specify the appliances that you would choose with the prize money, for example: washing machine
- Describe the appliances in terms of size, type, price range if you can....giving as much information as possible.
- Explain why you have chosen these specific appliances: you might for example decide NOT to purchase a refrigerator, because you already have one that is in a good working condition!

You may do as you wish, there are NO correct or incorrect responses.



APPENDIX 2

TRANSCRIBED TEXT: PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUE



RESPONDENT:01

Cooker - only two plates are functional		cooker
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Cooker		cooker
Microwave		microwave
Washing machine		washer
Refrigerator: fridge	Defy	brand name
Freezer		
Double door		type
R2000-3000		configuration
price		price
Cooker: four plates	LG	brand name
Oven		configuration
Replace the old one		
R3000- 4000		price
Microwave:	LG	brand name
with grill		sophistication
R1800-2800		configuration
price		price
Big and roomy		size
Washing machine	LG	brand name
Top loader		type
10kg		size
R5000- 6000		price
Refrigerator		
To improve the shelf life of foods		functional
To keep beverages cool		
Cooker		
So that I can be able to prepare a number of dishes		functional
at once on the four plates as well as in the oven		convenience
Microwave		
To reheat food that has been prepared previously		convenience
hence make maximum use of time		ergonomics
Washing machine		
To ease workload		convenience

RESPONDENT: 02

Hotplate- not happy with it because it short-circuits	hotplate
Refrigerator	refrigerator
Cooker	cooker
Washing machine	washing machine
Vacuum cleaner	vacuum cleaner
Refrigerator-freezer/fridge: combined	sophistication
Single door	configuration
R2500-3500	price
Defy	brand name
Cooker- four plate with oven	configuration
Replace the hotplate that is not working very well	
R3000-4000	price
Defy	brand name
Washing machine	
R4000-6000	price
LG	brand name
Vacuum cleaner	
LG	brand name
The more modern one as seen on TV	
Should be able to clean the carpet, curtains,	
Beddings e.g. mattress	sophistication
R6000	price
Refrigerator	
So that food items can keep longer	functional
Cooker	
To replace the old hot plate.	
Prepare different foods at once.	convenience
Washing machine	
To ease the workload	functional
	ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner	
To keep the home environment clean and safe.	functional

RESPONDENT: 03

Appliances that you already own

Refrigerator

refrigerator

Electric cooker

cooker

Happy with the refrigerator and stove because they are in good working condition. The refrigerator keeps the food frozen and chill. It keeps the food from spoilage. The electric stove needs to be replaced with one that has four plates and an oven.

Vacuum cleaner

vacuum cleaner

Stove with four plates and oven

cooker

Washing machine

washing machine

Dryer

dryer

Big upright vacuum cleaner

type

Between R3000 – 4000

price

Stove with 4 plates and oven

configuration

Between R25000- 3000

price

Big top loading washing machine

type

Between R4000- 5000

price

Big tumble dryer

R4000- 5000

price

Vacuum cleaner

Because I want to clean my carpet, curtains and other interiors(Soft furnishings)

functional

Four-plate stove with oven

Because I will be able to prepare different dishes at one goal on top as well as in the oven.

convenience

It should be very convenient and time saving

functional

Washing machine

To save time.

functional

Tumble dryer

For my clothes to dry very quickly hence save time to do other activities

functional

ergonomics

RESPONDENT: 04

Stove/cooker		cooker
Happy because it is working perfectly well		
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Microwave		microwave
Washing machine		washing machine
Tumble dryer		tumble dryer
Refrigerator	Defy	brand name
One with two doors – separate door for freezer and fridge		sophistication
Big enough for a family of two		size
R2000- 3000		price
Microwave	Defy	brand name
One that reheats, cooks as well as grill foods		sophistication
R1500- 2500		price
Washing machine	LG	brand name
8 kg load		size
R3000-4500		price
Tumble dryer	LG	brand name
Accommodate loads from the washing machine		size
R3500- 4500		price
I have chosen a refrigerator so that I don't frequent the supermarket and the green grocer every now and then functional		
To improve the shelf life of food		functional
Microwave		
To bring variety to my methods of food preparation		convenience
To save on time used to cook food		functional
Washing machine		
To save time used on hand washing		ergonomics
To ease the workload		functional
Tumble dryer		
To use the time for other activities		ergonomics

RESPONDENT: 05

Cooker		
Sometimes only two plates out of four work		cooker
I am not happy with this. Even then, it takes quite a longer time to Heat. Hence it needs to be replaced.		
Cooker		cooker
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Washing machine		washing machine
Tumble dryer		tumble dryer
Vacuum cleaner		vacuum cleaner
Cooker	Defy	brand name
Four plates		sophistication
Oven		
R2500- 3000		price
Refrigerator	Defy	brand name
Both fridge and freezer		sophistication
R3000-3500		price
Washing machine – top load		type
8 kg load		size
	LG	brand name
R4000-4500		price
Tumble dryer	LG	brand name
R3500- 4000		price
Vacuum cleaner		
Light but efficient		sophistication
R3000-3500		price
Cooker		
To replace the old one		functional
Refrigerator		
To keep foods for longer		functional
Washing machine		
To allow time for other activities such as shopping and cooking		ergonomics
Tumble dryer		
To lessen/reduce time clothes spend on the sun		functional
Vacuum cleaner		
For a cleaner feeling inside the flat		functional

