

Functionally illiterate consumers' food purchase behaviour in Botswana

MONDIYA NAMETSO MORAPANE

Dissertation

M Consumer Science (Food Management)

Supervisor: Dr GE du Rand

Co-Supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus

October 2012

Functionally illiterate consumers' food purchase behaviour in Botswana

by

MONDIYA NAMETSO MORAPANE

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Masters in Consumer Science (Food Management)

in the

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

Department of Consumer Science

University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Dr GE du Rand

Co-Supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus

October 2012

This dissertation is dedicated whole heartedly to the entire Morapane family.

*I am very thankful for my parents' love, encouragement, support and all the
blessing. Once more I thank you all.*

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation that I submitted for the degree of Masters in Consumer science (Food Management) at University of Pretoria is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this university or any other tertiary institution and that all reference materials contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

MONDIYA NAMETSO MORAPANE

October 2012



Acknowledgements

It is with my pleasure, sense of gratitude and appreciation that I am eternally grateful to the following people for their constructive assistance towards the successful completion of this study:

Special thanks are extended to my Supervisor Dr du Rand, for her enormous contribution towards the completion of this research project. I'm thankful for the valuable and continual feedback you provided me through the journey of this study.

Prof Erasmus, the Co Supervisor of this study you were a continuous source of knowledge, encouragement, inspiration and support. Thank you for pushing me beyond my limits in terms of thinking and quality work.

My sincere gratitude and appreciation to the department of Statistics of University of Pretoria, especially Ms Jaqui Sommerville for her dedications in assisting with data capturing and analysis of the results of the study and not forgetting Dr Debushe also for his contribution.

I would also like to thank the fieldworkers for their hard work in collecting the data, the Lab technician of the Department of Consumer Science, Trudie, for the technical editing of this dissertation.

Many thanks go to the language editor Ms Lindi De Beer for making this text readable and professional.

Thanks go to the ministries of Education Skills and Development and Trade and Industry for allowing me to carry out research.

Huge thanks also go to the respondents for sparing their time and answering the questions.

Special thanks are extended to my husband for the love, support and understanding that I continued to receive from you. Gaolape your love sustained me throughout my studies.

Thanks to my daughter, Legae for unwavering support, patience and understanding why I will constantly cross the border to go to school. You are an angel thank you for enduring during my absence.

Leruo, my son thanks a lot since you also understood why mommy spent so much time in South Africa, Pretoria. You supported me young as you were. I still remember you saying “mama when you are finishing your studies in Pretoria”.

Motlale thanks for looking after my kids while I stayed away to complete my studies. My parents, relatives, friends and church mates, thank you all for the support you gave me.

Appreciation goes to the University of Pretoria for supporting this study by providing a bursary, and to all the many people who contributed to this study in various ways.

Thanks also to myself for never giving up despite all the challenges.

Above all I would like to thank my creator, God whose power, love and mercies endured forever in me that I made it to the last mile of my study journey. You were and will always be with me. “I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).



Abstract

Functionally illiterate consumers' food purchase behaviour in Botswana

by

MONDIYA NAMETSO MORAPANE

Supervisor: Dr GE du Rand
Co-supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus
Department: Consumer Science
Degree: Masters in Consumer Science: Food Management

Illiteracy continues to be a major problem in developing countries. Botswana as an emerging economy with consumers of different literacy levels has no escape for this problem. This study puts the spotlight on consumer illiteracy in Botswana focusing specifically on purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers; the problems encountered in the market place and coping strategies used when purchasing food.

To elicit relevant information a quantitative research design and survey techniques using a structured questionnaire was used to gather information. Potential respondents were conveniently sampled in Gaborone and surrounding areas in Botswana (N=200) and women aged between 25 and 65 years formed the sample group. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and inferential analysis.

From the discussion and the interpretation of the results of the sample of the survey it became clear that certain elements of retailers' marketing mix product, *price*, *place*, *promotion* and *processes* were the most important factors that influenced younger women's food purchases. *Salespeople* are apparently of lesser importance to influence

consumers. The results indicated that functionally illiterate consumers mainly purchased food products from supermarkets and informal traders but also patronised other retail outlets occasionally. The study further revealed that consumers are vulnerable in the market place as they encountered problems during market place navigation, specifically in terms of *too much information; difficulties in computing prices reduced by percentages; crowded places, and advertisements tempting them to buy*. These problems seemed to negate the use of coping strategies.

The study has contributed to the limited literature on the food purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers. Retailers will gain insight on how to deal with functionally illiterate consumers in the market place and find ways of making the market place more consumer friendly.

Keywords: Functionally illiterate consumer; Functional literacy; Low literate consumer; Purchasing behaviour; Retailoutlets; Coping strategies; Gaborone, Botswana.



Table of Contents

Declaration.....	<i>i</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>ii</i>
Abstract	<i>iu</i>
Table of Contents	<i>vi</i>
List of Tables	<i>xi</i>
List of Figures	<i>xiii</i>
List of Addenda	<i>xiv</i>
<i>Chapter 1 The study in perspective.....</i>	<i>1</i>
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM	3
1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY	4
1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.4.1 Aim of the research.....	4
1.4.2 Research questions.....	4
1.4.3 Research objectives	6
1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
1.5.1 Functionally illiterate consumers: A developing economy perspective	6
1.5.2 Marketing mix.....	6
1.5.3 Buying behaviour.....	7
1.6 STUDY AREA.....	8
1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	9
1.7 DATA ANALYSIS	9
1.8 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	10
1.9 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION.....	10
1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS.....	12
<i>Chapter 2 Literature review and conceptualization</i>	<i>14</i>
2.1 INTRODUCTION	14
2.2 LITERACY	14
2.2.1 Functional literacy/illiteracy defined	16
2.2.2 The functionally illiterate consumer.....	16
2.2.3 Consequences of illiteracy in households in Botswana	17
2.2.4 Functional illiteracy and purchasing practices	19
2.3 FOOD PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR.....	19
2.4 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS' PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	20

2.4.1 Marketing factors	21
2.4.2 Socio-cultural factors	30
2.5 CONSUMER DECISION MAKING AND FOOD PURCHASING BY FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS	31
2.5.1 The consumer decision making process	32
2.5.2 Consumer decision-making and functionally illiterate consumers.....	33
2.6 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE.....	37
2.6.1 Problems related to choice of food products	37
2.6.2 Price related problems.....	38
2.6.3 Place / retail environment related problems	38
2.6.4 Promotion related problems.....	39
2.6.5 Salespeople related problems	39
2.6.6 Processes related problems	40
2.6.7 Other problems faced by consumers in the market place	40
2.7 COPING MECHANISMS OF FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES IN THE MARKET PLACE	42
2.7.1 Avoidance coping strategies	43
2.7.2 Confrontative coping strategies	46
2.7.3 Post purchase evaluation.....	47
2.8 SUMMARY	48

Chapter 3 Theoretical perspective, conceptual framework, and research objectives..... 49

3.1 MOTIVATION FOR USING SYSTEMS THEORY AS THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	49
3.1.1 Introduction.....	49
3.1.2 Core assumptions of the system.....	50
3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	53
3.3 AN EXPLICATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	55
3.3.1 Factors that influence consumers purchasing decisions (Inputs)	55
3.3.2 Consumers' interpretation of the influencing factors (Transformation)	55
3.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	57
3.5 SUMMARY	59

Chapter 4 Research design and methodology..... 60

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	60
4.2 UNIT OF ANALYSIS, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES	61
4.2.1 Unit of analysis	61
4.2.2 The sample and sampling procedure.....	61

4.3	MEASURING INSTRUMENT	63
4.3.1	Questionnaire	63
4.3.2	Observation in the retail outlet (Phase 2)	65
4.3.3	Interview (Phase 3).....	66
4.4	DATA COLLECTION	66
4.5	DATA ANALYSIS	66
4.5.1	Descriptive statistics	67
4.5.2	Inferential statistics	67
4.5.3	Open ended questions.....	67
4.5.4	Analysis of interviews	67
4.5.5	Operationalisation.....	67
4.6	QUALITY OF THE STUDY	70
4.6.1	Validity issues.....	70
4.6.2	Reliability issues	71
4.7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	72
4.8	SUMMARY	73

Chapter 5 Results and discussion **74**

5.1	INTRODUCTION	74
5.2	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS	74
5.2.1	Age of the respondents.....	74
5.2.2	Educational status of the respondents	75
5.2.3	Total household income.....	76
5.2.4	Residential areas	76
5.3	MARKETING MIX RELATED FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED RESPONDENTS' FOOD CHOICE.....	77
5.3.1	Conclusive remarks	79
5.4	PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR OF FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS	80
5.4.1	Retail outlets mostly patronised	80
5.4.2	Food products mostly purchased at different retail outlets	85
5.4.3	Consumers who use shopping lists to organise their shopping	86
5.4.4	Payment methods used in the market place	88
5.4.5	Conclusive remarks on consumers' buyer behaviour	89
5.5	PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS IN THE MARKET PLACE.....	89
5.5.1	Problems related to product choice.....	89
5.5.2	Problems related to the prices of food in the retail outlets	91
5.5.3	Problems related to places where consumers purchase food products.....	92
5.5.4	Problems related to the promotion of food products.....	93
5.5.5	Problems related to salespeople (personnel) in the retail outlets	94
5.5.6	Problems related to process related activities in the retail stores	95

5.5.7 Implications of age, educational level and income on problems in the market place	96
5.5.8 Conclusive remarks on problems encountered in the market place	101
5.6 COPING STRATEGIES USED TO HANDLE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE	102
5.6.1 Product related choice coping strategies	102
5.6.2 Price related coping strategies.....	103
5.6.3 Place related coping strategies (N=200)	104
5.6.4 Promotions related coping strategies.....	105
5.6.5 Salespeople related coping strategies	106
5.6.6 Process related coping strategies	107
5.6.7 Conclusive remarks on coping strategies employed in the market place.....	108
5.7 OBSERVATION OF SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR	109
5.8 RETAILERS' SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS IN TERMS OF FOOD PURCHASES.....	111
5.9 CONCLUSION.....	112

Chapter 6 Discussion of findings 114

6.1 INTRODUCTION	114
6.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.....	114
6.3 MARKETING MIX RELATED FACTORS THAT HAVE AN EFFECT ON CONSUMERS' CHOICE OF FOOD PRODUCTS FOR THEIR HOME (OBJECTIVE 1).....	115
6.4 FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS' PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR (OBJECTIVE 2).....	118
6.4.1 Retail outlets patronised by functionally illiterate consumers.....	118
6.4.2 Frequency and reasons for patronising retail outlets.....	119
6.4.3 Food products mainly purchased	120
6.4.4 Payment methods used in retail outlets	120
6.4.5 Consumers who engage in pre-planning.....	121
6.5 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE (OBJECTIVE 3)	121
6.5.1 Problems related to products in the retail outlets	121
6.5.2 Problems related to prices of products in the retail outlets	123
6.5.3 Problems related to retail outlets that provide food products.....	124
6.5.4 Problems related to promotion products in the retail outlets.....	125
6.5.5 Problems related to salespeople in the retail outlets	125
6.5.6 Problems related to processes related activities in the retail outlets.....	126
6.6 COPING STRATEGIES USED IN THE MARKET PLACE (OBJECTIVE 4)	127
6.6.1 Product related coping strategies.....	127
6.6.2 Price related coping strategies.....	128
6.6.3 Place related coping strategies	129
6.6.4 Promotion related coping strategies.....	129
6.6.5 Salespeople related coping strategies	130
6.6.6 Process related coping strategies	130

6.7	IMPLICATION OF PROBLEMS IN THE MARKET PLACE (OBJECTIVE 5)	131
6.8	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF RETAILERS TOWARDS FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS (OBJECTIVE 6).....	131
6.9	FOOD PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR EXPLAINED WITHIN THE SYSTEM THEORY.....	133
6.10	SUMMARY	134

Chapter 7 Limitations and recommendation for further research 135

7.1	THE RESEARCH IN RETROSPECT	135
7.2	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	136
7.3	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	137
7.4	CONCLUDING NOTES	138

References..... 140



List of Tables

TABLE: 3.1	VARIABLES USED IN THE STUDY	57
TABLE: 4.1	OPERATIONALISATION OF THE OBJECTIVES AND SUB-OBJECTIVES	68
TABLE 5.1	NUMBER OF YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING COMPLETED (N=200)	75
TABLE 5.2	GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS WHERE RESPONDENTS RESIDED (N=200)	77
TABLE 5.3	FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED RESPONDENTS' FOOD CHOICE (N=200)	78
TABLE 5.4	RETAIL OUTLETS MOSTLY PATRONISED (N=200)	80
TABLE 5.5	REASONS FOR CONSUMERS' PATRONAGE OF VARIOUS SHOPPING OUTLETS (N=200)	81
TABLE 5.6	RESPONDENTS' STORE PATRONAGE (N=200)	83
TABLE 5.7	AN ASSOCIATION OF FOOD TYPE AND OUTLET (N=200)	85
TABLE 5.8	REASONS FOR MAKING SHOPPING LIST (N=200)	87
TABLE 5.9	REASONS FOR USING PAYMENT METHODS	89
TABLE 5.10	PROBLEMS RELATED TO PRODUCT CHOICE (N=200)	90
TABLE 5.11	PROBLEMS RELATED TO PRICES (N=200)	91
TABLE 5.12	PROBLEMS RELATED TO PLACES WHERE FOOD IS PURCHASED (N=200)	92
TABLE 5.13	PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE PROMOTION OF FOOD PRODUCTS (N=200)	93
TABLE 5.14	PROBLEMS RELATED TO SALESPEOPLE IN THE RETAIL OUTLET (N=200)	94
TABLE 5.15	PROBLEMS RELATED TO PROCESS RELATED ACTIVITIES IN THE RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)	95
TABLE 5.16	IMPLICATIONS OF AGE, EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND INCOME ON PROBLEMS IN THE MARKET PLACE	97
TABLE 5.17	SIGNIFICANCE OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE BY SUBSETS	100

TABLE 5.18	PRODUCT RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)	102
TABLE 5.19	PRICE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)	104
TABLE 5.20	PLACE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)	105
TABLE 5.21	PROMOTION-RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)	106
TABLE 5.22	SALESPEOPLE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)	106
TABLE 5.23	PROCESS RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)	107
TABLE 5.24	AVOIDANCE AND CONFRONTATIVE COPING STRATEGIES	108



List of Figures

FIGURE 1.1	MAP OF BOTSWANA	8
FIGURE 1.2	RESEARCH OUTLINE	11
FIGURE 2.1	COPING STRATEGIES FOR FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS (Viswanathan et al., 2005:19)	43
FIGURE 3.1	CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ADAPTED FROM “A SIMPLE MODEL OF CONSUMER DECISION MAKING” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:483)	54
FIGURE 5.1	AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=200)	74
FIGURE 5.2	THE TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=200)	76
FIGURE 5.3	FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD CHOICE (N=200)	79
FIGURE 5.4	OUTLETS PATRONISED FOR FOOD PURCHASES (N=200)	81
FIGURE 5.5	REASONS FOR PATRONISING VARIOUS RETAIL OUTLET (N=200)	82
FIGURE 5.6	FREQUENCY OF PURCHASING IN RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)	84
FIGURE 5.7	FREQUENCY OF PURCHASING IN RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)	86
FIGURE 5.8	METHODS OF PAYMENT USED FOR FOOD PURCHASES (N=200)	88
FIGURE 5.9	A CONSUMER REQUESTING INFORMATION FROM A SALESPERSON IN A SUPERMARKET	112



List of Addenda

ADDENDUM A	CONSENT LETTER	150
ADDENDUM B	QUESTIONNAIRE	151
ADDENDUM C	SCREENING TEST	161
ADDENDUM D	OBSERVATION CHECKLIST	166
ADDENDUM E	INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	167
ADDENDUM F	MINISTRY PERMISSION LETTER	168
ADDENDUM H	LETTER FROM ETHICS COMMITTEE	171



Chapter 1

The study in perspective

This chapter presents the background and justification of the study. It introduces the research problem as well as important concepts that underpin the study.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Globally millions of consumers enter the market place without the literacy skills to cope, hence they make uninformed buyer decisions that may jeopardise an opportunity to optimise their already limited financial resources. Functional literacy refers to, numerical skills and abilities that enable a consumer to function adequately in day to day life (Viswanathan & Gau, 2005:188). Increasing illiteracy is a global challenge that affects both developed and developing countries. The United Nations Educational Statistical and Cultural Organization indicated that in 2005 more than 785 million adults were illiterate worldwide (UNESCO, 2005). Estimates show that about 47 million were functionally illiterate in the United States in 1995, of which 45 million were in the work force in 2009 (Harrison-Walker, 1995:51) while about 1.5 million adults in the Netherlands were classified as functionally illiterate (EFA Global monitoring report, 2009). However, statistics indicate that functionally illiterate consumers' estimated annual purchasing power was about \$380 million in the USA in 2005 (Viswanathan, Rosa & Harris, 2005:16). Illiterates are therefore contributing significantly to the world economy although they lack the skills to optimise their resources. Realising that illiterate consumers are not equipped with structural and functional knowledge, and that they spend their hard-earned money with the risk of being exploited, this seems like a moral issue that professionals such as a consumer scientist can no longer ignore and should attend to.

As part of the sub-Saharan Africa region, Botswana with its emerging economy is no exception in terms of high rates of illiteracy. Botswana is located in Southern Africa and landlocked by South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia and Angola. It was one of the poorest countries when it got independence in 1966 (NDP 9, 2006), but is now classified in the middle income bracket with its wealth coming from diamond mining and tourism. Botswana is about 582 000 km² in size with a total population estimated at 2 million; one of the lowest populations in the world. The first national survey on literacy levels in the country

was carried out in 1993. Results showed that 68.9% of adult males and 70.3% of the females were illiterate at that time (Central Statistics office, 1997). The second national survey on literacy levels that was performed in 2003 indicated that 2.11% of the 191 776 population of Gaborone had never attended school (Central Statistics Office and Department of Non formal Education, 2003). Illiteracy has been and still is high while the rapidly changing business setting in Botswana has led to the detriment of a large percentage of Botswana's population. The eruption of departmental and chain stores that offer a wide range of products through self-service is complicating matters for vulnerable consumers who wish to benefit from these new stores. Self-service requires a consumer to locate, compare and select the products in the store without the assistance of salespeople (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Self-service product display therefore requires a certain level of knowledge which functionally illiterate consumers lack. As a result they are likely to be exploited.

Functionally illiterate consumers, especially women, play a major role in the market place as they are responsible for the food procurement of their households (Viswanathan, Gajenddriran & Venkatesan, 2008:306). These women may be in conflict with this self-service system as they are not accustomed to it. They inevitably take more time and effort to locate food products and to interpret food labels in the store (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:16). Food is a very important commodity in households as food provides nutrients that are necessary to maintain life and growth and to prevent illness (Kittler & Sucher, 2008:1). Due to recent global recession, food has become a very expensive household commodity and when money is not spent wisely the outcome of the family health status could be affected negatively. Lack of functional skills in the market place sometimes even results in consumers being blatantly exploited. Consumers may for example purchase food from neighbourhood shops that usually charge higher prices and who even overcharge them for credit purchases without their knowledge (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008:314).

Consumers in less developed countries have been neglected with regard to consumer support, education and protection (Darly & Johnson, 1993:37). Although the Botswana Consumer Affairs Unit exists, it seems as if the unit is not doing enough as the Performance Audit Report of 2007 indicates ample evidence of consumer exploitation. This therefore calls for consumers to be protected. Apart from being **protected**, functionally illiterate consumers also need to be **educated** as the market place is becoming more complex. New stores and countless new products bear evidence of the problems consumers encounter every day with information that the consumers cannot comprehend. Adequate and correct information should be made available to consumers to facilitate wise purchase decisions (Day & Aaker, 1997:44). Informed, educated and empowered consumers will be strengthened in the market place, consumers will optimise their resources, experience less frustration and retailers could

better meet consumers' expectations. An explication of functionally illiterate consumer problems when purchasing food products and a comprehension of their subsequent coping strategies will be very useful to retail professionals and government for the formation of strategies to assist and support these vulnerable consumers to make informed responsible buyer decisions.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Botswana as an emerging economy is no exception with regard to the global problem of functional illiteracy. The rapid transformation in the retail business has resulted in an increase in departmental stores that provide diverse goods through self-service to many consumers of diverse socio-economic levels. Functionally illiterate consumers are unfortunately unable to cope with these changes or to benefit from the progress. This is because they lack the confidence and skills to function independently in sophisticated retail environments. They need to plan, create shopping lists and check prices (Viswanathan, Sridharan, Gau & Ritchie, 2009:86). Most of the hard earned income of these consumers who are mostly also in the lowest income earning groups is spent on food as it is a primary necessity. Research reveals that a higher share of the total expenditure in the low income families is allocated to food (Hamilton, 2001). Research done in developing countries indicates that households spend roughly half of their household incomes on food (Mitchell, 2008) while individuals in subsistence context spent a higher proportion of their income on necessities such as food (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008:302). For instance in South Africa which is neighbouring Botswana, the Sunday Times newspaper reported on 6 August 2012 that according to the economist, Mike Schussler, the poor are vulnerable to food prices because they already spend as much as 40% of their household income on food.

The nature of problems experienced by functionally illiterate consumers in Botswana and how they cope with these problems in the market place is not known. This study seeks to shed some light on this problem to ultimately start a process of reform whereby consumers, retailers and the economy could benefit.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Although studies have been done on functionally illiterate consumers globally (Mhlanga, 2010; Viswanathan, Torelli, Xia & Gau, 2009; Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b; Jae & Delvecchio, 2004), no such studies have been conducted in Botswana to date. An explication of functionally illiterate consumers' problems in Botswana, especially with regard to food purchase will be very useful to retailers to help them acquire a better understanding of an important market segment, how to handle them and retain customer loyalty. Findings could enable retailers to improve their shop layouts, labelling and promotions to better serve consumers' expectations. It will also help retailers to develop marketing strategies that are relevant and suitable, and to possibly invest in adult education programmes. Findings will also add to the extant literature on the purchasing and consumption behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers and could serve as a point of departure for further research. Public policy makers will be enlightened on how consumer literacy can be put into adult literacy.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Aim of the research

The aim of the study was to investigate and describe the food choice and purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers in Gaborone, Botswana because food purchasing involves many of these households' already restricted budgets. Unwise spending could have direct consequences in terms of their families' wellbeing. The intention was to identify problems that are encountered prior to and during food purchasing, to identify coping mechanisms that are used to overcome pertinent relevant limitations and to make recommendations on how consumers' problems could be addressed to enable them to cope better. The extended marketing mix (Kotler, Hayes & Bloom, 2002) was used as the input in the system theory.

1.4.2 Research questions

The research aimed to explore and to describe the phenomenon of food purchasing and therefore used the following research question namely,

- What is the purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers?
- What are the challenges that functionally illiterate consumers encounter in the market place during food purchasing?

- How do functionally illiterate consumers cope when facing challenges in the market place?

The research questions were formulated from the assumptions that functionally illiterate consumers encounter problems in the market place when purchasing food.

1.4.3 Research objectives

The following objectives were formulated to direct the study.

Objective 1: To investigate to which extent factors that are associated with a retailers' extended marketing mix affect consumers' choice of food products for their home.

Objective 2: To investigate functionally illiterate consumers' buyer behaviour with regard to food purchases:

Sub-objective 2.1: To investigate and describe where food products are purchased.

Sub-objective 2.2: To investigate and describe why consumers purchase specific food products at specific retail outlets.

Sub-objective 2.3: To investigate and describe what types of food products are mainly purchased for their household.

Sub-objective 2.4: To investigate and describe how often the various types of food products are purchased.

Sub-objective 2.5: To investigate and describe how food products are selected.

Sub-objective 2.6: To investigate and describe how monetary exchange is handled in the various retail outlets.

Sub-objective 2.7: To investigate and explore whether they do any pre-purchase planning before food purchases are made.

Objective 3: To identify and describe the problems that are experienced by functionally illiterate consumers in the market place, which are specifically related to the following:

Sub-objective 3.1: Food product choice;

Sub-objective 3.2: Prices/cost of food;

Sub-objective 3.3: Places/retail outlets;

Sub-objective 3.4: Promotion of food products;

Sub-objective 3.5: Salespeople in the food outlets;

Sub-objective 3.6: Process related activities in retail outlets.

Objective 4: To explore and describe the coping strategies used by functionally illiterate consumers to overcome/handle problems encountered in the market place.

Objective 5: To discuss the implications of the problems encountered by functionally illiterate consumers with regards to their food purchase behaviour.

Objective 6: To discuss the parameters of retailers' social responsibility towards functionally illiterate consumers in terms of food purchases.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.5.1 Functionally illiterate consumers: A developing economy perspective

The market place today has different segments of consumers that differ in terms of socio economic status and the market place these days is so complex that a consumer needs a considerable literacy level in order to optimise the information around him/her. The study was specifically looking at functionally illiterate consumers as part of the consumers who navigate the market place. Adkins and Ozanne (2005b:93) defines a functional illiterate consumer as a consumer who possesses skills below a fourth grade on primary school level in the reading and comprehending documents and mathematics, while Ozanne, Adkins and Sandlin (2005:242) refer a functionally illiterate consumer as someone who lacks the reading and writing skills to meet the daily demands in the market place. These definitions indicate that these consumers need literacy skills in order to navigate the market place. The society values education. Individuals with limited literacy may therefore encounter stigmatisation (Ozanne, *et al.*, 2005) apart from encountering problems in the market place. These consumers for example struggle to locate the products in the retail outlets, quite often purchase a wrong product due to inability to discriminate products or may fail to do mathematical calculations to know what they can afford or not.

1.5.2 Marketing mix

The marketing mix is a business tool used in marketing of products and services (Kotler, *et al.*, 2002:243). The factors that influence consumers' food choice are discussed in terms of the marketing mix as and the extended version acknowledges certain additional elements. The marketing mix provide marketers with a framework of delivery customer value based around the product, price, place, promotion, people, physical environment and processes (Gay, Charlesworth & Rita, 2007:151). Product refers to any tangible and intangible products or services offered to potential customers and possess the entire dimensions that are relevant to a product range (Mitchell, 2002:79). Different retail outlets for example have

different food products in terms of brands and types. Price refers to a tool that indicates or measures affordability, value for money or even quality for different consumers (Gay *et al.*, 2007). Retail outlets may focus on price to attract consumers and price may determine consumers' eventual product choice or perception of quality. Place refers to the location where products are offered on sale, and multiple descriptors may be used to describe the place, namely convenient access, layout, display and the general atmosphere (Gothan, 2008). Promotion entails methods of communication that a retail outlets use to provide the information to its customers such as advertising, personal selling to bring about favourable buying action and achieve long lasting confidence in the retail outlet and the product it provide (Ball, McCulloch, Frantz, Geringer & Minor, 2004:543). Salespeople represent all the employees of a retail outlet which customer come into contact with because they become part of the sales experience (Gothan, 2010:30) while process focuses on delivering of the service to the customer and enhancing customer perceived value with customer satisfaction as an important outcome of the service delivery process (Bendall-Lyon & Powers, 2004:115). These marketing tools were used as the input in the systems theory.

1.5.3 Buying behaviour

Buying behaviour refers to process by which individuals search for, select, purchase, use and dispose goods and services in an attempt to satisfy their needs and wants. Buying behaviour involves problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase and post purchase evaluation (Gillespie, Jeannet & Hennessey, 2004). The purchasing process varies for different individuals due to personal differences and differences in social, economic and cultural environment (Gillespie *et al.*, 2004:120-126).

Previous researches indicate that illiterate consumers encounter significant problems in the market place (Mhanga, 2010; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2009) due to the fact that grocery shopping has become a self service encounter in major stores which demands certain minimum literacy skills. Consumers in developing countries such as the illiterate understandably then tend to exhibit higher level of brand loyalty to counteract lack of sufficient information about existing brands and alternatives. For functionally illiterate consumers purchasing behaviour can be a challenging process as they need to make choice between different branded products. These consumers' incomes are generally low, which further complicates matters (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). There is limited research on illiterate consumers especially on their purchasing behaviour.

1.6 STUDY AREA

The study was done in Gaborone and the surrounding areas. Gaborone is the capital city of Botswana, situated in the southern east corner of Botswana and 15 kilometres from the South African boarder. Gaborone has a population of 191,776 based on a 2006 survey. The population constitutes 10% of the total population of Botswana. Gaborone is surrounded by villages such as Mogoditshane, Gabane, Tlokweng, Mochudi and Tlokweng (see Figure 1.1).

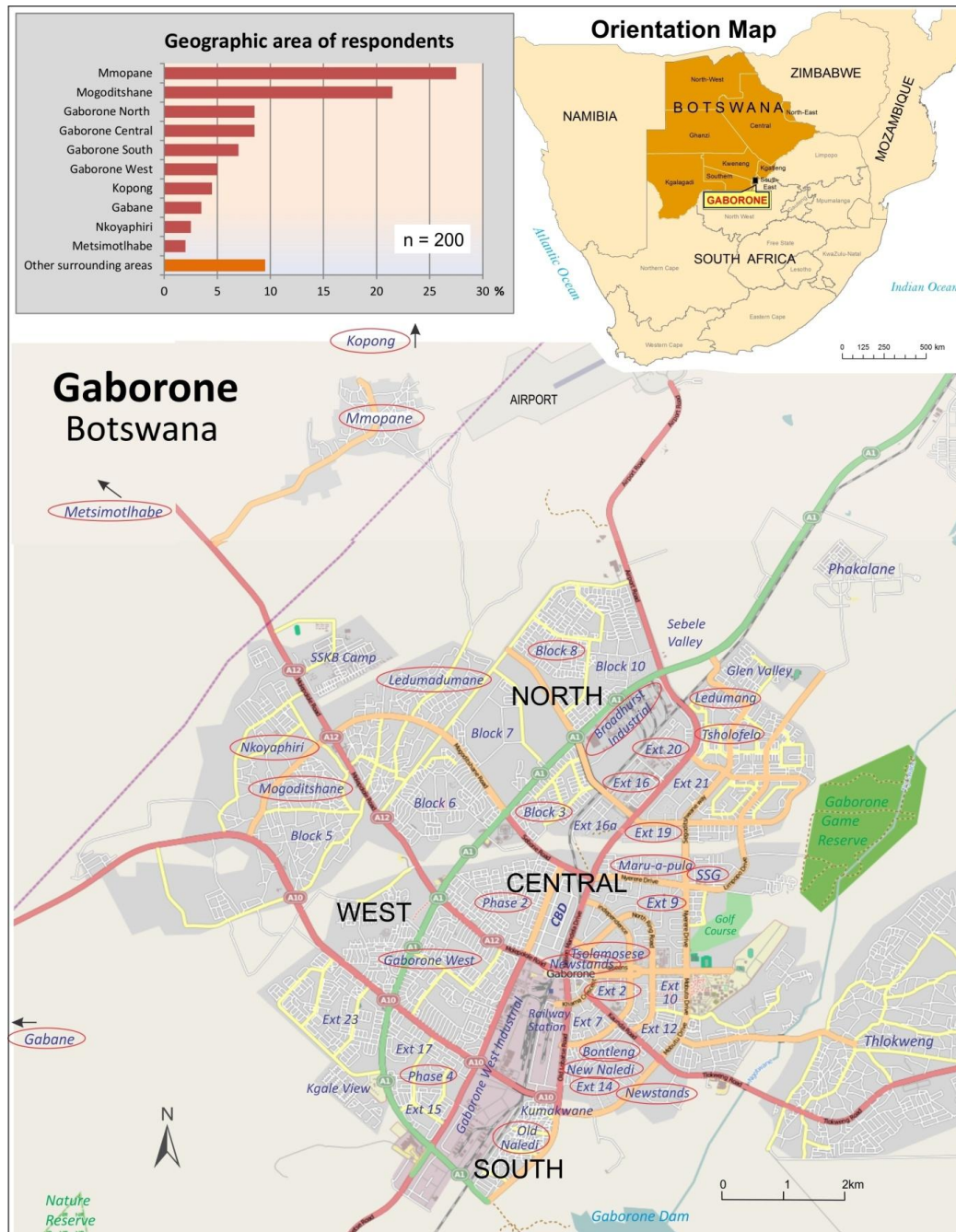


FIGURE 1.1: MAP OF BOTSWANA

It was believed that Gaborone would be the ideal place to collect data as there are many different types of retail outlets. It was assumed that consumers in this city would have experienced different problems in these different retail outlets.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research was exploratory and descriptive in nature. It aimed to gain new information about food purchase behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers in Botswana. It followed a quantitative approach although certain qualitative methods were incorporated. A structured questionnaire was used to interview the respondents in Gaborone and surrounding areas. The questionnaire contained questions that requested responses on a 3 and 5 point Likert-type scales with a few open ended questions that related to problems encountered in the market place and coping strategies used. A screening test was first carried out to determine whether the respondents qualified for the study. The questionnaire was also pre-tested before it was administered. The researcher and two well-trained assistants managed to interview 200 respondents during August 2010 and November 2010. To supplement the data from the questionnaire, some observations were done in various retail outlets where respondents purchased food. Retailers were also interviewed to find if they played any role in helping illiterate consumers in their stores.

The sample consisted of the women aged between 25 and 65 years with limited or no formal education. Convenience sampling was used to recruit willing female respondents that met the selection criteria. Women, who were observed, were randomly sampled while stratified random sampling was used to recruit the retailers who were interviewed.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. The frequencies, percentages, and means were calculated and the results were presented in forms of tables and graphs.

Inferential statistics were used to determine the relationship between specific demographic characteristics, i.e. age, education and income level and the problems encountered by functionally illiterate consumers in the market place. Three age groups were later distinguished to allow for differences in experience.

Open ended questions were also analysed through open coding and axial coding to form categories that cohered relevant constructs.

1.9 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The system theory was found appropriate to be used in this study as it allowed an investigation of illiterate consumers' food purchasing behaviour/food choice as an entire entity, as well as illiterate consumers' consideration of the various elements of the extended marketing mix in terms of sequence, relationship and their interdependency and how they contribute to consumers' food choice in the retail outlets. The system theory as a process reflects a sense of order and distinguishes three phases: inputs, transformation and output. The inputs in this study refer to the extended marketing mix elements and socio-cultural factors that influenced consumers' choice of food products. The inputs are then transformed within the consumers' own frame of reference in memory. Consumers' final decisions which can be either informed or uninformed culminate as the output.

1.10 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is organised in terms of the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1** - Provides the background and the justification of the study. It introduces the research problem as well as a definition and brief discussion of important and relevant concepts that were used to confine the scope of the study.
- **Chapter 2** - Reviews the literature required for the theoretical foundation of the study. It presents previous research on consumers' food purchasing behaviour, problems encountered by functionally illiterate consumers in the market place as well as coping strategies used.
- **Chapter 3** - Elaborates the conceptual framework of the study. The system theory was used to develop the conceptual framework. The objectives are also outlined.
- **Chapter 4** - Outlines a more detailed account of the methodology adapted for the study. The study population and research setting as well as measuring instrument are outlined and described.
- **Chapter 5** - Presents the results as well as the discussion of the findings of the study.
- **Chapter 6** - Outlines a discussion of the findings hand in hand with the literature.

- **Chapter 7** - Reflects the conclusion and the recommendations that are based on the findings of the study. It also outlines some limitations encountered in the process of conducting this study and identifies areas for further research.

Figure 1.2 provides an outline of the research project.

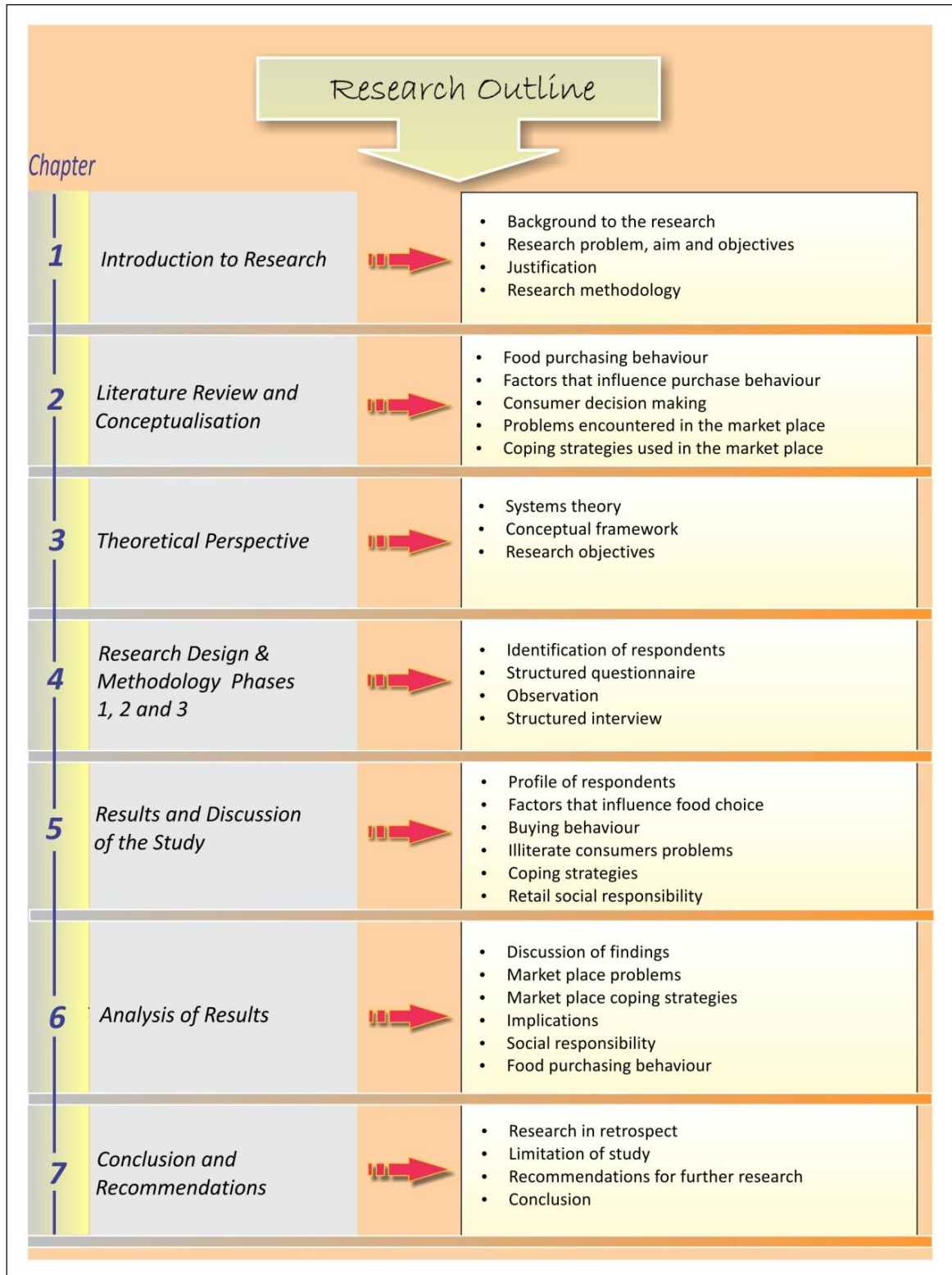


FIGURE 1.2: RESEARCH OUTLINE

1.11 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Certain concepts are defined to reflect the context in which they are used in this study:

Functionally illiterate consumer

A consumer who possesses skills below a fourth grade in reading and comprehending documents and mathematics (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:93). It also refers to a consumer who can possibly read and write simple sentences with a limited vocabulary but cannot read and write well enough to deal with daily requirements in the society.

