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**AN EVALUATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN CLOTHING RELATED POPULATION  
MEASURES AND SIZING SYSTEMS**

**Mariette Strydom  
Dissertation  
M Cons Sc (Clothing Management)**

**Study Leader: Prof HM de Klerk**

**May 2006**

**AN EVALUATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN CLOTHING RELATED POPULATION  
MEASURES AND SIZING SYSTEMS**

by

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Masters  
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**in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science**

**Department of Consumer Science**

**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
Pretoria**

**Study Leader: Prof HM de Klerk**

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# Abstract

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## AN EVALUATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN CLOTHING RELATED POPULATION MEASURES AND SIZING SYSTEMS

by

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Supervisor: Prof HM de Klerk  
Department: Consumer Science  
Degree: Masters in Consumer Science

The aim of the study was to investigate and describe how the South African clothing industry ensures well-fitting garments to their target consumers. The study was approached from the viewpoint that, if body measurements of the population are not current and accurate, all other aspects such as block patterns, sizing systems, and fit and wear testing cannot contribute to the achievement of an acceptable or proper fit.

The following procedures were followed:

- ✓ **Literature and research** on body measurements and sizing systems were studied.
- ✓ A **survey** was conducted among clothing and footwear manufacturers and retailers in South Africa, to determine the use of body measurements, problems experienced with body measurements, and knowledge of body measurement descriptions, what the South African sizing system entails, how block patterns are generated and how fit and wear testing is done.

- ✓ The **research strategy** consisted of postal questionnaires to all respondents and structured interviews with selected respondents.
- ✓ A **comparison** was made between the international and the respondents' descriptions of body measurements, with regard to consensus among the different descriptions.
- ✓ The **findings** conclude that various outdated and unscientific practices result in many problems being experienced by the industry. A wide variety of body measurements are needed and are used in the South African clothing industry and an alarming number of problems exist with regard to these measurements, probably resulting in the lack of well-fitting garments that satisfy the South African consumer. The problems experienced with the key dimensions are particularly alarming because these measurements are so important in achieving good fit. The supply of good quality garments to their target customers seemed to be a very important consideration to the retailers and manufacturers, but they need help in solving the problems identified.
- ✓ **Recommendations** include the establishment of a national standard for identifying landmarks and exact methods of how the measurements should be taken on the body, before a much needed survey of the South African population can be undertaken.



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## 'N ONDERSOEK NA SUID-AFRIKAANSE KLEDINGVERWANTE BEVOLKINGSMATES EN GROOTTE-SISTEME

deur

**MARIETTE STRYDOM**

Studieleier: Prof HM de Klerk  
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Die doel van die studie was om te ondersoek en te beskryf hoe die Suid-Afrikaanse kleding-industrie goedpassende klere aan hul teikenmark verskaf. Die studie is benader vanuit die standpunt dat, as die liggaamsmates van die bevolking nie heersend en akkuraat is nie, die ander aspekte soos blokpatrone, grootte-sisteme, en pas- en dra-toetse nie 'n goeie pas kan verkry nie.

Die volgende prosedure is gevolg:

- ✓ **Literatuur en navorsing** in verband met liggaamsmates en grootte-sisteme is bestudeer.
- ✓ 'n **Opname** is gedoen onder die Suid-Afrikaanse klere- en skoenvervaardigers asook kleinhandelaars om die gebruik van en probleme met liggaamsmates te bepaal. Daar is ook vasgestel hoe en waar liggaamsmates geneem moet word, wat die Suid-Afrikaanse grootte-sisteme behels, hoe blokpatrone opgetrek word en hoe pas- en dra-toetse gedoen word.

- ✓ Die **navorsingstrategie** het posvraelyste na alle respondente en gestruktureerde onderhoude met uitgesoekte respondente behels.
- ✓ Internasionale en respondente se beskrywings van liggaamsmates is met mekaar **vergelyk** met betrekking tot konsensus ten opsigte van die verskillende beskrywings van mates.
- ✓ Die **bevindinge** was dat verouderde en selfs onwetenskaplike praktyke bydra tot die probleme wat deur die industrie ondervind word. 'n Wye verskeidenheid liggaamsmates is nodig en word gebruik deur die Suid-Afrikaanse klere-industrie, en 'n verontrustende hoeveelheid probleme bestaan met betrekking tot die mates. Dit dra waarskynlik by tot die gebrek aan goedpassende kledingstukke om die Suid-Afrikaanse verbruiker se behoeftes te bevredig. Die probleme wat met die sleutelmates ondervind word, is veral kommerwekkend, aangesien die mates so belangrik vir die verkryging van goeie pas is. Dit blyk dat die voorsiening van klere van goeie gehalte aan hul teikenmarkte 'n baie belangrike oorweging vir die kleinhandelaars en vervaardigers is, maar dat hulle hulp nodig het om die bestaande probleme te bowe te kom.
- ✓ **Aanbevelings** sluit in die daarstel van 'n nasionale standaard met betrekking tot die identifisering van landmerke op die liggaam en presies hoe die mate geneem moet word, voordat 'n broodnodige opname van die Suid-Afrikaanse bevolking se liggaamsmates gedoen word.

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And to our Heavenly Father: All the praise and honour.

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

(Phil. 4:13)





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