RESPONDENT: 06

Cooker	cooker
Refrigerator	refrigerator
Lately I have noticed that some foods go bad despite being kept in The refrigerator. The cooker is working very well.	
Refrigerator	refrigerator
Microwave	microwave
Washing machine	washing machine
Vacuum cleaner	vacuum cleaner
Dishwasher	dishwasher
Refrigerator- combined freezer and fridge R2000 –3000	sophistication price
Microwave should be able to reheat food R1500-2000	sophistication price
Washing machine top loader 8- 10kg load R4000-5000	type size price
Vacuum cleaner As long as it can clean the carpet as well as the floor	design
R3000 – 5000	sophistication price
Dishwasher One that can clean as well as dry R2500-3000	sophistication price
Refrigerator To keep food longer To keep beverages cool	functional functional
Microwave To ease the hassle of preparing and cooking food To reheat food	convenience functional
Washing machine To use the time for other activities as well such as vacuum cleaning the flat	ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner To keep the flat free of dust mites which may accumulate on the carpet	functional
Dishwasher To ease the workload hence use the time for other activities	ergonomics

RESPONDENT: 07

Cooker	cooker
Perfectly working	
Refrigerator	refrigerator
Washing machine	washing machine
Vacuum cleaner	vacuum cleaner
Refrigerator	
Family size	size
Combined fridge and freezer	sophistication
R3000-4000	price
Washing machine	
One that is big enough to wash blankets, duvets, comforter etc	sophistication
R4000-6000	price
Vacuum cleaner	
Should clean the carpet floor and tiles, curtains and mattress	sophistication
R5000-6000	price
Refrigerator	
To keep food longer	functional
Washing machine	
To allow time for other activities	ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner	
To keep the flat cleaner	functional

RESPONDENT: 08

Cooker		cooker
Refrigerator		refrigerator
The cooker is working ok.		
The refrigerator however needs to be replaced.		
The freezer does not keep food frozen		
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Vacuum cleaner		vacuum cleaner
Washing machine		washing machine
Microwave		microwave
Refrigerator	LG	brand name
Big		size
Combined fridge and freezer		sophistication
R2500 –3000		price
Vacuum cleaner		
The ones advertised on TV – can clean the carpet, tile/cement floor,		
Curtains, mattress		sophistication
R3000 – 4000		price
Washing machine		
R4000		price
10kg load		size
Different heat/temperature settings		sophistication
Microwave		
R1500 – 2000		price
As long as it can reheat food		
Refrigerator		
To keep food longer and hence save on time spent acquiring food		ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner		
To keep the flat efficiently and sufficiently clean		functional
Washing machine		
To ease workload		ergonomics
Hence allow time for other activities		functional
Microwave		
To reheat food hence save on time spent preparing and cooking		convenience
Food		

RESPONDENT: 09

Cooker		cooker
Microwave		microwave
They are both working very well		
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Washing machine		washing machine
Tumble dryer		tumble dryer
Vacuum cleaner		vacuum cleaner
Refrigerator		
The refrigerator should be big enough for two people		size
R2500 – 3000		price
Washing machine	LG	brand name
8 kg load		size
Top load		type
R3000 –4000		price
Tumble dryer		
Different heat settings for different fabrics		sophistication
R3000-3500		Price
Vacuum cleaner		
Clean the carpet		sophistication
R2000 –3000		price
Refrigerator		
To keep food longer		functional
Washing machine		
To allow time for other activities such as socializing and		
Cooking		ergonomics
Tumble dryer		
To control exposure to heat of garments		functional
Vacuum cleaner		
To ease workload and also ensure that the flat is efficiently		ergonomics
cleaned		functional

RESPONDENT: 10

Cooker	cooker
Refrigerator	refrigerator
The cooker has only two plated. Does not have an oven.	
Refrigerator is working well.	
Cooker	cooker
Microwave	microwave
Washing machine	washing machine
Vacuum cleaner	vacuum cleaner
Cooker	
Four plates	configuration
Oven	
R2000- 3000	price
Microwave	
One that can reheat as well as bake and grill	sophistication
R1500- 3000	price
Washing machine	
6-10 kg load	size
Top loader t	type
R4000 – 5000	price
Vacuum cleaner	
The more modern one as advertised on TV.	
Should be able to clean the carpet, cushions, curtains, mattress etc	sophistication
R3000 –4500	price
Cooker	
To replace the old one	functional
Microwave	
To save time	convenience ergonomics
Washing machine	
To ease the workload	ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner	
To keep the place clean easier	functional

RESPONDENT: 11

Cooker	cooker
Microwave	microwave
They are both working	
Refrigerator	refrigerator
Washing machine	washing machine
Vacuum cleaner	vacuum cleaner
Refrigerator	
Upright	type
Combined fridge and freezer	sophistication
R4000 –5000	price
Washing machine	
Top load	type
8-10 kg	size
R5000 –6000	price
Vacuum cleaner	
Light and efficient	size
R3000 – 4000	price
Refrigerator	
So that food can keep longer	functional
To keep beverages cool and chilled	functional
Washing machine	
To ease workload hence allow time for other activities	ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner	
To keep the flat clean and healthy	functional