Functional literacy

The expression of language and numeracy competencies that enable adults to perform adequately in day to day life (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:15).

Functional illiteracy

Describes reading and writing skills that are inadequate to manage daily living activities in the market place (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005).

Supermarket

Refers to any large departmental store that sells food products and groceries.

Food purchasing behaviour

Refers to what consumers purchase, how they purchase, how much they purchase (quantity) and where they purchase food products (Ballantine, Rousseau & Venter, 2008).

Product

A product is anything tangible or intangible that an organisation/retail outlet offers to their potential customer and possess all the dimensions that are relevant to a product range (Mitchell, 2002:79).

Price

Price is a tool that indicates or measures affordability, value for money and even quality for different consumers (Dunne, Lusch & Griffith, 2002:369). It is used by retailers to attract customers.

Place

Place refers to the ease of access which potential consumers have to food products. Layout, well-displayed goods and the general atmosphere are components of a place (Gothan, 2008).

Promotion

Promotion refers to communication that secures understanding between the retail outlet and its publics to bring about a favourable buying action. It can be written, oral or visual and is used to inform the consumers about the store's offering (Ball *et al.*, 2004:534)

Processes

Processes entail delivering of service to the consumers (Bendall-Lyon & Powers, 2004:115) such as how the store handle complaints, provision of credit facilities, exchange policies and guarantees.

Salespeople

Refers to people that significantly influence customers' satisfaction in stores and include packers, those who price the goods and security personnel (Gothan, 2008:30).



Chapter 2

Literature review and conceptualization

This chapter provides a review of existing literature that provided the theoretical background for the study. It introduces the main concepts of the study.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Botswana, which is typified as an emerging economy, the market place today is populated with consumers of different lifestyles and varying needs which inevitably manifest in their purchasing behaviour. Development in the country inter alia led to the introduction of major supermarkets across the country and the introduction of self-service product displays in most of the major retail outlets. This self-service, however, requires a reasonable level of structural and functional knowledge of consumers such as the functionally illiterate in order to cope in the market place (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:15). This review of literature will focus on factors that affect functionally illiterate consumers' food purchasing behaviour, the problems they encounter in the market place as well as the coping strategies that they apply.

2.2 LITERACY

Literacy is a complex multidimensional concept. Defining literacy is extremely difficult, due to numerous interrelated factors such as changing societal demands, inconsistent standards and inadequate evaluation measures and it has also proved to be both complex and dynamic (UNESCO, 2006:147). Although the concept of literacy is described by researchers from different perspectives, certain major concepts are repeated in the different descriptions, for example the ability to read and write. Literacy definitions have evolved over the years. Literacy has traditionally been defined as being able to read and write. UNESCO (2006:158) referred the concept of literacy as the ability of a person to read and write a short statement on his /her everyday life. Jae and Delvecchio (2004:342) pointed out that literacy encompasses using printed and written information to function effectively in society to achieve one's goal. The United Nations Educational, Statistical and Cultural Organisation define literacy as "the ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate and compute using

printed and written materials associated with varying text” (UNESCO, 2004). UNESCO’s definition of literacy indicates how illiteracy has kept on changing. UNESCO (2006:149-151) indicates that literacy is based on four approaches which differ in complexity. These approaches emphasise that literacy is a set of tangible skills, especially the cognitive skills of reading and writing, and that literacy can be applied and practiced in the society. Literacy is a broad based-learning process as individuals learn in order to become literate and finally they understand literacy as a text. Furthermore literacy is a life-long process to gain meaning from print. It is the ability to understand spoken words and comprehend written text. The skills needed to grasp written and verbal meaning vary in different social and cultural contexts according to the need and demand of that society, i.e. skills that are effective in one society are not necessarily useful in another. For example in Botswana a consumer in Gaborone (the capital city of Botswana) has different language and numeracy skills from a consumer in Kalfontein (a remote area in Botswana).

Obstacles to literacy vary by country/culture and this may be due to:

- Availability of written materials
- Cultural influences
- Quality of education
- Media

The first ever national literacy survey conducted in Botswana was conducted from July to November in 1993. The survey results indicated a national literacy rate of 68.9%, with 66.9% and 70.3% for males and female respectively (Central Statistics Office, 1997). The second national literacy survey was executed in 2003 which revealed an increased literacy rate from 68, 9% in 1993 to 81% (Central Statistics Office and Department of Non Formal Education, 2003:95). However this survey indicated a reduction in the gap between male and female literacy rates (from 66.9% for males and 70% for females in 1993 to 80% for males and 70.3% for females in 2003). Since the national literacy survey is conducted every 10 years in Botswana the next literacy survey will be conducted in 2013.

This study was concerned with the purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers, i.e. how they navigated the market place to get the food products needed for their households, the challenges that they encountered in the market place as well as the coping strategies employed. As mentioned, there is evolution of literacy which leads to another concept of literacy which is functional literacy. The following section provides an overview definition of functional literacy.

2.2.1 Functional literacy/illiteracy defined

Functional literacy as defined by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:15) refers to the expression of language and numeracy competencies that enables adults to perform adequately in day to day life. Viswanathan & Gau, (2005:188) links functional literacy to the notions of literacy and numeracy that enable a consumer to function optimally and successfully in the market place while Adkins and Ozanne (2005a:94) imply that literacy is the ability to complete specific tasks. The authors further added that functional literacy refers to possessing the literacy skills needed to function within different social contexts (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:153). Functional illiteracy therefore means people's lack of language and numeracy skills to meet their needs in the market place. It entails the inability to make practical use of one's knowledge for social and practical tasks (Gavritliuk, 2007:81). Functional illiteracy ranges from people who are unable to read anything, to individuals who can write their names but who have difficulty in understanding instructions on products, to people who cannot use specialised knowledge to solve problems according Kirsch & Guthrie as cited Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005. UNESCO (2006:419) implies that a person is functionally illiterate if he/she cannot engage in activities that require literacy. From these definitions it is clear that numeracy is a counterpart of literacy and it refers to possessing basic competency in counting (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Functional illiteracy implies that an individual is not able to read, write and function successfully in the market place in order for his/her needs to be met.

2.2.2 The functionally illiterate consumer

In practical terms, a functionally illiterate consumer possesses skills below a fourth grade in reading and comprehending documents and mathematics (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:93). According to UNESCO (2006:10) an individual is considered to be functionally illiterate if she cannot engage in activities that require literacy, e.g. reading and writing. For the purpose of this research a functionally illiterate consumer is a person who is not able to use reading, writing and mathematical skills to effectively complete shopping tasks (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a:94-95).

Characteristics of a functionally illiterate consumer

A functionally illiterate consumer possesses one or more of the following characteristics.

- A functionally illiterate consumer fails to locate products in the retail outlets.
- A functionally illiterate consumer purchases a wrong product.
- A functionally illiterate consumer fails to do simple mathematical calculations that are necessary to distinguish price differences.
- A functionally illiterate consumer fails to distinguish similar products.

- A functionally illiterate consumer fails to understand product labels that contain usage instructions and explicate the content.

2.2.3 Consequences of illiteracy in households in Botswana

As mentioned, illiteracy is a major challenge to the country. Consumers need to have basic reading and writing skills in order to cope in today's market place and the absence of these skills poses a significant implication to the households. The implications of illiteracy in the household are discussed below:

2.2.3.1 *Incorrect purchasing*

Consumers make mistakes when purchasing food products, for instance they may purchase the wrong food products and as a result they do not get value for their money. Consumers with limited literacy often have to suffice with lower quality goods because they may not have a choice but purchase what they have memorised (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). If consumers do not get the right food products for their household then the nutritional status of their family members is at stake, as they may have to take diets that are inadequate in some nutrients which can affect physical health. It is therefore important for consumers to be facilitated to help them to make informed choices. Furthermore if consumers are limited in terms of reading ability they may even fail to cook the food properly as they cannot follow the instructions that are provided.

2.2.3.2 *Purchasing hindrance*

Illiteracy is a hindrance to the products purchased for households as research indicates that consumers at times avoided purchases, which means they end up leaving the retail outlets without quality products. On the other hand they end up purchasing substandard products. And this can affect the nutritional status of their household (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:259; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:153). Illiterate consumers would be unable to fully participate in the shopping environment. Those who are able to do the purchasing exercise do it unfreely as they are not confident enough (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). This suggests that they may rely on the social network to do the purchasing for them, which is not good as literature indicated that some of the people who help the illiterate consumers with shopping chores tend to over-control them (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). In some cases some illiterate consumers relied on the salespeople who may also be rude and unsympathetic. It further affects consumers physically and psychologically and as a result their needs are not met (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:153).

2.2.3.3 Lack of participation in shopping

Consumers may feel ashamed of themselves and as a result they do not participate in shopping and would rather send family or friend to do shopping for them. Lack of participation in shopping cripple the illiterate consumers as they will not be aware of what is happening in the market place, such as new developments in the market place.

2.2.3.4 Unemployment

Another implication of illiteracy for an individual in the household is the inability to get employment. Literacy level, employment stability and income are related. There is a strong relationship between unemployment and illiteracy, for instance to have a decent job one needs to be educated. Unemployment is a serious problem at the rate of over 23.8% of the labour force in Botswana (Mid-Term review of NDP 9, 2006:27). The unemployment is largely among the young, lowly skilled people, specifically females (Hanemann, 2005) and the uneducated. Unemployment also has an impact on the functioning of a household, because if the breadwinner is not educated this can pose consequences to the household; the household may not have enough food and poverty may result. Poverty can contribute to the HIV/AIDS pandemic which at the moment the government of Botswana is trying to prevent new infection by providing anti retrieval drugs hence a lot of money is used in buying these drugs. However, the government of Botswana has come up with initiatives that help the unemployed, illiterate and other Batswana to eradicate poverty such as backyard gardening (Mid-Term review of NDP 9, 2006:63). Illiterate consumers are likely to have children who are illiterate and drop out of school so this will impose a burden on the family breadwinner as these children when they grow up may be dependent on the family support system to survive.

2.2.3.5 Negative health outcomes

Illiteracy can lead to serious implications in the health of an individual. Adults with literacy problems have poorer health. This may be due to the fact that they are likely to take medications incorrectly and they are likely to have less regular medical checkups as they cannot afford them. Illiterate consumers also fail to read instructions or how to take medicine or to prepare products correctly. Consumers may also fail to take medication properly thereby endangering their health status (Ozanne, *et al.*, 2005:258).

While illiteracy poses significant threats to the individual and households it also affects the society. The literacy pandemic does not only pose a major threat to the households, but also to economic growth, political stability and development in a country (Youngman, 2002:70). If there are more illiterate people in the country it will be harder for the country to develop. Countries with a low level of education encounter barriers to economic growth and

development. A low level of education presents problems to the household such as lower income levels and this leads to a low state-wide level of education which results in increased welfare costs, higher crime rates due to lack of employment and decreased voter participation. The role of education is for growth and prosperity of the individual and society as a whole (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:154).

2.2.4 Functional illiteracy and purchasing practices

Purchasing practices refer to the activities that relate to purchasing supplies and include places where someone purchases goods, what and how often an individual purchases. It involves the relationship between buyer and retailer. Understanding purchasing practices of functionally illiterate consumers is very important as it provides an understanding of how this vulnerable group plans, selects and purchases their food products from the market place. It assists the retailer in acquiring an understanding of how the consumer carries out a shopping errand and as a result can help improve the future decisions of the buyer. This knowledge is not only relevant to the buyer, but also to the marketers as they can attain a more detailed understanding of the purchasing practices of functionally illiterate consumers and then organise their marketing strategies to better meet the needs and demands of these consumers (Sheth & Mittal, 2004:273).

Food purchasing practices of functionally illiterate consumers differ from literate consumers because they are limited in reading and writing ability. Previous research indicates that functionally illiterate consumers' purchasing practices include perceptual decision making and loyalty to retail outlets (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:16). They base their decisions on non-value producing factors such as familiarity with the shopping environment. Functionally illiterate consumers also befriend salespeople so that they help them with purchasing procedures (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:27).

2.3 FOOD PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR

Purchasing refers to a series of activities that involves the selection and acquiring of desired goods and services. These activities include product search, selection receipt, storage and final use of the product (Davis, Lockwood, Pantelidis & Alcott, 2008:180). Purchasing behaviour refers to activities and decision processes involved in choosing alternatives, procuring and using the products (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2006) that are involved in the acquisition of food products; the product to be purchased has to be the right product, the right amount, and acquired at the right time, place and price (Gregoire, 2010:100). Food purchasing behaviour in this case refers to what consumers purchase, how they purchase,

how much they purchase (quantity) as well as where they purchase food products (Ballantine, *et al.*, 2008). For functionally illiterate consumers purchasing is a complicated process as they need to make a choice between too many products of different brand names and prices. Functionally illiterate consumers are limited when it comes to purchasing as their incomes are generally low and therefore they are not able to purchase in bulk (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:442). Functionally illiterate consumers' food purchasing behaviour involves how and why these consumers navigate the market place, what the food products that they purchase are, as well as where they get their products from.

There are ways in which consumers tend to purchase the products. Purchase can be either a trial or repeat purchase. A *trial purchase* is when a consumer purchases a product which may be new in the market for the first time and usually the product is bought in a small quantity (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:497). In this case it is sensible to buy small quantities as this gives ample time to try out effectiveness. A trial purchase may not be applicable to functionally illiterate consumers as they are brand loyal and research indicates that they buy the same products from familiar stores (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). *Repeat purchase* occurs when a consumer repeats the purchase. A consumer purchases a product/brand they have purchased before. It usually involves little or no information seeking at all and is performed quickly (Davis *et al.*, 2008). The repeat purchase signifies that the product satisfies the consumer's needs and therefore it can be used again and as a result it leads to brand loyalty. Functionally illiterate consumers, like other consumers, do engage in food purchasing which can be very difficult for them and they can end up purchasing the wrong product.

2.4 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS' PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

Multiple factors influence functionally illiterate consumers' purchase behaviour when it comes to food choice in the market place (inputs). These factors may however influence illiterate consumers differently due to their inability to use information to their advantage irrespective of how these factors are experienced and eventually transformed into outputs that would refer to informed responsible buying decisions (or not) (Gregoire, 2010:3). The system perspective is used to discuss this interaction and to explain that certain factors are more significant than others during food purchasing.

2.4.1 Marketing factors

Marketing factors such as product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes influence consumers' food purchasing decision. Each factor will be examined individually.

2.4.1.1 Product

A product is anything tangible or intangible that an organisation/retail outlet offers to their potential customers, possesses all the dimensions that are relevant to a product range and it is the central focus of the marketing mix. If it fails to satisfy the needs of consumer no amount of promotion, price or place will persuade consumers to purchase (Ball *et al.*, 2004:525). In this study product refers to food product. Product has several aspects including variety, packaging, colour, quality and brand name which will be discussed below.

There are a **variety** of food products available for consumers in the market place. The market place offers **perishables, fresh products and non-perishable products**. Perishables include vegetables and fruits, dairy, bakery products and meat, while non-perishables include cereals and legumes. **Fruits and vegetables** can be sold fresh and processed. Processed fruits are canned, frozen and dried. Vegetables are edible parts of plants and examples of them are roots, (e.g. carrot, bulbs-onion, garlic), stems (e.g. celery leaves, spinach), seeds, beans and flowers (e.g. broccoli) (Brown, 2011:271). These vegetables like fruits can be sold when they are fresh or they can be processed in different ways. They can be canned, bottled, frozen or even dried. Fresh fruits and vegetables are generally sold loose or may be packaged. There is written information in these packages which can be a challenge to functionally illiterate consumers. The information in these packages includes brand name, ingredients used, expiry date, etc. Supermarkets sell fresh fruits contained in trays, boxes and bags while informal traders mostly sell loose fruits although there are some who sell fresh fruits in bags. In some supermarkets fruits are graded. Grading refers to examining and classifying food products according to quality based on a defined standard. Grades may be A, B, C, etc. ranging from the best quality to least. Grading gives the consumer knowledge about the expected quality of the purchased product (Bennion & Scheule, 2010). Grading fruits is very difficult as their quality changes between the times graded and time purchased (Brown, 2011:270). Fruits of different grades and brand names are priced differently and it may be difficult for functionally illiterate consumers to differentiate these vegetables as they have limited reading ability. They would not be able to understand grading information and therefore it is essential for supermarkets to ensure that salespeople at the vegetable and fruit sections aid consumers with the information.

Dairy foods include milk and milk products, cream, cheese, etc. Dairy products like fruits can be sold fresh, e.g. fresh milk. Milk can be processed into cream, yoghurt and cheese. It

can also be pasteurized and contained in packages which have labels. The labels on the packages are written in a language that consumers cannot comprehend. The dairy products have different brand names and are normally provided by supermarkets, food wholesalers, general dealers and some spaza shops.

The market place offers **meat** which includes beef, lamb, pork, poultry, mutton and fish. Fresh meat is available for sale in the retail outlets such as butcheries, supermarkets, general dealers, etc. and meat that is sold in butcheries is graded in accordance with a country's legislation and quality standards. Meat can also be processed which means changing meat from its original fresh cut to ham, sausages, bacon, etc. Meat and fish can also be preserved, i.e. frozen or sold in processed, tinned format. The latter may be very convenient for households with limited or no refrigeration. Processed meat has labels on the packaging to provide information (Brown, 2011:156). Like fruits and vegetables meat differs in quality and is thus graded (Brown, 2011:140).

The other category of food that is found in the market is **non-perishable** which includes a wide range of food products. As the name denotes these are products which do not get spoilt easily. **Cereals, grains and legume products** are the dried seeds or fruits of cereal grasses. They include rice, pasta and sorghum. Legumes include beans, peas, lentils, etc. These are the major world staple food (Brown, 2011:298-345). In Botswana the staple food is sorghum and maize. These can be provided as wholegrain or refined. These grains are mostly packaged and sold in packages. There are different brands and different quality products. The quality of these products is indicated on the labels and this can be a problem for functionally illiterate consumers as they may not be able to access this information and even if they can access it may be difficult for them to understand what those labels mean. These food products are mostly sold by supermarkets, general dealers, food wholesalers and spaza shops. They are packed in plastic, paper or cardboard boxes and they have labels on them. Research indicates that illiterate consumers spend a high proportion of their income on food more especially on staples (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008:302). The same study further states that consumers buy most of their food products in local stores at higher prices. Processed food, especially maize meal and bread, is cheaper at supermarkets (D'Haese & Huylenbroeck, 2005:98).

Packaging refers to all the activities of designing and producing the container for a product (Kotler, 2003:436). It is an effective instrument to transfer information to consumers. Packaging has informational labelling as well as persuasive labelling. Informational labelling conveys complete product information, i.e. the name of the product, place of the business, nutritional content, weight instructions and storage, brand, the use by date, expiry date, pack

date and ingredients used (Vaclavic, Pimentel & Devine, 2010:295). Persuasive labelling provides the brand identity. Packaging aims to determine product image, protects the products and indicates the shelf life of a product according to (Kotler, 2003:436). The information about products is on the package and illiterate consumers have problems with understanding the information on the package. The language written on the package is also a problem as it is difficult for functionally illiterate consumers to comprehend and as a result these consumers make use of visual cues on the packages when they do shopping, i.e. they memorise words, colours and logos. Packaging conveys a signal of quality to consumers (Nair, 2011:152) thus visual cues may serve as quality indicators to products (Mhlanga, 2010:115). It should be attractive and relevant to the target market. A food label is considered the most appropriate source that consumers can use to get information about the product (Ali & Kapoor, 2009:724) but this is not the case for functionally illiterate consumers as they are limited in their ability to read.

Labels on the packages help the consumer to identify and select food products (Vaclavic *et al.*, 2010:293). It is therefore, essential for consumers to distinguish between accurate and misleading information. Functionally illiterate consumers tend to focus more on the persuasive labelling than informational labelling, the reason being that they depend on pictures in the packages to identify the brands (Mhlanga, 2010:115). It has an influence on how consumers distinguish food products. Colour forms part of packaging and can be used to attract consumers' attention. Packaging is crucial for functionally illiterate consumers as they make use of pictorial thinking. Pictorial thinking refers to viewing brand names and prices as objects rather than symbols (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Literature indicates that functionally illiterate consumers rely on pictures, colours and shapes of packages or containers in order to make purchases (Rosa & Ebenkamp, 2003:18). It can be difficult for these consumers to recognise the different brands if the packaging were to change for instance illiterate consumers are likely to pass them by and subsequently their needs are not met in the market place. Food manufactures as part of the marketing strategy tend to change the food packages often. This becomes a problem to functionally illiterate consumers as they make use of visual cues in the food packages. This suggests that if food manufacturers want to switch their packaging graphics, they need to do it slowly to make the consumers aware of the change.

Quality refers to the feature of a product to satisfy stated or implied needs (Davis, Lockwood & Stone, 2003:34). The products in the market place differ in quality as some are of high quality and some are low quality. Quality is indicated through specific grades on the labels or packages, therefore functionally illiterate consumers would not be able to access this information as their reading ability is limited. Consumers prefer quality products to avoid

complaints (Davis *et al.*, 2003:34). Price is used as an indicator of quality by consumers with limited knowledge such as the functionally illiterate (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:442). This might mislead functionally illiterate consumers to purchase products which are expensive rather than purchasing store brands, which are the same quality as national products.

A **brand name serves** as a device that helps one to recognise the products. It consists of the words, letters or numbers and is intended to identify the food product of one seller and differentiate the product from competing products (Tapp, 2005:194-195). It can define the relationship that a consumer has with a specific product according to Schreurer (2000:16). Individuals prefer to buy products with brand names that they know in retail stores according to Gothan (2008:9) to reduce risk. Brand names can indicate quality (Gothan, 2008:9). Brands have personal and social meaning therefore they can communicate information about the status of consumers to others. The brand names that best communicate the social status of the individual tend to be more expensive than the store owned brands. Brand names can be very useful to functionally illiterate consumers during the shopping process as they do rely on pictures to make a purchasing decision. It makes it easier for consumers to locate and identify the required products because of visual image(s) (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005).

The retail outlets, especially the supermarkets, offer both generic/store owned brands and national brand products. Generic or store owned labels refer to “brands owned not by a manufacturer or producer but by a retailer or supplier who gets its goods made by a contract manufacturer under its own label” (Nair, 2011:151), while national brand products are nationally distributed product brand names. Generic brand products are cheaper than national products as they are not marketed as profusely as national products. Consumers including functionally illiterate consumers tend to purchase national products rather than generic products because they are not familiar with them. It is therefore the responsibility of the retailers to make functionally illiterate consumers aware of these products as they are equally as good as the national brands. They can economise in terms of money as they are cheaper than their counterparts. They are made of same ingredients as national product brands and at times by the same companies. The researcher has observed that consumers do not purchase these products and the reason may be that they do not know about them.

2.4.1.2 Price

Price is a tool that indicates or measures affordability, value for money and even quality for different consumers (Ball *et al.*, 2004). It is used by retailers to attract customers. The value that is attached to something such as a food item is a determining factor when purchasing food products. It is the price that distinguishes why a certain brand is more expensive than another. It is also the price that may encourage store patronage (Marx 2005:16). The price of

the product may have different meanings to different consumers and consequently the perception of consumers regarding price and quality is complex. Some consumers are ready to select and are willing to pay for quality products whereas others cannot afford to pay for high quality products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Though many authors have indicated the relationship between high price and quality, some consumers may purchase the cheapest food product for the sake of affordability. Less privileged consumers such as the functionally illiterate can be more sensitive to price increase and therefore it is crucial for retailers to understand how price is important to consumers (Mhlanga, 2010). Functionally illiterate consumers are guided by price when making decisions to purchase products, but they fail to relate the price of the products to other product attributes such as the size and weight (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:19). Price is therefore an essential consideration in deciding whether to patronise a retail outlet or not.

2.4.1.3 Place

Place refers to the ease of access which potential consumers have to food products (Baker *et al.*, 2005:602). Layout, well-displayed goods and the general atmosphere are components of a place (Dickson as cited by Grabowski, 2010:43). A place should meet the consumer's needs and be pleasant shopping environment. A place that meets or exceeds consumers' needs may be considered as being worth revisiting and thus leads to store loyalty. The layout of the retail outlet should be easily accessible as it controls movement and it determines the general appearance in the retail outlets (Newman & Cullen, 2002:244).

Functionally illiterate consumers purchase from different retail outlets (Mhlanga, 2010:93; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2009; Gau & Viswanathan, 2008) and these include local grocery outlets, supermarkets, general dealers, street vendors and spaza shops. These retail outlets provide varied products for consumers. Research reveals that daily shopping for items such as milk and bread was done at the local outlets such as spaza shops (D'Haese & Huylenbroeck 2005:98; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:391) while major shopping was done at major supermarkets in cities (D'Haese & Huylenbroeck, 2005:98). This indicates that supermarkets are widely used. In another study on functionally illiterate consumers and nutritional material by Viswanathan *et al.* (2008:314) their results indicated that functionally illiterate consumers who dwell in rural areas purchased at the same local outlet and as a result they developed an economic relationship with one store. Therefore their product choice was limited as the outlets have a limited variety of products. These retail outlets were generally expensive and had a limited variety of stock (D'Haese & Huylenbroeck, 2005:98-104). This means that consumers had to travel to supermarkets in the nearest city centres in order to get a variety of goods though they incur transport expenses. To reduce transport expenses goods are bought in bulk (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008:303; D'Haese & Huylenbroeck, 2005:98:104).

One of the reasons for shopping at the local outlets is that their families had always shopped in those retail outlets. This indicates that family plays a big role in the formation, structuring and conditioning of consumer behaviour. Parents are role models and interact with their children by orientating them in purchasing, giving allowances and allowing them to use products as well as taking them shopping (John, 1999:183-185). According to research, consumers chose certain retail outlets based on the assortment of products, prices of products, product presentation as well as packaging. Thus the stores should be conducive to consumers by providing a pleasant environment. The various outlets that offer consumers with food products will be discussed below.

Supermarkets have recently become a place to shop for many consumers. They are large stores that offer great a variety of products ranging from food, drinks, fruits and vegetables to clothing and other goods used in the home (Haese & Huylbroeck, 2005:98). They offer goods and a wide selection of products at lower prices because of their size. Furthermore supermarkets may charge lower prices because they offer store labels and generic items (Goldman & Hino, 2005). Supermarkets can be chain stores or individually owned. Examples of chain supermarkets in Botswana are Payless, Supa Save, Choppies, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, etc. These supermarkets sell the same products at similar prices and have the widest selection of products as well as more storage space (Goldman & Hino, 2005) and this enables the consumers to have plenty of choice. Supermarkets provide self-service, i.e. consumers have to navigate the shop, choose among the different products and pay at the checkout point. This service may not be conducive to successful purchasing as functionally illiterate consumers are limited in retail skills (John, 1999). Although shopping in supermarkets is rewarding it has certain disadvantages. Research indicates that supermarkets in low income neighbourhoods and rural areas may charge higher prices than those in a nearby high income neighbourhood, as they are likely to be small, fewer and may experience high costs per unit sold (Goldman & Hino, 2005). Additionally supermarkets in these areas may face less competition. Most of the supermarkets are located in towns and therefore it is costly to travel to urban areas for some consumers such as the functionally illiterate, who are mostly low income earners.

Supermarkets sell both generic/store brands and national brands. A study done in South Africa showed that very few functionally illiterate consumers believe in the use of store brands indicating that the shops cannot sell a poor product that will tarnish their name (Mhlanga, 2010:117). Consumers are not aware of generic food products; this suggests that retailers should ensure that all consumers are aware of generic brands in supermarkets.

Spazas/tuck shops are small retail businesses that operate from a residential area with the aim to make profit (Ligthelm, 2005:202). Spaza and tuck shops refer to the same type of business. In Botswana spaza shop is termed as “*semausu*”. Spaza/tuck shops can be either attached to the main residential structure or can be operated from a separate structure. Spaza shops serve the customers over a counter or through a window. Like supermarkets, spaza shops sell mainly basic necessities such as food products and other goods such as paraffin, candles, etc. Spaza shops are very convenient to consumers in terms of their operation time and location. For example they are open for long hours and they are located within the residential areas so they are within walking distance from consumers’ homes (Ligthelm, 2005:210). Consumers enjoy credit facilities provided by spaza shops (Ligthelm, 2005:210). Functionally illiterate consumers may prefer spaza shops as they do not have to choose among different products and there is the possibility that the salespeople are aware of their literacy status and therefore help them to select products. As mentioned, spaza shops sell over the counter. The consumer asks for the item from the assistant rather than choosing and this makes it easier for the consumer as there is no reading involved. On the other hand spaza shops have some limitations. Spaza shops offer limited goods which are mostly expensive and at times there is even a shortage of stock (Ligthelm, 2005:210). The same study indicates that some spaza shops may provide poor customer service and dirty shopping environments, and the owners may be reluctant to offer credit to its customers (Ligthelm, 2005:210).

General dealers / Traditional retail stores are individually or family owned retail outlets (Goldman & Hino, 2005:273). In terms of size they are smaller than supermarkets and are mainly found in rural areas even though they still operate in towns. Purchasing from general dealers can be rewarding as they are very convenient, they are located in the residential area and provide unlimited household items including food. General dealers are also very convenient for individuals who cannot afford to purchase food in larger supermarkets in towns as well as those who still prefer to purchase their food in traditional stores (Goldman & Hino, 2005:273). Research done in South Africa indicated that functionally illiterate consumers patronize general dealers (Mhlanga, 2010:93) despite the negative experiences they encounter, as it is costly to travel to supermarkets. Some general dealers provide credit to their customers. On the negative side, general dealers offer limited products which are expensive.

Food wholesalers provide food products and other goods to consumers. Wholesalers purchase from various manufactures and they are usually very big and are located in towns and cities. Examples of food wholesalers in Gaborone, Botswana are Mets-Sef, Trade World Cash and Carry, Metro, etc. Food wholesalers offer both fresh and un-perishable food. They

get their products from production areas and sell in larger volumes to other retail outlets as well as to individual consumers. Food wholesalers limit the functionally illiterate as they sell goods in bulk which is a challenge as they have lower incomes. Research indicates that they are challenged if they have to calculate the unit price of goods as sold in bulk (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:20) and therefore food wholesalers may not be the best retail outlets for them.

Informal traders include roadside vendors who provide food products to functionally illiterate consumers (Mhlanga, 2010:93). They offer small quantities of products and mainly sell fruits and vegetables, though there are a few who provide meat, pasta and other products. Informal traders operate from their homes or near their homes, in front of general dealers or supermarkets and in places where consumers are most likely to be found such as bus stops. Functionally illiterate consumers appear to enjoy the benefits of purchasing from informal traders as they can negotiate the price and credit facilities are available.

2.4.1.4 Promotion

Promotion or advertising refers to all forms of marketing and communication that convey what retail outlets offer visually, verbally or audibly (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:388). It intends to influence, attract and convince the consumer to purchase food products and achieve long lasting confidence in the retail outlet (Ball *et al.*, 2004:525). There are various ways in which retailers can let consumers know about their products and these include television, radio, pamphlets, brochures and leaflets. Promotion is valid for a specific period of time and place and can be directed to a certain customer group, for example the senior citizens. Promotion provides the consumer with aspects such as brand, price, and social importance, i.e. advertising establishes product identity, provides product information and builds brand loyalty. Like other consumers functionally illiterate consumers buy goods which are on promotion. However it may be a challenge as it has written information which they cannot comprehend. Functionally illiterate consumers rely mostly on verbal information therefore they can be reached through television, radio and salespeople or advice from a friend (Jae, Delvecchio & Cowless, 2008:441). These media devices, e.g. television exert a lot of rational influence on consumer buyer behaviour (Dotson & Hyatt, 2005:36). Retailers need to be careful to use the right devices when promoting food products for consumers such as functionally illiterate consumers. Newman and Cullen (2002:195) suggest that in order for promotion to be effective, symbols, words and signs should be appropriate for the target group.

2.4.1.5 Salespeople in the food section

Salespeople become part of the sales experience encounter of the consumers and these include packers, those who price the goods, security people, managers and cashiers. Salespeople play a key role in helping consumers in general in stores. Sales people may provide the key to informed responsible buyer decisions (Gothan, 2010:30). In the food section they assist consumers with food related products such as weighing fruits and vegetables, price identification, etc. These are the people that functionally illiterate consumers ask when they need clarity in the stores. A salesperson that has a good relationship with his customers creates a pleasant shopping experience for his/her customers and this ensures store loyalty. Salespeople should be competent, trustworthy, friendly, expert, honest and helpful as they are supposed to satisfy the needs of the consumers. Although they appear to be helpful in a retail outlet environment there are times when salespeople can engage in inappropriate behaviour resulting in the dissatisfaction of consumers. Consumers who are functionally illiterate do need to be helped by salespeople. Previous studies indicate that functionally illiterate consumers ask salespeople when experiencing difficulties in retail outlets (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:25). Functionally illiterate consumers prefer certain stores as they have helpful salespeople (Mhlanga, 2010:112).

2.4.1.6 Processes

Processes entail delivering of services to the consumers and refer to all visible and non-visible activities and procedures involved in producing and delivery of food service (Bendall-Lyon & Powers, 2004:115). It focuses on the mechanism that supports transaction and relationship in the retail outlets (Gay *et al.*, 2007:105). Visible services include aspects such as special discounts, special offers, availability of credit facilities, discounts, shopping carts, operating times etc., while non-visible aspects include guarantees, services such as exchange, etc.(Gay *et al.*, 2007:105). Processes assist consumers to judge the services in the retail outlet and therefore are very important to consumers. It can contribute to consumer satisfaction if it is done properly as it can lead to customer loyalty. After sales is also part of the process. This comes after the consumer has purchased the food product. It may come as a complaint. Consumer complaints should be presented to the retailers, be heard and appropriate action should be taken (Bendall-Lyon & Powers, 2004:115). Functionally illiterate consumers in South Africa purchased at certain outlets because they had security, availability of shopping trolleys and they had different methods of payment (Mhlanga, 2010:112).

2.4.2 Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors such as educational level, financial status and reference group influence consumers' food purchasing decision. Each factor will be examined individually.

2.4.2.1 Education level

Educational level has a major influence on food consumption. It is education that enables one to read labels and calculate prices. The more education a person has the more likely it is that the person will be paid, thus education is strongly linked to a higher standard of living, and higher incomes that increase one's buying power principle of independence (Solomon, 2006:453). Hence functionally illiterate consumers with very low or no education and low income have limited exposure to written information on the products and have less experience with products. As already mentioned, most of the consumers have low educational attainment and they reside in rural areas where they have limited access to retail outlets (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008:302). Consumers need to be educated because the market place is becoming more complex every day, i.e. there is a variety of food products to choose from with written information. Some of the written information is even misleading. Adequate and correct information should be made available to consumers so that they can optimise their limited financial resources (Day & Aaker, 1997:44). Consumers need to be empowered with life skills that can be used in the market place. This can be done through education which will help to produce socially responsible consumers in the market place. Therefore it is important for consumer education to reach vulnerable groups such as the functionally illiterate (Schuh & Kitson, 2003). Consumer education helps individuals to act as informed, rational and prudent consumers. A consumer with a high level of education is likely to read, search for more information about the products and try more brands. Conversely, low education or a lack of education can limit the consumer's information search.

2.4.2.2 Financial status

Educational status goes hand in hand with financial status (Viswanathan & Gau, 2005:187). The ability to purchase food products is dependent on the proportion of the family income that is set aside for the purchase of food. Functionally illiterate consumers tend to have low disposable incomes. Mhlanga (2010:28) concurs that individuals with limited literacy skills are mostly likely to hold jobs of a lower position and thus their financial status is likely to be low, thereby limiting them to some of the products in the market. In Botswana the low position such as house maids are paid a minimum of P600 per month (Labour report, 2008) thus the salary is very low and the price of food is increasing speedily. This affects the kind of food that they can purchase. Limited income affects an individual's exposure to products,

therefore their exposure to products in the market place is also limited thus reducing their decision making skills in the market place.

2.4.2.3 Reference groups

Reference groups are persons and groups whom one has direct interaction with and looks to for guidance for one's own behaviour, attitudes and specific values and about whose opinion one cares (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:281). From a marketing view reference groups serve as a frame of reference regarding purchasing decisions (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Reference groups provide a standard of comparison against which an individual can judge his own attitude, belief and behaviour. These groups can be informal or formal. Reference groups can be normative and comparative. Normative reference groups influence the general behaviour of an individual and the family is the most normative reference group as they mould one's behaviour. Family forms the basis of interaction among its members hence it may be viewed as a learning platform that moulds behaviour. Parents are the primary socialization agents for effective consumption behaviour. Thus children acquire their consumption behaviour norms through observation of their parents as role models and sources of cues for basic consumer behaviour (Dotson & Hyatt, 2005:36). As a result family buyer behaviour patterns affect consumer socialization. Hence functionally illiterate consumers depend on family during purchasing (Mhlanga, 2010:123; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24). This is because the family members know their literacy status and can help them to be aware of specific products as well as brands. On the other hand comparative reference groups influence a specific attitude or behaviour (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:281). Reference groups can have a significant influence on the products used and consumption as the literature indicates that functionally illiterate consumers get help from friends and families about product selection (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:27).

2.5 CONSUMER DECISION MAKING AND FOOD PURCHASING BY FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS

Food is one of the goods that consumers purchase regularly as it is a basic necessity for life that fulfils several functions in the body. Food is purchased and consumed not only for its nutritional status, but also for expressing social relationship and values (Kittler & Sucher, 2008). In terms of nutritional value, food provides the daily requirements of calories, vitamins, proteins and micro nutrients (Erickson, 2008:240). It also serves the status function. With food people are able to discern themselves from others (Sijtsema, Linnemann, Gaasbeek, Dagevos & Jongen, 2002:567). Food is also a powerful cultural medium as it symbolizes important relationships among people (Kittler & Sucher, 2008). Cultural information is likely to

influence the individual's food purchase behaviour. Culture is a major determinant of what food people can use and therefore the consumers' cultural background will determine their purchase behaviour.

Consumers go through a process of decision making before they make up their mind to purchase a food product. It is critical for one to understand consumers' decision making as it helps in improving future decision making. Marketers also need to get a better understanding of functionally illiterate consumer decision making as it will equip them with better knowledge of decisions related to these consumers. It will also help marketers to be alert to aspects influencing consumers' decisions (Sheth & Mittal, 2004:273). Decision making is a complex task as there are many options to choose from in the market place. Researchers have developed consumer decision models which help to explain the consumption process (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:524).

2.5.1 The consumer decision making process

The consumer decision making process assumes that consumers go through a five stage process (need recognition, pre-purchase/information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase/choice and post-purchase behaviour (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:478).

The above mentioned process assumes that consumers should recognise that **a problem or needs exists**, search for information about the problem, consider alternatives, choose a product and finally evaluate the chosen product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Consumers identify their need before they can get involved in any other decision. Need recognition is the first step in consumer decision making process. A need exists when a consumer experiences her current status to be different from how she would want it to be e.g. a need to purchase the family's food supply for the week or the weekend.

After realising that a problem needs to be solved consumers would then engage in an **information search** which will be availed through advertising, in-store promotion, television, radio and leaflets (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:480) and other sources. Consumers may also get information regarding products from personal sources such as family and friends. Consumers can also rely on their previous knowledge, i.e. their past experience with the product. Information about products can also be obtained from marketing sources such as the salespeople. Searching for information is a major way of reducing the risk of purchasing the wrong product. Functionally illiterate consumers will not use all the information sources that literate consumers would, simply because they do not have access to it, or lack comprehension.

Once a consumer has searched for the information about the food products, relevant **alternatives need to be identified and compared**. Alternatives have to be weighed and can be based on own experience, e.g. important evaluation criteria such as affordability, advice from family, friends or experience after which a choice can then be made.

Once the consumer has weighed and evaluated different alternatives and compared prices, and places in case of functionally illiterate consumers, a **purchase decision** is made with regard to the preferred product.

2.5.2 Consumer decision-making and functionally illiterate consumers

Consumer decision making of functionally illiterate consumers is different from the consumer decision making of literate consumers.

2.5.2.1 Internal influences

Internal influences are aspects that influence consumer decision making. The consumer relies on knowledge to make sense of the situation and to guide his decision-making process (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:485).

Linguistic and arithmetic ability: In emerging economies thousands of consumers have low literacy levels due to dropping out of school, migration, war and poverty. These factors hinder them from acquiring relevant consumer skills that are used in the market place. Linguistic ability refers to the ability for one to express oneself in a different language. Consumers should be able to read, understand and process written information in the market place. The ability to read is one of the necessary conditions for advertisement information to be processed by consumers in products. Functionally illiterate consumers are not able to read and comprehend the written information as it complex. If the text is hardly readable individuals with low linguistic ability cannot interpret it. Many consumers rely on written food labels as the primary source of information about what the food product contains. This is not the case with functionally illiterate consumers as their low linguistic ability hinders them from understanding written text and as a result they may give up. Language barriers lead to miscommunication in the market place, generate frustrations and increase the time it takes to complete certain tasks in the market place (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:16, 21). It affects exchange transactions in the market place as well as participation in the consumer environment. Language barriers leave consumers vulnerable, who purchase unintended items and times also leave the market place without desired items (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:21). Arithmetic ability entails the ability to calculate simple mathematics. Arithmetic ability is very important to consumers as in order to successfully perform well in the market place one needs to be able to count and perform simple calculations related to quality, sizes,

cost and other tasks. It has a negative impact as consumers end up avoiding retail outlets with the fear that they have to calculate prices, hence they leave the market place without the desired products.

Product knowledge: Product knowledge entails the presence or absence of relevant schemata in the memory that will provide the means to acknowledge, recognise and deduce actual product characteristics that will they affect final purchasing decisions that might result in an informed or uninformed purchase decision (Kachale, 2005:12). It is knowledge that is required to evaluate product alternatives during the buying process. Product knowledge is acquired in the early stages of life through consumer socialisation. Consumer socialization is the process whereby young children acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the market place (John, 1999:183). Product knowledge is acquired by being exposed to and continuous use of products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:162), but since these consumers have limited income they are limited to certain products. Consumers should have acquired transactional knowledge such as information of products, brands, stores, shopping skills, pricing and shopping scripts (John, 1999:192) to be able to function adequately in the market. Consumers are supposed to read and calculate prices and evaluate the products in the market place. An average consumer in an emerging economy still lacks the rudimentary skills in language and arithmetic calculation that are required in the retail environment (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:541). Consumers are also confronted with a lack of structural knowledge. Structural knowledge refers to knowledge about the structure of product categories and brands (John, 1999:192). Since functionally illiterate consumers have limited literacy skills they lack the knowledge associated with symbolic meaning and status accorded to certain types of products and brand names. They have low incomes and therefore are limited in experience with the purchasing of products. Limited product knowledge may prevent functionally illiterate consumers from making an informed choice when purchasing food. Consumers lack knowledge pertaining to different brands. It is the responsibility of retailers to empower them so that they can be brand loyal and thereby increase sales. Literature indicated that functionally illiterate consumers based their purchases on an intuitive feeling of product quality or suitability. They based their choice on a sense that a product looked fresh or good rather than focusing on product attributes (Rosa & Ebenkamp, 2003).

2.5.2.2 Consumer information search

During purchasing, consumers search for information as already mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. Information search is very crucial in order to make relevant and accurate product choices. Information search can be internally or externally or it can be both. The consumer will search for information to satisfy unmet needs. Internal information stems from

memory; for example it can be from experience with the product (Lamb *et al.*, 2008:69). The consumer will first seek the information from her memory and if the information from her memory is not enough the consumer will turn to external sources. The external sources include marketing sources such as salespeople and sales promotions. Sales promotions such as pamphlets and brochures are difficult for functionally illiterate consumers to read and comprehend as they are written mostly in English. It is evident that consumers do face challenges with the information as they cannot comprehend the information. Research indicates that if consumers with low literacy are given too much information that exceeds their processing limit, information overload occurs (Erasmus, 2002). If functionally illiterate consumers are overloaded with information, more so if their reading ability is limited, they become overwhelmed and can fail to use the information effectively as they lack the necessary retail skills. Functionally illiterate consumers' information search is limited or is not done at all because some cannot do it on their own. Individuals with a low educational level do not engage in deeper information search (Cooil, Keiningham, Aksoy & Hsu, 2007:78). As a result they tend to rely on friends, salespeople or family (Mhlanga, 2010:5). Low literacy may hinder consumers' efforts to find out about substitute products therefore may affect consumer product choices. Functionally illiterate consumers purchase habitually, i.e. they purchase the same products from the same retail outlets therefore they would probably do less information search. It is essential for retailers to consider the kind of information that appears in advertisement papers. It should be simple and straight to the point and all consumers should be able to understand it.

2.5.2.3 Evaluation of alternatives

Evaluation of alternatives is a very crucial stage as many consumers are not always able to make rational decisions by weighing alternatives (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003). Consumers use the information obtained during information search, e.g. from the marketing sources such as the advertisements and salespeople, as well as non-marketing information, i.e. family and friends and the information stored in their memory to help evaluate and compare alternatives (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006:77). At this stage consumers need to focus on product attributes and features that are most relevant to their need. Decision rules are procedures used by consumers to facilitate brand or other consumption related choices (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:136-137). These decision rules provide guidelines that enable the consumers to have a less stressful decision process. There are of two types of decision rules; compensatory and non-compensatory. Compensatory rules are those in which a consumer evaluates a brand considering each relevant attribute. Non-compensatory consumers eliminate all alternatives not meeting the basic standard. Their decisions are habitual, i.e. they base their decision on single attributes such as price without regarding other product attributes. Thus their decisions are non-compensatory, i.e. they do not balance

positive evaluation of a brand on one attribute against a negative one (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:539; Viswanathan & Gau, 2005:188). They consider attributes such as store prices, helpful salespeople and the service offered in the store (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:20-24). The alternatives, such as different types of food brands, prices and stores will be considered, evaluated and eventually a decision will be made. Functionally illiterate consumers, as mentioned, are brand loyal which means the stage of evaluation of alternatives may not figure at all to them as they memorise what they purchase and the places where they purchase from. For some illiterate consumers family and friends will help them to evaluate the products. They need to make a decision of a preferred food product.

2.5.2.4 Choice

This is the fourth stage where the consumers choose the preferred product. The purchase decision is made based on selected alternatives. Functionally illiterate consumers will make a choice on where and what to purchase. At this stage the retail outlet preferred will be chosen. The food product desired will also be selected. It may be an informed choice or an uninformed choice. Some functionally illiterate consumers who do not want to reveal their literacy status leave the retail place without the required food item (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005; Adkins, 2001:56). Functionally illiterate consumers will experience either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their purchases. The level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction is largely a function of congruency between buyers' experience of the product and the perceived performance of the product (Food & Agriculture Organization, 2006).

2.5.2.6 Post purchase

The outcome of consumer decision does not end after a purchase has been made. Consumers engage in an evaluation of the food products purchased. During this period functionally illiterate consumers compare their expectation to perceived reality and experiences. If the purchased food products meet the expectation of the consumer, the consumer will be satisfied. On the other hand if the performance of the food product is below the initial expectation negative disconfirmation is the result (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

According to Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:19) functionally illiterate consumers make decisions differently than literate consumers. Their decisions are based on cognitive predilections, decision rules, tradeoffs and coping mechanisms: Cognitive predilections refer to primitive thoughts that functionally illiterate consumers use to acquire knowledge and understanding about goods and products Hornby, as cited by Mhlanga (2010:42). Cognitive predilection can be done through concrete reasoning and pictographic thinking. Their decisions are based on concrete thinking which refers to processing of a single piece of information without a higher level abstraction (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Their decisions are also based on pictographic

thinking that is viewing brand names and prices as objects rather than symbols. It goes to visualizing quantities rather than using symbolic information (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2009; Viswanathan & Gau, 2005:188). They visualize store signs, brand names, price tags and even the currency that they pay with. Evidence given by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005) also indicates that functionally illiterate consumers calculate the amount of products purchased in a shopping trolley by visualizing bills.

2.6 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE

Functionally illiterate consumers experience some challenges related to food products, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes in the market place. These constraints will be discussed accordingly.

2.6.1 Problems related to choice of food products

Functionally illiterate consumers like every other consumer do navigate the market place to purchase food products. They however struggle in the market place. Literature indicates that functionally illiterate consumers are unable to comprehend too much text-based information (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Consumers operate in the market place, especially the supermarkets, which are brimming with varied products that have written information. This written information is not only on products but is also found on the retail outlets. It seems like the market place was created for literate people consequently neglecting the illiterate. Recent research in South Africa also indicated that functionally illiterate consumers had difficulties with reading information and comprehending the written information on food products (Mhlanga, 2010:47). The consumers fail to read brand names, product information, and expiry dates and furthermore they struggle to recognise complex words (Gau and Viswanathan, 2008). As a result they resort to visual cues to get information. Moreover information on products is mostly written in English, therefore functionally illiterate consumers are not able to comprehend it (Jae, 2009:76). As consumers cannot comprehend the information on products they end up being susceptible to risks that are associated with improper use of products (Jae & Delvecchio, 2004:352).

Functionally illiterate consumers have difficulties in processing numerical product information (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:20). They fail to compute numerical information such as simple mathematics and subtraction, i.e. they have difficulties with converting volume into purchase unit. As a result of these illiterate consumers tend to buy the cheapest product rather than one of value because they cannot do simple calculations (Rosa & Ebenkamp, 2003:19). This therefore suggests that an inability to process numerical information would encourage

heuristic and habitual decisions. Reading numerical information was also found to be a challenge as research indicated that consumers interchanged digits and wrote incorrect prices (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). Their findings further revealed that errors appeared despite the use of calculators by consumers. Still on numerical information, consumers were not competent to comprehend products reduced by percentage and fractions (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008).

Functionally illiterate consumers in the market place are challenged when they have to choose among a wide range of products in the market place. A lot of effort has to be used when locating a product (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). As a result they spend too much time in the retail outlets which may result in choice of substandard products. The choice of substandard products may also be triggered by depending too much on suggestions stated in product advertising and packaging.

2.6.2 Price related problems

Price is crucial as it determines affordability and is one of the important aspects that consumers use to choose products in the retail outlets. Functionally illiterate consumers are challenged by the prices in the retail store. These price-related challenges are discussed below.

The presence of multiple price tags on a product is confusing and a major challenge to consumers. Products in the retail outlets, especially supermarkets, sometimes have more than one price tag, e.g. original price, sale price and discounted prices (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). Therefore, a lot of time and effort is spent in locating a price display (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). This confusion of prices leads to an emotional situation at the till/checkout point. A study reported by Gothan (2008) indicated that price should be displayed visibly and correctly so that consumers can see it.

Literature indicated that functionally illiterate consumers were being overcharged in the retail outlets where they purchased their food products (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2009; Jae, 2009:79). This happened probably because they might not be aware of the prices, especially in retail outlets where they are offered credit facilities.

2.6.3 Place / retail environment related problems

The store environment is quite important during product selection as consumers will rely on the store environment if they lack knowledge about products. However, if the store is not conducive to shopping, it encompasses both cognitive and affective challenges to consumers. Literature indicated that functionally illiterate consumers were challenged when

shopping in big stores because they had to spend a lot of effort trying to locate the products they needed. This is attributed to the size as well as the layouts of the retail environment. Gau and Viswanathan (2008) emphasise that consumers encountered problems in locating products even in familiar stores because they became anxious.

Retail outlets where functionally illiterate consumers purchase their food products have more information, which at times makes it difficult for consumers to select products. The information is written mostly in English.

Limited products in retail outlets can be a constraint, especially for consumers in rural areas whose shopping is done in a local store (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008). The same study reports that these consumers were often exploited and overcharged as they lacked access to many stores that offered a variety of products. Moreover it might be expensive for these low income earners to travel to city centres to purchase food in big supermarkets. Even though these consumers are overcharged and cheated they fail to take action or change stores (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008). Although there could be some exception, functionally illiterate consumers also contribute to being abused by failing to take action against exploitation.

2.6.4 Promotion related problems

Promotion helps consumers to save but it can be deceptive at times. Problems stemmed from advertisements are not congruent with what they show (Jae *et al.*, 2008:440). This gave consumers a difficult time. The same study indicates that since functionally illiterate consumers rely on pictorial information it may not be beneficial if advertisements are not designed for them. Long and complicated messages can be a problem to functionally illiterate consumers according to Macklin, Bruvold and Shea as cited by Jae *et al.* (2008:443). They therefore suggest that messages should be kept short and simple when advertising. Their research indicated that pictures in advertisements that are incongruent with text may degrade comprehension among functionally illiterate consumers (Jae *et al.*, 2008:448). They are concerned that functionally illiterate consumers should not be excluded from protection against deceptive advertising (Jae *et al.*, 2008:440).

2.6.5 Salespeople related problems

The market has become technologically advanced and the introduction of self-service displays has made it more complex. Botswana as an emerging economy has consumers who function in a context where the market activities are subjected to certain limitations. The limitations that functionally illiterate consumers face in the retail outlets are discussed below.

As mentioned, functionally illiterate consumers use friends, family and salespeople as their frame of reference when making purchasing decisions. Reliance on salespeople for assistance in the retail outlets may expose the consumers to abuse by salespeople. The salespeople are uncaring and rude towards functionally illiterate consumers (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). The same study revealed elements of cheating, exploitation and disrespectful treatment by shop keepers (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2007). A recent study in South Africa indicated that functionally illiterate consumers are labelled and called names (Mhlanga, 2010:108) while another study conducted in South Africa reports rude and unfriendly behaviour by salespeople as a major frustration during service encounters in supermarkets (Marx & Erasmus, 2006:65). This could result in emotional stress to consumers as well as a lack of trust. Disrespectful treatments by salespeople leave consumers frustrated, helpless, inadequate and feeling responsible for this outcome. This suggests that retailers should be very careful and find ways of identifying these vulnerable consumers and train their salespeople well.

2.6.6 Processes related problems

Research indicated that the retail outlets provided credit facilities to illiterate consumers but products offered on credit are usually more expensive, often without the knowledge of consumers according to Viswanathan *et al.* (2008:302). They further explain that the shops are also not responsive to refunds and returns which is frustrating to consumers.

Functionally illiterate consumers are not confident enough to present their complaints before the retailers when they are not treated well. As a result they are mistreated in the market place (Adkins, 2001:60). Research indicates that they do not report salespeople even if they are not treated well, the reason being that they fear to expose their literacy status (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.7 Other problems faced by consumers in the market place

Functionally illiterate consumers do face multiple challenges in the market place where they purchase their food products.

2.6.7.1 *Stigma attached to functional literacy*

Stigma is the possession of a trait that is socially discrediting. It is a negative emotion elicited when an individual experiences failure in relation to social standard (Goffman as cited by Adkins and Ozanne, 2005b:154). Stigma sets an individual away from others who are considered normal according to Goffman as cited by Adkins (2001:51). Research indicates that functionally illiterate consumers are stigmatised (Mhlanga, 2010:108 Ozanne *et al.*, 2005; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:23; Adkins, 2001:52). Stigma affects individuals negatively

hence it affects their performance in the market place. The individuals feel responsible for their failure and believe that their failure reflects inadequacy (Fortenberry *et al.*, as cited by Ozanne, *et al.*, 2005:254). Societies value educational attainment and consider people who have a deficit in skills and knowledge as failures (Adkins, 2001:20). They face negative social judgment and are labelled inferior (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:253) and therefore this affects their self-esteem. Low self-esteem negatively influences the way functionally illiterate consumers perform in the market place, for example functionally illiterate consumers do not interact confidently in the market place because they may be hesitant to ask for help or assistance (Mhlanga, 2010). This has a great impact on the way consumers perform in the market place. Stigmatised consumers are affected even in situations where other people are unaware of their condition (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b:154-155). This is because they feel responsible for their illiteracy. Consumers who accept low literacy stigma are more victimized than those who fight against this literacy status (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a:154). It is crucial to help consumers accept their status by empowering them with skills so that they can be able to function effectively in the market place.

2.6.7.2 Shame

Shame is a complex biological emotion that causes a person to withdraw. It refers to a negative emotion elicited when a person experiences failure in relation to personal or social standards (Fortenberry *et al.* as cited by Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:254). It results in failure to achieve social competency because an individual feels inadequate and incapable of finishing the shopping task (Mhlanga, 2010:106). Shame may prevent individuals with limited literacy skills from telling food service providers about their status and as a result their purchasing behaviour is affected, hence they can choose wrong products. A particular research study that was done in South Africa (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:256) concluded that functionally illiterate consumers experienced shame when they have monetary shortages at the checkout counters. The same study indicated that consumers were also labelled as “stupid” which is really a problem especially if consumers are not confident enough to fight back. Functionally illiterate consumers’ shame ranged in intensity from feeling bad, panicking, anxious or even crying (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:256; Adkins, 2001:54).

2.6.7.3 Vulnerability

Consumer vulnerability refers to “a state of powerlessness that rises from imbalance in the market place interaction or inability to interpret marketing messages” (Baker, Gentry & Rittenburg, 2005:134). It occurs when a consumer is unable to finish his/her desired goal in the consumption due to being powerless, e.g. being unable to calculate the cost or read instructions. Vulnerability may arise from various factors such as lack of access to retail facilities and subsequent inexperience, lack of access to stores that offer affordable prices

and subsequent inability to optimise financial resources (Baker *et al.*, 2005:31), and lack of access to affordable products especially to consumers who are poor such as the illiterate as they pay more for low quality products. Physical elements in the market place also contribute to consumer vulnerability. Retail places are not always designed to accommodate consumer vulnerability, for example written information in stores in Botswana is mostly in English which is a challenge especially if consumers cannot read it. Functionally illiterate consumers are sometimes abused emotionally in the market place: Literature shows that salespeople may be hostile towards consumers with low literacy (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). For instance a study done in South Africa indicated that functionally illiterate consumers are shouted at if they run short of money at till point and are labelled and called names (Mhlanga, 2010:107-108).

2.6.7.4 Lack of functional retail skills

Functional retail skills involve the knowledge of shopping transactions such as differentiating between products of different brands, shopping scripts, etc. and using the available information in a retail store to successfully complete tasks (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008:4; John, 1999:195). Functionally illiterate consumers lack skills pertaining to tasks such as planning of shopping, creating shopping lists, checking prices, and requesting bills (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008:303). Consumers must have knowledge on shopping procedures such as comparing prices, quantities and branding (John, 1999:194). This therefore means that retail skills are essential in order to perform effectively in the market place.

2.7 COPING MECHANISMS OF FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES IN THE MARKET PLACE

Output is the result of transforming inputs into achievement of a goal (Gregoire, 2010:3). Informed/uninformed buyer decision will be the anticipated output that results from how a functionally illiterate consumer has interpreted the inputs. Though functionally illiterate consumers experience problems in the market place they are not passive. Instead they display a variety of **coping strategies** to make an informed buyer decision (Mhlanga, 2010:48; Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:244-264; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24). The coping strategies refer to the methods used by functionally illiterate consumers when experiencing problems in order to navigate the retail place and to deal with problems. The coping strategies of functionally illiterate consumers as espoused by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:16) are illustrated in Figure 2.1. This study will however only focus on the avoidance and confrontative strategies used by these vulnerable consumers.

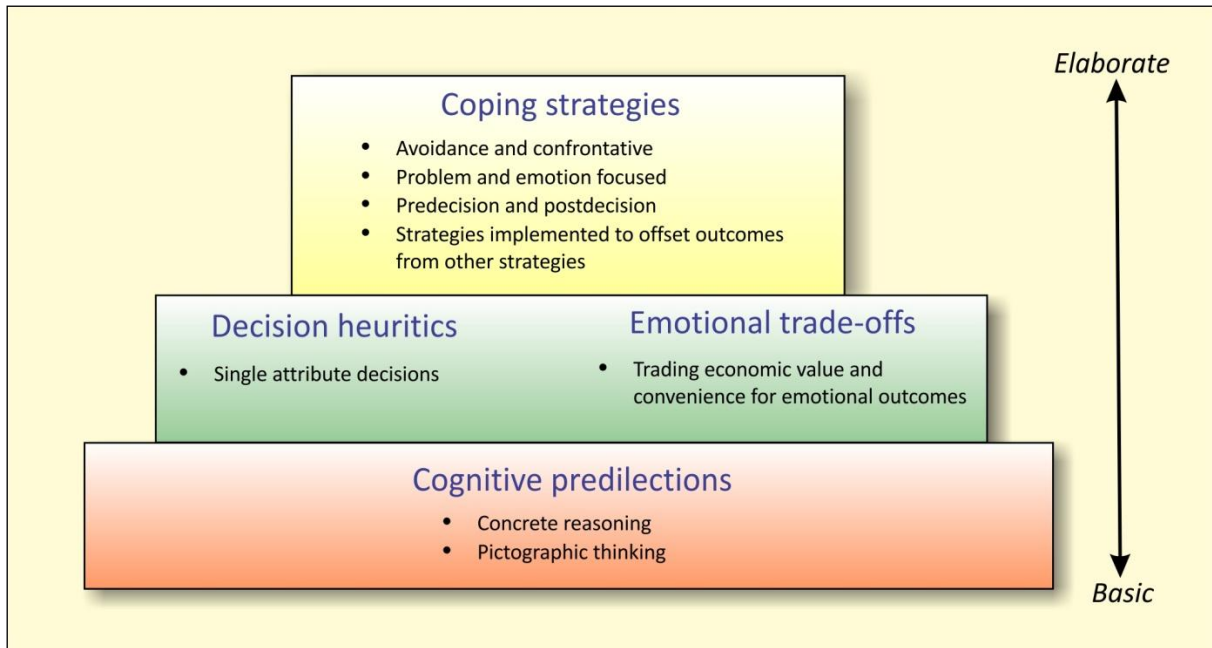


FIGURE 2.1: COPING STRATEGIES FOR FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS
 (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:19)

Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:24) grouped the coping strategies into two categories: Avoidance and Confrontative. Of these two some are problem focused and emotion focused while some are implemented before product choice decision and others are implemented after the purchase decision. Consumers who do not want to reveal their limited skills employed avoidance strategies whereas those who faced this challenge of illiteracy employed confrontative strategies. An avoidance coping strategy is where the consumer does nothing to remedy the situation or avoids the condition totally (Lazarus & Lazarus 1994:159) whereas in the confrontative coping strategy the consumer faces the situation. Coping strategies protect the consumer from potential threats to their self-esteem. It reduces the demands of the environment and assists functionally illiterate consumers in getting their needs met in the market place while others serve as protective strategies (Adkins, 2001:76).

2.7.1 Avoidance coping strategies

Avoidance coping strategy is where the consumers do nothing about the situation or avoid the condition totally.

2.7.1.1 Memorisation

Memorisation refers to the ability to recall the learnt information. Functionally illiterate consumers memorise text, visual cues in brands, the combination of letters in specific fonts and colours, logos, symbols, packaging, shapes and store layouts (Mhlanga, 2010:119; Gau

& Viswanathan, 2008; Ozanne *et al.*, 2005: 258; Adkins, 2001:59) in order to get their need satisfied in the market place. Fonts and colours are helpful to consumers with low literacy abilities as they help them to recall (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Memorisation of attributes such as logos, packaging, brand name and colours, as well as the retail outlets does not only help with the selection of products, but also saves time as they can choose products quickly. (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). Given evidence by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:21) some consumers memorise and recognise the currency and coins used to pay. They memorise the structures of retail stores and this helps them to choose retail outlets quickly. Memorising is the coping strategy used by most South African consumers who are functionally illiterate (Mhlanga, 2010:118).

2.7.1.2 *Display of repetitive behaviour*

Repetitive behaviour refers to actions that consumers engage in repeatedly in order to cope in the market place. Functionally illiterate consumers create a comfort zone for themselves to avoid shopping stress and anxiety by confining shopping to the same stores (Mhlanga, 2010:110). As consumers purchase at the same stores they become familiar with the store layout and this saves them shopping time and also reduces stress associated with an unfamiliar shopping environment, as they know where the products are located (Adkins, 2001:63). Shopping in the same stores and purchasing the same products led to brand and store loyalty. However at times these visited stores may have a limited variety of products. If consumers become store loyal they will be willing to repurchase more in future and recommend the store to other people. The reasons for visiting the same stores include low prices, easy transport access, friendly salespeople (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2009:86) and the fact that the family used to shop there (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). In addition shopping was also done at familiar outlets with limited choices to avoid having too many options to choose from (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2008). The reason for opting for smaller stores with limited choices was done to avoid stress. Furthermore retail patronage was confined to outlets where salespeople were friendly and helpful (Mhlanga, 2010:112). Repetition reduces external demands placed on the consumer and helps solve day to day consumption related tasks.

2.7.1.3 *Avoid discounted products*

Retailers reduce their prices on a regular basis in order to attract consumers in their stores. The prices are mostly reduced in terms of percentages. Other retailers use fractions to reduce prices. This becomes a hiccup to functionally illiterate consumers as they cannot comprehend percentages or fractions and therefore in response to this they avoid buying products that have fractions off or a percentage off prices (Mhlanga, 2010:122; Gau & Viswanathan, 2008:11-12). This was done to avoid dealing with price uncertainties as they cannot handle complicated numbers. Instead, functionally illiterate consumers prefer simple

prices that they can easily comprehend. By avoiding the reduced products this helps consumers to keep their literacy status concealed. On the other hand, they end up buying expensive food products. It is therefore critical for retailers to assess their price reduction system in order to accommodate all consumers.

2.7.1.4 Pretend disability

Functionally illiterate consumers are stigmatised as mentioned already, therefore are very sensitive and resort to hiding their literacy status. Some resort to asking, but to some asking can be such a threatening encounter and therefore they ask salespeople or even strangers indirectly without revealing their literacy status by pretending to be disabled. Literature indicates that they pretend to have a disability to avoid embarrassment (Mhlanga, 2010:121; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). This was done by faking a disease and the most faked disease is eye problems (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24).

2.7.1.5 Carry limited cash when going for shopping

Functionally illiterate consumers doubt the honesty of the salespeople especially at the till point hence they devised a strategy of carrying limited cash to avoid being cheated in the market place (Mhlanga, 2010:123; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24). This strategy does not only help conceal literacy status but can also help consumers to avoid impulse purchasing.

2.7.1.6 Pay with cash only

In order to avoid embarrassment at the checkout point functionally illiterate consumers operate on a cash only basis transaction. Findings from previous studies indicate that the consumers who have difficulties in writing cheques avoid paying with them and instead they use cash (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Studies have also indicated that a limited amount of cash is carried to avoid the risks of using all the money (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:27).

2.7.1.7 Deflection

Consumers use deflection, i.e. turn their attention away from their reading skills and focus on other skills (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:258; Adkins, 2001:75) as another coping strategy. The consumers deflect attention away from skills that they have difficulties with, such as reading skills, and focus it on skills that they are competent with, e.g. computer competency (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:258). As mentioned already, some functionally illiterate consumers keep their literacy status to themselves. They do not want to reveal their literacy status so they use alternative retail markets such as flea markets, yard sales and farmers' markets where written material is not present (Adkins, 2001:75). In this case consumers are limited to what is offered at the alternate market otherwise their needs remain unsatisfied.

2.7.2 Confrontative coping strategies

Confrontative coping strategies were employed by the consumers who faced the challenge of illiteracy. The consumers use these coping strategies so that they can be able to get their desired products in the stores. The following are some of the coping strategies that were employed:

2.7.2.1 Shopping help

A number of investigators have found out that functionally illiterate consumers depend on other people they trust such as relatives, friends, salespeople, fellow shoppers and sometimes even strangers to assist them with shopping tasks (Mhlanga, 2010:124; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2007; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a; Viswanathan & Gau, 2005; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24). This social network assists with aspects such as writing of cheques, making shopping lists, selecting products, etc. The most common and reliable shopping helper is the family or a close friend as they may have knowledge about the literacy status of the consumer (Mhlanga, 2010). For consumers who did not want to expose their literacy status to strangers a close friend or a family member was ideal. At some point functionally illiterate consumers depended on others to the point of total delegation where they no longer went shopping; instead the family did all the shopping chores (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). On the other hand the use of shopping helpers had its own disadvantage. Research by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005) showed that the social network that helped consumers over-control them. More over-dependence on retail salespeople can expose the consumers to exploitation, for example cashiers can cheat consumers if they realise that they are illiterate.

2.7.2.2 Develop relationship with salespeople

Functionally illiterate consumers develop relationships with the store salespeople by revealing their literacy status. This enabled the retail salespeople to assist them with their shopping chores (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). Creating a relationship with retail store personnel helps to prevent hostility and embarrassment. Research indicates that functionally illiterate consumers schedule their shopping chores when the salespeople they have befriended are on duty (Adkins, 2001:65). Research indicates that they hand all the money to cashiers with the trust that they will get correct change (Mhlanga, 2010:127; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24).

2.7.2.3 Practice and pre-planning purchase activities

Pre planning activities may assist consumers who are deficient in market skills in order to avoid embarrassment in the market place. Research indicates that functionally illiterate consumers practice various activities at home and these include practicing how to write a cheque, making shopping lists, timing and setting reminders (Adkins, 2001:80; Mhlanga

2010). Use of a modified shopping list was reported and this enables them to know what exactly will be purchased (Adkins, 2001:80). Some functionally illiterate consumers create a shopping list as they pick up the products in the stores (Mhlanga, 2010:126). Planning activities before shopping also includes how to get around to the retail outlet/trial buying excursion (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005:258; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:26). The use of a shopping list helps consumers to avoid being tempted to buy unbudgeted products. Research also indicates that they make these shopping lists with the help of others such as friends or family (Adkins, 2001).

2.7.3 Post purchase evaluation

Consumers' post purchase evaluation is the result of a transformation of purchase influences (marketing influences, family influences, etc.) into achievement of a purchase goal, e.g. to purchase enough food for their family. This can be viewed as a system where so-called inputs (all the influencing variables) are transformed (through product search and evaluation which involves memory) in terms of the actual purchases (outputs) (Gregoire, 2010:3). The systems approach to consumer decision-making is explained in more detail in Chapter 3, specifically 3.1.2. Informed or uninformed purchase behaviour will be the anticipated outputs that result from how a functionally illiterate consumer has interpreted the inputs through his experience, as well as the help from family, friends and salespeople. The food product chosen may reflect an informed product choice. On the other hand due to lack of linguistic and numeracy skills the consumer may find it difficult to display informed purchase behaviour and hence a wrong product is chosen. The outcome of the purchasing decision does not end after the decision has been made. It is important to determine if the consumers' standards were met. The consumer will evaluate the product against own expectation and requirements for the product. If the food product that is selected matches the expectation of the functionally illiterate consumer she has a neutral feeling and if the expectation exceeds the expected performance positive disconfirmation occurs and she will be satisfied. Conversely if the performance of the selected food product is below expectations negative disconfirmation will occur leading to dissatisfaction (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:547). Informed and uninformed food purchasing decisions will form part of a consumer's internal reference which is termed *feedback*. Feedback refers to process whereby a system receives information from an internal and external environment (Gregoire, 2010:3). It assists the system to adjust to needed changes. An informed or uninformed choice of food products will be the result of purchasing behaviour. The consequences of the decision will be re-evaluated so as to get more knowledge (control) which will be used in future purchases to address the problems that they have encountered in the market place. If retailers know what the extent of their problems are, and understand of how functionally illiterate consumers select different brands

in their stores they have a clearer picture of how the store environment can be adapted to assist them. This is how the retailers can contribute to assist functionally illiterate consumers.

2.8 SUMMARY

The chapter explicated food purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers who are limited in terms of their reading and writing ability. Food purchasing behaviour includes aspects of what consumers purchase, how they purchase, how much they purchase and where they purchase the food products from. Decision making entails five stages which are problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, choice and post purchase. The functionally illiterate consumer's decision making is different from the literate consumer's. The functionally illiterate consumers mostly base their decision on one piece of information e.g. price or brand and they disregard other product attributes. They are exposed to constraints in the market place. These challenges range from failing to locate products in the market place to being cheated. As a result of these challenges illiterate consumers employ coping mechanisms ranging from leaving the market place without the desired products (which protected their self-worth), to asking the salespeople for assistance, thereby revealing their inadequate literacy skills.

The next chapter gives the methodology and the data collection methods used in the study.



Chapter 3

Theoretical perspective, conceptual framework, and research objectives

This chapter introduces the system framework that served as the theoretical perspective. It was used to organise relevant literature in terms of a conceptual framework and to design the research methodology and a discussion of the findings.

3.1 MOTIVATION FOR USING SYSTEMS THEORY AS THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The systems theory approach was used to structure the research due to particular emphasis on low literate consumers' transformation of external influences in terms of purchase decisions and their use of coping strategies in a market place that is not necessarily aware of the challenges that they have to overcome.

3.1.1 Introduction

Systems theory as defined by Heylighten and Joslyn (2002:1) refers to “a trans disciplinary study of abstract organization of phenomena independent of their substance, type, spatial or temporal scale of existence in terms of the principles that are common to all complex entities and models that can be used to describe them.” The system theory seemed appropriate for this study as it provided a useful vehicle to discuss consumers' purchasing behaviour as an entity and to discuss the various elements that relates to buying behaviour in terms of the sequence, relationship and interdependency of the elements of purchasing behaviour and how they contribute to the outcome of food choice. The assumptions of the systems theory are presented and discussed in terms of the parameters of the study as shown by the conceptual framework (Figure 3.1).

3.1.2 Core assumptions of the system

The following assumptions are inherent to the system theory (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4) and will be discussed.

Any system is discussed in terms of inputs, transformation and outputs:

The system consists of the three major parts: inputs, transformation and outputs. The inputs which are the marketing mix elements and socio-cultural factors influence the functionally illiterate consumers when purchasing food and are changed during the transformation process into the outputs. Transformation refers to unified diversion of inputs to outputs (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:7). The outputs refers to the results of transforming the inputs to outputs (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:8)

In any system there is a goal:

For illiterate consumers the primary goal is to make informed purchase decisions and therefore get their need met in the market place, i.e. to purchase the right food products which will satisfy their physiological need.

System can be open or closed:

Food purchasing behaviour is regarded as an open system as it is open to and interacts with other systems in the environment (Payne-Palacio, 2005:59). Food choice is regarded as an open system as boundaries between various elements are permeable. The elements in the systems influence one another (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:333). Food purchasing as a system is influenced by other external factors such as economy. If the economy of the country goes down like the recent recession that took place, in Botswana the prices of the food go up and this has an effect on consumers' food choice, i.e. the functionally illiterate may not be able to afford to purchase the food they used to purchase and need for their family..

Wholeness is another important characteristic of system approach:

System theory implies that the entity is more than the sum of its parts (Payne-Palacio, 2005:59), i.e. the system should be understood as a whole rather than emphasising certain parts in isolation as these certain elements contribute toward an informed purchasing decision (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:329). Thus the output of a system may not necessarily be derived from factors that influence food choice in isolation, e.g. assuming that price may be considered the main influencer of food choice alone. It does not work like that, a collective contribution of all influencing factors is crucial (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:325).

The parts of a system are interrelated and interdependent:

The elements in a system interact with one another and are interdependent (Payne-Palacio, 2005:59). For instance, a change in one part of the system affects the other part of the system. The elements in a system exhibit mutual influence on one another. Some elements in the system may be regarded as more crucial than another, for example a consumer may purchase food products in a certain outlet though it is far because the prices are affordable. The system is composed of subsystems that form part of the entire system and this therefore implies that the influencing factors are different in importance (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4). Some of the influencing factors are more significant than the others (hierarchy). Even though some are more important than others they are able to compensate for others, this is referred to as equifinality. Equifinality refers to a process whereby the output (informed/uninformed purchase decision) may be achieved by using different inputs or by varying transformation process (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4), e.g. sympathetic salespeople and stores that are farther away may provoke the same reaction as opposed to rude salespeople in very conveniently located stores based on the compensatory rule that significance is allocated to certain product characteristics in terms of perceived importance. Each element of food purchasing behaviour should not to be discussed in isolation but rather integrated with other components

A system theory is self-reflexive:

Self-reflexivity as defined by Whitchurch and Constantine (1993:325) refers to the ability of the human being to make themselves and their own behaviour an object of examination and a target of explanation.