RESPONDENT: 12

Cooker		cooker
It is in good working condition		
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Vacuum cleaner		vacuum cleaner
Microwave		microwave
Washing machine		washing machine
Refrigerator	LG	brand name
Family size		size
Freezer separate from fridge		sophistication
R3000 – 3500		price
Vacuum cleaner		
Light so that it can be carried around with ease		ease of use
R3500 –4000		price
Microwave	LG	brand name
Should be able to reheat, bake and grill		sophistication
R2000 – 3000		price
Washing machine		
8 kg		size
Top load		type
R4000 – 4500		sophistication
		price
Refrigerator		
To keep food longer		functional
Vacuum cleaner		
To ease workload		ergonomics
To clean the flat efficiently		functional
Microwave		
To save on time spent preparing and cooking food		ergonomics
To bring variety to dishes		convenience
Washing machine		
To ease workload		ergonomics
To allow time for other activities		convenience

RESPONDENT: 13

Refrigerator	refrigerator
It is in good condition	
Microwave	microwave
Stove/cooker	cooker
Washing machine	washing machine
Tumble dryer	tumble dryer
Microwave	
With grill	sophistication
R1500 – 2000	price
Cooker	
Four plate with oven	configuration
R2000 – 3000	price
Washing machine	
Automatic	sophistication
5 kg load	size
R5000 – 6000	price
Tumble dryer	
With different fabric settings	sophistication
R3000 – 4000	price
They are labour saving appliances	functional

RESPONDENT: 14

Refrigerator		refrigerator
Cooker		cooker
Cooker – only two out of the four plates are working		
Refrigerator		
The freezer door is broken therefore is not efficient		
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Washing machine		washing machine
Cooker		cooker
Refrigerator	Defy	brand name
Combined fridge and freezer		sophistication
Also with water disperser		
R8000 – 10000		price
Washing machine	Whirlpool or LG	brand name
Good make		
10 kg		size
		configuration
R2500 – 3000		price
Cooker	Defy	brand name
With four plates and oven		configuration
R2000 – 2500		price
Refrigerator		
To replace the old one		functional
Washing machine		
To ease workload		ergonomics
Cooker		
Better to buy a new one than to repair an old one		functional

RESPONDENT: 15

Stove		cooker
I don't like it because of the size. It does not have an oven		
Microwave		microwave
Washing machine		washing machine
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Vacuum cleaner		vacuum cleaner
Microwave	LG	brand name
Big		size
One that has defrost and grill option		sophistication
R1500 – 2500		price
Washing machine	Whirlpool	brand name
Wash and spin, no drying, automatic		sophistication
R2500 – 3500		price
Refrigerator	LG	brand name
Because I like their products		
Big in size		size
R5000 – 6000		price
Vacuum cleaner		
The latest versions as seen on TV		
Multipurpose – clean the floor, curtains, beddings etc		sophistication
R2500 – 3000		price
Microwave		
To ease workload		ergonomics
For variety e.g. Snacks		convenience
To warm/reheat food		functional
Washing machine		
To ease the workload		ergonomics
Refrigerator		
To keep food fresh		functional
To keep beverages/water cool		functional
Vacuum cleaner		
To clean carpets		functional

RESPONDENT: 16

Refrigerator	refrigerator
Stove	cooker
Vacuum cleaner	vacuum cleaner
Dishwasher	dishwasher
Microwave	microwave
Vacuum cleaner	
Cleaning as well as dry carpet, curtain	sophistication
R2000 – 3000	price
Dishwasher	
One with drying component	sophistication
R3500 –4500	price
Microwave	
Defrost, cook and grill etc	sophistication
R1000 – 2000	price
Washing machine	
Big enough for blankets	size
	sophistication
R3500- 5000	price
Vacuum cleaner	
Cleans properly and efficiently	functional
Dishwasher	
To ease the workload	ergonomics
Microwave	
To have variety of dishes	convenience
Washing machine	
To ease workload	ergonomics

RESPONDENT: 17

Safeway kettle		kettle
It performs well though it is inconvenient to use as compared To the cordless kettle		
Bar fridge		refrigerator
It is too small and doesn't freeze food well		
Appliances that I would choose		
Washing machine	LG	brand name
I would choose LG because I believe that it is a good brand.		
Would like a washing machine because I do not like washing R2000		clothes price
Defy electric cooker + oven + grill		brand name sophistication
R2000		price
LG microwave		brand name
R1200		price
This microwave has many functions and is programmed to fast cook some traditional South African foods e.g. bobobie. It also looks good and comes in various colours.		functional aesthetical
Tumble dryer	LG	brand name
I would buy this because sometimes clothes take too long to dry especially in winter R2000		functional price
Food processor	Kenwood	Brand name
This would help cut down cooking time especially when cooking in bulk R1000		convenience price
Food mixer	Kenwood	brand name
This helps in reducing the task of baking cakes, pastries R500		convenience price
Coffee maker	Kenwood	brand name
Like fresh coffee R400		convenience price
Food steamer		
Steaming keeps the nutrients in food as opposed to baking R700		nutrition price
Deep fryer	Ken wood	brand name
Helps to fry food at the right temperatures effectively R1200		functional price
Coffee grinder	Kenwood	brand name
For making fresh coffee and grinding spices R800		functional price
LG fridge		brand name
300 litres		size
LG is a good brand and works effectively		functional

R3200

price

RESPONDENT: 18

Refrigerator	refrigerator
Good condition	
Microwave	microwave
Food processor	food processor
Floor polisher/shiner	floor polisher/shiner
Electric stove	cooker
Tumble dryer	tumble dryer
Washing machine	washing machine
Microwave	
With grill	functional
R1600	price
Food processor	
Should do various processes i.e. shredding, mixing, slicing	functional
R400	price
Floor polisher/shiner	
Should polish floors, shine floors	functional
R3000	price
Electric stove	
R2000	price
Tumble dryer	
With different fabric settings	functional
Washing machine	
Automatic	type
Top loader	type
5 kg load	size
R5000	price
They are all labour saving.	functional
Saves human energy in a case where all family member are working	
Faster than a human	
Space available in the house	

RESPONDENT: 19

List of appliances already owned

Refrigerator	refrigerator
Microwave	microwave
Kettle	kettle
Iron	iron
Television	television
Video	video

All the appliances are in good condition except the iron.
 The iron is a little old thus the performance is not good.
 I am very satisfied with the performance of all my appliances.

Appliances I will buy with the prize money

Washing machine

Preferably about 10 kg	size
LG brand	brand name

Because I have an LG refrigerator and microwave.
 I am satisfied with both appliances. As a result I'll definitely buy an LG.

Will not spend more than R5000	price
--------------------------------	-------

Home theatre system

Also buy an LG brand	home theatre
	brand name

Prefers to spend at least R3000	price
---------------------------------	-------

Coffee maker & food processor

coffee maker
food processor

Prefer the Kenwood brand.

brand name

Prepared to spend R300 & R1000 respectively

price

RESPONDENT: 20

Stove	cooker
So far I am happy with it. It works pretty well.	
Refrigerator	refrigerator
Washing machine	washing machine
Microwave	microwave
Dishwasher	dishwasher
Refrigerator	
Combined fridge and freezer	type
Double door	configuration
R2000 – 3000	price
Washing machine	
Big	size
Front loading	type
R3000 – 4000	price
Microwave	
Combined	sophistication
R1500 –2000	price
Dishwasher	
Family size	size
R3000 –5000	price
Refrigerator	
For food storage	functional
To keep liquids cool and for a long time	functional
Washing machine	
To save time and energy	ergonomics
	convenience
Microwave	
To save time and energy	ergonomics
	convenience
Dishwasher	
To save time and energy	ergonomics
	convenience

RESPONDENT: 21

Cooker/stove/range		cooker
It is working perfectly well.		
Refrigerator		refrigerator
Microwave		microwave
Washing machine		washing machine
Vacuum cleaner		vacuum cleaner
Dryer		tumble dryer
Refrigerator	LG	brand name
Family size		size
Lockable door		configuration
R2500 – 3000		price
Microwave LG		brand name
Medium size		size
R1200 –1500		price
Washing machine		
Medium size		size
Front-loading		type
R3500 – 4500		price
Vacuum cleaner		
Upright		configuration
R2500 – 3500		price
Dryer		
Medium size		size
R3500 – 4000		price
Refrigerator		
To improve the storage life of food		functional
Microwave		
For convenience		convenience
Washing machine		
To save time		ergonomics
To ease workload		ergonomics
Vacuum cleaner		
To keep the household dust free		functional
Dryer		
For faster drying of laundry unlike on the clothesline		ergonomics
To allow time for other activities.		



APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONNAIRE





Department of Consumer Science

QUESTIONNAIRE: EVALUATION OF HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

Introduction and Notification

Dear participant,

Thank you for participating in this research project. The intention with this research project is to gain an understanding of consumers' experience with, and evaluation of major household appliances to eventually suggest ways in which customer service in retail could be improved to provide augmented customer service. Please give your honest opinion through out and try to be as accurate as possible when providing the requested figures.

Please complete ALL the questions. All information will be treated as highly confidential and participants will not be identified.

Your participation is appreciated!

Meriam Makgopa & Mphatso Kachale (Masters' students)

Dr Alet C Erasmus

Senior lecturer

Geagte respondent,

Baie dankie vir u deelname aan hierdie navorsingsprojek. Die doel met hierdie navorsingsprojek is om verbruikers se ervaring met die keuse en evaluering van huishoudelike toerusting beter te verstaan om uiteindelik voorstelle aan die handel te kan maak om dienslewering te verbeter. Gee asseblief deurgaans u eerlike mening en probeer asseblief om syfers wat verlang word so korrek moontlik weer te gee.

Voltooi asseblief AL die vrae. Alle inligting sal as hoogs vertroulik beskou word en respondente sal nie geidentifiseer word nie.

U deelname word op prys gestel!

Meriam Makgopa & Mphatso Kachale (Magister studente)

Dr Alet C Erasmus

Senior lektor

Respondent number:

Questionnaire: Section A



Demographic information of the respondent Demografiese inligting van die respondent Please mark with an X in the relevant boxes Merk asseblief met 'n X in die toepaslike blokkie						For office use								
1. Gender of the respondent/ Geslag van die respondent				Male Manlik	Female Vroulik	V1		1-3						
2. Age (years)/ Ouderdom (jare):				25-35	36-45	46-55	56+	V2	4					
3. Education level/ Opleidingspeil	Grade 7 or lower Graad 7 of laer	Grade 8-11	Grade 12	College diploma/ Kollege diploma	Degree/ Graad	Post graduate/ Nagraadse kwalifikasie	V3	5						
							V4	6						
							V5	7						
4. Household income per annum/ Huishouding se inkomste per jaar				Max R60 000	R60 001 to R90 000	R90 001 to R120 000	R120 001 to R150 000	R150 001 to R180 000	R180 001 to R240 000	R240 001 to R300 000	R300 001 to R500 000	Above / Meer as R500 000	V6	8-9
5. Geographic area: name of city/town Geografiese gebied: naam van stad/dorp								V7	10					
6. How long have you had electricity in your home? (Years) Hoe lank het u reeds elektrisiteit in u huis? (Jare)				0-3	4-5	6-10	11-15	As long as I can remember So lank as wat ek kan onthou						