In any system there is feedback:

In any system feedback is essential as it provides essential information to ensure the continuing effectiveness of the system. Feedback can be negative or positive and it is important when functionally illiterate consumers evaluate and search for new ways to improve the decision making process (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4).

3.1.2.1 Factors influencing consumers to select food products (inputs)

Various factors (*inputs*) influence the consumers to select food products. In this research inputs represents the factors that influence buyer behaviour, namely marketing factors and socio-cultural factors. The marketing factors include *product, price, place, promotion, salespeople* and *processes* (Payne-Palacio, 2005:60) while the socio-cultural factors that will be referred to in this study are *financial status, educational level* and *reference group*. These factors can be differentiated consciously and subconsciously in the consumers' mind when the literate consumers enter the market place (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:444). The system

postulates that the influencing factors are not of the same significance, therefore *hierarchy* is evident (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4). This means that certain factors will be more influential than others when consumers select food products. If a consumer is not impressed by the retail outlet (place) where she purchases food she may continue to patronise that store as prices may be affordable. A negative experience with one of the influencing factors can have an impact on the individual as these elements may compensate for one another for example low prices may compensate for unsympathetic salespeople.

3.1.2.2 *Transformation of influencing factors in terms of problems encountered in the market place*

All the influencing factors are considered during consumers' choice of food in the retail outlets. Consumers interpret/transform these factors within their own frame of reference that is based on cognitive structures in memory resulting from personal experience with food products or from information acquired from friends, family and salespeople. The knowledge will be used to help select the food products, the stores and ultimately the method of payment. If the consumer had no experience with the food product he/she will look for information about the product while shopping in retail outlets before engaging in the final decision of whether to select the product or not. The consumer can get the information from various sources such as advertisements papers, salespeople, family or friends. The sources of information are not equally important, some are more important than others, e.g. those that are more easily understood (hierarchy). Unfortunately functionally illiterate consumers' information search is limited because they are not able to access all types of information. The elements that influence food purchasing behaviour are interrelated and interdependent so when there is change in one element the other elements are affected (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993:328).

3.1.2.3 *Post purchase evaluation of food products (output)*

Consumers' food choice can eventually be either informed or uninformed. The final decision regarding food choice could come through various ways (equifinality). An informed choice could be based on information and help from the family, friends or salespeople which reflects a confrontative coping strategy, i.e. consumers are not ashamed of their literacy status and they reveal it to other people. If a consumer has applied a confrontative coping strategy it may result in informed choices as friends, family or salespeople may help the individual with an informed product choice. An informed food choice may reflect that a consumer might have applied an avoidance coping strategy, i.e. the consumer hid their literacy status and went to other shops or purchased whatever was available. That may have led to the wrong product

choices or no product choices at all. Informed and uninformed food purchasing decisions will form part of the consumer's internal frame of reference, which is termed as *feedback* in the system framework and the consequences may require the consumer to look back at the decision by acquiring more knowledge (control) from family, friends or even salespeople. Any complaints about the service provided (processes in the retail outlets) serve as feedback that can be used by retailers which can lead to consumer satisfaction. *Wholeness* is critical in the systems approach in the sense that the output may not necessarily be derived from one aspect in isolation e.g. an informed decision is not necessarily due to logic product display only. All other aspects such as influencing factors, information sources, problems encountered as well as coping strategies need to be considered and integrated so that an informed choice/purchase can be achieved.

The outcome of the purchasing decision does not end after the decision has been made. If the food product that is selected matches the expectations of the functionally illiterate consumer she has a neutral feeling and if the expectation exceeds the expected performance, positive disconfirmation occurs that may lead to satisfaction. Conversely if the performance of the selected food product is below expectations negative disconfirmation will occur, leading to dissatisfaction (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:498).

3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 3.1 shows the conceptual framework for the study. It was formulated in accordance with the relevant literature.

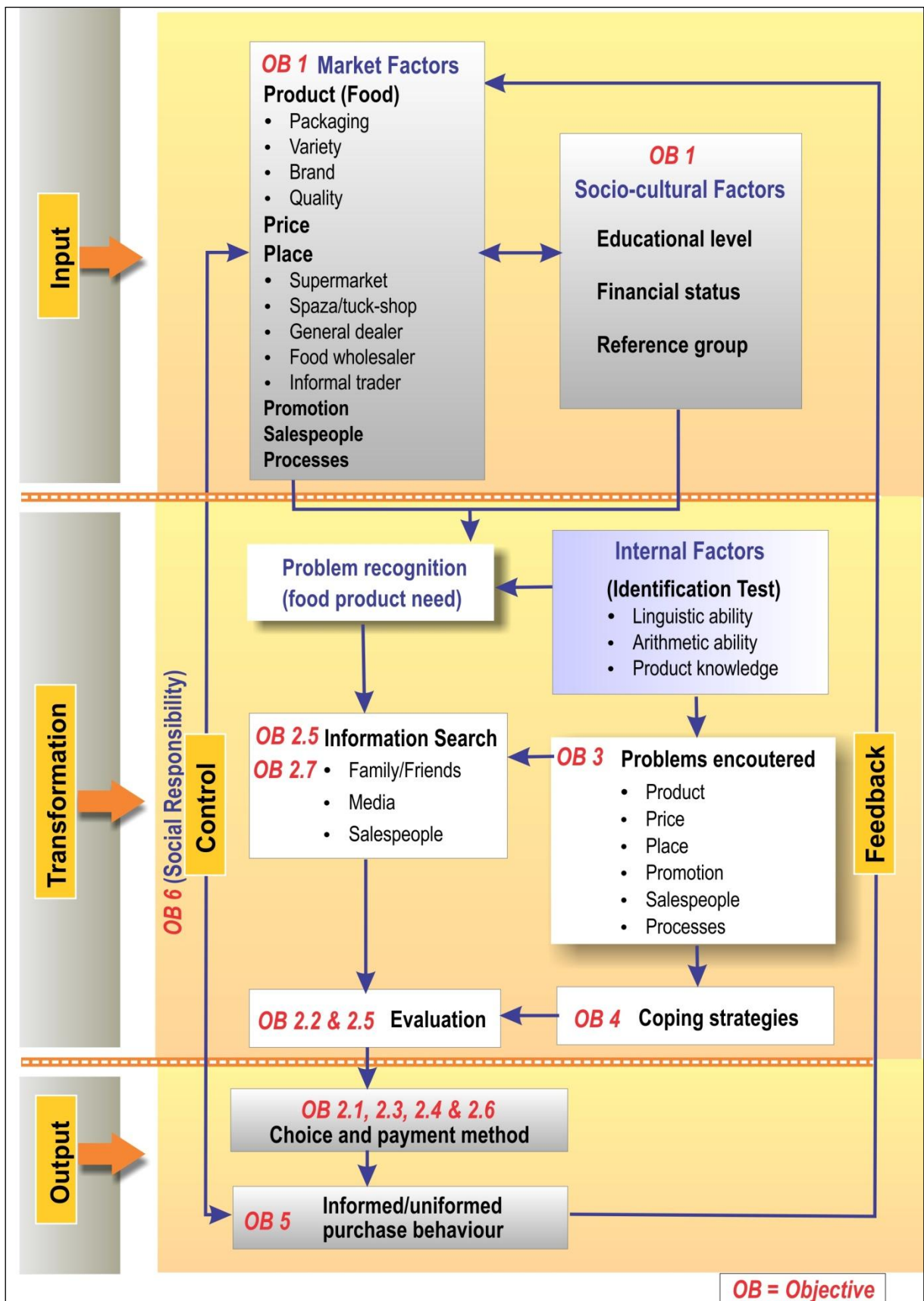


FIGURE 3.1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ADAPTED FROM “A SIMPLE MODEL OF CONSUMER DECISION MAKING” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:483)

3.3 AN EXPLICATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.3.1 Factors that influence consumers purchasing decisions (Inputs)

Food choice/purchasing behaviour is a complex human behaviour influenced by many interrelated factors (Asp, as cited by Simelane, 2008). Food purchasing behaviour is influenced by certain marketing factors namely product, price, place, promotion, process and salespeople. Illiterate consumers are driven by different factors when it comes to food choice; some are driven by cheaper prices, convenient places, products on promotion, sympathetic salespeople or even the services that are provided by the stores (processes). Other factors, socio-cultural factors e.g. education level, financial status and reference group, also play a major role in influencing illiterate consumers' food choice. For instance the family is the immediate reference group that moulds consumer behaviour (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). In this phase one of the core assumptions, namely *hierarchy*, comes into being as not all the influencing factors are equally important. Some consumers are influenced by the prices of food products when selecting food while others are influenced by retail outlets.

3.3.2 Consumers' interpretation of the influencing factors (Transformation)

The influencing factors are individually perceived and collectively interpreted within consumers existing schemata in memory that are determined through prior experience with the product (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:2). The low literate consumer will refer to his or her own experience with the use of food product or what they have seen family members buy when they enter the market place (John, 1999) to fulfil their need, which is food. How a consumer ultimately makes a decision regarding purchasing food products involves the internal influences through which inputs are processed. An illiterate consumer will inevitably rely on internal resources such as his/her linguistic and arithmetic ability and product knowledge to make sense of the situation and to guide the decision making process. A consumer will refer to his/her own experience with the food product and experience influences consumers' knowledge and preference of food products. On the other hand, limited linguistic and arithmetic ability have an influence on the consumers' choice of food products. It inhibits the consumers from making informed choices as they have a poor reading and writing skills (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005).

Salespeople, family, friends and media such as radio, television and advertisements are sources of information to illiterate consumers. The sources of information are not of the same level (*hierarchy*) some are more influential than others (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4). Illiterate consumers' information search is also limited because they are not able to access all types of information and as a result they may prefer information from family rather than

salespeople who are at times rude to consumers. Written advertisements are not utilised effectively as the consumers are limited in terms of reading. If consumers' product knowledge and experience are limited they will find it difficult to comprehend the product information and this thus leads to problems or constraints in the market place. Constraints/problems posed by elements of the marketing mix inhibit the consumers' ability to make informed purchasing decisions. These constraints can emanate from all the influencing factors, e.g. problems related to food products such as too much information on food products. Some of the influencing factors pose more significant constraints/problems than others (*hierarchy*) (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4).

When consumers experience problems in the market place, they employ coping strategies. The use of some coping strategies may enable the consumers to make informed decisions while other coping strategies do not necessarily lead to informed purchasing behaviour. Even the coping strategies do not carry the same weight, some are more important than the others (*hierarchy*). During the transformation phase the consumer applies decision rules, thereby putting the elements that influence food choice as well as coping strategies in terms of importance (*hierarchy*) (Spears & Gregoire, 2003:4). The decision rules can be compensatory, i.e. negative results of one of the elements e.g. rude personnel may be compensated by other positive attributes of certain elements, e.g. lower price.

3.3.3 Consumers' post-purchase process (Output)

The eventual purchasing decision culminates as the outcome, i.e. informed/uninformed food choice (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007) (output). The outcome, whether positive or negative, can come through various ways (equifinality). An informed purchasing choice/behaviour could be based on help from the family, friends or salespeople, or it could be from the use of a coping strategy, e.g. confrontative coping strategies, as they enable the illiterate consumer to face the illiteracy challenge and this can help them get their need met in the market place. An uninformed choice may reflect on the use of avoidance coping strategies, e.g. leaving the retail outlets without the desired food products or from rude salespeople who could not help the illiterate consumers. The consumer's final decision, whether informed or uninformed, has consequences. The latter decision is part of the feedback of the product experience which will provide information about products in future. The consequences may also help the consumer to re-evaluate the situation by acquiring more information (control) in order to make informed purchases next time. The control element in this system could be the strategies that retailers put in place to help the functionally illiterate consumers and to address obstacles. The retailers should at this stage have realised the functionally illiterate consumers' need and come up with coping strategies to help them, e.g. a help desk that

assists those who are illiterate to help them to make informed choices and feel unthreatened in their retail outlets.

3.3.4 Variables used in the study

Independent variable refers to a factor which the researcher controls or manipulates thereby causing an effect on selected dependent variables. The dependent variables are then measured or otherwise monitored as it is expected to be affected by manipulation of the independent variable (Copper & Schindler, 2006:63).

TABLE 3.1 VARIABLES USED IN THE STUDY

Independent variables	Dependent variables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing factors such product as price, place, promotion, salespeople and process. • Socio cultural factors such as age, education, income level and reference group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buyer behaviour • Problems encountered in the market place

In this study the independent variables were the marketing factors such as product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes which were thought to influence functionally illiterate consumers' buyer behaviour. The socio cultural factors such as age, education, income level and reference group were also independent variables, supposing that if women are less educated they would be unlikely to navigate a wide range of retail outlets.

Buyer behaviour was a dependent variable. The effectiveness of purchasing was expected to be linearly related to the information on the marketing factors e.g. information about various products in the market place, knowledge about food prices, different types of promotions etc., and therefore more extensive exposure to retail outlets may result in more efficient or informed choice of products.

3.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study was to investigate and describe the food choice and purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers in Gaborone, Botswana. The intention was to identify problems that are encountered prior to and during food purchasing and to identify coping mechanisms that are used to overcome pertinent limitations and to make

recommendations on how consumers' problems could be addressed to enable them to cope better.

The following objectives were formulated to direct the study.

Objective 1: To investigate to which extent factors that are associated with a retailers' marketing mix affect consumers' choice of food products for their home.

Objective 2: To investigate functionally illiterate consumers' buyer behaviour with regard to food purchases:

Sub-objective 2.1: To investigate and describe where food products are purchased.

Sub-objective 2.2: To investigate and describe why consumers purchase specific food products at specific retail outlets

Sub-objective 2.3: To investigate and describe what types of food products are mainly purchased for their households.

Sub-objective 2.4: To investigate and describe how often the various types of food products are purchased.

Sub-objective 2.5: To investigate and investigate and describe how food products are selected.

Sub-objective 2.6: To investigate and describe how monetary exchange is handled in the various retail outlets.

Sub-objective 2.7: To investigate and explore whether they do any pre-purchase planning before food purchases are made.

Objective 3: To identify and describe the problems that are experienced by functionally illiterate consumers in the market place, which are specifically related to the following:

Sub-objective 3.1: Food product choice;

Sub-objective 3.2: Prices/cost of food;

Sub-objective 3.3: Places/retail outlets;

Sub-objective 3.4: Promotion of food products;

Sub-objective 3.5: Salespeople in the food outlets;

Sub-objective 3.6: Process related activities in retail outlets.

Objective 4: To explore and describe the coping strategies used by functionally illiterate consumers to overcome/handle problems encountered in the market place.

Objective 5: To discuss the implications of the problems encountered by functionally illiterate consumers with regards to their food purchase behaviour.

Objective 6: To discuss the parameters of retailers' social responsibility towards functionally illiterate.

3.5 SUMMARY

The chapter provided the system framework that served as the theoretical perspective. The motivation for using the system theory was outlined and the core assumptions of the system theory which involved concepts such inputs, transformation, outputs, hierarchy, equifinality, and interrelatedness of the elements in a system were discussed. The chapter also explicated the conceptual framework and the objectives of the study were also stated.

Chapter four will outline the research design and the methodology of the study. Data collection and analysis is explained as well as ethical aspects are attended to.



Chapter 4

Research design and methodology

This chapter presents the research design and the research methodology and explains the data collection procedures that were used to generate data.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research was empirical in nature and followed an exploratory, descriptive approach. A descriptive research approach relies upon observation for data collection (Walliman, 2005:11). It provides a description of actions of the respondents and tries to understand those actions in terms of the context (Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Delpont, 2005:106). Exploratory research also seeks to gather ideas and insights about new phenomena (problems faced by functionally illiterate consumers as well as their coping strategies in the market place) (De Vos, et *al.*, 2005:106). An exploratory study was undertaken because the researcher examined a relatively new field. From the existing literature, problems encountered in the market place and the coping strategies implemented by consumers in Botswana have not been examined yet. It was also undertaken to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and field of interest (Walliman, 2005:11). A predominantly quantitative procedure in the form of survey was followed, but certain elements of qualitative research were used namely interview and observation. A structured questionnaire was developed and used to interview respondents. A screening test that was quantitative in nature was carried out first, to determine whether the respondents qualified for the study. The test consisted of ten pictures and word based questions derived from advertisements papers (see Addendum C). The test required respondents to do simple additions, subtractions, to differentiate between products and interpret some information.

The study was cross sectional, i.e. the study was done in a specific context (Gaborone) at a particular time (August 2010 to November 2010), carried out once and represented a snapshot of one point in time (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:141). The study was also empirical, i.e. it made use of primary data (De Vos, et *al.*, 2005). The primary data was collected through the combination of quantitative method (questionnaire) and qualitative methods (observation and

interview). The study integrated both primary and secondary data. The literature review was compiled (secondary data) from various reliable sources to indicate what has been done and published to date on functionally illiterate consumers' buying decisions; problems encountered and the coping strategies employed. The questionnaire implemented a set of questions that respondents had to answer in terms of Likert-type scales. It also incorporated a few open ended questions to encourage respondents to provide their own views on certain issues. The respondents were conveniently sampled in a specific geographic area in Botswana which the researcher had easy access to as it was envisaged that data collection would be time-consuming.

4.2 UNIT OF ANALYSIS, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

4.2.1 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis for this study comprised of illiterate female consumers (working women) of Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana, and surrounding areas within a radius of 40 km from Gaborone (see figure 1.1). The pre-condition for participation in the research was that the individuals had to be females of 25 years and older with limited or no formal education.

The unit of analysis was based on the following considerations:

- Women were chosen as the population for this study because literature indicates that women are mostly responsible for food purchasing and food preparation for households (Simelane, 2008).
- The women had to be between 25 and 65 years of age and had to be responsible for food procurement for their families.
- A focus on female consumers seemed appropriate because women are specifically hard hit by the phenomenon of illiteracy in Botswana (Klaven, Tijdens, Hugh-Williams & Martin, 2009).

4.2.2 The sample and sampling procedure

The study was limited in scope as it investigated female consumers only. A sample is a representation of the entire population (De Vos, *et al.*, 2005:82; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:63). The study consisted of female respondents who resided in Gaborone and surrounding areas. These areas are very close to Gaborone; the furthest was 40 km away from Gaborone. Gaborone is the capital city of Botswana and is located in the South East District. It covers a total area of 19.6 km² with a population of 192,700 according to a 2006 survey of which 4,552 have never attended either formal or non-formal schooling. Primary data was collected from these consumers because they resided in the city where there are

many different types of retail outlets. It was assumed that they would have experienced different problems in these different retail outlets.

4.2.2.1 Identification of respondents

The researcher administered a screening test which helped to conveniently select the possible respondents in Gaborone and surrounding areas in Botswana. The test involved an exercise which was given to all possible respondents (with formal or no formal education) to test their arithmetic and linguistic ability. The test identified respondents who qualified for participation. The test consisted of ten pictures and word based questions derived from advertisements papers (see Addendum C). The test required respondents to do simple additions and subtractions, to differentiate between products and interpret some information. Calculators were not allowed. In order to qualify/to take part in the study, the possible respondents had to get a score of five or less out of ten. The test was administered to 250 individuals. Respondents who qualified and were willing to participate (200) were then recruited for the study. The rest (50) were thanked for their time and were kindly informed that they were not eligible for the study.

4.2.2.2 Convenience sampling (Phase 1)

Convenience sampling was carried out to select the respondents for the study who were interviewed through the use of a structured questionnaire. The respondents that were conveniently selected during a screening test automatically qualified for the study. Convenient sampling is a non-probability sampling method chosen due to time and financial limitations. After discussion with the statistician, a sample size of 200 respondents was envisaged. This seemed appropriate, due to the exploratory nature of the research. The respondents were recruited by means of a very time-consuming process from Gaborone and surrounding areas mostly at workplaces, public places such as Kgotla, clinics, hospitals and learning centres (those who have enrolled with the Department of Non-Formal Education).

4.2.2.3 Random sampling (Phase 2)

Respondents that were to be observed were randomly selected from the rest of the respondents and taken to the retail outlets to be observed. The researcher used screening test sheets (see addendum C) as they contained the respondents' numbers as well as contact information that made it easier to contact them. The sheets were cut, folded and put in a container and every woman stood the chance of selection in order to arrive at 20 women. The researcher decided to observe only 10% (in this case 20 women) of the respondents because of financial constraints.

4.2.2.4 Stratified random sampling

A stratified random sampling technique was used for selecting retailers that were interviewed. Stratified sampling was used for gaining a greater degree of representativeness and to serve as a check on conscious and unconscious bias on the part of the researcher (De Vos, *et al.*, 2005). Retailers were stratified according to the type of the retail they operate (supermarket, spaza, general dealer, food wholesaler, informal trader). A minimum of two per retail type was recruited, resulting in a total of 10 retailers. A number was allocated to each retailer from a different retail outlet (supermarkets, general dealers, spaza shops, food wholesalers and informal traders). Ten retailers were then randomly selected. Initially ten retailers were randomly selected for interview, but unfortunately two did not honour the appointment and only eight were interviewed.

4.3 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

4.3.1 Questionnaire

The researcher made use of an interviewer administered questionnaire. It was a structured interview questionnaire where the researcher physically met the respondents and asked them questions face to face (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill & 2007:357). The questionnaire contained brief closed ended questions/statements that were responded to by means of a 3 point Likert-type scale (Yes/definitely, Maybe/sometimes, No/never) to provide uniform answers. A Likert-type scale is popular as it is easy to prepare, interpret and simple for the respondents to answer (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:6). Care was taken to make instructions clear. It was developed in English but translated to Setswana during the interview. It was developed by the researcher based on the extant literature on functionally illiterate consumers' and their buying behaviour. Professionals from the Department of Statistics of the University of Pretoria were involved to ensure that the content of the questionnaire was in line with the envisaged statistical analysis. Questionnaires were administered by the researcher with the help of two trained field workers, i.e. Home Economics students (fellow teachers who are furthering their education at University of Botswana) who were familiar with the subject, to gain information about functionally illiterate consumers. It was ensured that responses would not be influenced in any way for data reliability purposes. The questionnaire was pre-tested beforehand on ten (10) women with similar background to those of the study group to check for validity and reliability of the instrument. Pre-testing is carried out to detect weaknesses in the research methodology and the data collection instruments. It provides proxy data for selection of probability sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:85). It also

determines the time that will be required to complete the questionnaire. A logical way of testing whether different question formats produce different answers is to test the questionnaire before the main research commences (Silverman, 2010:272). Ten female adults employed by the University of Pretoria as cleaners were approached and interviewed. The length of the questionnaire seemed problematic for a few. No changes were made because the majority coped well.

The questionnaire consisted of six sections (see Addendum B):

Section A: *Demographic information.* Questions pertaining to age, number of years of formal schooling, total household income and place of residence were included.

Section B: *Factors influencing food choice.* This section contained four questions from which the respondent had to determine the most influencing factor. These factors were product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes. The places where respondents purchased the food were to be indicated. The places ranged from supermarkets to informal traders. The section required respondents to state what food they mostly purchased, how often and why they purchased food from various places. For question 7 a five point Likert-type scale (once per month, once per week, every day, occasionally and never) was used. There was an open ended question where the respondents had to state if they purchased food from any other place not specified in the questionnaire.

Section C: *How consumers selected food.* Respondents were asked to indicate whether they made shopping lists when going shopping and those who made shopping lists were asked to explain why.

Section D: *Monetary exchange in the market place.* In this section respondents had to indicate the payment method used and reasons for the using specific payment methods.

Section E: *Problems encountered in the market place.* The respondents had to indicate the problems encountered in the market place with regard to the product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and process. A three point Likert-type scale was used. There was also an open ended question where the

respondents had to state if they had any other problem that was not mentioned in the questionnaire.

Section F: *Coping strategies employed by respondents.* In this section ten statements were responded to by means of a Likert-type scale. There was an open ended question where the respondents had to state if they reacted in any other way that was not mentioned in the questionnaire.

Except for question 7 in section B, section B and the rest of section F included the same Likert-type scales in order to simplify the instructions and responses. The questionnaire was completed by the researcher and field assistants by marking a cross at the relevant answers that respondents submitted. No interference was made in terms of respondents' answers.

The questionnaire contained a covering letter which was read to the respondents before the interview took place. After the researcher had explained to the respondents what the research entailed as explained in the cover letter, the willing respondents signed a consent form before the interview commenced. The cover letter was collected from the department of Consumers Science at the University of Pretoria. The cover letter explained the purpose of the study (see appendix A). It gave the instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and how long will it take. It informed the respondents that they could withdraw from the study if they wished to do so. The questionnaire also ensured confidentially that the information will be used by University of Pretoria for the purpose of study only (see appendix A).

4.3.2 Observation in the retail outlet (Phase 2)

The researcher carried out observations in phase 2 of the research in order to gather observable data in the physical environment (retail outlets) of the study group as a form of triangulation. The observations helped to support information for the interpretation and explanation of the data obtained during the first phase (structured interview). The researcher became a non-participant observer and a checklist (addendum D) was used to capture certain attributes in the retail outlets. The observation took place at the retail outlets where consumers did their major shopping, in supermarkets, general dealers and also at retail outlets where they did occasional/fill-in shopping in food wholesalers, spaza shops and informal traders. The observations were done during the week at lunch, after work and weekends. The 20 respondents were contacted before the observations as the researcher took their contact numbers during the interview (screening test). The researcher was merely observing and she did not reveal the purpose of activity. The researcher obtained permission from the retailers to do the observation in their stores.

4.3.3 Interview (Phase 3)

The researcher also interviewed the eight retailers after they were randomly selected using stratified random selection to find out if they played any role in helping functionally illiterate consumers. The researcher made appointments with various retailers and interviewed them regarding their social responsibility towards the illiterate consumers. The interview was restricted to the questions asked by the researcher who made use of the interview schedule (see addendum E).

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

Respondents were recruited conveniently from different areas in Gaborone and surrounding areas. The data collection techniques included structural questionnaires, observations and interviews. A screening test was used to determine respondents who qualified for the study. Identifying respondents was a time-consuming process. The possible respondents were asked questions from the screening test which took about 10 to 15 minutes and if it happened that the individual qualified, she was selected and interviewed using the structured questionnaire. The interview took about 25 to 30 minutes. About 250 possible respondents were initially approached from which 200 respondents who met the pre-requisites were interviewed. The objectives of the study were explained to them first, after which they signed a letter of consent (see addendum A). The questionnaire was administered by the researcher and two trained assistants during August 2010 to November 2010 at different areas (work places, hospitals, clinics, Kgotla, retail outlets, etc.). The assistants accompanied the researcher for the first few interviews after which they continued on their own.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis refers to the process of bringing order, structure and meaning out of the data that was collected (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:333). The questionnaires were coded in accordance with the predetermined data definitions. The statistician at the Department of Statistics of University of Pretoria captured the data by using the SAS statistical analysis (version 9.2) software program. She then sent the questionnaire back to the researcher to check data errors before statistical procedures could be carried out. Errors which resulted due to incorrect coding were identified and corrected.

4.5.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the factors influencing food choice, dominant reasons for purchasing at various retail outlets and frequency of shopping. The data was summarized and visually presented in the form of graphs, frequency tables, means, and percentage distributions. Means and modes were also calculated to explain the tendencies of the variables of the data that was collected.

4.5.2 Inferential statistics

A more detailed interpretation and representation of the data was done through the use of chi square tests. The chi square tests showed the relationship between variables (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:243). The Fisher exact test was also used when the chi square test was invalid, i.e. when the expected value in any of the cells of the table was below ten.

4.5.3 Open ended questions

Open ended questions were open coded by hand and analysed to identify the relevant concepts and to form coherent groups pertaining to the same construct. These were mainly used to shed light on the findings.

4.5.4 Analysis of interviews

The interviews were analysed and coded by hand to identify prominent constructs and to form coherent themes for discussion.

4.5.5 Operationalisation

Table 4.1 provides a summary of how data was analysed and interpreted.

TABLE: 4.1 OPERATIONALISATION OF THE OBJECTIVES AND SUB-OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES AND SUB-OBJECTIVES	QUESTIONS	STATISTICAL METHOD
Objective 1: Investigate to which extent factors that are associated with a retailers' marketing mix affect consumers' choice of food products for their home	Section B: Question 5 (V7-12)	Descriptive statistics: Frequency presented in terms of percentages.
Objective 2: To investigate functionally illiterate consumers' buyer behaviour with regard to food purchases Objective 2.1: To investigate and describe where food products are purchased. Objective 2.2: To investigate and describe why consumers purchase specific food products at specific retail outlets. Objective 2.3: To investigate and describe what type of food products are mainly bought for their households. Objective 2.4: To describe and investigate how often the various types of food products are purchased. Objective 2.5: To describe and investigate and how food products are selected. Objective 2.6: To investigate and describe how monetary exchange is handled in the various retail outlets. Objective 2.7: To investigate and explore whether they do any pre-purchase planning before food purchases are made.	 Section B: Question 6-9 (V12-55) Section D: Question 12-13 (V61-70) Section C: Question 10-11 (V56-60) Section D: Question 12-13 (V61-70) Section C: Question 10-11 (V56-60)	Descriptive statistics: Frequency presented in terms of percentages. Descriptive statistics based on what the majority indicated. Percentage calculated. Simple frequencies; percentage calculated.

TABLE: 4.1 OPERATIONALISATION OF THE OBJECTIVES AND SUB-OBJECTIVES continued.....

OBJECTIVES AND SUB-OBJECTIVES <i>continued...</i>	QUESTIONS	STATISTICAL METHOD
Objective 3: To identify and describe the problems that are experienced by functionally illiterate consumers in the market place, which are specifically related to the following: Objective 3.1: Food product choice; Objective 3.2: Price/cost of food; Objective 3.3: store / retail outlet; Objective 3.4: Promotion of food products; Objective 3.5: Salespeople in the retail places; Objective 3.6: Process related activities in the retail outlets.	Section E: Question 14 (V71-80) Section E: Question 15 (V81-90) Section E: Question 16 (V91-100) Section E: question 17 (V101-106) Section E: Question 18 (V107-115) Section E: Question 19 (V116-121)	Descriptive statistics: Ranking, Means calculations, standard deviation followed by Chi square test and Fisher exact test.
Objective 4: To explore and describe the coping strategies used by functionally illiterate consumers to overcome/handle problems encountered in the market place.	Section F: Questions 20-25 (V122-170)	Descriptive statistics: Ranking. Means calculations, standard deviations followed by Chi square test and Fisher exact tests.
Objective 5: To discuss the implications of the problems encountered by functionally illiterate consumers with regards to their food purchase behaviour.		Interpretation from findings
Objective 6: To discuss the parameters of retailers' social responsibility towards functionally illiterate consumers in terms of food purchases.	Interview	Discussion based on interpretation of findings.

4.6 QUALITY OF THE STUDY

The quality of the data determines the success and publishability of the research. The study should provide data that is valid and reliable. The quality of the study was attended to in terms of specific validity and reliability issues.

The following measures were taken to limit error and to enhance the validity and reliability of data during research process:

4.6.1 Validity issues

Validity refers to the extent to which data collection methods accurately measure what they were intended to measure (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:614; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:160). To ensure validity in this study the researchers looked at theoretical and construct validity.

4.6.1.1 **Conceptualisation: Theoretical validity**

Up to date literature was extensively reviewed to ensure identification and clarification of concepts pertaining to functionally illiterate consumers' purchasing behaviour, problems encountered by them and coping strategies used in the market place. The researcher reviewed the literature also to become more acquainted with relevant theory used in this study. A conceptual framework was provided to direct the research process. The validation included the important and relevant concepts used in the study, functionally illiterate consumer, purchasing behaviour, extended marketing mix (Chapter 2). The questionnaire was also compiled and it was checked to ensure that the questions correlated with the objectives. The questionnaire was scrutinised by experts from the Department of Consumer Science as well as two professional statisticians from Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria.

4.6.1.2 **Operationalisation: Construct validity**

Construct validity refers to the logical relationship among variables (De Vos 2005). It is concerned with validating the theory behind the measuring instrument through construction of underlying dimensions that show a logical relationship among variables (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:162). Construct validity was ensured by a well-constructed literature review that specified relevant concepts and proper conceptualisation. A Likert type scale was employed thought out as the major means in the questionnaire to ensure consistency. Help was sought from the statistician during the whole process of research to ensure that procedures for data analysis and interpretation were well handled. The following were also discussed

- **Content validity** is concerned with the representativeness or sampling adequacy of the content of an instrument. As a researcher you have to determine whether the instrument contains an adequate sample of items representing the concept, and whether the instrument really measures the specific concept (De Vos, 2005:161). In this study, the denotations of the central concepts were accurate indicators of the connotations of the concepts. In addition, the items in the questionnaire related to the sub-objectives of the study.
- **Criterion validity** refers to multiple measurements. It is achieved by comparing scores of an instrument with an established external criterion (De Vos, 2005:161).

4.6.1.3 Inferential validity

Inferential validity is a measure that ensures that statistical inferences about a larger population from a small population are valid (Leedey & Ormrod, 2005:252). It is achieved by statistical tests like chi-square tests and Fisher's exact test during analysis to ensure level of significance as well as the level of association or correlation between variables. In this case chi-square tests and Fisher's exact test were used to determine significant associations between selected variables.

4.6.2 Reliability issues

Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection methods will yield consistent results when duplicated (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:149). Reliability was ensured in this study by the following:

- The questionnaire was checked by the supervisors and statisticians to ensure that all questions were relevant and that it would cover all the objectives, and to ensure that the wording and concepts were appropriate.
- Permission from the ethics board of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria was obtained before data collection (see Addendum H).
- Statisticians were consulted to ensure that the questions were formulated correctly to allow relevant statistical analysis.
- The questionnaire was pre-tested on a smaller population to check its reliability (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:122-123) before administered.
- Willing respondents were interviewed after they were fully informed about the purpose of the research and this was confirmed by them signing a letter of consent (see Addendum A).
- Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured to encourage honest responses.

- Respondents were allowed to withdraw at any time during the data collection procedure if they wished to do so.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following issues were adhered to.

- **Informed consent**

Informed consent relates to the accurate communication of all possible information that relates to a research project (De Vos *et al.*, 2003). The consent form required respondents to sign before taking part. The respondents of this research were illiterate women (above age of 21) who had the capacity to give informed consent directly. The researcher explained about the overall goal and objectives of the research as well as data collection procedures to respondents.

- **Voluntary participation**

Participation in this study was voluntary. Respondents had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without an explanation if they wished to.

- **Anonymity and confidentiality**

Strict anonymity and confidentiality of the identities of the respondents were maintained throughout the data collection procedure. It was communicated to respondents formally. For observations (phase 2) the respondents were assured that the data was collected for educational purposes only and that the data would be kept confidential.

- **Formal approval**

Formal approval of the study was obtained from Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria (see Addendum H). Retailers' approval to do the observation in their stores was also obtained. The researcher consulted the retailers who gave their permission verbally after she gave them the written document from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (see Addendum F). Permission to do research was also granted by the Ministries of Education, Skill and Development (see Addendum G).

- **Training of field assistants**

Field assistants (fellow teachers in Home economics who are furthering their education at University of Botswana) were trained and the overall goal of research was explained to them.

4.8 SUMMARY

The chapter provided an overview of the design of the study, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instruments as well as data analysis. A sample of 200 illiterate women was recruited for the study. These women were aged between 25 and 65 years. The data was collected by means of a structured questionnaire which was completed in interview format. Observations were carried out in retail outlets to supplement the data collected from the questionnaire. Retailers were interviewed to find if they played any role in helping illiterate consumers. The data was analysed and the quality of data was assured by means of validity and reliability measures that were integrated into the study. Ethical considerations were also taken into account.



Chapter 5

Results and discussion

This chapter presents the findings of the research in terms of the objectives for the study and includes tables, and figures to support interpretations.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter starts with the relevant demographic information to explicate the profile of the sample and follows with findings that pertain to the specific objectives that were formulated for the research.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

The study focused on female respondents because they are predominantly responsible for buying food for their households, although their decision may be influenced by other family members (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). A total of 200 questionnaires were retrieved for interpretation.

5.2.1 Age of the respondents

A minimum age of 25 years was set as a precondition for the females' participation in the study to allow for some experience in food purchasing. Figure 5.1 reflects the representation of specific age groups more visually.

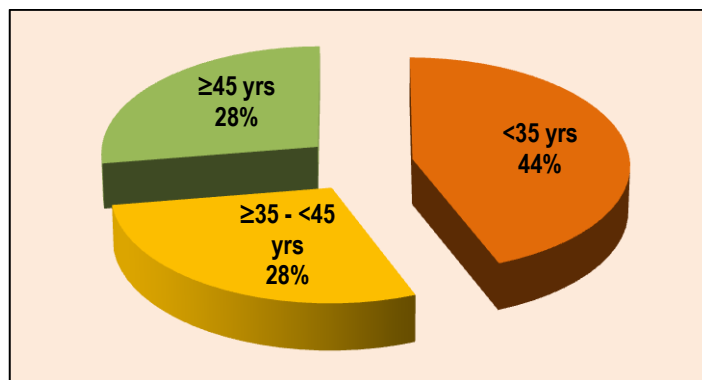


FIGURE 5.1: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=200)

The age of respondents varied from 25 to 65 years of age. They were subsequently grouped into three categories for statistical analysis, i.e. <35 years (n=88; 44.0%); n=57; ≥35 – <45 years (28.5%) and ≥45 years of age (n=55; 27.5%). These age categories were distinguished to allow further investigation of the purchase behaviour of younger females whose concerns may differ from middle-aged females who have more experience in the market place and older females who may have developed persistent ways to deal with challenges in the market place over time and who probably have adult children that assist or support them in some way. Findings will therefore be presented and discussed in terms of the three age categories. The selected age categories were well represented: the youngest group (<35 years) was the largest, while the other two age groups were equal in size.

5.2.2 Educational status of the respondents

The number of years of formal schooling completed by the respondents was limited (Table 5.1). Two categories were formed for the purpose of statistical analysis, i.e. no schooling (49.0%); and some formal education (51.0%).