Section B: Experience with appliances/Ondervinding met toerusting

7. Please indicate your OWNERSHIP of the following appliances as required Dui asseblief u EIENAARSKAP van die onderstaande toerusting aan soos aangedui	We own one at present (Ons besit tans een)	We have owned one before (Het vantevore een besit)	Have never owned one (Het nog nooit een besit nie)	Not interested in having one (Stel nie daarin belang om een te besit nie)	Would like to have one Sou graag een wou besit		
Refrigerator/ Koelkas (Yskas)						V8	11
Separate freezer (Aparte vrieskas)						V9	12
Stove (hob & oven combined) (Stoof: oond en kookplate gekombineer)						V10	13
Separate oven plus hob (Aparte oond en kookplate)						V11	14
Extractor (cooker hood) (Stoofkap)						V12	15
Washing machine: top loader (Bolaai wasmasjien)						V13	16
Washing machine: front loader (Voorlaai wasmasjien)						V14	17
Washing machine: twin tub (Dubbelbalie wasmasjien)						V15	18
Dishwasher (Skottelgoedwasser)						V16	19
Tumble dryer (Tuimeldroer)						V17	20
Microwave oven (Mikrogolfoond)						V18	21
Vacuum cleaner (Stofsuier)						V19	22
Sewing machine (Naaldwerkmasjien)						V20	23

8. Approximately HOW MANY YEARS of personal experience do you have of using the following appliances? Ongeveer HOVEEL JARE van persoonlike ondervinding het u met die gebruik van die onderstaande toerusting?	None/ Geen	Maximum 3 Maksimum 3	4 to 5	6-10	More than 10 Meer as 10			
<input type="radio"/> Refrigerator/ Koelkas (Yskas)						V21		24
<input type="radio"/> Separate freezer (Aparte vrieskas)						V22		25
<input type="radio"/> Stove (hob & oven combined) (Stoof: oond en kookplate gekombineer)						V23		26
<input type="radio"/> Separate oven plus hob (Aparte oond en kookplate)						V24		27
<input type="radio"/> Extractor (cooker hood) (Stoofkap)						V25		28
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: top loader (Bolaai wasmasjien)						V26		29
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: front loader (Voorlaai wasmasjien)						V27		30
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: twin tub (Dubbelbalie wasmasjien)						V28		31
<input type="radio"/> Dishwasher (Skottelgoedwasser)						V29		32
<input type="radio"/> Tumble dryer (Tuimeldroer)						V30		33
<input type="radio"/> Microwave oven (Mikrogolfoond)						V31		34
<input type="radio"/> Vacuum cleaner (Stofsuier)						V32		35
<input type="radio"/> Sewing machine (Naaldwerkmasjien)						V33		36

9. Which of the following appliances have you chosen/selected for your own household's use in the past? Watter van die onderstaande toerusting het u al in die verlede uitgesoek/gekiek vir u eie huishouding se gebruik?	Never/ Nooit	Once/ Een keer	More than once Meer as een keer			
<input type="radio"/> Refrigerator/ Koelkas (Yskas)				V34		37
<input type="radio"/> Separate freezer (Aparte vrieskas)				V35		38
<input type="radio"/> Stove (hob & oven combined) (Stoof: oond en kookplate gekombineer)				V36		39
<input type="radio"/> Separate oven plus hob (Aparte oond en kookplate)				V37		40
<input type="radio"/> Extractor (cooker hood) (Stoofkap)				V38		41
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: top loader (Bolaai wasmasjien)				V39		42
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: front loader (Voorlaai wasmasjien)				V40		43
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: twin tub (Dubbelbalie wasmasjien)				V41		44
<input type="radio"/> Dishwasher (Skottelgoedwasser)				V42		45
<input type="radio"/> Tumble dryer (Tuimeldroer)				V43		46
<input type="radio"/> Microwave oven (Mikrogolfoond)				V44		47
<input type="radio"/> Vacuum cleaner (Stofsuier)				V45		48
<input type="radio"/> Sewing machine (Naaldwerkmasjien)				V46		49
10a. Have anyone ever guided you on HOW TO EVALUATE household appliances prior to purchasing? If so, indicate <u>who</u> and <u>when</u> ? Het enigiemand u ooit wenke of riglyne gegee oor hoe 'n mens TOERUSTING EVALUEER voordat 'n aankoop gemaak word? Indien wel, spesifiseer <u>wie</u> en <u>wanneer</u> :	Never Nooit	Indirectly Indirek	Yes, intentionally Ja, doelbewus	V47		50
_____				V48		51
_____				V49		52
_____				V50		53
_____				V51		54
10b. Considering ALL the factors that would influence your selection of a new household appliance, how important would the QUALITY of the product be in terms of your final decision? Met in agneming van AL die faktore wat u keuse van 'n nuwe huishoudelike toestel kan beïnvloed, hoe belangrik sal die GEHALTE van die produkte tydens u finale besluit wees?	Very important Baie belangrik	Important Belangrik	A consideration 'n Oorweging			
			Less important Minder belangrik			
			Of no importance Van geen belang			