TABLE 5.1: NUMBER OF YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOLING COMPLETED (N=200)

Years	n	%
None	98	49.0
1 - 3 years	9	4.5
>3 - < 5 years	8	4.0
≥ 5 years	85	42.0

The sample constituted of almost an equal representation of respondents with some formal education (51%) and no formal education (49%). All respondents were nevertheless requested to complete the screening test that aimed to determine their (in)ability to conclude important calculations in the market place. Respondents included in this study were those who failed to complete more than five out of ten tasks correctly. Most of those with some formal education had completed five years or more of schooling. In Botswana, some females are not allowed formal education by their religious affiliation. It was thought that those with some formal education (i.e. the younger respondents) would be more opinionated and able to negotiate in the market place. Food purchasing behaviour would not necessarily depend on the respondents' educational level only, but can also depend on their prior experience, i.e. consumer socialisation. Therefore, it is important for retailers to ensure that consumers are given enough information regarding food purchasing which will ultimately contribute to informed food purchasing decisions. The educational level of the respondents may also indicate the kind of employment that the respondents can obtain, which will inevitably

influence their incomes. Low educational levels generally lead to low income jobs such as domestic work, cleaners, etc. Since this study investigated problems in the market place, it was anticipated that those with some formal education would experience fewer problems because it was expected that they would have better arithmetic and linguistic abilities which would enable them to calculate prices/expenses (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a:155-157).

5.2.3 Total household income

The monetary unit of Botswana is the Pula which is almost equal to ZAR, i.e. the South African currency. The respondents' household incomes were grouped into four categories: <P500; ≥P500 - P1000; ≥P1000-P2000 and >P2000 after data capturing. It was decided to re-categorise income to make it viable for statistical analysis, i.e. into three groups: those that earned <P500; ≥P500-P1000; and ≥P1000. The largest group (38.5%) represented the middle category ≥P500-P1000 per month. Figure 5.2 illustrates the categories visually.

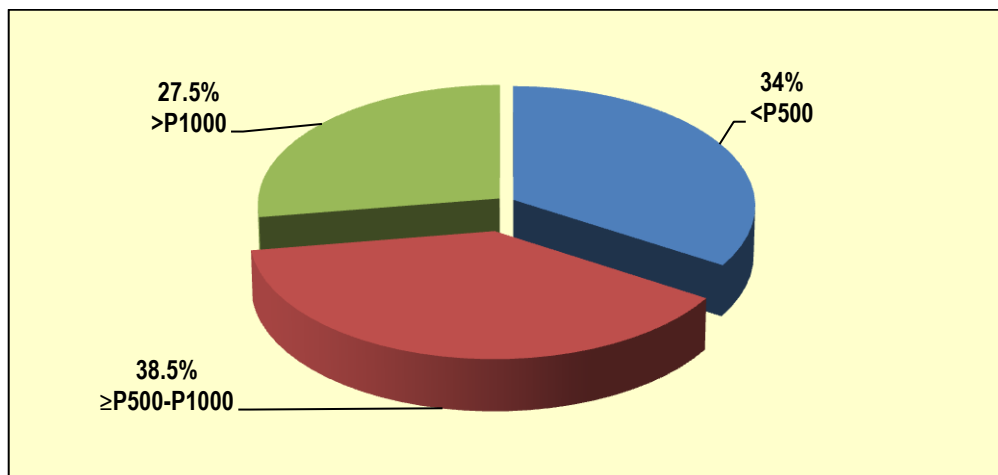


FIGURE 5.2: THE TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=200)

All the respondents in this study were low income earners, which confirm an urgency to ensure that consumers' money is spent responsibly. In Botswana workers with low positions such as maids, gardeners and farm workers are paid a minimum of P600 per month (Labour Report, 2008). Thus the salaries are very low while the price of food is constantly on the increase, which limits the kind of food products and the quantities that they can purchase.

5.2.4 Residential areas

A pre-requisite for participation was residence in Gaborone, Botswana and surrounding areas to ensure that all respondents would have equal access to supermarkets in the urban area of Gaborone. The researcher decided to recruit a sample from villages surrounding Gaborone because of easy access to this area and the potential to recruit a viable sample

size. A total of 41 locations were targeted. The majority of females who eventually participated in the study came from two locations that are close to Gaborone; Mmopane (27.5%) and Mogoditshane (21.5%). Locations within Gaborone formed 28% of the sample. Eventually 72% of the respondents were from rural and peri-urban areas and 28% were from urban areas. Table 5.2 reflects the geographical area and specific locations where respondents resided. It is important to note that potential respondents were identified and that they had to complete a pre-test that specified a maximum score of 50% in the test to qualify for participation. The researcher and the assistants approached 250 females, 200 scored five or below out of ten (50%). The rest who scored above 50% were thanked for their time and kindly informed that they did not qualify for the study.

TABLE 5.2: GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS WHERE RESPONDENTS RESIDED (N=200)

GEOGRAPHIC AREA	n	%
Mmopane	55	27.5
Mogoditshane	43	21.5
Gaborone North: Block 3, Block 8, Broadhurst, Ledumang, Tsholofelo, Extensions 19 & 20	18	9.0
Gaborone Central: Extensions 2, 9, 14 & 16, Maruapula, SSG, Phase 2, Railway Station	15	7.5
Gaborone South: Bontleng, New Naledi, Newstands, Old Naledi	14	7.0
Gaborone West and Phase 4	11	5.0
Kopong	9	4.5
Gabane	7	3.5
Nkoyaphiri	5	2.5
Metsimothabe	4	2.0
Other surrounding areas	20	10.0
Total	200	100

5.3 MARKETING MIX RELATED FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED RESPONDENTS' FOOD CHOICE

This research firstly aimed to broadly investigate which of the factors that are associated with a retailer's marketing mix, i.e. product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007), affect consumers' choice of food products for their home. Table 5.3 reflects respondents' reaction when confronted with single statements that pertained to pertinent elements of the marketing mix. Only the MOSTLY responses were tabulated and figures are presented in descending order for ease of interpretation. The results are also presented more visually in Figure 5.3.

TABLE 5.3: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED RESPONDENTS' FOOD CHOICE (N=200)

FACTOR	FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED FOOD CHOICE (QUESTIONS)	SAMPLE		<35years (n=88)		≥ 35 - < 45 years (n=57)		≥ 45 years (n=55)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Product	Do you look at different food products, i.e. do you look at more than one of the same type of food product?	186	93.0	86	97.7	57	100.0	53	93.0
Process	Do you prefer certain stores because they are willing to assist you when you ask questions in the store?	169	84.5	83	94.4	54	94.7	52	94.5
Price	Do you compare the prices of the products before you choose a product?	157	78.5	86	97.7	56	98.2	55	100.0
Promotion	Do you look for advertisements or any other information such as brochures that the store hands out to display products?	156	78.0	85	96.6	56	98.2	55	100.0
Place	Do you consider different places to buy food rather than going to the same place every time?	147	73.5	87	98.9	56	98.2	5	9.1
Salespeople	Are you influenced by sales people when you are in the store?	26	13.0	13	14.8	8	14.0	5	9.1

More than 90% of the sample compared different products before they made a purchase decision, while between 70% and 85% also took cognisance of the support provided (process), price, promotions and considered different stores (places), i.e. they did not blindly shop at any outlet. Only 13% indicated that salespeople influenced their purchases. The limited influence of salespeople applied across all the age groups, which suggests that salespeople are not optimised to encourage informed buying behaviour. Reasons for this are not clear from this single question and will be addressed in subsequent sections.

When the different age groups were considered separately, one prominent difference came to the fore. The older group (≥45 years) did not show interest in shopping around at different places probably because shopping around might be tiresome, or they might also have already established their store preference over time. A visual presentation of the findings is reflected in Figure 5.3

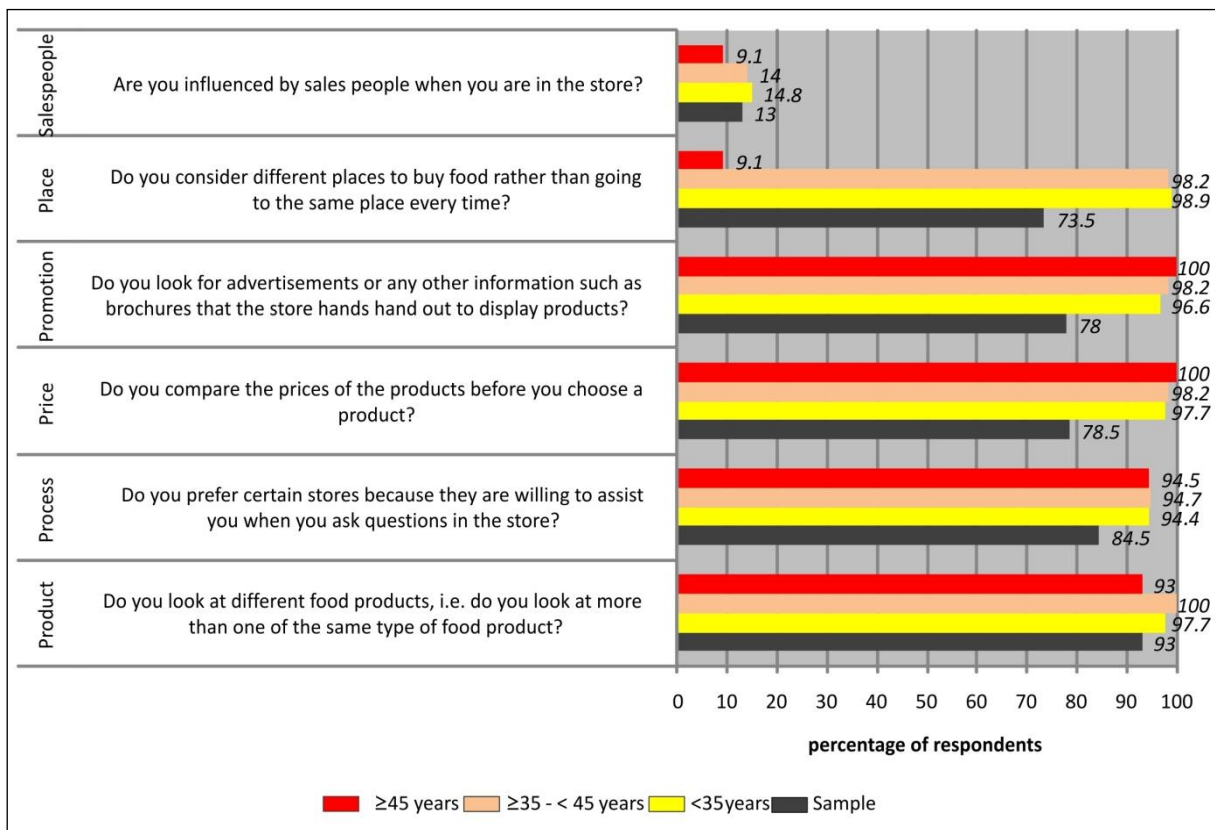


FIGURE 5.3: FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD CHOICE (N=200)

Findings revealed that respondents, irrespective of their age, were not influenced by salespeople and that older consumers (≥ 45) did not shop around.

5.3.1 Conclusive remarks

This question merely aimed to investigate broadly whether certain elements of retail stores' marketing mix were attended to more specifically by respondents than other elements when shopping for food. Respondents seemed to be more discriminative regarding product attributes ($>90\%$) and price, place, promotion and processes (more than 70%), but the entire sample as well as the individual age groups seemed reluctant to consult salespeople for assistance ($<15\%$). This is unfortunate because salespeople are supposed to facilitate consumers towards responsible and informed buyer decisions. More than 90% of older consumers seemed not to be interested in shopping around. This may be due to logistic problems, i.e. an inability to travel or move around, or they patronised stores that they preferred. It is thus recommended that stores focus on consumers' ≥ 45 years in terms of their marketing strategies because this seems to be a potentially viable customer segment that deserves more attention.

5.4 PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR OF FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS

The study aimed to find out where functionally illiterate consumers mostly purchase their food products; what food products they purchased; how they selected food products; methods of payment used in the market place, and to find out whether they did any planning before actually purchasing.

5.4.1 Retail outlets mostly patronised

This question enquired about respondents' patronage of retail outlets specifically where they MOSTLY purchased their food products. The results are summarised in Table 5.4 in descending order for the sample, and a visual representation is depicted in Figure 5.4.

TABLE 5.4: RETAIL OUTLETS MOSTLY PATRONISED (N=200)

Place	Across the sample		<35 yrs (n=88)		≥35 - <45 yrs (n=57)		≥45 yrs (n=55)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Supermarkets	200	100.0	88	100.0	57	100.0	55	100.0
Informal traders	185	92.5	82	93.1	50	87.7	53	96.3
Spaza shops	66	33.0	31	35.2	22	38.6	13	23.6
Food wholesalers	58	29.0	27	30.6	18	31.1	13	23.6
General dealers	58	29.0	30	34.0	15	26.3	13	23.6
Other places	13	6.5	7	7.9	4	7.0	2	3.6

Shaded figures indicate 50% of the sample

All the respondents purchased food from supermarkets while >90% of the sample purchased food from informal traders. An approximate even support was evident for general dealers, food wholesalers and spaza shops. Less than 7% purchased food products from other retailers. When different age groups were considered the same pattern was evident, i.e. all the respondents procured food products from supermarkets, probably because they sell a variety of products and because supermarkets are generally cheaper. Between 87% and 96% supported informal traders probably because they are located in places that are conveniently located near their homes or bus stops. Furthermore informal traders sell food items in small quantities that are more easily affordable although they sell mostly fruits and vegetables. Less than 35% of the sample purchased food from spaza shops, general dealers and food wholesalers. Therefore, it seems like they do occasional shopping in those retail outlets due to price (affordability) and/or because those outlets are not necessary located nearby.

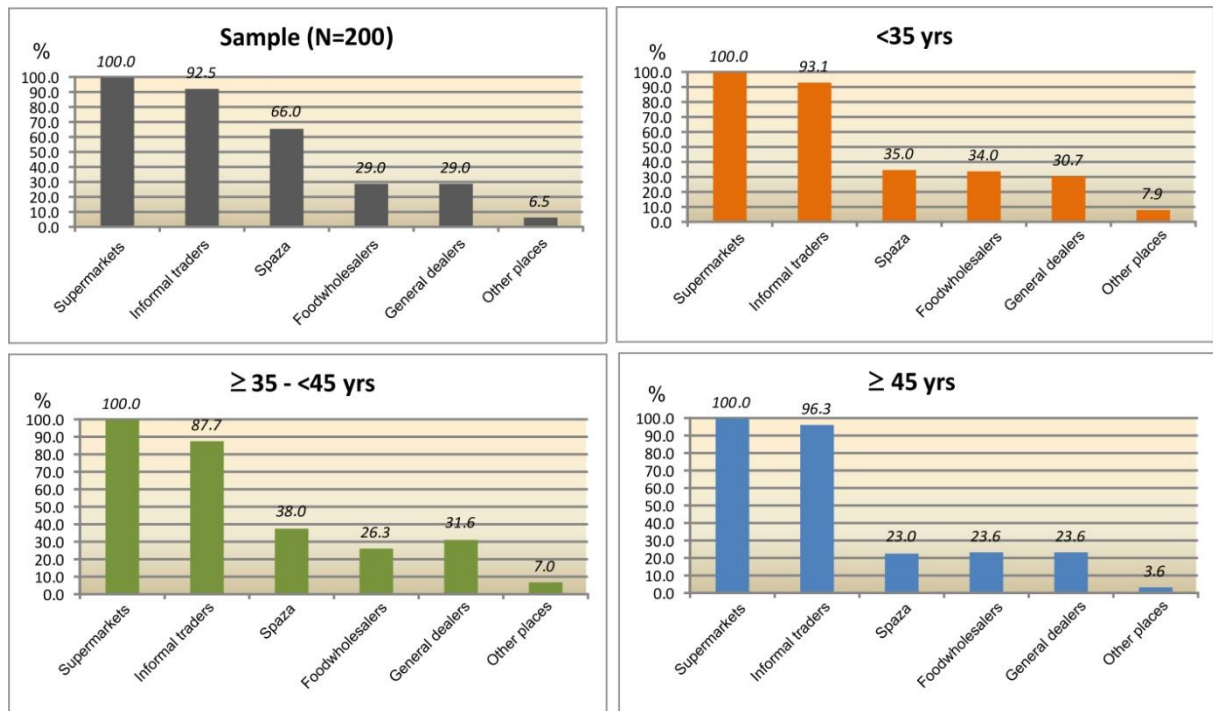


FIGURE 5.4: OUTLETS PATRONISED FOR FOOD PURCHASES (N=200)

Supermarkets and informal traders were patronised by the majority of respondents irrespective of age. Other outlets were patronised less frequently, which means that efforts to assist functionally illiterate consumers to make informed buying decisions and to optimise their finances should be directed via supermarkets, because that is ideal to reach the majority of vulnerable consumers.

5.4.1.1 Reasons for consumers' patronage of various retail outlets

Reasons for respondents' patronage of various outlets are summarised and presented in descending order in Table 5.5 and visually presented in Figure 5.5.

TABLE 5.5: REASONS FOR CONSUMERS' PATRONAGE OF VARIOUS SHOPPING OUTLETS (N=200)

Reasons for shopping at various places	Sample		<35yrs (n=88)		≥35 - <45 yrs (n=57)		≥45 yrs (n =55)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The store has affordable prices	198	99.0	86	97.7	57	100.0	55	100.0
I trust the store	191	95.5	83	94.3	56	98.8	52	94.6
The store is near my home/work	162	81.0	76	86.4	41	71.9	45	81.1
Friendly salespeople in the store	90	45.0	39	44.2	27	47.4	24	43.6
The store is small so product selection is easy	8	4.0	4	4.6	1	1.8	3	5.5
No option as there are no stores nearby	5	2.5	1	1.1	4	7.0	0	0.0

Shaded figures indicate >50 % of the sample

More than 90% of the sample indicated that they procured food from the retail outlets that offered affordable prices and those they trusted. Another pertinent reason was directed at convenient location of the outlet, i.e. near their homes/work places. Many (45%) indicated that they patronised stores with friendly salespeople. Less than 5% indicated that they chose small stores which explained their patronage of spaza shops. Only a few had no choice at all (2.5%) than to purchase at the only store available.

When different age groups were considered separately it became evident that more than 90% of the respondents preferred certain stores because they offered affordable products (PRICE) and they trusted these stores (PROCESSES). The same tendency applied across the different age groups. The nearby location of an outlet (PLACE) influenced the store patronage of more than 70% of the respondents. Around 40% preferred some stores due to friendly staff (SALESPEOPLE). This may indicate the importance of a good relationship between salespeople and customers in retail outlets. Although a similar pattern also applied across all age groups, this reason was not as pertinent as the aforementioned process, place and price related reasons. Respondents did not indicate a preference for smaller stores, thus if efforts to assist functionally illiterate consumers are directed via large supermarkets it would not necessarily be problematic in terms of reaching them.

Figure 5.5 reveals prominent reasons for shopping in different outlets more explicitly.

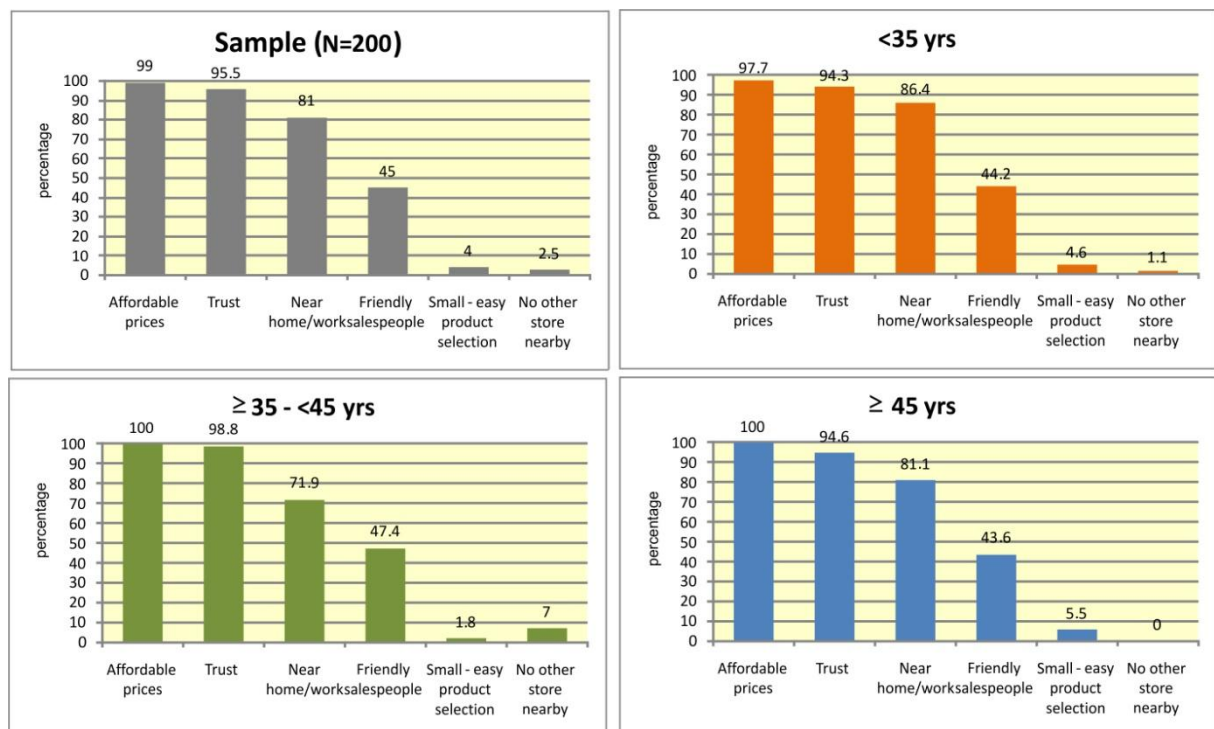


FIGURE 5.5: REASONS FOR PATRONISING VARIOUS RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)

Affordable prices and trust seemed to be the most prominent reasons why respondents bought from specific retail outlets (90% of the respondents). Irrespective of respondents' age consumers visited nearby stores, which is understandable because transport is expensive and their incomes were low. Other reasons such as preferring small stores were less relevant.

5.4.1.2 Frequency of patronage at various retail outlets

Respondents had to indicate how frequently they patronised various retail outlets to purchase food. Findings are summarised in Table 5.6 and visually presented in Figure 5.6

TABLE 5.6: RESPONDENTS' STORE PATRONAGE (N=200)

Store		Frequency of store patronage									
		Every day		Once per week		Once per month		Occasionally		Never	
Sample		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Supermarket	All (N=200)	2	1.0	53	26.5	145	72.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
	<35 yrs	2	2.7	21	23.8	65	73.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
	≥35 - <45 yrs	0	0.0	15	26.3	42	73.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
	≥45 yrs	0	0.0	17	30.9	38	69.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Spaza shop	All (N=200)	12	6.0	52	26.0	19	9.5	70	35.0	47	23.5
	<35 yrs	7	7.9	22	25.0	4	4.5	27	30.6	28	31.8
	≥35 - <45 yrs	2	3.5	17	29.8	11	19.3	16	28.0	11	19.3
	≥45 yrs	3	5.4	13	23.6	4	7.2	27	49.0	8	14.5
General dealer	All (N=200)	2	1.0	22	11.0	37	18.5	50	25.0	89	44.5
	<35 yrs	1	1.1	8	9.0	18	20.4	18	20.4	43	48.8
	≥35 - <45 yrs	0	0.0	10	17.5	10	17.5	16	28.0	21	36.8
	≥45 yrs	1	1.8	4	7.2	9	16.3	16	29.0	25	45.5
Food wholesaler	All (N=200)	2	1.0	12	6.0	53	26.5	64	32.0	69	34.5
	<35 yrs	0	0.0	7	7.9	30	34.0	26	29.5	25	28.4
	≥35 - <45 yrs	0	0.0	3	3.5	13	22.8	20	35.0	21	36.8
	≥45 yrs	2	3.6	2	3.6	10	18.1	18	32.7	23	41.8
Informal trader	All (N=200)	81	40.5	103	51.5	4	2.0	9	4.5	3	1.5
	<35 yrs	38	43.1	44	50.0	1	1.1	3	3.4	2	2.7
	≥35 - <45 yrs	20	35.0	33	57.8	0	0.0	3	5.2	1	1.7
	≥45 yrs	23	41.0	26	47.2	3	5.4	3	5.4	0	0.0
Other	All (N=200)	2	1.0	6	3.0	6	3.0	63	31.5	121	60.5
	<35 yrs	1	1.1	4	4.5	2	2.2	36	40.9	45	51.1
	≥35 - <45 yrs	0	0.0	1	1.7	3	5.3	12	21.4	40	71.4
	≥45 yrs	1	1.8	1	1.8	1	1.8	15	27.7	36	66.6

Shaded areas reflect on discussion in subsequent paragraph

Overall, between 35% and 40% of the sample purchased food from informal traders **daily**. Other larger outlets, e.g. supermarkets and general dealers, were probably less accessible and also sell food in large quantities which made it less affordable or impractical to patronise them for frequent purchases. Spaza shops seemed an alternative for fill-in purchasing, although daily food purchasing was only done by 3% to 8% of the sample.

Food shopping on **weekly intervals** seemed to be an option for more of the respondents. The majority ($\pm 50\%$) shopped at informal traders on a weekly basis; $\pm 25\%$ shopped at supermarkets and/or spaza shops while a smaller percentage visited general dealers and wholesalers on a weekly basis.

The majority of the respondents (69%) across all the age groups **mostly** patronised supermarkets for food purchases **once per month**. This is probably because they are mostly paid at month end and can then afford to go to larger supermarkets. Although more of the younger consumers purchased at general dealers and wholesalers, these do not seem to be the outlets of choice. The so-called “other” outlets which were patronised occasionally included butcheries (where consumers purchased meat). Figure 5.6 provides a more visual presentation of frequency of purchasing in various retail outlets.

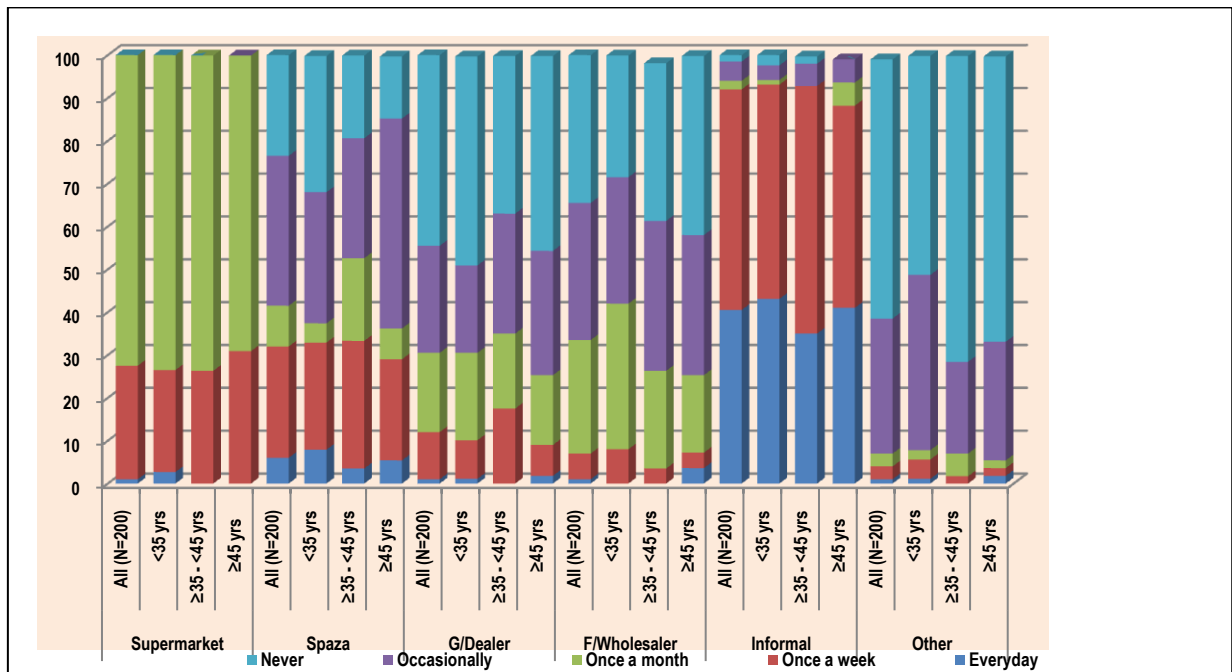


FIGURE 5.6: FREQUENCY OF PURCHASING IN RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)

Figure 5.6 shows that, irrespective of age, supermarkets were patronised by the majority on a monthly basis while informal traders were visited more regularly (weekly or daily) for fill-in purchases. Other retail outlets were visited occasionally.

5.4.2 Food products mostly purchased at different retail outlets

Consumers may patronise different stores to purchase specific types of food products and that would explain how frequently they would have to go to certain stores. Table 5.7 summarises the results for the question where the respondents had to indicate the different types of food products that they purchased MOSTLY at different retail outlets.

TABLE 5.7: AN ASSOCIATION OF FOOD TYPE AND OUTLET (N=200)

Retail outlet	Fresh fruits and vegetable		Meat		Canned/ Bottled products		Cereal and cereal products	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Supermarkets	91	45.5	161	80.5	198	99.0	199	99.5
Informal traders	194	97.0	7	3.6	0	0.0	1	0.5
General dealers	4	2.0	21	10.5	73	36.5	73	36.5
Other places	3	1.5	75	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Spaza shops	2	1.0	1	0.5	30	15.0	137	68.5
Food wholesalers	0	0.0	4	2.0	121	60.0	73	36.5

Shaded figures indicate noteworthy numbers of respondents

Supermarkets appeared popular in providing consumers with most of the food products, i.e. meat, canned/bottled products, and cereal and cereal products, while a noteworthy 45.5% also purchased fruits and vegetables from supermarkets. Fresh fruits and vegetables seemed to be purchased mainly from informal traders (97%) probably because they could purchase perishables in small quantities, they could negotiate the price unlike in supermarkets and they did not necessarily have storage facilities for the larger quantities that are sold in supermarkets. Apart from supermarkets, a noteworthy part of the sample (37.5%) indicated that they purchased meat from other places such as butcheries. Butcheries provided convenience in terms of their location, and the possibility to purchase smaller quantities of supplies. Food wholesalers were patronised by the majority for canned and bottled products while spaza shops which are easily accessible provided the majority with cereal and cereal products, especially bread. A visual presentation of the findings is reflected in Figure 5.7.

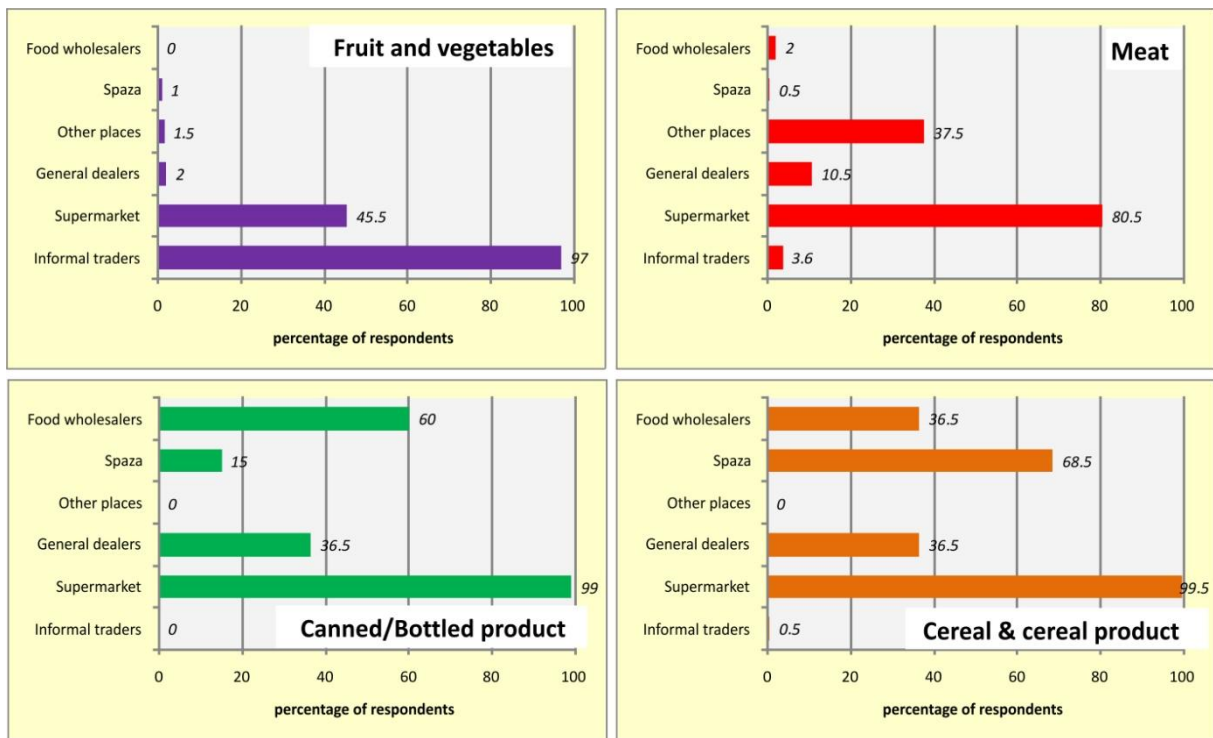


FIGURE 5.7: FREQUENCY OF PURCHASING IN RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)

The findings revealed that informal readers dominated in providing fruits and vegetable, supermarkets provided canned and bottled, cereal and cereal products as well as meat.

5.4.3 Consumers who use shopping lists to organise their shopping

Informed, responsible food purchasing behaviour involves pre-purchase planning which may include a list of food products that a consumer plans to purchase for the family. Functionally illiterate consumers have very limited linguistic skills. Nevertheless they were asked whether they generally drew up a list before their food shopping excursions. The findings indicated that the majority (60%) of the respondents did not draw up a shopping list probably because they could not, but 32% affirmed that they made shopping list. It seemed that illiterate consumers did not make shopping lists and while one can assume that it is partly due to their limited linguistic skills, this could be investigated further.

5.4.3.1 Reasons for making shopping lists

Table 5.8 summarises the results for the question where the respondents were asked to indicate the reasons for making a shopping list. Only the MOSTLY responses were tabulated.

TABLE 5.8: REASONS FOR MAKING SHOPPING LISTS (N=200)

Reasons for making a shopping list	YES MOSTLY					SOMETIMES					NOT AT ALL				
	Education level		Age (years)			Education		Age (years)			Education level		Age (years)		
	No education	Some education	<35	≥35 - <45	≥45	No education	Some education	<35	≥35 - <45	≥45	No education	Some education	<35	≥35 - <45	≥45
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Makes shopping easier	27.3	30.8	32.4	10.0	47.1	4.6	5.8	2.7	10.0	5.9	68.2	63.5	64.9	80.0	47.0
So that I don't forget some food item	9.1	1.9	5.4	5.0	0.0	4.6	5.8	8.1	5.0	0.0	86.4	92.3	86.5	90.0	100.0
To stick to my budget	4.6	7.7	5.4	5.0	11.8	4.6	3.9	8.1	0.0	0.0	90.9	88.5	86.5	95.0	88.2

Shaded areas reflect on discussion in subsequent paragraph

When different age- and levels of education categories were considered individually, it became evident that:

- The majority did not think that a shopping list would be particularly useful: more than 80% of the respondents did not think that making a shopping list would *prevent them from forgetting items* when they went shopping, and almost 90% did not think that a shopping list would *help them to stick to their budget*.
- **Older respondents** were more inclined to make shopping lists *to make shopping easier* (47.1%) but they were hesitant to admit that shopping lists would help to not to forget food items. Younger respondents (up to 45 years of age) may not have done so because they were probably better able to navigate the market place than older consumers. Only 5.4% of the **younger consumers** make shopping lists so that they would not forget food items they needed.
- The majority of respondents (> 60%) with **no or some education** did not make shopping lists as they *did not believe that it would make their shopping task easier*: less than 30% of respondents with **no education** made shopping lists while approximately 30% of those with **some education** made shopping lists to make the shopping task easier. Once again, shopping lists were not really used to remember what to purchase or to stick to their budgets: less than 10% of the respondents with **some education** used shopping lists to stick to their budget or not to forget some items. The ≥45 year age group was more active in doing so, but it was nevertheless only a small group.

5.4.4 Payment methods used in the market place

Various payment methods that could be used to pay for food products in the market place were identified through literature and listed for respondents to react to in terms of how they generally paid for food purchases. The results are presented in Figure 5.8

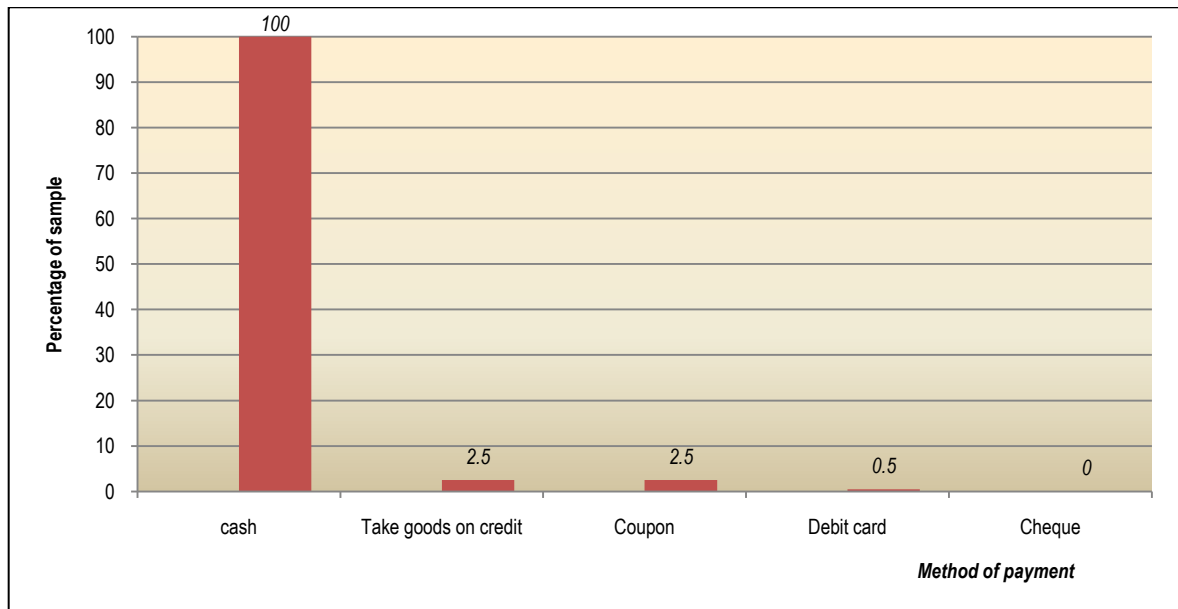


FIGURE 5.8: METHODS OF PAYMENT USED FOR FOOD PURCHASES (N=200)

The payment method that was apparently used by all the respondents (100%) was cash. Only one respondent used a debit card. An indication that one respondent used a debit is not questionable as these consumers are limited in terms of reading and writing and they would have difficulties operating it. The results indicated that none of the respondents used cheque, a facility that has in any case decreased in popularity in recent years (Borzekowski & Kiser, 2008:889).