Section C: Evaluation of appliances/ Evaluering van toerusting

11. Please answer ALL of the following questions Beantwoord asseblief AL die volgende vrae	Always/ Altyd	Sometimes/ Soms	Never/ Nooit			
1. Do you tend to use the <u>price of appliances</u> as an indication of quality? In other words, do you believe that more expensive appliances are of a better quality? Is u geneig om die <u>prys van toerusting</u> as 'n aanduiding van die kwaliteit daarvan te gebruik? Glo u dus dat duurder toerusting van 'n beter kwaliteit is?				V 52		55
2. Are you of the opinion that <u>imported appliances</u> are of a better quality? Is u van mening dat <u>ingevoerde toerusting</u> van 'n beter gehalte is?				V 53		56
3. Will you <u>trust salespeople</u> to recommend the best quality appliances to you? Sal u <u>verkoopsmense vertrou</u> om die beste gehalte toerusting vir u aan te beveel?				V 54		57
4. Do you use the <u>brand names of appliances</u> to discriminate differences in the quality of appliances? Gebruik u <u>handelsname van toerusting</u> as 'n aanduiding van die gehalte van toerusting?				V 55		58
5. Do you use <u>friends and family members' recommendations</u> to identify the best quality appliance? Gebruik u <u>vrinde en familie se aanbevelings</u> om die beste gehalte toerusting te identifiseer?				V 56		59
6. Do consider the <u>guarantee as an indication of the quality</u> of an appliance? Beskou u die <u>waarborg as 'n aanduiding van die gehalte van toerusting</u> ?				V 57		60
7. Do you regard <u>modern design as an indication of good quality appliances</u> ? Beskou u <u>moderne ontwerp as 'n aanduiding van goeie gehalte toerusting</u> ?				V 58		61
8. In your opinion, do you regard appliances that are manufactured from <u>new (trendy) materials</u> to be of good quality? Is u van mening dat toerusting wat van <u>nuwe, moderne materiaal</u> vervaardig is, 'n aanduiding is dat dit van goeie gehalte is?				V 59		62
9. Do you believe that <u>widely advertised appliances</u> will be of good quality? Glo u dat <u>toerusting wat wyd geadverteer</u> word, van goeie gehalte sal wees?				V 60		63
10. Do you believe that an appliance that carries the <u>PROUDLY SOUTH AFRICAN</u> label, will be a good quality product? Is u van mening dat toerusting wat die <u>TROTS SUID-AFRIKAANSE</u> merk dra, van goeie gehalte sal wees?				V 61		64
11. Do you believe that there is <u>little difference in the quality</u> of appliances on the market? Glo u dat daar <u>min verskil</u> is in die gehalte van toerusting wat op die mark is?				V 62		65
12. Will you always go to <u>certain retailers</u> because you believe that they will only sell good quality appliances? Sal u altyd na <u>sekere handelaars</u> toe gaan omdat u glo dat hulle net kwaliteit toerusting sal verkoop?				V 63		66

Section D: Service life of appliances/ Lewensduur van toerusting

12. For any of the listed appliances that you've had to replace in the past, please indicate the APPROXIMATE SERVICE LIFE in terms of YEARS OF USE, from brand new until replacement because of total break down.

(Ten opsigte van die onderstaande toerusting wat u al voorheen moes vervang omdat dit onklaar geraak het, dui asseblief die BERAAMDE LEWENSDUUR van die toerusting aan IN JARE, vanaf aankoop tot dit in onbruik geraak het)

	Service years/ Diensjare	I have no experience of replacement Ek het nog nie toerusting vervang nie nie			
<input type="radio"/> Refrigerator/ Koelkas (Yskas)			V64		67-68
<input type="radio"/> Separate freezer (Aparte vrieskas)			V65		69-70
<input type="radio"/> Stove (hob & oven combined) (Stoof: oond en kookplate gekombineer)			V66		71-72
<input type="radio"/> Separate oven plus hob (Aparte oond en kookplate)			V67		73-74
<input type="radio"/> Extractor (cooker hood) (Stoofkap)			V68		75-76
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: top loader (Bolaai wasmasjien)			V69		77-78
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: front loader (Voorlaai wasmasjien)			V70		79-80
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: twin tub (Dubbelbalie wasmasjien)			V71		81-82
<input type="radio"/> Dishwasher (Skottelgoedwasser)			V72		83-84
<input type="radio"/> Tumble dryer (Tuimeldroer)			V73		85-86
<input type="radio"/> Microwave oven (Mikrogolfoond)			V74		87-88
<input type="radio"/> Vacuum cleaner (Stofsuier)			V75		89-90
<input type="radio"/> Sewing machine (Naaldwerkmasjien)			V76		91-92

13. If you were to purchase the following appliances at this stage (brand new), what is the SERVICE LIFE that you would EXPECT AS BEING REASONABLE (i.e.HOW LONG WOULD YOU EXPECT IT TO BE FUNCTIONAL UNTIL IT NEEDS TO BE REPLACED)?

Indien u nou toerusting in die onderstaande lys NUUT sou koop, WATTER LEWENSDUUR SOU U VERWAG en beskou as BILLIK (DUS, HOEVEEL JAAR SE WERKVERRIGTING SOU U VERWAG OM TE KRY TOTDAT DIE TOESTEL WEER VERVANG MOET WORD)?