5.4.4.1 Reasons for consumers' usage of specific payment methods

Respondents reacted to a list of reasons that may have influenced them in terms of the choice of payment methods. The reasons listed in Table 5.9 (in descending order) basically broadened the results which reflect on the payment methods.

TABLE 5.9: REASONS FOR USING PAYMENT METHODS

Reasons for using payment method	Yes/ Definitely		Sometimes		Not at all	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
The method is familiar	200	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I have no other choice	109	54.5	0	0.0	91	45.5
It is the only method accepted by the store	6	3.0	2	1.0	192	96.0
The method is recommended by friends	3	1.5	0	0.0	197	85.5

Shaded figures indicate majority of respondents

All the respondents indicated that they used cash as it was familiar to them or because “I have no choice” (54.5%). The few (3%) that indicated that cash was the only method accepted by the retailers probably also meant that the credit cards and the debit cards were not within their reach.

5.4.5 Conclusive remarks on consumers’ buyer behaviour

This question merely aimed to investigate broadly the food purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers. In terms of where functionally illiterate consumers purchased, it was discovered that specific retail outlets were patronised for different products for instance supermarkets provided most of the food stuff such as cereals, meat, canned and bottled goods as well as fruits and vegetables, while food wholesalers dominated in providing canned products and informal traders dominated in terms of fruits and vegetables. Consumers apparently preferred retail points that evoked trust (PROCESS), PRICES that suited them and because they have developed relationship with friendly SALESPEOPLE. Although the majority did not prepare shopping lists per se they indicated that they did plan their purchases mentally. The findings further revealed that respondents primarily paid for their food purchases with cash.

5.5 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS IN THE MARKET PLACE

5.5.1 Problems related to product choice

In section E of the questionnaire respondents (N=200) reacted to a set of statements that aimed to identify problems that were encountered in the market place. These problems were related to different elements of food retailers’ marketing mix, i.e. product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes. Problems were judged on a three point Likert-type scale (3: Yes/definitely; 2: Maybe/sometimes; 1: No/never).

Based on the problems encountered, it was decided that for ALL elements of the marketing mix:

- A mean of ≥ 2.5 would be regarded as a pertinent problem.
- A mean of ≥ 1.5 to < 2.5 would be considered an occasional problem.
- A mean of < 1.5 or below would be considered a minor/insignificant problem.

The respondents were asked to indicate the problems that they experienced in the market place regarding the food PRODUCTS they purchase. Findings are summarised in Table 5.10 and means are presented in descending order.

TABLE 5.10: PROBLEMS RELATED TO PRODUCT CHOICE (N=200)

PRODUCT RELATED PROBLEMS	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
New food products that you are not familiar with	2.6	0.49	2	3
Too much information on products	2.6	0.55	1	3
Products not always in stock	2.5	0.55	1	3
Packaging is not strong	2.4	0.51	1	3
Difficult to find products in the store	2.3	0.64	1	3
Difficult to compare food products because sizes of same products are different	2.3	0.69	1	3
Same types of products not grouped together	2.3	0.68	1	3
There is not enough choice in terms of different sizes of product	2.3	0.69	1	3
Too little information	2.1	0.78	1	3
Other problems	1.0	0.14	1	3

Bold figures indicate mean ≥ 2.5 (maximum = 3)

In terms of the problems related to PRODUCT CHOICE two prominent problems became clear, namely *new food products that consumers were not familiar with* and *too much information on products*. New products seemed a problem because consumers with limited literacy rely on pictographic thinking, i.e. on extrinsic factors during product evaluation (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). They memorised brand logos, letters and colours in order to remember the products they are used to. This enabled the consumers to discriminate between products. Therefore, a new food product in the market place can pose a challenge. Respondents were also bothered by *too much information on the products*, which understandably relates to lack of reading skills. Similar findings were reported by Gau and Viswanathan (2008), namely concluding that consumers with limited literacy skills struggle to interpret and comprehend lots of information on a product.

The other problems that posed occasional frustration included seven different aspects such as products *that are out of stock* which may then require them to find another affordable alternative; *packaging which was not strong* which may be intolerable if you have to carry products for long distances and if you have to store it securely. It was sometimes difficult to *find products in the store; difficult to compare products if sizes differed; difficult if similar products were not grouped together* and if *there was limited choices in terms of sizes and too little information available to them.*

Different problems had different variations for example new *food products that you are not familiar with* (Mean 2.6, Std dev 0.49). This constraint has a lower standard deviation therefore there was less variation in terms responses to this constraint. This indicates that most of the respondents did encounter problems when the new products were introduced in the market place, hence it is the responsibility of the retailers to make sure that they gradually introduce new products in their stores. Too little information (Std dev 0.78) has a higher standard deviation which suggests that most of the respondents were minimally affected when there is too little information on the food products. This was expected as the consumers are limited in terms of reading ability.

5.5.2 Problems related to the prices of food in the retail outlets

Problems related to the prices of food are summarised and presented Table 5.11

TABLE 5.11: PROBLEMS RELATED TO PRICES (N=200)

PRICE RELATED PROBLEMS	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Difficult to calculate prices reduced by percentage	2.8	0.52	1	3
Prices differ from what you pay	2.7	0.54	1	3
Difficult to estimate the total cost in the trolley	2.5	0.66	1	3
Prices are not clear	2.5	0.59	1	3
Difficult to calculate the cost of products sold in bulk	2.5	0.70	1	3
Price tags are not attached	2.4	0.61	1	3
There is more than one price tag in the product.	2.3	0.71	1	3
Price tags are difficult to read	2.2	0.71	1	3
Price tags are printed too small	1.5	0.73	1	3
Other problems	1.0	0.00	1	3

**Bold figures indicate mean \geq 2.5*

The findings disclosed several inconveniences that contributed to difficulties with handling prices in retail outlets. Matters that contributed to an inability to cope in the market place included difficulties in *calculating prices reduced by percentages* (Mean 2.8, Std dev 0.52); *prices differed from what they paid* as they lacked bargaining power; *difficulty to estimate the*

total cost in the trolley which directly relates to lack of arithmetic skills; *prices not clear* as well as *difficulty in calculating the cost of products if sold in bulk* as. Limited arithmetic and linguistic abilities therefore made it very difficult for them to comprehend numeric information. This suggests that retailers should make sure that there are salespeople who could help consumers with price related questions in the stores.

The other attributes that emerged to be less problematic were *price tags that were not attached to products*; *more than one price tag on the products* as well as the *price tags that were difficult to read*. These are universal problems that would even frustrate literate consumers. A minimal response indicated that *small prices tags*(Mean 1.5, Std dev 0.73) were not a concern probably because retailers used the standard price tags or shelf prices that are generally quite legible.

5.5.3 Problems related to places where consumers purchase food products

Place related problems that were encountered in the market place when purchasing foods, are summarised in Table 5.12.

TABLE 5.12: PROBLEMS RELATED TO PLACES WHERE FOOD IS PURCHASED (N=200)

PLACE RELATED PROBLEMS	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Places are too crowded	3.0	0.20	2	3
Places are too small	2.9	0.26	1	3
Places are not clean	2.9	0.36	1	3
There is not enough food products in the stock	2.8	0.43	1	3
Layout in the stores confuses	2.8	0.42	1	3
There is not enough lights	2.8	0.45	1	3
Places far from where they live/work	2.7	0.68	1	3
Traders not always at their trading places	2.5	0.52	1	3
Places are too big	1.2	0.46	1	3
Other problems	1.0	0.14	1	3

**Bold figures indicate mean \geq 2.5 (maximum3)*

It was evident that the respondents (Mean 3.0, Std dev 0.20) suffered when *retail places were crowded* – probably because they purchased at the end of month when most of the people were paid. Retail stores were therefore likely to be crowded which was not conducive for them to do shopping. Other prominent problems were that places *were too small* (Mean 2.9) and *not clean* (Mean 2.9); *places with limited stock* (Mean 2.8); and *confusing store layouts* which suggest that retailers should minimise changing the store layout often.

Consumers were bothered when *there was not enough light* (Mean 2.8), probably because the data was collected when Botswana was experiencing a shortage of electricity. Therefore there were frequent power failures. Consumers also suffered when the traders were not at their trading places, especially the informal traders, probably because they did not have an alternative to go to when that happened as they have developed relationship with the retailers. Respondents were minimally challenged by big retail outlets as Botswana has no big retail shops such as hypermarkets. These findings contradict what Viswanathan *et al.* (2005) as well as Gau and Viswanathan (2008) reported, namely that consumers have difficulties with relatively big retail outlets. Their studies were done in the USA; therefore the results yielded may not be relevant to an emerging economy such as Botswana where logistics are different. It is evident that problems that are related to prices of food did not deviate much from the mean (Table 5.12). This suggests that majority of the respondents were affected similarly.

5.5.4 Problems related to the promotion of food products

Respondents' problems that could be related to the PROMOTION of food products were quantified through judgment of a list of attributes. The findings are presented in Table 5.13.

TABLE 5.13: PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE PROMOTION OF FOOD PRODUCTS (N=200)

PROMOTION RELATED PROBLEMS	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Adverts tempt you to buy unnecessary products	2.8	0.48	1	3
You don't understand how much to save/spend	2.7	0.51	1	3
Products in adverts but out of stock in places	2.7	0.50	1	3
Advertisements are not true	2.6	0.54	1	3
Too much information on advertisements papers	2.3	0.68	1	3
Other problems	1.0	0.14	1	3

**Bold figures indicate mean ≥ 2.5 (maximum 3)*

In terms of the PROMOTION of food products, the following appeared to be prominent problems experienced by functionally illiterate consumers. They experienced the *temptation to buy unnecessary products* (Mean 2.8, Std dev 0.48) as advertisements papers, brochures and sales promotions encouraged sales and are often at the entrances of the stores. This problem does not only affect illiterate consumers. Even literate consumers are tempted to buy products which are advertised. This problem could however have a more serious impact if a consumer does not plan purchases beforehand or if a consumer has a very limited budget and does not spend the money wisely.

Respondents *did not know how much they saved and spent*, probably because the advertisements were not clear. The information is often not comprehensible as they lacked the linguistic and numeric competence to understand promotions properly (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). This calls for retailers to be more specific and to inform consumers on how much they will spend and save.

Products were often advertised although products were out of stock when they arrived in stores. It seems retailers are not consistent and regular in terms of stock advertised and supplied in the stores. This needs to be addressed urgently to avoid disappointing consumers who are already vulnerable in the market place.

Too much information on adverts (Mean 2.8, Std dev 0.68) was not considered as a major problem probably because they did not understand some of the information and did not use all the written information anyway. Most of the respondents were not bothered by too much information on advertisements as indicated by the standard deviation (0.68).

5.5.5 Problems related to salespeople (personnel) in the retail outlets

Respondents were asked to indicate their problems regarding SALESPEOPLE (personnel) in the retail outlets. The findings are summarised in Table 5.14.

TABLE 5.14: PROBLEMS RELATED TO SALESPEOPLE IN THE RETAIL OUTLET (N=200)

SALESPEOPLE RELATED PROBLEMS	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Wait for the salespeople	2.6	0.63	2	3
Salespeople do other things while helping you	2.4	0.68	1	3
There is not enough sales people	2.2	0.67	1	3
Salespeople not helpful	2.2	0.66	1	3
Salespeople not well informed	2.2	0.66	1	3
Salespeople not friendly	2.2	0.67	1	3
Salespeople not easily identifiable	1.3	0.50		3
Salespeople do not know your language	1.1	0.36	1	3
Other problems	1.0	0.20	1	3

**Bold figures indicate mean ≥ 2.5*

In terms of problems related to salespeople respondents (Mean 2.6) indicated that “waiting for salespeople” was a major problem. Most of the respondents found it were concerned if they had to wait for salespeople (Std dev 0.63). Consumers who purchased from the spaza

shops were mainly affected, as some spaza shops are attached to a main house in which case the salespeople operate from the house. Therefore, consumers often have to wait to be served.

Respondents were apparently minimally bothered by *identifying salespeople* as most of them wear uniforms, especially in supermarkets. *Language* (Mean 1.1, Std dev 0.36) also seemed to be a less serious problem as most of the respondents did not mention it. In Botswana most people speak the national language “Setswana”. English is the official language of government and education while Setswana is the national language, though it is not the mother tongue of all the people. The other factors that seemed problematic occasionally are also noteworthy, e.g. salespeople *not being friendly*, *not being well-informed* and *not helpful*. This is probably due to the appointment of incompetent salespeople in retail outlets which suggest that retailers should train their salespeople to meet the needs of different consumers.

5.5.6 Problems related to process related activities in the retail stores

Respondents’ indication of problems related to PROCESS related activities in the retail outlets are summarised in Table 5.15.

TABLE 5.15: PROBLEMS RELATED TO PROCESS RELATED ACTIVITIES IN THE RETAIL OUTLETS (N=200)

PROCESS RELATED PROBLEMS	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Places does not pay back money if you complain	2.7	0.55	1	3
Places not able to help with food problems	2.5	0.61	1	3
Places does not offer discounts	2.3	0.79	1	3
Shopping hours not convenient	1.6	0.85	1	3
Places do not offer products not on credit	1.3	0.71	1	3
Other problems	1.1	0.34	1	3

***Bold figures indicate mean \geq 2.5 (maximum3)**

Two problems related to process related activities came to the fore.

Stores did not pay back their money if they complained (Mean 2.7, Std dev 0.55). Majority of the respondents were bothered when the stores did not pay them back as shown by the higher mean (2.7) and low standard deviation (0.55). Instead, retail outlets forced the respondents to get another food product in exchange. This may be attributed to retailers’ policies that need to be communicated to consumers clearly.

Stores failed to *assist* respondents concerning their food related problems. This could possibly be ascribed to shortages of skilled personnel, e.g. consumer specialists. Additionally some consumers purchase from the informal traders who do not care about consumer complaints. Other aspects such as *shopping hours not convenient* (Mean 1.6, Std dev 0.85) and *places not offering discounts* were rated less problematic because retail outlets have convenient trading hours and they close very late. Consumers are also aware that food retail outlets *do not offer food products on credit* and therefore was not regarded as a problem.

5.5.7 Implications of age, educational level and income on problems in the market place

Problems experienced by consumers in the market place are further discussed in terms of established elements of the extended marketing mix which were defined for this study (PRODUCT, PRICE, PLACE, PROMOTION, SALESPEOPLE, PROCESSES) and how these are related to demographic subsets of the sample (AGE, EDUCATION LEVEL, INCOME) to indicate whether problems experienced by certain subsets of the sample were significantly more pertinent than for others. This would be useful to identify more vulnerable consumers groups and to identify and describe more pertinent problems. Findings are presented in Table 5.16.

A Chi square test¹, which is probably the most used non-parametric tests of significance for nominal data, was used in this study to show the association between variables to determine how closely observed frequencies match the expected frequencies (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:274). If the p-value is greater than 0.05 the statistical null hypothesis cannot be rejected, hence they will be an association. It was used side by side with a Fishers' exact test² which is also a statistical significance test used in the analysis of contingency of tables where sample sizes are small. It was used to identify significant relationships when the chi square test was not suitable, i.e. when the expected value in any of the cells of the tables, given the margin is below 10.

Findings presented in Table 5.16 are discussed on the following page.

TABLE 5.16: IMPLICATIONS OF AGE, EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND INCOME ON PROBLEMS IN THE MARKET PLACE

Problems encountered in the Market Place	AGE						EDUCATION						INCOME						
	< 35 yrs		≥ 35 - < 45 yrs		≥ 45 yrs		p value	none		some		p value	<P500		>P500-1000		>P1000		p value
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	¹ Fisher test ²	Yes	No	Yes	No	¹ Fisher test ²	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	¹ Fisher test ²
PRODUCTS																			
Too much information on product	95.5	4.6	98.3	1.8	100.0	0.0	0.2175 ¹	100.0	0.0	95.1	2.6	0.0596 ²	97.1	2.9	98.7	1.3	96.4	3.6	0.6698 ¹
New product not familiar with	76.1	23.9	47.4	52.6	56.4	43.6	0.0012 ¹	67.3	32.7	57.8	42.2	0.1652 ¹	58.8	41.2	63.6	36.6	65.5	34.6	0.7264 ¹
PRICES																			
Difficult to calculate % reduced prices	94.3	5.7	96.5	3.5	96.4	3.6	0.7742 ¹	100.0	0.0	91.2	8.8	0.0033 ²	77.9	22.1	68.8	31.2	56.4	43.6	0.0375 ¹
Prices differ from what you pay	95.5	4.6	98.3	1.8	96.4	3.6	0.6696 ¹	100.0	0.0	91.8	8.8	0.0141 ¹	97.1	2.9	98.7	1.3	89.1	10.9	0.0238 ¹
Difficult to estimate total cost in trolley	92.1	8.0	87.7	12.3	90.9	9.1	0.6812 ¹	96.9	3.1	84.3	15.7	0.0023 ¹	94.1	5.9	92.2	7.8	83.6	16.4	0.1159 ¹
Prices not clear	93.2	6.8	98.3	1.8	96.4	3.6	0.3336 ¹	98.0	2.0	93.1	6.9	0.1001 ¹	95.6	4.4	94.8	5.2	96.4	3.6	0.9125 ¹
PLACES																			
Places crowded	97.7	2.3	93.0	7.0	96.4	3.6		95.9	4.1	96.1	3.9		94.1	5.9	98.7	1.3	94.6	5.5	
Places too small	95.5	4.6	93.0	7.0	94.6	5.5		93.9	6.1	95.1	4.9	0.7051 ¹	95.6	4.4	93.5	6.5	94.6	5.5	
There is not enough products in stock	97.7	2.3	100.0	0.0	96.4	3.6	0.3776 ¹	99.0	1.0	97.1	2.9	0.3321 ¹	98.5	1.5	98.7	1.3	96.4	3.6	0.594 ¹
Layout confuses you	98.9	1.1	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.5275 ¹	100.0	0.0	99.0	1.0	0.3258 ¹	99.9	1.0	98.7	1.3	100.0	0.0	0.4481 ¹
There is not enough light in store	90.9	9.1	66.7	33.3	69.1	30.9	0.0005 ¹	84.7	15.3	71.6	28.4	0.0251 ¹	67.7	32.4	80.5	19.5	87.3	12.7	0.0261 ¹
Stores far from where you live/work	81.8	19.1	73.7	26.3	70.9	29.1	0.6195 ¹	83.7	16.2	69.6	30.4	0.0163 ¹	69.1	30.9	83.1	16.9	76.4	23.6	0.0295 ¹
Traders not at trading places	63.6	36.4	42.1	57.9	47.3	52.7	0.0243 ¹	55.1	44.9	51.0	44.0	0.5593 ¹	45.6	54.4	49.4	50.7	67.3	32.7	0.0406 ¹
PROMOTION																			
Adverts tempt you to buy	96.6	3.4	98.3	1.8	94.6	5.5	0.5659 ¹	98.0	2.0	95.1	4.9	0.2711 ¹	95.6	4.4	96.1	3.9	98.2	1.8	0.7176 ¹
Don't understand how much you save	97.7	2.3	96.5	3.6	98.2	1.8	0.8346 ¹	99.0	1.0	96.1	3.9	0.1889 ¹	98.5	1.5	96.1	3.9	98.2	1.8	0.6016 ¹
Products in adverts not in store	98.9	1.1	100.0	0.0	96.4	3.6	0.2664 ¹	100.0	0.0	97.1	2.9	0.871 ¹	97.1	2.9	98.7	1.3	100.0	0.0	0.4036 ¹
Advertisements not true	96.6	3.4	98.3	1.8	98.2	1.8	0.766 ¹	99.0	1.0	96.1	3.1	0.1889 ¹	98.5	1.5	96.1	3.9	98.2	1.8	0.6016 ¹
SALES PEOPLE																			
Wait for sales people to help you	89.8	10.2	89.5	10.5	98.2	1.8	0.1392 ¹	90.8	9.2	93.1	6.9	0.5453 ¹	91.2	8.8	92.2	7.8	92.7	7.3	0.948 ¹
Sales people do other things	87.5	12.5	91.2	8.8	0.9	9.1	0.7147 ¹	85.7	14.3	93.1	8.9	0.0869 ¹	83.8	16.2	89.6	10.4	96.4	3.6	0.0785 ¹
PROCESSES																			
Stores does not pay back the money	98.9	1.1	98.3	1.8	87.3	12.7	0.0025 ¹	95.9	4.0	95.1	4.9	0.7797 ¹	94.1	5.9	94.8	5.2	98.2	1.8	0.5196 ¹
Stores not able to solve your problem	95.5	4.6	94.7	5.3	90.9	9.1	0.5177 ¹	95.9	4.1	92.2	7.8	0.2628 ¹	92.7	7.4	92.2	7.8	98.2	1.8	0.3066 ¹

¹ - Chi Square; ² - Fisher test; Level of significance for both tests: 5% (P ≤ 0.05)

In terms of FOOD PRODUCTS, problems experienced did not differ significantly for the different **income** groups ($p=0.66$). **Age** however seemed to be a significant indication of problems related to products as significantly more young consumers (aged <35 years) experienced problems with new products that they were not familiar with in the market place ($p=0.001$). **Education level** was also significant indication of problems experienced because significantly more consumers with *no education* compared to consumers with *some education* indicated that *too much information is provided on products for them to comprehend* ($p=0.05$). This confirms the vulnerability of illiterate consumers and suggests that limited structural knowledge hinder consumers from making responsible and informed decisions (John, 1999). Unless consumers acquire the necessary linguistic and arithmetic skills through better education to enable them to interpret information and to select relevant information, this problem will not be solved easily from consumers' point of view. A "quick fix" to resolve failure to comprehend the information because consumers do not have the necessary knowledge to support their purchasing decisions does not exist. From retailers' point of view, however, salespeople could be deployed to assist consumers during the decision-making process (which is not the case at the present according to the findings) and/or the product information that is provided could be adapted to make it more understandable for vulnerable consumers. This would involve further investigation of ways in which information could be supplied to functionally illiterate consumers specifically with regard to food purchases.

In terms of food products' PRICES, the prevalence of problems experienced could significantly relate to specific age categories. The importance of **educational level** however once again came fore through findings which indicated that significantly more consumers with *no education* than consumers with *some education* experienced problems *to calculate percentage reduction in prices* ($p=0.003$), because *prices on the shelves differed from what they actually paid* ($p=0.014$) and that it was *difficult to calculate the total cost of their purchases* ($p=0.002$) although they indicated that prices were clear ($p=0.100$). Income also seemed significant in terms of consumers' ability to handle prices in the store, as significantly more consumers in the higher income categories (>P1000) indicated that they struggled to *calculate percentage reductions* ($p=0.037$) and thought that *prices paid differed from prices on the shelves* ($p=0.023$). Low income is associated with educational levels, which means that findings for consumers with *no education* was probably just confirmed by the subsets with *low income* and that inability to understand the calculations are probably to blame for the problem experienced.

Consumers did not blame stores for the prices that are not clear, they actually only admitted their failure to cope because they have not acquired the required arithmetic skill, the

functional and transactional knowledge i.e. confidence to negotiate in the market place (John, 1999) that would enable them to ensure satisfying decisions. Again this will not be resolved easily unless the stores are willing to provide a service where consumers could ask for assistance before they proceed to pay points/terminals where the embarrassment of not having enough money could cause further personal stress.

In terms of PLACES where consumers purchase food products in general, problems experienced could be distinguished in terms of all the demographic subsets - **age, education** as well as **income level**. **Age** seemed a significant indication of problems experienced in places as findings revealed that young consumers (aged <35 years) were significantly more concerned *if there is not enough light in the stores* ($p=0.005$) and *if traders are not at trading places* ($p=0.024$). **Education level** exposed significant differences for different subsets: consumers with no *education* indicated that they suffered significantly more when *there was not enough light in the stores* ($p=0.025$) and that *stores were far from where they lived or work* ($p=0.016$). **Income level** also seemed significant. Findings indicated that consumers in the higher income categories ($\geq P1000$) were significantly more aware of stores that do not have enough lights ($p=0.026$). The middle income group were significantly more aware that places where they purchased food were far from where they lived or worked ($p=0.029$). It seems consumers blamed stores for poor lighting in the stores. Retailers therefore have to attend to their physical environment (stores) in a meticulous way, especially lighting, to enable consumers to compare and evaluate products in the stores and hence to make an informed product decision. Retailers should also provide spacious aisles to avoid overcrowding.

In terms of the PROMOTION of food products in the market place no significant difference in the occurrence of problems experienced in this regard could be differentiated in terms of the **age, education level** and **income level** categories. Findings revealed that all consumers have similar problems with the way food products are promoted. Consumers seemed to blame retailers for advertisements that were not truthful as they did not indicate clearly how much they would save and because products were often out of stock. This calls for retailers to reconsider how they promote their food products. The stores should communicate information clearly in adverts as adverts tempt consumers to buy and when problems occur, they become confused and distressed.

In terms of SALESPEOPLE in the market place the problems experienced did not differ significantly for different **age** groups, different **education levels** or **income levels**. Consumers typically blamed salespeople that were not always available to assist them. This suggests that retailers should ensure that they have competent well-informed salespeople

employed who will be able to help and show consumers that they matter regardless the nature of their needs. Salespeople should realise the importance of always being at the trading place and retailers, especially in the supermarkets, should encourage their staff to know that consumers come first.

In terms of PROCESS related activities in the stores, problems experienced did not differ significantly for different **education** or **income levels**. **Age** was however significant indication of problems experienced as consumers in the older age category (≥ 45 years) had significantly more problems with stores that did not refund them when they returned products ($p=0.002$). This suggests that retailers should improve on after sales services. Retailers should review the way they handle consumers' complaints as the consumers blame retailers for not resolving their problems. Consumers were dissatisfied because they were not refunded when they returned products but were forced to take other food products instead.

A summary of the significance of problems encountered in the market place by subsets of the sample is presented in Table 5.17.

TABLE 5.17: SIGNIFICANCE OF PROBLEMES ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE BY SUBSETS OF THE SAMPLE

ELEMENT OF THE MARKETING MIX	ITEMS PERTAINING TO SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF THE MARKETING MIX	AGE (p value)	EDUCATION (p value)	INCOME (p value)
PRODUCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too much information on the product New product not familiar with 	- 0.0012	- -	- -
PRICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to calculate % reduced prices Prices differ from what you pay Difficult to estimate total cost in the trolley Prices not clear 	- - - -	0.0033 0.0141 0.0023 -	0.0375 0.0238 0.1159 -
PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Places crowded Places too small There is not enough products in the stock Layout confuses you There is not enough lights in the store Stores far from where you live/work Traders not at trading places 	- - - - 0.0005 - 0.0243	- - - - 0.0251 0.0163 -	- - - - - - -
PROMOTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertisements tempt you to buy Don't understand how much you save Products in advertisements not in store Advertisements not true 	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -
SALESPEOPLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait for salespeople to help you Salespeople do other things 	- -	- -	- 0.0785
PROCESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stores does not pay you back the money Stores not able to solve your problem 	0.0025 -	- -	- -

5.5.8 Conclusive remarks on problems encountered in the market place

In retrospect, retailers' activities related to their marketing mix, i.e. product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and process, could be associated with problems that were encountered by the respondents. Findings indicated that some elements were significantly more problematic. PLACES (*crowded, small, dirty stores; confusing layout; limited stock and limited lighting*) and PRICES seemed the most problematic followed by PROMOTIONS, PROCESS and SALESPEOPLE. The implication is that if vulnerable consumers such as functionally illiterate consumers encounter difficulties during navigating the market place, this will hinder them from making informed buyer decisions. It is clear from the results that the demographic subsets, i.e. age, educational level and income, have an influence on the challenges encountered in the market place. The demographic subsets were discussed in terms of the elements of the marketing mix.

A significant relationship existed between age, educational level and PRODUCT related aspects in retail. More respondents in the younger age group (<35 years) experienced problems with new food products that they were not familiar with. Similarly more consumers with no education were bothered by too much information on the products. In terms of the PRICES of food products, no significant relationships existed between age and problems pertaining to the prices of food products. However, a significant relationship existed between educational level and price-related problems; consumers with a lower education level experienced significantly more problems. Respondents particularly had problems with percentage reduced prices, prices that differed from what they had to pay, etc. Age, education level and income level influenced the problems experienced in terms of outlets where they purchased food. (PLACE). In terms of PROMOTION of food products consumers were affected in the same way; no demographic subset was influenced significantly more than the other. Significant relationships emerged between problems encountered in the market place and demographic subsets. The problems were still considered based on the marketing mix. For SALESPEOPLE consumers were affected in the same way; no demographic subset was influenced significantly more than the other. While in terms of problems related to PROCESS, a significant relationship existed for consumers who experienced problems with stores that did not return their money when they returned the products.

Price involved significantly more problems than other elements of the marketing mix according to figures in Table 5.17. Of the three demographic subsets, education level and income level significantly influenced difficulty to calculate prices that were reduced by percentages; when prices differed from what they had to pay; because it was difficult to estimate the total cost in the trolley; and when prices were not clear. These findings strongly

indicate that in retail outlets where consumers purchased the food products they have problems with the prices of goods. This suggests that retailers need to attend to their pricing systems as a matter of urgency.

Problems experienced in the market place were significantly related to products and related characteristics, processes of the stores and salespeople while problems with promotions were less pertinent.

5.6 COPING STRATEGIES USED TO HANDLE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE

5.6.1 Product related choice coping strategies

In section F of the questionnaire respondents (N=200) were given the opportunity to indicate the coping strategies that they employed when they encountered problems in the market place. These coping strategies were also related to different elements of retailers' marketing mix, i.e. product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and processes.

Based on the coping strategies employed it was also decided that for ALL coping strategies the mean would be interpreted as follows:

- A mean ≥ 2.5 would be regarded as a prominent coping strategy
- A mean ≥ 1.5 to < 2.5 would be considered a coping strategy that is sometimes used
- A mean < 1.5 would be considered as a coping strategy seldom used

Respondents were asked to indicate how they coped when they encountered problems that were related to food PRODUCTS in retail outlets. The findings are summarised in Table 5.18.

TABLE 5.18: PRODUCT RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)

PRODUCT RELATED COPING STRATEGIES	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Ask salespeople	3.0	0.12	2	3
Go to other stores	2.9	0.30	1	3
Buy products with brand & symbol that I know	2.9	0.32	1	3
Choose products with stronger packaging	2.9	0.36	1	3
Avoid trying new products	2.9	0.31		
Avoid buying the products	2.8	0.44	1	3
I remember where products are displayed	2.8	0.50	1	3
Pretend the disease so as to get help	1.2	0.57	1	3
React in any other way	1.1	0.30	1	3

**Bold figures indicate mean equal ≥ 2.5 (maximum 3)*

In terms of coping with difficulties related to the food products per se, the most prominent strategy was to ask *salespeople*, i.e. they revealed their literacy status to salespeople. Other prominent coping strategies were to buy *products with brands and symbols that they were familiar with*; to choose a *stronger packaging*, to avoid trying new products and to remember where products were displayed. They thus used at least seven coping strategies to overcome product related problems in the market place which mostly implied own effort to solve their problems. It was interesting to note that consumers used both avoidance and confrontative coping strategies. Avoidance coping strategy is whereby the consumer does nothing to the situation or avoids the condition totally (Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994:159), e.g. consumers go to other stores if they cannot find what they are looking for in the store, while when using a confrontative coping strategy the consumer faces the situation, for example by asking the salespeople about anything that she wants to purchase in the store.

5.6.2 Price related coping strategies

Respondents' indication of which coping strategies they used when they experienced difficulties with PRICES in the retail outlets are summarised in Table 5.19.

TABLE 5.19: PRICE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)

PRICE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Ask the salespeople about the prices	3.0	0.28	1	3
Go to other stores which have true prices	2.9	0.44	1	3
Avoid products reduced by percentages	2.8	0.52	1	3
Go to other stores with simple prices	2.6	0.68	1	3
I negotiate the prices	2.4	0.78	1	3
Go shopping with a friend	2.1	0.83	1	3
I complain to the store	2.0	0.87	1	3
Hand all the money to the cashier	1.4	0.81	1	3
React in any other way	1.3	0.62	1	3

**Bolded figures indicate mean \geq 2.5 (maximum3)*

Concerning PRICES of food products, several coping strategies were used to address their problems. It was interesting to note consumers engaged in confrontative coping, e.g. *asking the salespeople about the prices in the store* (Mean 3.0, Std dev 0.28) which calls for retailers to make sure that their salespeople are well-informed in order to serve the best interest of customers. Some consumers were not ashamed of their literacy status as they negotiated the prices (Mean 2.1), and complained to the stores (Mean 2.0, Std dev 0.87). On the other hand the findings indicate that some respondents did not want to reveal their literacy status therefore they used avoidance coping strategies, i.e. *going to other stores*. They also avoided *products reduced by percentages while some went to stores with simple prices*. They seemed to be lacking transaction knowledge which prevented them from performing simple calculations. In an open question some respondents indicated that they alerted the cashier about the amount of money they had before they paid for the goods. This coping strategy seemed to work for them.

5.6.3 Place related coping strategies (N=200)

The following responses aimed to verify the coping strategies that were employed when respondents experienced problems with the PLACES where they purchased food products. The results are presented in Table 5.20.

TABLE 5.20: PLACE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)

PLACE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Buy from stores with good lighting	3.0	0.07	2	3
Buy from large stores with wide variety of products	3.0	0.10	2	3
Buy from familiar stores	3.0	0.12	2	3
Ask help from salespeople	3.0	0.17	2	3
Buy from stores with good store layout	3.0	0.17	2	3
Buy from stores near where you stay	3.0	0.27	1	3
Buy from informal traders	2.7	0.52	1	3
Take a friend with you when shopping	2.0	0.79	1	3
React in any other way	1.0	0.14	1	3

**Bold figures indicate mean \geq 2.5 (maximum3)*

Once more the respondents reacted to a list of coping mechanisms that they could possibly employ in the stores if they encountered difficulties. In this case consumers employed both avoidance and confrontative coping strategies. Prominent coping strategies indicated that they: *purchase from other stores with better lighting* (Mean 3.0, Std dev 0.07); *purchase from large stores with a wide variety of goods*; *purchase from familiar stores*; *seek help from salespeople*; *purchase from stores with good layout*; *purchase from stores near where they stay/work, and/or purchase from informal traders*. This suggests that consumers seem to go to stores that have more appealing physical store attributes. It is therefore important that retailers attend to physical attributes such as good lighting, enough space in the store, etc. It was noteworthy to discover that consumers did take their friends along to assist them with shopping (Mean 2.0, Std dev 0.79) regularly which concurs with the findings of Viswanathan *et al.* (2005) who reported that consumers make use of family and friends if they struggled to cope in a store.

5.6.4 Promotions related coping strategies

Respondents reacted to a set of statements that aimed to find out how they coped when they experienced problems regarding the PROMOTION of food products in retail outlets. The results are presented in Table 5.21.

TABLE 5.21 PROMOTIONSRELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)

PROMOTIONS COPING STRATEGIES	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Compare food advertisements	3.0	0.19	1	3
Enquire about advertised prices	3.0	0.29	1	3
Get help from sales people	2.9	0.36	1	3
Plan food expenditure	2.8	0.41	1	3
Carry limited cash	2.5	0.60	1	3
Stick to shopping list	2.4	0.64	1	3
Avoid looking at food products which are advertised	2.2	0.71	1	3
React in any other way	1.0	0.00	1	1

**Bold figures indicate mean \geq 2.5 (maximum3)*

Respondents indicated that despite the challenges imposed by the promotion of products in the market place they mostly compared *food advertisements; enquired about food prices from salespeople* and they planned *for food expenditure and carried limited cash* to prevent them from being lured by exciting promotions. This agrees with what Adkins and Ozanne (2005) have reported, namely that illiterate consumers carry limited cash when shopping and that they are thus not influenced by promotions to spend more. Carrying limited cash thus prevented impulse purchases.

5.6.5 Salespeople related coping strategies

This question intended to attest to the coping strategies that were used when respondents experienced problems with SALESPEOPLE in retail outlets. The results are presented in Table 5.22.

TABLE 5.22: SALESPEOPLE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)

SALESPEOPLE RELATED COPING STRATEGIES	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Ask salespeople to help you	3.0	0.31	1	3
Go to other shops	3.0	0.31	1	3
Complain to the manager	1.9	0.85	1	3
Buy where you know the salespeople	1.8	0.85	1	3
Develop relationship with the salespeople	1.5	0.76	1	3
Buy where they know your language	1.1	0.50	1	3
React in any other way	1.0	0.00	1	1

** Bolded figures indicate mean \geq 2.5 (maximum3)*

Two prominent coping strategies were apparently used to cope with problems related to salespeople in retail stores, namely *to ask for help* (Mean 3.0, Std dev 0.31) (confrontative coping) or *to go to another store* (avoidance coping). A less prominent strategy, although

exercised on occasion, was *to complain to the manager*. Consumers with limited literacy are however less inclined to complain because they have limited bargaining power. Alternatively they *purchased where they knew the salespeople* (Mean 1.8, Std dev 0.85). This is attributed to the fact that respondents seemed to have developed relationships with salespeople and therefore shopping becomes easier if they patronise outlets where they know the salespeople. If they go to new stores they *developed new relationships with salespeople* and *became* friends with salespeople which eventually enhanced trust. Results therefore confirm the potential role of salespeople to assist low literate consumers.

5.6.6 Process related coping strategies

Respondents were asked to indicate the coping strategies which they employed when they encountered problems related to the PROCESS related activities of the stores where they purchased food products. The findings are summated in Table 5.23.

TABLE 5.23: PROCESS RELATED COPING STRATEGIES (N=200)

PROCESSES RELATED COPING STRATEGIES	Mean	Std dev	Min	Max
Buy from shops willing to give back your money and accept returned products	3.0	0.25	1	3
Buy from shops that care about your problems	3.0	0.25	1	3
Buy from stores that offer better services	3.0	0.26	1	3
Buy from stores that offer better prices	3.0	0.30	1	3
Buy from stores that have more convenient shopping hours	2.9	0.48	1	3
Buy from stores that offer credit facilities	1.0	0.22	1	3
React in any other way	1.0	0.20	1	3

**Bolded figures indicate means ≥ 2.5 (maximum3)*

Attributes mentioned as the most pertinent coping strategies were to *buy from stores that are willing to make refunds and accept returned products*; to go to *shops that care about their problems*; patronise *stores that offer better services or better prices*, as well as *more convenient shopping hours*. It is interesting to note that in this case most consumers employed the avoidance coping strategy which suggests that consumers simply go to other shops if they are not looked after. Functionally illiterate consumers can thus become a loyal market segment if their challenges are addressed in a particular outlet.

Different coping strategies were used and it is evident that most of the respondents used the same coping mechanisms in the market place as indicated by the variations that were shown by the standard deviation.

A summary of the coping strategies used is presented in Table 5.24.

TABLE 5.24: AVOIDANCE AND CONFRONTATIVE COPING STRATEGIES

ELEMENT	CONFRONTATIVE STRATEGY	AVOIDANCE STRATEGY
PRODUCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask salespeople 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to other shops • Buy products with brand and symbols that they know • Avoid trying new product • Avoid buying the products • Remember where products are located • Choose stronger packaging • Pretend disease to get help
PRICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask salespeople • Negotiate the price • Go shopping with a friend • Complain to the stores • Hand all the money to the cashier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to other stores • Avoid products reduced by percentage
PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask salespeople • Go shopping with a friend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy from familiar stores • Buy from informal traders • Buy from stores with lighting • Buy from stores with a wide variety of products • Buy from store near where you work • Buy from stores with good layout
PROMOTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare food advertisements • Enquire about advertised prices • Get help from the salespeople • Plan for food expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry limited cash • Stick to shopping list • Avoid looking at food products which are advertised
SALESPEOPLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask salespeople • Complain to the manager • Buy where you know the salespeople • Develop relationship with salespeople 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to other shops • Buy where they know your language
PROCESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy from shops willing to give you back your money and accept the returned products • Buy from shops that care about your problems • Buy from shops that offer better services • Buy from shops that offer better prices • Buy from shops that have convenient shopping hours • Buy from shops that offer credit facilities 	

5.6.7 Conclusive remarks on coping strategies employed in the market place

In terms of the coping strategies used by functionally illiterate consumers in retail outlets, it appeared that consumers in Botswana displayed both confrontative and avoidance coping mechanisms. Those who engaged in confrontative coping strategies did not hide their literacy status, but instead revealed it by asking salespeople questions and as a result they developed relationship with salespeople, etc. Findings however also indicated that some salespeople were not always friendly and supportive. The most confrontative coping strategy used by consumers was asking salespeople. In terms of avoidance coping strategies the respondents mainly went to other stores or purchased familiar products from familiar stores. Asking salespeople and going to other stores emerged to be prominently used in terms of

PRODUCT, PRICE, PLACE and SALESPEOPLE related problems. Although salespeople did not have a strong influence during food purchases their presence was highly valued by consumers when they experienced problems in the retail outlets. This should be investigated further and retail outlets, especially supermarkets, should have a place where consumers can be taught how to scan for prices rather than asking salespeople who at times are rude and unfriendly and not supportive. The implication is that when these coping strategies are applied consumers are able to select the products that they want to purchase.

In terms of the problems related to food PRODUCTS functionally illiterate consumers employed more of the avoidance coping strategies, namely going to other stores, avoiding new products, purchasing only familiar brands, etc. The least used coping strategy was pretending to have a disease. With regards to PRICES of food products, when consumers experienced problems they managed by applying both confrontative strategies, e.g. asking the salespeople about the prices of products, and avoidance coping strategies such as going to other stores which have true prices. Confrontative coping strategies were used more often with regards to PRICES. Consumers applied both the coping strategies, but the avoidance coping strategies were employed more than the confrontative strategies when functionally illiterate consumers had problems with PLACES where they purchased food products. The respondents applied both coping strategies but more of the confrontative coping strategies were applied when they experienced problems with how the food products were promoted (PROMOTIONS) in the retail outlets. When consumers had problems with SALESPEOPLE they coped by applying both confrontative strategies, e.g. asking salespeople to help them as well as complaining to the manager, and avoidance coping strategies such as going to other stores. With regard to PROCESSES related activities in the retail outlets the respondents coped by employing only confrontative coping strategies. This finding contradicts findings that reported that consumers in emerging economies tolerate poor services. This indicates that somehow consumers are aware that they need to be given quality service in the market place.

5.7 OBSERVATION OF SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR

The researcher visited the food retail outlets that were frequently used by respondents namely, supermarkets, spaza shops, butcheries and general dealers and did some observations of the behaviour displayed by functionally illiterate consumers. A check list was used to tick off the behaviour that the respondents displayed. The researcher started to observe the consumers as soon as they entered the store in order to find out how they find their way around the aisles in the store to locate what they have come to purchase. As

the consumers entered the stores the researcher noticed that consumers used big trolleys for major purchases while they used small trolleys when purchasing a few food items. Most of the respondents picked up an advertisement paper when they entered the stores (if it was available) and selected food items while looking at the advertisements. It was obvious that they were looking for food products that were on special offer. It was interesting to note that the respondents spent reasonable time on one item before they decided to put it in the trolley as if they were not sure whether to take it or not. They seemed uncertain of what they wanted to purchase. Some of those who patronised supermarkets made use of calculators on their mobile phones to add the totals of their purchases. Consumers asked salespeople questions, especially those at the vegetable section as they proceeded with their shopping. Consumers asked questions if they were not sure of where an item is located or if they were not sure of the prices (see Figure 5.9). The researcher also observed that when the supermarkets were full and crowded, the respondents moved and squeezed themselves in the aisles and patiently waited in the long queues. They were seen at the pay point/terminal talking to the cashier and some showed the cashier the amount of money they had. All consumers who were observed paid for their food purchases with cash.

Those who used coupons purchased at selected general dealers that accepted the coupons. They were accompanied by their children who helped to pick up the items and place them in one area. It was interesting to see that in the retail outlets none of the consumers who were observed had a shopping list, except those who took the printed advertisements and started ticking the items they wanted. Those who shopped at spaza shops did not check the change and they bought one item at a time.



FIGURE 5.9: A CONSUMER REQUESTING INFORMATION FROM A SALESPERSON IN A SUPERMARKET

5.8 RETAILERS' SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS IN TERMS OF FOOD PURCHASES

Information obtained from the interviews was coded and organised according to the following questions that were contained in the interview schedule:

1. What is the nature of your business?

(Participant) A	<i>It's a Supermarket</i>
(Participant) B	<i>It's a General dealer</i>
(Participant) C	<i>Its Spaza / Semausu</i>
(Participant) D	<i>It's a Supermarket</i>
(Participant) E	<i>It's a Supermarket</i>
(Participant) F	<i>It's a Wholesaler</i>
(Participant)G	<i>Informal trader</i>
(Participant) H	<i>It's a food wholesaler</i>

2. What are the objectives of your business apart from making profit?

A	<i>To provide goods to the consumers in the surrounding areas.</i>
B	<i>To provide a variety of food and other household items to the community.</i>
C	<i>To provide small items/goods that consumers need after supermarkets have closed.</i>
D	<i>To provide goods to people around. Involved in community activities such helping the needy.</i>
E	<i>To provide Batswana with food at low prices.</i>
F	<i>To enhance good customer service by providing food and other household goods.</i>
G	<i>To sell vegetables and fruits to people in this area</i>
H	<i>Provide different products mainly food</i>

3. How do you give back to the community?

A	<i>We sponsor/donate to churches.</i>
B	<i>Sponsor primary school leaving end of year party.</i>
C	<i>We don't sponsor as we don't have much profit.</i>
D	<i>Sponsor motorcycle, offer donations to the orphans.</i>
E	<i>Give food, money and clothes to the needy and orphans.</i>
F	<i>Donate money to football teams.</i>
G	<i>I don't give out to community as i do not make much profit</i>
H	<i>We donate to the needy</i>

4. Do you have any strategies that help consumers who are limited in education?

A	<i>We train our staff to help all kinds of consumers.</i>
B	<i>No we have no strategy in place but those who need help we do assist them.</i>
C	<i>No but we help those who have problem with calculating their totals.</i>
D	<i>Nothing in place at the moment as we didn't take that into consideration but we have someone who addresses all the consumers' problems.</i>
E	<i>Nothing but if they need help we can help them.</i>
F	<i>Nothing specifically for them.</i>
G	<i>Not at all</i>
H	<i>Not at all</i>

An interview was carried out to find out if the retailers have a strategy in place to help the illiterate consumers. The results indicated that most of the interviewed retailers engaged in helping the community but they have not yet started with activities to help on consumers with limited education. Findings showed that ONLY supermarkets were focused on social responsibility. This may be due to the fact that they are large and make some reasonable profit. Although the supermarkets were engaged in activities that were associated with social responsibility they were not yet involved with or concerned about functionally illiterate consumers.

5.9 CONCLUSION

The results of the study were presented in this chapter. Results were analysed and interpreted using quantitative calculations. Tables and figures were used for presentation. The chi square test was used to check the relationship that existed between the demographic attributes (age, education and income level) and the problems encountered in the market place. This research focused on the purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers. The results indicate that all the elements of the marketing mix namely *product*, *price*, *place*, *promotion* and *process influence* or persuade functionally illiterate consumers to purchase food products in some way and that salespeople that could potentially play a very supportive role, were less influential compared to the other influences. This should be investigated as a major shortcoming in food retail outlets.

The results of this study revealed that all the illiterate consumers predominantly purchased food from supermarkets as they are cheaper and have a wider range of products, as well as from informal traders (92.5%) because they are conveniently located close to their homes or work places. They patronised other retail outlets occasionally for smaller quantities or because they were conveniently located near their homes. They paid for food purchases mainly with cash and a very few prepared shopping lists. Findings indicated that all respondents experienced difficulties when navigating retail outlets. These problems were related to all the marketing mix elements namely the *product*, *price*, *place*, *promotion*, *salespeople* and *processes*. In terms of the PRODUCT the respondents admitted that they had problems if they encountered new products in the market place, if there is too much information on products, if products are not in stock, etc. With regard to the PRICES of food products, respondents made it clear that they are bothered by prices that are reduced by percentage, prices that differ from what they have to pay, prices that are not clear, etc. The

respondents indicated that when it comes to PLACES where they purchased products they are bothered if the stores are crowded, small, not clean, etc. In terms of PROMOTION advertisements tempted respondents to purchase food while consumers had to wait for salespeople while they do other things and at times there were not enough salespeople around. With regard to PROCESSES in the stores consumers admitted that stores where they purchased food did not pay back the money if they complained. The results also confirmed the use of coping mechanisms to overcome the difficulties encountered in the stores. Coping strategies that were employed are both avoidance and confrontative. They were employed in order to help consumers get what they desired in the market place (Adkins, 2001). The coping strategies were applied to all the elements of the marketing mix, namely *product, price, place, promotion, salespeople* and *processes*, which gave consumers problems. In some cases consumers employed both avoidance and confrontative coping strategies, e.g. PRICES, PROMOTION, SALESPEOPLE. In terms of PRODUCT consumers employed more avoidance coping strategies than confrontative coping strategies, while in some cases like in PROCESSES only confrontative coping strategies were employed. This highlights that even though consumers applied coping strategies this does not mean that they are satisfied in the market place, therefore retailers need to attend to this market segment, get an understanding of their purchasing behaviour and assist them so that they can navigate the market place informed and freely. An observation was carried out in the retail outlets in order to find out how the illiterate navigated the market place in order to locate and choose food products and to find the payment related activities at the check outpoint. The results showed that illiterate consumers did not make use of shopping lists and spent a considerable time and effort in trying to select food products. They paid mainly with cash. The retailers were also interviewed and it was found out that they had nothing in place to help the functionally illiterate consumers, as if they were not aware of this market segment. It is therefore important for retailers to have knowledge and familiarise themselves with challenges faced by illiterate consumers so that they gain insight into what this segment needs and attempt to assist them because they are more inclined to become loyal to stores where they feel at ease. Only supermarkets seemed aware of a social responsibility towards their communities.



Chapter 6

Discussion of findings

This chapter presents a discussion of the results in terms of the objectives for the study.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective for the study was done to investigate and describe the choice and purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers in Gaborone, Botswana with regards to a prominent product category, namely food purchasing, that involves a significant percentage of their already restricted budgets and that could have direct consequences in terms of their family well-being. The research was a cross-sectional and was carried in Gaborone and surrounding areas as they are many different types of the retail outlets. The intention was to identify problems that are encountered and coping mechanisms that are used to overcome pertinent limitations. A quantitative approach was used to collect primary data using a structured questionnaire, which was used to interview the respondents. The respondents who were willing to take part in the study were recruited conveniently after they were identified by means of a screening test. The researcher managed to recruit 200 women aged between 25 and 65 years old (between August 2010 and November 2010), some with formal schooling and some without any formal schooling. To support the data collected observation and interviews were carried out for triangulation purpose. Statistical procedures followed the data collection and consisted mainly of basic descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics. The interpretations of results were done in accordance with the objectives of the study. The discussion will be done within the systems theory.

6.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Various researchers emphasise the role played by women in food procurement for the family (Simelane, 2008; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2007:302; Blijham, De Kan & Niehof, 2006; Kleinhans, 2003:1). Similarly this study looked at women's food purchasing behaviour. The respondents in this study were women of various age groups (between 25 and 65 years) with the majority

aged <34 years. The women resided in Gaborone (the capital city of Botswana) and surrounding areas and the majority came from Mmopane (27.5%) and Mogoditshane (21.5%). The sample was approximately evenly represented by the respondents with some formal education (51%) and some with no formal education (49%). The study indicated that the women who have formal education were younger (<34 years). This could be closely linked to the fact that education has recently become more important as the educational system in Botswana emphasises that all should have completed basic education by 2016 (National Development Plan 9, 2003). The respondents' income level was varied but the majority of women earned between P500 and P1000 per month. This finding adds to previous studies that functionally illiterate consumers have a low income (Mhlanga, 2010; Viswanathan & Gau, 2005:187).

6.3 MARKETING MIX RELATED FACTORS THAT HAVE AN EFFECT ON CONSUMERS' CHOICE OF FOOD PRODUCTS FOR THEIR HOME (OBJECTIVE 1)

Findings disclosed that consumers were influenced by different factors when they purchased food. These influencing factors are termed elements of the marketing mix which are the product, price, place, promotion, process and salespeople. The most influencing factor was product (93%), followed by processes (84%), price and promotion (both at 78%), place (73.5%) and salespeople (13%).

Consumers compared different PRODUCTS in the retail outlets before they made a purchase decision. Comparing different products especially of the same brand can enable one to assess prices and choose wisely. Though consumers mentioned that they looked at more than one product of the same brand, they did not consider different product attributes such as size but rather focussed on one attribute, e.g. the brand name. This resulted in purchasing familiar products as they avoided the risk associated with unknown products. The results of this study are consistent to what Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:20) reported, that illiterate consumers do not trade-off between arrays of product attributes. This is an indication of concrete reasoning as the literature indicated in chapter 2. This suggests that consumers should be provided with knowledge about different products in the retail outlets to enable them to make informed decisions. Retailers need to implement strategies that will assist and facilitate all consumers during the purchase of products, especially food, to enable informed decisions.

The findings reflected that respondents (n = 169) highly regarded the support provided by the retail outlets where they purchased their food products (PROCESSES). PROCESS seemed

an important influencer regardless of the age of the respondents. This shows that these consumers irrespective of their illiteracy appreciated the services provided by the stores they bought from. This implies that the services provided by the retailers are highly valued by the respondents. Therefore this confirms that any activity that is carried out in food stores to assist vulnerable consumer would probably encourage store loyalty.

PRICE was another important persuasive influence to food choice: the idea that the higher the price the higher the quality was the reason that respondents purchased certain food products because they were affordable and it was favoured by 80% of the respondents. The results are coherent with those obtained in various studies that price is influential and appears to be the central unit during product choice (Mhlanga, 2010:142; Du Plessis, Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:20). Price determines the consumer to visit the store (Marx, 2005:16; Prasad, Medhi, Toyama & Balakrishna, 2008). Respondents in this study had low incomes and thus price became an important aspect to them. The findings of this research are consistent with what Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:19-20) reported, namely that illiterate consumers make habitual decisions based on single attributes such as price. The authors further proclaimed that consumers who lack the marketing skills like the functionally illiterate tend to depend on the price of the product and use the price to discriminate among products. On a similar note, consumers with little experience regarding products will use price as an indicator of quality (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:198; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:204). This may be ascribed to an inability to relate products to other product attributes. The price of the products, especially a low price, enabled consumers to purchase goods (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:19). This therefore suggests that consumers need proper education in terms of price and the quality of products so that they can make an informed decision. It should be noted that some advertisements deliberately emphasise a higher price to underscore the retailers' claim of quality (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:198).

PROMOTIONS carried out in the retail outlets were considered important as they influenced consumers' decisions regarding food products as indicated by the findings. As mentioned earlier, advertisements provide information about food products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:401) and influence the choice of specific products. Advertisements also intend to attract consumers to products that are displayed in the stores. About 78% of the sample was influenced by the advertisements placed in retail outlets. It is surprising to see consumers who are limited in terms of reading being influenced by advertisements. Retailers should keep consumers' needs in mind when they advertise their food products.

PLACE was also retained as an important factor when it came to food choice. The percentage calculated was fairly high for location and accessibility of retail outlets influence

purchasing decisions (Sonnenberg, 2003:37). The results support Arnold, as cited by Goldman and Hino (2005), that location determines product choice. The younger (<35 years) and middle-aged (≥ 35 - <45 years) respondents indicated that they considered and compared different stores before they chose food products. This may be ascribed to the fact that they know retail outlets that offered better products. The reasons for comparing retail outlets may be due to the fact that some retail outlets do not have a variety of products and are used for infilling shopping, e.g. spaza shops. Consumers may also prefer stores that offered the best services. The older respondents (≥ 45 years) did not always consider places when they purchased their food products. Literature indicates that older consumers exhibit different shopping habits than younger consumers. They tend to be more store loyal than younger consumers especially with respect to supermarkets (Shiffman & Kanuk, 2010:417). Furthermore the distance of the retail outlets could have led to these results as aging can lead to poor health status which can limit their movement. The reason for this is not clear and therefore needs to be investigated further.

SALESPEOPLE were not identified as a pertinent factor that influenced food choice. The findings applied to all the age groups. Less than 10% of the respondents in this study was influenced by salespeople to choose the food products in the retail outlets. It was not surprising to get these results as salespeople are not necessarily in close contact with consumers in food retail outlets. Salespeople have contact with consumers at specific sections, for instance at the weighing section, at pay points and when the consumers ask something relating to a product in the retail outlets. The systems theory postulates that a system is judged holistically in terms of how different marketing mix elements influence consumers' choice of food. The individual elements will be considered in hierarchical order, i.e. hierarchy is evident and some attributes were more dominant than others. It was expected that certain factors would be more influential than the others. In this study it was demonstrated by salespeople being less important during food choice.

This research therefore revealed that consumers are influenced by products, processes, place, and price and promotion. The findings of the study concur with that of Grabowski, (2010:123), namely that product related characteristics, store environment and price are the most influential elements that influence consumers' purchase decisions. Inevitably that may influence their store patronage. From the finding it is evident that these factors have an affect on food choice and the results further indicate that some of these factors negatively influence consumers as they encounter pertinent problems which are discussed in more detail in Section 6.5.

The first objective (objective 1) aimed to examine the marketing mix related factors that have an affect on their food choice. Descriptive statistics were used and findings showed that consumers are indeed affected negatively by the factors that influence food choice as discussed in section 5.4 (problems encountered in the market place).

6.4 FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS' PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR (OBJECTIVE 2)

6.4.1 Retail outlets patronised by functionally illiterate consumers

Findings revealed that supermarkets are apparently used more than any other retailers in Botswana. The reason could be ascribed to the fact that the study was done in the city of Gaborone and its surrounding areas where there are many supermarkets, often within close proximity of one another. This supports the view of D'Haese and Van Hylbroeck (2005:100) in South Africa indicating the wide use of supermarkets and that even respondents from poor rural households travel to do shopping in supermarkets in the nearest centres. Findings indicated that consumers patronise supermarkets mainly as they are affordable. As found by various studies supermarkets have become more popular places to purchase from recently as they have lower prices than other shops (Kaufman, 2005: 19; D'Haese & Van Hylbroeck, 2005:98; Suwanvijit & Promsa-ad, 2009) and provide a variety of services. This finding suggests that if retailers were to assist functionally illiterate consumers, the supermarkets would be ideal as they are widely used by most of consumers.

The second retail outlet that emerged to be patronised by the majority is the INFORMAL TRADER. The findings indicated that respondents also purchased mostly from informal traders (92.5%). This could be ascribed to the fact that informal traders sell the products which have no written material, i.e. fruits and vegetables. The findings concur with a report by Adkins (2001:24) that consumers purchased their goods where there was no written material, in places such as flea markets. Jae *et al.* (2008) add that consumers with limited literacy rely on verbal information when making purchasing decision, thus informal traders suit them as they can speak freely, are not hindered by written material and they can even negotiate the prices. The other reason is that products provided by informal traders are often affordable (Bugncourt as cited by Ligthelm, 2005:200). Furthermore informal traders sell products, especially fruits and vegetables, in small quantities/packages. It is understandable for respondents to purchase loose products such as tomatoes, as they might not have proper storage facilities because they cannot afford them. Other points of sale, i.e. general dealers, food wholesalers and spaza shops, were apparently less popular as they were not patronised by the majority of the respondents. This could be ascribed to their prices which are probably high and some of these retail outlets, especially the food wholesalers, sell

products in bulk which is expensive for these consumers. This therefore suggests that food wholesalers and general dealers should find ways of attracting these consumers to their stores. In contrast Goldman and Hino (2005:274) reported that in developing countries consumers still patronise traditional stores for food purchasing. In an open ended question respondents indicated that they purchased meat from butcheries. The butcheries seemed to sell meat at cheaper prices than the butcheries in the supermarket. This could be ascribed to the fact that the beef industry is the second largest revenue earner in Botswana as the country exports beef to European countries and therefore beef is affordable. Once again there is evidence of hierarchy here as some retail outlets were more important than the others. This suggests that consumers rank the retail outlets in order of importance and patronise retail outlets that match their expectation (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). The SUPERMARKET was identified as the most visited retail outlet by consumers and INFORMAL TRADERS as the second most visited retail outlet.

6.4.2 Frequency and reasons for patronising retail outlets

The majority of the respondents indicated that they purchased food *once per month* from supermarkets while they patronised informal traders on a *daily* and *weekly* basis. Other researchers in South Africa confirmed the monthly patronage in supermarkets (D' Haese & Huylenbroeck, 2005; Visser, 2007). Food purchases are done mostly at the end of the month, immediately after they are paid. Frequent shopping at supermarkets and informal traders suggests that consumers are store loyal and suggests that consumers find specific store merchandise affordable (Monroe & Venkatesan as cited by Sheinin & Wagner, 2003:202).

Reasons for the choice of retail outlets were investigated through responses to six attributes. Three of the six listed attributes were regarded as the most important by more than 80% of the sample. *Affordability*- Consumers are attracted to retail stores that have affordable prices because they have low disposable incomes (Mhlanga, 2010:110). Price determines the consumer to visit the store (Marx, 2005:16; Prasad *et al.*, 2008). Moreover the study is on women, who are traditionally known for being aware of the difference in prices therefore affordability matters to them.

Results indicated that the respondents showed interest in stores that are within proximity to their homes or work places. These findings confirm to what Sonnenberg (2003:37) found, namely that consumers in South Africa purchase goods from retail outlets located near their home or work place. Other researchers also agree that location correlated with patronage for specific stores (Prasad *et al.*, 2008; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24).

Consumers patronised retail outlets where they trust salespeople. The findings support the findings of Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:23) that the relationship between salespeople and consumers lead to trust which eventually leads to store loyalty.

The above reasons for liking various retail outlets reflect consumers' perception of the stores. Consequently the perceptions are important to an understanding of the shopping process and the changes which would occur if the food retail outlet structure were to change.

6.4.3 Food products mainly purchased

Canned/bottled products, cereal and cereal products and meat represented a large share (over 80%) of the food products mainly procured from supermarkets. This suggests that supermarkets attract consumers with a larger choice of products which are relatively affordable. Supermarkets are able to stock a variety of products. Very similar to their findings, research conducted by D'Haese and Van Hylbroeck (2005) indicated that low income households spend a lot of money on staple foods which are mainly cereals.

Spaza shops emerged to be the main provider of cereal and cereal products (68.5%), especially bread. This could be ascribed to the fact that spaza shops are conveniently located within walking distance from their homes and bread is purchased on daily basis. According Ligthelm (2005) bread contributed to 27% of spaza shops' turnover. Food wholesalers dominated in providing canned and bottled food products (60%).

6.4.4 Payment methods used in retail outlets

Findings revealed that though there are various methods of payment, functionally illiterate consumers in Botswana paid for their food products mainly with cash as they are more *familiar* with it. As consumers used cash they become more experienced with it. This finding concurred with Adkins and Ozanne (2005a:97) who reported the use of cash by functionally illiterate consumers as opposed to other methods of payment. They further indicated in their study that illiterate consumers used cash and avoided using cheques as they have a problem with writing. None of the respondents in the study used cheques. The use of cheques has declined any way these days (Borzekowski & Kiser, 2008:889). Although recently there has been an increase in the use of electronic payment, it was alarming to find only one respondent using the electronic method of payment (debit card). It must be noted that the debit card that the respondent used belonged to her husband.

6.4.5 Consumers who engage in pre-planning

From an investigation of respondents' use of shopping lists, more than half of the respondents (63%) expressed that they were not concerned with making shopping lists. This study collaborates with Viswanathan *et al.* (2007:303) and Viswanathan and Harris' (2001) findings who reported that shopping lists are not essential for illiterate consumers as they are limited in terms of reading and writing. The few that made shopping lists prepared them to make their shopping task easier. However Adkins and Ozanne (2005a:97) reported that illiterate consumers who made shopping lists had some codes that acted as external memory to help in the selection of products. The findings suggest that in general low literate Botswana consumers are not well-informed and that they have limited marketing skills. They need to be facilitated and this calls for retailers to provide ready-made shopping lists that consumers can use if they wish to do so.

The second objective (objective 2) aimed to examine the purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers. Existing evidence was scrutinised by means of a literature review. Analyses such as descriptive techniques were employed. Descriptive statistics are described in Chapter 5, section 5.4 and Chapter 6. The recommendations were made regarding the findings.

6.5 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE (OBJECTIVE 3)

Problems that affect consumers in the market place are significant during the transformation process. These problems affected the manner in which the respondents navigated the market place. As a result it hindered consumers' ability to make an informed purchase decision.

6.5.1 Problems related to products in the retail outlets

In terms of FOOD PRODUCTS, problems that affect the respondents were subsequently investigated through their response to ten attributes/statements. Consumers (Mean 2.6, maximum = 3) highlighted *difficulties with new products that they are not familiar with in the market place*. The findings support a previous report by Adkins (2001:63) who reported mistakes resulting from purchasing new products. This indicates that consumers are brand loyal and thus they purchase familiar products. Consumers avoided risk by purchasing brands that they are satisfied with rather than trying new products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:229). This suggests that if consumers become brand loyal they will be loyal to specific brands and stores. This also might suggest that functionally illiterate consumers purchase new products on a limited basis. When consumers are faced with new products in the market

place they have to obtain the relevant product knowledge about this new product. According to research illiterate consumers have difficulties transferring knowledge across domains (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:20). Therefore it will not be easy to comprehend new information on the product unless retailers create some kind of awareness.

Respondents indicated that *too much information is provided on products for them to comprehend* (Mean 2.5). This supports the previous research which pointed out that if consumers have to deal with too much information their decision making is affected (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Adkins, 2001). Too much information which exceeds the processing limit of respondents leads to information overload. Additionally too much information can lead to confusion for inexperienced consumers such as illiterate consumers (Erasmus, 2002:26). These results support the literature that when consumers are presented with too much information they encounter difficulties in encoding and storing all the information. They may find it difficult to remember products information from advertisements for new brands (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:227). Too much information may also lead to consumer frustrations, confusion or even poor purchase decision (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:227). This means that it is important to provide these consumers with information that is relevant to their linguistic and arithmetic capability. According to Macklin, Bruvold and Shea as quoted by Jae *et al.* (2008:443) messages should be short and simple when designing products for consumers. Food manufacturers are constantly changing food packages which can become a problem to illiterate consumers. Retailers should be careful and bear in mind consumers of different socioeconomic statuses when designing a new food package.

These two problems were subsequently subjected to chi square analysis to check if they were significantly related to specific demographic factors (age, educational level and financial status). It was evident that significantly more young respondents aged (<35 years) experienced problems with new products that they were not familiar with in the retail outlets ($p = 0.001$).

In terms of education level the findings indicated that significantly more consumers with no education compared to consumers with some education confirmed that too much information is provided in on the products ($p = 0.005$). This was expected as these consumers are limited in reading ability and literature has indicated that they bothered by products that has too much information (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008).

6.5.2 Problems related to prices of products in the retail outlets

In order to find out problems related to PRICES of food products the respondents had to respond to a list of nine statements that are related to prices of food products. Five factors with means above 2.5 came to the fore: *Inability to calculate percentage reduction in prices* emerged to be challenging (Mean 2.8). The results seem to be in agreement with recent research that prices that are reduced by percentage gave consumers a hard time (Mhlanga, 2010:90; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:23). As would be expected, consumers with limited numeric skills cannot comprehend figures. They cannot perform mental calculations. Inability to perform mental calculations was evident during the screening test. They lacked rudimentary skills which are acquired at an early stage (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). This therefore suggests that different formats of prices used in sales advertisements influence consumers differently (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:194). Retailers should avoid price reduction expressed in percentage and use actual numbers, e.g. half price. Retailers should also make sure that there are salespeople who will help consumers with these prices.

Prices on the shelves that differed from what they actually paid (Mean 2.7) surfaces as a concern. As would be expected from the researcher's observation this problem does not only affect illiterate consumers; even literate consumers are affected. Retailers often change prices on the shelves and forget to change their pricing system at payment terminals. Emphasis should be placed on the pricing system of the retail outlets, especially supermarkets, to avoid this inconvenience. According to Spreng and Mackoy (1996:2002) stores use price to attract consumers. This therefore calls for the retailers to make sure that prices are well placed for consumers to see them easily (Gothan, 2008). Respondents had difficulties with prices that were *not clear* (Mean 2.5). This supports Adkins' (2001:59) report that illiterate consumers faced problems when they were not able to understand pricing of products in the retail market. It was also *difficult to calculate the total cost of purchases* as their mental capacities could not handle it. This was not surprising and expected as the consumers' arithmetic ability is limited as literature has indicated. The results are consistent with literature, which posits the inability of consumers to sum up the total amount of products they have purchased (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008). This suggests that retailers, if possible, should in the future consider introducing shopping baskets with computation aids that will add up the total in the shopping cart.

The problems were subsequently subjected to chi square analysis to check if they have significance on demographic factors (age, educational level and financial status). In terms of education level the findings indicated that significantly more consumer with no education compared to consumers with some education experienced problems such as calculating

prices reduced by percentages, prices on the shelves differed from what they paid for and it was difficult for them to calculate the total cost of their purchases.

6.5.3 Problems related to retail outlets that provide food products

Place seemed to be more problematic than other marketing mix elements. It became evident from findings that in retail outlets (PLACE) consumers experienced more problems such as *crowded stores; small stores; unclean stores; limited products in stores; confusing layout; limited lighting; stores far away; and traders not at their trading places*. This study is in line with literature that posits that affective elements of the environment have the capacity to influence consumers to select the products (Solomon, 2006) hence in a way agreeing with these findings that a place that is small is likely to limit consumers in terms of product choice, likely to be crowded and unclean. A South African study indicated that retail stores attend to their physical environment of the store meticulously than other marketing mix elements (Gothan, 2008), however this finding are contrary as most of the respondents were bothered by retail places that are not pleasant to purchase from. This may be attributed to the fact that retail outlets in South Africa are more advanced in terms of service quality. Retailers should make sure that their retail outlets are not crowded, perhaps by ensuring that there are enough salespeople to attend to customers and to reduce overcrowding. The researcher observed that respondents purchased mainly from supermarkets that are affordable so they were always full and crowded. (Dabholkar, Thorpe and Rentz as cited by Gothan 2008) suggest that space can benefit the consumers as it is used for product evaluation. Thus aisles should be wide enough to allow for easy navigation and movement. It appears that store layouts (confusing layouts) were of much concern to the respondents inherently, indicating that retailers should maintain or minimise the changing of store layouts. This concern does also affect literate consumers. If there is need to change the layout, the transition should be easy and should take time. With repeated exposure in the store consumers become more familiar with it. It is therefore essential for retailers to constantly monitor their store image and adapt it to suit the possible target market such as functionally illiterate consumers. This can further lead to store loyalty (Bloemer, Odekerken & Schroder, 2002:69).

The problems were subsequently subjected to chi square analysis to check if they have significance on demographic factors (age, educational level and financial status). In terms of education level the findings indicated that significantly more consumer with no education indicated that they suffered when there was not enough lights in the stores and the stores are far from where they live or work. The consumers in the higher income category suffered when there were not enough lights while consumers in the middle income category

significantly suffered when places that they purchased food from were far from where they lived and worked.

6.5.4 Problems related to promotion products in the retail outlets

In terms of PROMOTION of food products, the majority of women indicated that *advertisement papers tempted them to buy food products*. Advertising is often criticised for tempting consumers to purchase products that they do not need. It does not lead to informed decision making but rather persuades consumers to purchase. Some adverts are just plain and without pictures which makes it difficult for consumers to comprehend them. Pictures play an important role when consumers are making purchasing decisions (Jae & Delvecchio, 2004; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:21) as they base decisions on peripheral cues (Jae & Delvecchio, 2005). They further explain that pictures should be congruent with the advertisement otherwise they may degrade comprehension, it is therefore essential that buyers must read advertisements. However this is a challenge to functionally illiterate consumers as their reading ability is questionable. Advertisements are written at a level that is beyond consumers' ability to comprehend and that is why too much information on products or on advertisements seemed to be a problem. Retailers should design advertisements that provide information that can be comprehended by functionally illiterate consumers. Thus it is suggested that retailers use pictorial depictions on the advertisements and use speakers in the stores to inform consumers about products on sale. Respondents did not know how much they saved and spent probably because advertisements were not clear. Retailers (especially supermarkets) have the tendency of writing the discounted price and the amount that you save without writing the original price. This becomes difficult for consumers to figure out the original price as they are unable to perform mental calculations.

6.5.5 Problems related to salespeople in the retail outlets

In terms of SALESPEOPLE the majority of the respondents voiced *waiting for salespeople* as a constraint which confirms ineffective service delivery. The findings support a research done in South African supermarkets that consumers wait for salespeople (Marx, 2005). The assistance from salespeople in South African supermarkets is inadequate as they display rude and unfriendly behaviour (Marx & Erasmus, 2006:65). It is therefore essential to appoint and train salespeople in all aspects of customer care. Retailers should train their salespeople more on consumers' needs. As expected very few respondents experienced problems with language. This is ascribed to Setswana being the national language which is spoken by most of the people in the country. The majority also indicated less difficulty in identifying salespeople in retail outlets. Salespeople in supermarkets put on uniforms which made them easily identifiable.

The problems were subsequently subjected to chi square analysis to check if they have significance on demographic factors (age, educational level and financial status). In terms of income level the findings indicated that significantly more consumers in the higher income category are aware that salespeople do other things while assisting them.

6.5.6 Problems related to processes related activities in the retail outlets

In terms of PROCESSES, more than 70% of respondents indicated that retail places *do not refund their money when they complained or returned the products*. The findings suggest that in general consumer complaints are not handled well in Botswana. Previous research indicate that consumers are not satisfied with the services that are rendered to them in the market place but limited literacy hinders them from taking action as a result they are frustrated and stressed (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005; Adkins, 2001; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005b). In an open ended question about nine respondents indicated that they do not take action as they do not want the salespeople to lose their jobs. Consumer complaints must be handled fairly and appropriate actions must be taken (Bendall-Lyon & Powers, 2004:115) to ensure consumer satisfaction. In another open ended question some respondents indicated that stores that provided credit purchases charged them more. This finding corresponds with the report from Viswanathan *et al.* (2007:302) that consumers who shopped in local grocery stores were sometimes charged more for goods offered on credit, without their knowledge. It is alarming as this indicates that these vulnerable consumers are sometimes exploited.

These problems were subsequently subjected to chi square analysis to check if they have significance on demographic factors (age, educational level and financial status). In terms of age the findings indicated that significantly more consumers in the older age category had problems with stores that did not refund them when they returned the food products. This suggests that retailers should review that return policy so that to enable the consumers to purchase in their retail outlets.

The content of the questionnaire supported and confirmed the theoretical content of the literature review. It became evident that problems in the market place were related to all the elements of the marketing mix in some way.

The third objective (objective 3) aimed to examine the problems encountered by consumers in the market place. Descriptive techniques were employed to determine whether consumers were notably affected by problems that are related to the extended marketing mix. Section 5.5 in Chapter 5 reveal the results. Additional statistics procedures, namely chi square and Fisher exact tests were done to check for significant relationships among selected variables,

namely demographic characteristics and problems encountered. It was clear that significantly more consumers in the older age category experienced problems with food products and how the stores treated them.

6.6 COPING STRATEGIES USED IN THE MARKET PLACE (OBJECTIVE 4)

Consumers tend to have options for coping if faced with problems. They expressed interest in changing their status quo by applying coping strategies. As mentioned in chapter 2 of this study there is evidence that functionally illiterate consumers engage in various remedies of coping in retail outlets (coping strategies). Respondents appeared to use one or a combination of coping strategies to deal with stressful events (Watson & Spense, 2007), in this case challenges in the market place, in order to get their needs met. Coping strategies help consumers fulfil their daily market needs. It helps them to be more efficient as they can choose quickly among alternatives. It reduces demands placed on consumers. Additionally it serves to protect consumers' self-esteem as well as making their environment manageable (Adkins, 2001:80). However, these coping strategies do not guarantee informed product choices. The coping strategies were also categorised according to their relation to product, price, place, promotion, salespeople and process.

Literature suggests that consumers who are illiterate display unique coping strategies in order to compensate for their lack of literacy (Mhlanga, 2010; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005; Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Adkins & Ozanne, 2005a; Adkins, 2001) so that they can get their needs met in the market place. As mentioned in chapter 2, coping strategies can be confrontative or avoidance (Watson & Spense, 2007). Most of the respondents employed both confrontative and avoidance coping strategies. However there were consumers who only employed avoidance coping strategies, i.e. left the situation. In this case they left the stores where they experienced difficulties and went to other stores.