	Years Jare	I am not interested in owning one, ever Ek stel nie daarin belang om ooit een te besit nie			
<input type="radio"/> Refrigerator/ Koelkas (Yskas)			V77		93-94
<input type="radio"/> Separate freezer (Aparte vrieskas)			V78		95-96
<input type="radio"/> Stove (hob & oven combined) (Stoof: oond en kookplate gekombineer)			V79		97-98
<input type="radio"/> Separate oven plus hob (Aparte oond en kookplate)			V80		99-100
<input type="radio"/> Extractor (cooker hood) (Stoofkap)			V81		101-102
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: top loader (Bolaai wasmasjien)			V82		103-104
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: front loader (Voorlaai wasmasjien)			V83		105-106
<input type="radio"/> Washing machine: twin tub (Dubbelbalie wasmasjien)			V84		107-108
<input type="radio"/> Dishwasher (Skottelgoedwasser)			V85		109-110
<input type="radio"/> Tumble dryer (Tuimeldroer)			V86		111-112
<input type="radio"/> Microwave oven (Mikrogolfoond)			V87		113-114
<input type="radio"/> Vacuum cleaner (Stofsuier)			V88		115-116
<input type="radio"/> Sewing machine (Naaldwerkmasjien)			V89		117-118



Section E: Product characteristics/ Produk kenmerke

<p>1. Indicate your view of the following statements Dui u mening oor die volgende stellings aan</p>	<p>True/ Waar</p>	<p>False/ Onwaar</p>	<p>Uncertain/ Onseker</p>		
<p>A stainless steel drum is recommended for a washing machine because it will be more durable (last longer) than a porcelain enamel drum/ 'n Vlekvrystaal drom word aanbeveel vir wasmasjiene omdat dit meer duursaam sal wees (langer hou) as 'n porselein emalje drom.</p>				V90	119
<p>The rotation speed of the drum of a tumble dryer will influence its effectiveness Die rotasiespoed van die drom van 'n tuimeldroeër sal sy effektiwiteit beïnvloed</p>				V91	120
<p>A top loading washing machine will have a longer service life than a front loader automatic machine/ 'n Bolaaiër wasmasjien sal langer hou (langer lewensduur) as 'n voorlaaiër outomatiese wasmasjien</p>				V92	121
<p>Food is stored in a freezer at approximately minus ten degrees Centigrade Voedsel word by ongeveer minus 10 grade Celsius in 'n vrieskas gestoor</p>				V93	122
<p>Variable wattage control on a cylinder vacuum cleaner is mainly used to save electricity Die verstelbare wattsterkte op stofsuikers word hoofsaaklik gebruik om te bespaar op elektrisiteitsverbruik</p>				V94	123
<p>An upright vacuum cleaner cleans more effectively than a cylinder vacuum cleaner 'n Regoptipe stofsuier maak meer effektief skoon as 'n silindertipe stofsuier</p>				V95	124
<p>A ceramic glass hob will crack if cold water spills on the hot surface 'n Glasbladstoom kan kraak as koue water daarop stort</p>				V96	125
<p>In a convection oven (thermofan), several racks can be used for baking simultaneously (even delicate sponge cakes) /In 'n konveksie oond (waaier oond) kan daar tegelykertyd op verskillende rakke van die oond gebak word (selfs delikate sponskoeke)</p>				V97	126
<p>Most top loading washing machines draw hot water from the geyser because they cannot heat the water / Die meeste bolaaiër wasmasjiene tap warm water vanaf die huis se warmwatersilinder(geyser) omdat hulle nie die water kan warm maak nie</p>				V98	127
<p>An electronic microwave oven consumes much more electricity than a mechanical model 'n Elektroniese mikrogolfoond gebruik meer krag as 'n meganiese mikrogolfoond</p>				V99	128
<p>A dishwasher with a concealed element is safer to use than one with a visible heating element in the bottom of the machine / 'n Skottelgoedwasser met 'n versteekte element is veiliger om te gebruik as een met 'n sigbare element in die bodem van die masjien</p>				V100	129
<p>The newer refrigerators that have a stainless steel outer finish will last much longer than those with a white porcelain enamel coating /Die nuwer koelkaste met 'n vlekvrystaal buite afwerking sal baie langer hou as dié met 'n wit porselein emalje afwerking</p>				V101	130
<p>The wattage of a refrigerator is higher than the wattage of a vacuum cleaner Die watt verbruik van 'n koelkas (yskas) is hoër as die watt verbruik van 'n stofsuier.</p>				V102	131
<p>Less electricity will be used to bake a kilogram of chicken portions in an oven than to fry them in a pan on a stoveplate / Minder elektrisiteit sal gebruik word om 'n kilogram hoenderporsies in die oond gaar te maak as om dit in 'n pan op 'n stoomplaat te braai.</p>				V103	132
<p>800 rpm is a particularly high rotation speed for a washing machine 800 rpm is 'n besonder hoë rotasiespoed vir 'n wasmasjien</p>				V104	133
<p>If a stew is cooked in a microwave oven, the cooking time will be affected by the size of the baking dish /As 'n bredie in die mikrogolfoond gaargemaak word, sal die grootte van die bakskottel die gaarmaaktyd beïnvloed</p>				V105	134
<p>The sizes of different refrigerators are generally indicated in litres Die groottes van yskaste word gewoonlik in liters aangedui</p>				V106	135
<p>If the noise level of a washing machine is indicated as 40db, it means that the appliance is rather noisy/As die geraasvlak van 'n wasmasjien aangedui is as 40db, beteken dit dat die masjien redelik raserig sal wees</p>				V107	136
<p>A special detergent used by dishwashers, are more alkaline than the detergent used by washing machines/Die spesiale wasmiddel wat deur skottelgoedwassers gebruik word is meer alkalies as die wasmiddel wat deur wasmasjiene gebruik word.</p>				V108	137
<p>The dust bags of vacuum cleaners should be emptied every week Die stofsaakke van stofsuikers moet weekliks leeggemaak word</p>				V109	138
<p>A reasonable life span that could be expected from major household appliances, is approximately 7 years 'n Redelike lewensduur wat van groot elektriese toerusting verwag kan word, is sowat 7 jaar</p>				V110	139

Section F: Open ended questions/ Oop vrae

15. What kind of information would you like to get from a salesperson to assist you to choose the best quality washing machine? Explain in approximately 100 words

Watter tipe inligting sou u van 'n verkoops persoon in die winkel wou kry om u te help om die beste kwaliteit wasmasjien uit te kies? Verduidelik in omtrent 100 woorde

V111			140-141
V112			142-143
V113			144-145
V114			146-147
V115			148-149
V116			150-151
V117			152-153
V118			154-155
V119			156-157
V120			158-159

16. If your friend complains that the washing machine that she has recently bought is of poor quality, what would she probably be complaining about? Explain in approximately 100 words

As u vriend kla oor die swak gehalte van 'n wasmasjien wat hulle onlangs gekoop het, waaroor sal die vriend waarskynlik kla? Verduidelik in ongeveer 100 woorde.

V121			160-161
V122			162-163
V123			164-165
V124			166-167
V125			168-169
V126			170-171
V127			172-173
V128			174-175
V129			176-177
V130			178-179

Section G



When you have to purchase a washing machine for your household, how would the following actions describe your behaviour? Hoe sal die volgende aksies u optrede beskryf as u 'n wasmasjien vir u huishouding moet koop?	Definitef/	Soms/	Nooit/ Never		
I would go to a reliable store and I will generate all the information that I require in the store Ek sal na 'n betroubare handelaar(winkel) gaan en al die inligting wat ek nodig het daar gaan uitvind				v131	180
I would visit several stores before I make a final purchase decision Ek sal na verskeie winkels gaan voordat ek 'n finale besluit oor die produk neem				v132	181
I will contact friends or family to hear which appliances they would recommend Ek sal vriende, familie kontak om te hoor watter toerusting hulle sou aanbeveel				V133	182
I would purchase the same brand that I am familiar with Ek sal dieselfde handelsnaam gaan koop wat ek reeds ken				V134	183
I would browse through news papers and magazine advertisements to see what is advertised Ek sal kyk watter produkte in koerante en tydskrifte geadverteer word				V135	184
I would ask a salesperson to recommend the best product Ek sal 'n verkoopsman gaan vra om die beste produk aan te beveel				V136	185
I would visit several web sites to see what is available Ek sal op verskeie web tuistes gaan kyk wat is beskikbaar				V137	186
I will determine what I can afford and then I will only look at appliances within that price range Ek sal vasstel wat ek kan bekostig en slegs produkte oorweeg wat in daardie prysklas val				V138	187
Although I have to consider affordability, I regard other factors more important than the price of the appliance Hoewel ek bekostigbaarheid in ag neem, is ander faktore vir my belangriker as die prys van die toerusting				V139	188
I will get as much information about various products from different sources and product specialists before I make a final decision Ek sal soveel moontlik inligting omtrent verskillende produkte van verskeie bronne en spesialiste gaan inwin voordat ek 'n finale besluit neem				V140	189
I will choose the appliance on my own without consulting anybody else Ek sal die toerusting alleen kies sonder om iemand anders te raadpleeg				V141	190
I will buy the cheapest appliance that seems like good value for money Ek sal die goedkoopste toerusting koop wat lyk of 'n goeie waarde vir geld sal wees				V142	191
I will choose a modern looking appliance Ek sal toerusting koop wat modern lyk				V143	192
I will take into consideration the economy of the appliance such as the water consumption and the wattage Ek sal die ekonomiese eienskappe in ag neem, onder andere die waterverbruik en die watt verbruik				V144	193
I will seriously consider the size of the machine Ek sal die grootte van die masjien baie sterk oorweeg				V145	194
I will find out where the appliance can be serviced and repaired Ek sal uitvind waar die toestel gediens en herstel sal kan word				V146	195
I will browse through the manuals of the different appliances before I make a final decision Ek sal deur die handleidings van verskillende toestelle blaai voordat ek 'n finale besluit neem				V147	196
I will compare the guarantees that are provided by various manufacturers Ek sal die waarborge wat deur verskillende vervaardigers gebied word, vergelyk				V148	197
I will choose an appliance wherever I can get a good credit arrangement Ek sal die toerusting gaan koop waar ek 'n goeie krediet reeling kan tref				V149	198
I will choose one of the more expensive appliances that are available Ek sal een van die duurste van die beskikbare toerusting koop				V150	199
I will take a friend along to help me choose the new appliance Ek sal 'n vriend of vriendin saamneem om my te help om die nuwe toerusting te kies				V151	200
I will search for a good second hand machine Ek sal kyk of ek 'n goeie tweedehandse masjien in die hande kan kry.				V152	201
I will be focus on the quality differences between appliances that are available Ek sal konsentreer op kwaliteitverskille tussen die apparate wat beskikbaar is				V153	202