6.6.1 Product related coping strategies

In terms of PRODUCT related challenges the findings indicated that the majority of respondents asked salespeople for assistance (confrontative coping strategy). The finding concurs with what previous studies suggest that illiterate consumers seek help from salespeople (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005:24; Adkins, 2001:67-68). This suggests that they are assertive and hence are able to deal with their constraints in the market place (Watson & Spencer, 2007; Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994:153). Other consumers employed avoidance coping strategies by avoiding trying new products or not buying the products at all, as well as going to other stores. This suggests that their coping potential is

very low. Therefore they need to be empowered in the market place. Retailers should establish help desks that cater for these consumers. Results also indicated that if consumers have difficulties with packaging they tend to choose products with stronger packaging. New products can be a threat in the market place, but to avoid stress and frustration consumers resorted to buying products that they know while some avoided buying products that they are not familiar with.

Consumers' use of memory was confirmed by the respondents. The majority expressed relying on memory in retail outlets when facing challenges in the market place. This is consistent with research done by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005) that indicated that illiterate consumers coped by picturing and memorising layouts in stores. They further add that they memorise even the coins and notes that they use to pay for their goods. Additionally illiterate consumers easily recall previously seen pictures (Prasad *et al.*, 2008). Memorising where the products are does not only assure wise product selection but it also ensures shopping efficiency by saving time and thus reducing the amount of time spent in product comparison and increases the consumer's ability to get the preferred product (Adkins, 2001:60). This suggests that retailers should keep in mind the illiterate consumers when they change layouts in the stores. The transition should be slowly introduced and consumers should be made aware of the changes. Likewise food manufactures should be very careful when changing brands, logos and words on products as this can confuse the consumers because they rely on memory to select the products (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005).

6.6.2 Price related coping strategies

Findings indicated that confrontative and avoidance coping strategies were once more applied when consumers wanted to overcome problems related to the PRICES of food products. It was not surprising to see consumers applying avoidance coping strategies such as *avoiding buying new products* and *avoiding trying new products*, as they cannot transfer knowledge across different domains (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Thus they cannot use the already acquired knowledge to comprehend new information. This suggests that they avoided the stress that is associated with new products. Respondents also resorted to using products with the brand name and symbols they were familiar with. This is also consistent with what previous researchers have reported (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Adkins, 2001:63-64). Consumers seemed to ask salespeople for assistance if they found it difficult to calculate prices or if prices were not clear, i.e. when there was more than one price tag or when the price was not attached. The results collaborated with what Gau and Viswanathan (2008) reported in their study namely that multiple prices gave illiterate consumers difficulties. This emphasises that retailers should ensure that their pricing system is consistent.

6.6.3 Place related coping strategies

In response to the dilemma faced in the retail outlets the respondents preferred stores that have *good lighting; variety of stock; familiar stores; good store layout; stores near their places* and also *purchased food from informal traders*. The places where consumers purchase food products should be conducive to a pleasant shopping experience, i.e. the store layout and lighting may improve customers' in-store emotions and may provide re-purchase information (Bruner, 1990:94). It should provide all that will enhance informed decision making. The results are consistent with what previous researchers have found namely that consumers preferred to shop in stores that they were familiar with (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Adkins, 2001:63). Retailers should avoid changing store layouts more often as it can bring about anxiety to the consumers.

6.6.4 Promotion related coping strategies

The promotion of food seemed to pose more problems for the respondents. It was clear from the findings that respondents reverted to *comparing food advertisements*: it was not clear how they did it as their linguistic and arithmetic ability is limited. However they mentioned at some point the use of shopping helpers, e.g. family, more especially their children. These helpers probably assisted them to compare products. This also confirms what previous researchers have found that illiterate consumers make use of social networks which can be family or friends (Ozanne *et al.*, 2005: 258; Adkins, 2001:67-68).

The respondents (Mean 3.0) *enquired about advertised prices from salespeople* (Mean 2.9) as mentioned earlier. Even though consumers are not influenced by salespeople during food choice they seemed to value the assistance from the salespeople. Some of the respondents mentioned that they asked about the advertised prices from salespeople or from their family or friends. These findings are remarkably consistent with those of Viswanathan *et al.* (2005) and Adkins (2001:68) as they emphasised that illiterate consumers relied on asking salespeople. The system theory poses that individual factors should not be viewed in isolation but in this instance salespeople seemed of more importance while they were not influential during food choice.

Respondents, as indicated by the results, *planned food expenditure and carried limited cash*. These results collaborate with research by Viswanathan *et al.* (2005:24) who also found that illiterate consumers carried limited cash to avoid overspending. Botswana consumers carried limited cash as their incomes were low therefore they cannot overspend, while in contrast a recent study in South Africa indicated that illiterate consumers preferred to have excess cash to prevent shortfall. It is interesting to see consumers employing different coping strategies when dealing with the same challenge. The data at hand also indicated that

consumers planned their food expenditure. However there is not enough conclusive evidence to substantiate this as the number of those who made shopping lists is very low (31.5%) therefore this needs to be investigated further so that they can be helped with pre-planning for their purchases.

6.6.5 Salespeople related coping strategies

Coping mechanisms related to salespeople were investigated through responses to seven attributes. The findings reflected upon two coping strategies used by most of consumers. *Asking salespeople* and *going to other shops* were highlighted. The majority of the respondents preferred to *ask salespeople*. This suggests that though they had problems with the salespeople they did not hide their literacy status from them and tend to value the assistance delivered by salespeople. Some went *to other stores* when they experienced problems with the salespeople. As mentioned earlier those who did not want to reveal their literacy status resorted to going to other shops. These results emphasised what other studies have reported, which is that illiterate consumers go to other stores where their literacy status is not known (Adkins, 2001:69). The findings also indicated that some *complained to the manager, bought food products where they know the salespeople; or developed relationship with salespeople*. These coping strategies were employed minimally as depicted by mean below 2.5. In an open ended question some respondents revealed that they also coped by paying items one by one to avoid being shouted at by the cashier in case their money is short. Literature indicates that the South African consumers applied this strategy (Mhlanga, 2010). Previous studies suggest that salespeople are rude and hostile to consumers when they run short of money (Gau & Viswanathan, 2008; Viswanathan *et al.*, 2005). Language used in the retail outlets was not problematic as most people in Botswana speak “Setswana”, the national language.

6.6.6 Process related coping strategies

Findings indicated that consumers patronised retail outlets that offered *better services and prices; care about their problems; and/or have convenient shopping hours* as indicated by the findings. The respondents (Mean 3) indicated that they purchased from stores that have better services, prices and cared about their problems. Although consumers indicated that they patronise these stores it is however not known at what level their problems are handled. This suggests that these consumers preferred better services that will satisfy them despite their literacy status. Therefore retailers should treat consumers’ complaints and other services in such a way that it will change the consumers’ perception about their stores and hence they will be store loyal. It is evident from the results that the respondents did not complain when their problems were not handled well in the market place, because they did not have the confidence to voice their complaints further or they did not know where they can

complain. This then supports the reports that consumers in emerging economies tolerate ineffective services (Marx & Erasmus, 2006). The findings indicate that some consumers resort to going to other stores or fail to complain when they experience problems in the retail outlets where they buy food products.

6.7 IMPLICATION OF PROBLEMS IN THE MARKET PLACE (OBJECTIVE 5)

With regard to the investigation into the problems experienced by functionally illiterate consumers the data yielded that indeed consumers experienced difficulties in the stores that they patronised for food. The findings yielded that problems emanate from all the marketing mix elements, i.e. the product, price, place, promotion, process and salespeople. These problems negate the use of coping mechanisms to get their needs met in the retail outlets. These problems leave consumers vulnerable. If consumers are vulnerable in the market place there is no way they can make an informed decision. Some of the consumers end up leaving the market place completely without the desired products which can lead to stress and frustration. Some leave the market place without the desired products as a result their daily needs are not met in the market place. There is evidence of wrong product choice (Adkins, 2001). It was evident that consumers engaged in various coping strategies. Though consumers engage these coping mechanisms this does not assure responsible and informed purchasing decision. It is the responsibility of retailers to assist and support functionally illiterate consumers and make the market place an appealing place to shop at. Retailers should look at each marketing mix element and address each accordingly.

6.8 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF RETAILERS TOWARDS FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE CONSUMERS (OBJECTIVE 6)

From the results of the interview it was very clear that retailers in Botswana are not yet aware of the functionally illiterate consumers. They are involved in helping the disadvantaged community and yet they are still at the infant stage when it comes to vulnerable consumers like the illiterate. This suggests that retailers in Botswana should be made aware of this category of consumers. It will not only benefit them in terms of profits but it will also make the shopping environment easier to be navigated by all consumers, resulting in store loyalty. Retailers can equip consumers such as the illiterate with education. This education can help even to protect the consumer. If illiterate consumers are informed about the market place they will be able to shop effectively.

This last objective (objective 6) aimed to examine the social responsibility of retailers toward functionally illiterate consumers. Literature was thoroughly reviewed and retailers were interviewed. Recommendation regarding the issue is provided in Chapter 7.

6.9 QUALITY OF THE STUDY

The researcher use different data collection methods (Triangulation) to verify the findings and to ensure reliability of the data: a screening test was used followed by completion of a questionnaire on an interview basis. The researcher also made in store observations.

Validity is the extent to which a data collection method accurately measures what it were intended to measure (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:640). Content validity refers to the adequacy of the content and the content should be representative of all the relevant concepts within the theory (De Vos, 2005). Content validity was ensured in this study by making sure that the sections in the questionnaire correlated with the objectives. This ensured that correct concepts were measured, which were chosen in accordance with literature..

The following components of validity were discussed:

Construct validity refers to the degree to which an instrument successfully measures (De Vos *et al.*, 2005). The meaning of constructs must be understood and the proposition that the theory makes about the relationships between this and other constructs has to be identified (De Vos, 2005:161).The constructs for this study were precisely and clearly defined. The researcher interviewed the respondents in their language which is Setswana and the constructs were measured using several attributes/statements.

Content validity is concerned with the representivity or sampling adequacy of the content of an instrument. As a researcher you have to determine whether the instrument contains an adequate sample of items representing the concept, and whether the instrument really measures the specific concept (De Vos, 2005:161). In this study, the denotations of the central concepts were accurate indicators of the connotations of the concepts. In addition, the items in the questionnaire related to the sub-objectives of the study.

Criterion validity refers to multiple measurements. It was achieved by comparing scores on an instrument with an established external criterion (De Vos, 2005:161).

6.10 FOOD PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR EXPLAINED WITHIN THE SYSTEM THEORY

Factors that affect food choice are explained within a system theory. In this study five factors were identified as influences during consumers' food purchases. These factors were product, price, place, promotion, process and place. Although food purchasing behaviour is influenced by several elements (see chapter 2), this study revealed that some of the elements are more influential than the others. Interestingly older consumers were less influenced by the places where they purchased the food products. It was also evident that salespeople did not exert much influence on consumers' food choice. This indicated one of the assumptions of system theory that not all the influencing factors are equally important (hierarchy). Consumers patronised different retail outlets. Supermarkets and informal traders seemed to be used by the most consumers because they were affordable. Some retail outlets were considered more important than the others (hierarchy is also evident here).

During transformation phase the a consumer relies on the internal resources for instance prior experience and knowledge about the food products in order to guide the decision making process (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010) This is confirmed by the behaviour of consumers to rely on the previous experience with the product. Consumers based their decisions on experience, understanding of social situation and knowledge they had in order to make appropriate decisions. During this process of interpretation of inputs into outputs, consumers seemed to have difficulties with interpreting/transferring information across domains as they are limited in terms of arithmetic and linguistic ability. Their information search was limited as they are limited in reading. This study revealed that during this phase consumers encountered difficulties in the retail outlets and hence they applied the coping strategies. These difficulties as well as the coping strategies were discussed in terms of the marketing mix namely the *product, price, place, promotion, salespeople* and the processes. The problems and coping strategies were in an apparent hierarchy as some problems were more prominent than the others. Some coping strategies were applied more frequently than others. The application of coping strategies does however not guarantee an informed product choice. This reflects a desperate need to assist functionally illiterate consumers in the retail outlets.

The proposed outcome is either informed or uninformed purchasing decision (*output*). The study concluded that some consumers through the use of coping strategies were able to make an informed decision. On the other hand some ended up leaving the stores without desired food items and others purchased the wrong products. This is a concern as it indicates that these consumers lack the marketing skills that will enable them to function effectively in the retail outlets. It is therefore necessary for functionally illiterate consumers to

be facilitated in the market place. At this point the retailers should intervene by getting a full understanding of how these consumers operate in the market place hence devise strategies that will assist these consumers.

6.11 SUMMARY

Food purchasing is a dynamic and complex process. It is essential as it fulfils the basic need of hunger. Botswana as an emerging economy has the problem of illiteracy which has some impacts on how functionally illiterate consumers' choice food products in the retail outlets that are brimming with written information.

The study was undertaken to add to the literature regarding purchasing behaviour of functionally illiterate consumers. The study revealed that respondents are influenced by stores' presentation of the elements of the marketing mix as well as socio cultural factors when they choose food in retail outlets. The study found that older people did not show interest in shopping around at different places. It became clear that supermarkets are widely used by most of the consumers followed by informal traders while other points of retail were minimal visited. Respondents indicated that they purchased food products from the retail outlets as they are cheap, trustworthy, and conveniently located near where they live or work. During market place navigation respondents'encountered problems and as a result they adopted strategies to cope and to address these limitations.



Chapter 7

Limitations of the study and recommendation for further research

This chapter presents the limitations of this study and provides suggestions for further research.

7.1 THE RESEARCH IN RETROSPECT

It is important for the researcher to reflect on the study objectively in order to find out whether all the objectives were addressed or not and to make sure that the study presents results satisfactorily.

The study was limited in scope, i.e. 200 respondents were interviewed and this posed limitations in terms of sample and sampling. The researcher ensured that the data collected was accurate, valid and reliable. To ensure valid and reliability the researcher compiled a thorough literature from various up to date sources, the statistician was involved to check the content of the questionnaire and the respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of their contribution to encourage honest responses. The questionnaire that was used to interview the respondents was accompanied by a cover letter that the respondents had to sign after the purpose and the objectives of the study were explained to them. Permission to carry out the research was sought from relevant authorities namely the Research Committee, Faculty of Agricultural and Natural Sciences of the University of Pretoria, the Ministry of Education, Skills and Development and the Ministry of Trade and Industry in Botswana, as well as from the retail outlets where the researcher did the observations. The respondents were assured that the findings would be used for academic purposes only and would be kept confidential.

The study was meant to be explorative and descriptive and had no intentions to generalize the findings. The research was carried out in certain geographic area that suited the purpose of the study, i.e. the area is the capital city where there are many people of different socio economic status and varied retail outlets that sell different food products. Limited financial resources also restricted the study to a particular area. Appropriate measures were taken to

ensure that the information collected in this study was accurate and reliable to make meaningful interpretations.

In order for the study to be successful it is essential that all the objectives stated are met. The researcher can conclude that all the objectives were met and meaningful conclusions were made from the data.

7.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study discusses the limitations as follows:

Sample and sampling

- Due to financial constraints the study was restricted to a particular geographic area in Botswana. The study would have been ideal if it enabled generalisation of the results to a larger population. The findings cannot be generalised to the rest of the country as the research was carried out in Gaborone and the surrounding areas in Botswana. Most of the problems encountered and coping strategies were similar. However the researcher made an effort to involve as many respondents as possible though it was difficult to recruit them, because of their reluctance to reveal their literacy status.
- Time constrained the study as the study was part of the pre-requisite for a Master's degree therefore it had to be completed in a specific period of time.

Data collection

- Interviewing or filling the questionnaire was time-consuming due to inclusion of a screening test to identify those who qualified for the study. It took the researcher and assistants between 35-45 minutes to conduct the screening test and the interview. This might have had an impact on some responses, especially the last questions, as consumers seemed to be tired which may have jeopardised the truthfulness of the responses. However potential respondents were warned that the interview would take a little bit of their time.
- During observation period some of the retailers were reluctant to allow the researcher to carry out the observations in their stores.
- Two retailers did not honour the appointment which resulted in interviewing only eight retailers instead of ten.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The research identified opportunities for further research.

- **A comparative study:** It would be worthwhile if a comparative study on literate women to find out if they are affected by the same problems in the market place and if they use the same coping strategies to combat the problems encountered. The study could include a qualitative method, e.g. panel group discussions.
- The study employed a cross sectional research design, therefore a longitudinal research design is recommended for future research.
- **Geographic area:** This study could be repeated over other regions in Botswana (rural and urban) to determine whether there are significant differences in terms of problems encountered in the market place and coping strategies used.
- **Gender:** The study consisted only of female consumers. It is recommended that the study be repeated with males because they are also affected by this phenomenon of illiteracy.

The following suggestions that involve issues relating to the findings are suggested:

- In terms of places where consumers purchase food (as indicated in the factors that influence functionally illiterate consumers' food choice investigations), reasons why older consumers do not do comparative shopping should be investigated.
- It might be interesting to find out why the salespeople had limited influence on consumers' food choice and to investigate how they can be optimised to encourage informed purchasing behaviour

Recommendations to the retailers

These findings pose a challenge to the retailers to:

- Take consumers' demands/problems seriously and improve services offered in their stores as the functionally illiterate consumers have shown that they are brand and store loyal.
- Train their staff to be able to handle and assist consumers of different illiteracy level.
- Improve the physical environment of their stores, e.g. stores should be kept clean and avoid changing store layouts often as the research indicated that consumers use memorisation as a coping strategy to get products in the retail outlets. Aisles should be spacious to avoid overcrowding.

- Develop new advertising tactics that will cater for the current needs of functionally illiterate consumers.
- Provide shopping lists with pictures so that illiterate consumers could just tick what they need to purchase. These shopping lists can be placed at the entrance of the stores.
- Educate illiterate consumers to encourage informed purchase decisions.
- Use both languages (English and Setswana) in the stores as some are able to read Setswana.
- Use symbols and pictures when labelling in the stores.

Recommendations to the policy makers

These findings pose a challenge to the policy makers to:

- Formulate policies aimed at protecting the consumer, especially vulnerable consumers such as the illiterate.
- Formulate policies that will emphasise visual product description to enable functionally illiterate consumers to make informed decisions.
- Include purchasing in the school curriculum from primary level so that children can teach their parents who are illiterate, as the research indicated that some illiterate consumers were helped by their children with shopping activities.

Recommendations to the food manufacturers

These findings pose a challenge to the food manufactures to:

- Maintain the same colour, logo and wording when they change the food products.
- Introduce new product into the market gradually so that the consumers get to know it, not only in stores but also in public places such as the clinics, kgotla, etc.
- Illustrate product information in pictures.

7.4 CONCLUDING NOTES

The rapidly changing business landscape in Botswana has led to more chain shops, especially supermarkets and departmental stores. This is not a positive development for all consumers in Botswana. To the functionally illiterate consumers it can be very stressful as they are limited in terms of literacy. Limitation in literacy affects how they perform in the market place. The study showed that the functionally illiterate consumers are influenced by the marketing mix, i.e. *product*, *price*, *place*, *promotion* and *processes*, to select food products in the market place while salespeople had limited influence on their choice of food.

This research made it clear that supermarkets appeared popular in providing functionally illiterate consumers with most of the food products for the households followed by informal traders who provided mostly the fruits and vegetables. Other points of sale provided certain food, for instance food wholesalers were patronised by the majority for canned and bottled food products. Respondents further stated that they visited supermarkets once a month.

The study indicated that there are an alarming number of problems encountered during food choice that can be related to stores' design of their marketing mix i.e. *products, price, place, promotion, processes* and *salespeople*. As a result of these problems consumers end up leaving the retail outlets without the desired food products. The study is clear that when the consumers encounter the problems in the market place they employ coping strategies so that they can get what they desire and to protect their self-worth. The coping strategies used are the "avoidance" as well as the "confrontative" coping strategies. Some of the coping strategies identified in this research especially the confrontative ones may allow consumers to get their food need met, while in avoidance coping strategies consumers' needs may go unmet. As food is an important aspect of a household and more money is spent on food by both illiterate and literate consumers it is important for consumers to spend their hard earned money optimally to get what they need in the market place. Retailers should more empathetic understanding of how the functionally illiterate consumers operate and this can help retailers to make changes in the marketing mix that will suit functionally illiterate consumers and encourage informed purchasing behaviour. Furthermore, retailers should find ways of helping the functionally illiterate consumers as the findings of this study indicated that they are loyal to the retail outlets where they purchase food.



References

- ADKINS, N.R. 2001. *Low literate consumers in a literate market place: Exploring Consumer literacy and its impact*. PhD Dissertation. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg.
- ADKINS, N.R. & J.A.E, H. 2010. Market place vulnerability of limited English proficient consumers opportunities to increase knowledge in macro marketing. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 28(2):1-12.
- ADKINS, N.R. & OZANNE, J.L. 2005a. The low literate consumer. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(1): 93-105.
- ADKINS, N.R. & OZANNE, J.L. 2005b. Critical consumer education: empowering the low literate consumer. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 25(2):153-162.
- ALI, J. & KAPOOR, S. 2009. Understanding consumer perspective on food labelling in India. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 3(6): 724-734.
- ALLEN, D.E. 2002. Towards theory of consumer choice as a socio-historically shaped practical experience: the fits-like a glove (FLAG) framework. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(4): 515-532.
- BABBIE, E. & MOUTON, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. Cape Town. Oxford University Press.
- BALL, D.A, McCULLOCH Jr, W.H, FRANTZ, P.L, GERINGER, J.M, MINOR, M.S, 2004. *International Business: The challenge of global competition*. 9th ed. Boston. McGraw-Hill / Irwin.
- BALLANTINE, N. ROUSSEAU, G.G. & VENTER, D.J.L. 2008. Purchasing behaviour as a determinant of, food insecurity in Klipplaat. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, (36):1-8.
- BAKER, S.M. 2001. Market place experiences of consumers with visual impairments: beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 20(2): 215-224.
- BAKER, S.M, GENTRY, J.W. & RITTENBURG, T.L. 2005. Building understanding of the domain of consumer vulnerability. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 25(2):128-139.
- BENDALL-LYON, D. & POWERS, T.L. 2004. The impact of structure and process attributes on satisfaction and behavioural intentions. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 18 (2):114-121.
- BENNION, M. & SCHEULE, B. 2010. *Introductory foods*. 11thed. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.

- BLACKWELL, R.D., MINIARD, P.W. & ENGEL, J.F. 2006. *Consumer behaviour*. 10th ed. California. Thomson, South-Western.
- BLIJHAMN, D.E., KAN, L. & NIEHOF, A. 2006. Determinants and adequacy of food consumption in LA Trinidad the Philippines. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 10:1.
- BLOEMER, J. & ODEKERKEN-SCHRÖDER, G. 2002. Store satisfaction and loyalty explained by customers and store related factors. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining behaviour*, (15): 68-80.
- BORZEKOWSKI, R. & KISER, L.K. 2008. The choice at the checkout: quantifying demand across payment instruments. *International Journal of Industrial Organisation*, 26: 889-902.
- BOTSWANA, 2006. *Midterm Review of National Development Plan 9*, 2006. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Gaborone. The government printer.
- BOTSWANA, 2003. *Botswana National Development Plan 9*. 2003. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Gaborone. The government printer.
- BROWN, A. 2011. *Understanding food principles and preparation*. 4th ed. Belmont, Wadsworth.
- BROWN, P. & RICE, J. 2001. *Ready to wear Apparel analysis*. 3rd ed. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.
- BRYANT, C.A., D.E., WALT, K.M., COURTNEY, A. & SCHWARTZ, J. 2003. *The cultural feast: An introduction to food and society*. Belmont. Thomson/ Wardworth.
- BUTTLE, F. 2004. *Customer Relationship Management: Concept and Tools*. Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann: Oxford
- CANT, M. 2010. *Essentials of marketing*. Cape Town. Juta.
- CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE. 1997. Literacy survey report. Gaborone, Botswana. Department of printing and publishing services.
- CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE. 2003. Report of the Second National Survey on Literacy in Botswana. Gaborone: Botswana. Department of printing and publishing services.
- COOIL, B., KEININGHAM, T.L., AKSOY, L. & HSU, M. 2007. A longitudinal analysis of customer satisfaction and share of wallet: investigating the moderating effect of customer characteristics. *Journal of Marketing*, 71(1): 67-83.
- COOPER, D.R. & SCHINDLER, P.S. 2006. *Business Research Methods*. 9th ed. New York. McGraw-Hill.
- D'HAESE, M. & HUYLENBROECK, G.V. 2005. The rise of supermarkets and changing expenditure patterns of poor rural households' case study in the Transkei area, South Africa. *Food Policy*, 30(1): 97-113.
- DARLEY, W.K. & JOHNSON, D.M. 1993. Cross national comparison of consumer attitudes towards consumerism in four developing countries. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 27(1): 37-45.
- DAVIS, B., LOCKWOOD, A., PANTELIDIS, I. & ALCOTT, P. 2008. *Food and beverage management*. 3rd ed. Oxford. Butterworth-Heinemann.

- DAVIS, B., LOCKWOOD, A. & STONE, S. 2003. *Food and beverage management*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- DAVIS, T.C., WOLF, M.S., BASS, P.F., MIDDLEBROOKS, M., KENNEN, E., BAKER, D.W., BENNETT, C.L., DURAZO-ARVIZU, R., BOCCHINI, A., SAVORY, S. & PARKER, R.M. 2006. Low literacy Impairs Comprehension of Prescription Drug Warning Labels. *JGen Inter Med*, 21(8): 847-851.
- DAY, G.S. & AAKER, D.A. 1997. A guide to Consumerism: What is it, where did it come from and where is it going? *Marketing Management*, 6(1): 44-48.
- DE VOS, A.S., STROYDOM, H., FOUCHE, C.B. & DELPORT, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grassroots level*. 3rd ed. Pretoria. Van Schaiks.
- DOTSON, M.F. & HYATT, E.M. 2005. Major influence factors in children's consumer socialization. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 22(1):35-42.
- DOWSE, R. & EHLERS, M.S. 2011. The evaluation of pharmaceutical pictograms in a low literate South African population. *Patient Education and Counselling*, 45(2):87-99.
- DU PLESSIS, P.J. & ROUSSEAU, G.G. 2003. *Buyer behaviour: a multi cultural approach*. 3rd ed. Cape Town. Oxford.
- DUNNE, P.M., LUSCH, R.F. & GRIFFITH, D.A. 2002. *Retailing*. 4th ed. USA. Mike Roche
- ERASMUS, A.C. 2002. *Script elicitation and script organisation for the acquisition of major household appliances within the consumer decision making context*. PhD, University of Pretoria.
- ERASMUS, A.C. 2010. Customer service in appliance sales departments of selected prominent retail outlets: store manager, sales personnel and customer perspective. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, 38:30-42.
- ERASMUS, A.C., MAKGOPA, M.M. & KACHALE, M.G. 2005. The paradox of progress: inexperienced consumers' choice of major household appliances. *Journal of Family Ecological and Consumer Sciences*, 1(26):35-42.
- ERICKSON, P.J. 2008. Conceptualizing food systems for the global environmental change research. *Global Environmental Change*, 18(1): 234-245.
- FOOD & AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO) 2003. *Trade reforms and food security*. Rome.
- FOOD & AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO), 2006. *Trade reforms and food security*. Rome.
- FLAVIN, C., MARTINEZ, E. & POLO, Y. 2001. Loyalty to grocery stores in the Spanish market of the 1990s. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 8(2):85-93.
- GAU, R. & VISWANATHAN, M. 2008. The retail experience for low literate consumers. *Journal of Research for Consumers*, 15(1):1-21.
- GAY, R. CHARLESWORTH, A. & RITA, E. 2007. *Online Marketing: A customer –led approach*. Oxford. University Press

- GAVRILIUK, V.V. 2007. Overcoming functional illiteracy and the formation of social competence. *Russian Education and Society*, 49(9):79-89.
- GILLESPIE, K, JEANNET, J. & HENNESSY, H.D. 2004. Global marketing: An interactive approach. Houston Mufflin Company. New York
- GOLDMAN, A. & HINO, H. 2005. Supermarkets vs. traditional stores: diagnosing the barriers to supermarkets share growth in an ethnic minority community. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 12:273-284.
- GOTHAN, A.J. 2003. *The perception of a sales person of his/her role in the working environment*. Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- GOTHAN, A.J. 2008. *A critical appraisal of the customers' service and service quality in appliance sales departments in prominent South African retail store*. PhD. University of Pretoria.
- GRABOWSKI, A. 2010. *A delineation of female customers' judgement of the customer service and consequent service quality of prominent clothing department stores in Tshwane*. Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- GREGOIRE, M.B. 2010. *Food service organization: a managerial and system approach*. Boston. Prentice Hall
- HALSTED, D., JONES, M.A. & COX, A.N. 2007. Satisfaction theory and the disadvantaged consumer. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behaviour*, 20:15-35.
- HANEMANN, U. 2005. Literacy in Botswana. UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg, Germany, March 2005.
- HAWKINS, D.I., BEST, R.J. & CONEY, K.A. 1992. *Consumer behaviour: Implication for marketing strategy*. 5th ed. Chicago. Irwin.
- HAWKINS, D.I., BEST, R.J. & CONEY, K.A. 2007. *Consumer Behaviour: Building for Marketing Strategy*. 10th ed. Boston. McGraw-Hill / Irwin.
- HENRY, B. & CADWELL, C. 2006. Self empowerment and consumption: Consumer remedies for prolonged stigmatization. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(9/10):1031-1048.
- HEYLIGHTEN, F. & JOSLYN, C. 2002. What is a system theory? [Online] Available from: <http://www.systemstheory.ac.cambridgeunivrsity.com> [Accessed: 2011-03-02].
- HOLT, D.B. 2002. Why do brands cause trouble? A dialectical theory of consumer culture and branding. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29: 70-80.
- JAE, H. 2009. Linguistically isolated consumers: Historical trends and vulnerability in the US market place. *The Marketing Management Journal*, 19(2): 72-83.
- JAE, H. & DELVECCHIO, D.S. 2004. Decision making by low literacy consumers in the presence of point of purchase information. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 38(2): 342-354.
- JAE, H. & DELVECCHIO, D.S. 2005. The effects of consumer literacy on product choice. *Asia Pacific Advances in Consumer Research*, 6:77.

- JAE, H., DELVECCHIO, D.S & COWLESS, D. 2008. Picture-text incongruence in print advertisements among low and high literacy consumers. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 42(3):439-451.
- JOBBER, D. 2004. Principles and practice of marketing. 4th ed. Boston. McGraw-Hill / Irwin.
- JOHN, D.R. 1999. Consumer socialization of children: A retrospective look at twenty five years of research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 26(5): 183-213.
- KACHALE, M.G. 2005. *Inexperienced young adults' assessment of major household appliances for personal use*. Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- KAUFMAN, P.R. 1997. Rural poor have less access to supermarkets, large grocery stores. *Rural Development Perspectives*, 13(3): 19-25.
- KHAN, J. & CRAIG-LEES, M. 2009. Mobile payments: Their effect on purchase behaviour. *Anzmac*.
- KITTLER, P.G & SUCHER, K.P. 2004. *Food and Culture*. 4th ed. Belmont. Thomson Wadsworth.
- KITTLER, P.G & SUCHER, K.P. 2008. *Food and Culture*. 5th ed. Belmont. Thomson Wadsworth.
- KLAVEN, M, TIJDENS, K, HUGHI- WILLIAMS, M. & MARTIN, N.R. 2009. An overview of women's work and employment in Botswana. Decision for life MDG3 Project. Country report No 5. Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- KLEINHANS, E.H. 2003. Black female students' perception of clothing store image attributes. Masters dissertation, University of Stellenbosch.
- KLEMZ, R.B., BOSHOFF, C. & MAZIBUKO, N.E. 2006. Emerging markets in black South African townships: small local independently owned versus large nation retailers. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(5/6): 590-610.
- KOTLER, P. 2003. Marketing management 11th ed. Marketing Management. Eason Education. Upper Saddle River. New Jersey.
- LABOUR FORCE REPORT*. 2008. Central Statistics Office. Gaborone, Botswana. Department of Printing and Publishing Services.
- LAZARUS, R.S. & LAZARUS, B.N. 1994. *Passion and Reason: Making sense of our emotion*. New York. Oxford University Press.
- LEEDY, P.D. & ORMROD, J.E. 2005. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 8th ed. New Jersey. Pearson.
- LEIBTAG, E.S & KAUFMAN P.H. 2003. Exploring food purchases behaviour of low income households. *Agriculture, information Bulletin*: 747-07.
- LIGTHELM, A.A. 2005. Informal retailing through home based micro enterprises: The role of Spaza shops. *Development Southern Africa*, 22(2): 200-214.

- MARX, J.M.M. 2005. *Customer service as an indication of service quality in South African supermarkets*. Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- MARX, J.M.M. & ERASMUS A.C. 2006. An evaluation of the customer service in the supermarkets in Pretoria East, Tshwane Metropolis, South Africa. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, 34: 56-68.
- MHLANGA, S. 2010. *An exploration of the decision making processes and coping mechanisms of functionally illiterate South African consumers*. Masters Dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- MITCHELL, A.S. 2002. Do you really want to understand your customer? *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, (2): 71-79.
- MMAKOLA, D.J. 1996. *Food consumption patterns: The effects of socio-economic change*. Masters Dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- MOLT, M. 2011. *Food for the fifty*. 13thed. New Jersey. Saddle River.
- NAIR, L. 2011. Private label brand in food and grocery: The changing perception of consumer and retailer in India-A study in the Pune region. *International Refereed Research Journal*, 11(1): 135-170.
- NEWMAN, A.J. & CULLEN, P. 2002. *Retailing: Environment and operations*. London. Thompson learning.
- NYER, P.U. 1997. A study of the relationships between cognitive appraisals and consumption emotions. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(4): 296-304.
- OMAR, O.E., HIRST, A. & BLANKSON, C. 2004. Food shopping behaviour among ethnic and non ethnic communities in Britain. *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, 10(4): 39-57.
- OZANNE, J.L, ADKINS, N.R. & SANDLIN, J.A. 2005. Shopping for power: How adult literacy learners negotiate the market place. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 55(4): 251-286.
- PAYNE-PALACIO, J. & THEIS, M. 2009. *Introduction to food service*. 11thed. Upper Saddle River New Jersey. Prentice Hall
- PAYNE-PALACIO, J. & THEIS, M. 2005. *Introduction to food service*. 11thed. Upper Saddle River New Jersey. Prentice Hall
- PETER, J.P. & OLSON, J.C. 1993. *Consumer behaviour and Marketing Strategy*. 3rd ed. Irwin, Inc.
- PRASAD, A., MEDHI, I. TOYAMA, K. & BALAKRISHNA, R. 2008. Exploring the Feasibility of Video Mail for Illiterate Users. Proceeding of the working Conference on advanced visual interfaces. AVI: 103-110.
- RINGOLD, D.J. 2005. Vulnerability in the market place: concepts, caveats, and possible solutions. *Journal of Micromarketing*, 25(2): 202-214.
- ROSA, J.A. & EBENKAMP, B. 2003. What if they can't read? *Brand week*, 44(44): 18.
- ROUSSEAU, G.G. Reference groups and family decision-making. In DU PLESSIS, P. J. & ROUSSEAU, G.G. *Buyer behaviour. A multi cultural approach*. Cape Town. Oxford University: Southern Books.

- SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. & THORNHILL, A. 2007. *Research methods for business students*. 4th ed. Harlow. Essex Pearson.
- SCHIFFMAN, L.G. & KANUK, L.L. 2007. *Consumer behaviour*. 7th ed. New Jersey, USA. Prentice Hall.
- SCHIFFMAN, L.G. & KANUK, L.L. 2010. *Consumer behaviour*. 8th ed. New Jersey, USA. Prentice Hall.
- SCHUH, M. & KITSON, M. 2003. Adult consumer education across Europe: redressing the market or reaching the vulnerable consumer. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 27(3): 218-251.
- SEMELANE, B.D. 2008. *The acceptability and use of convenience food by black women employed by government in Mpumalanga*. Masters Dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- SETH, J.N. & MITTAL, B. 2004. *Customer behaviour: a managerial perspective* 2nd ed. California. South-Western.
- SHEININ, L.G. & WAGNER, J. 2003. Pricing store brands across categories and retailers. *Journal of Products and Brand Management*, 12(4): 201-219.
- SIJTSEMA, S., LINNEMANN, A., GAASBEEK, T., DAGEVOS, H. & JONGEN, W. 2002 Variables influencing food perception reviewed for consumer-oriented product development. *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 42(6): 565-581.
- SILVERMAN, D. 2010. *Doing qualitative research*. 3rd ed. London : Sage.
- SOLOMON, M.R. 2006. *Consumer behaviour; buying, having and being*. 7th ed. New Jersey. Pearson.
- SONNENBERG, N.C. 2003. *The influence of extrinsic factors on young urban consumers choice of interior soft furnishings*. Masters Dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- SPEARS, M.C. & GREGOIRE, M.B. 2007. *Food Service Organizations: A Managerial and Systems Approach*. 6th ed. New Jersey. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- SPEARS, M.C. & GREGOIRE, M.B. 2003. *Food Service Organizations. A Managerial and Systems Approach*. 5th ed. New Jersey. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- SPEARS, M.C. & VADEN, A.G. 1985. *Food Service Organizations: A Managerial and Systems Approach*. New York. Macmillan.
- SUNDAY TIMES 06 AUGUST 2012 ONLINE EDITION available at <http://www.timeslive.co.za>. (accessed 19 September 2012)
- SUWANVIJIT, W. & PROMSA-AD, S. 2009. The insight study of consumer life styles and purchasing behaviours in Songkla province, Thailand. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 1(2): 66-73.
- TAPP, A. 2005. *Principles of direct and data base marketing*. Prentice hall/ Financial times.

- THATCHER, A., SHAIK, F. & ZIMMERMAN, C. 2005. Attitudes of semiliterate and literate bank account holders to the use of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs). *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 35(2): 115-130.
- THATCHER, A., MAHLANGU & ZIMMERMAN, C. 2006. Accessibility of ATMs for the functionally illiterate through Icon-Based Interfaces. *Behaviour and Information Technology*. 25(1): 65-81.
- UNESCO. 2006. *EFA Global monitoring report 2006: Literacy for life*. UNESCO France.
- UNESCO. 2009. *EFA Global monitoring report 2009: Literacy for life*. UNESCO France.
- UNESCO EDUCATION SECTOR 2004: "The plurality of literacy and its implication for policies and programs" Position paper 13, 2005.
- VACLAVIC, V.A., PIMENTEL, M.H. & DEVINE M.M. 2010. *Dimensions of food*. 7th ed. Boca Raton. CRC Press
- VISSER, C.E. 2007. Acceptability, choice and preference of brands and flavours of dairy fruits beverages by certain black female consumers. Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria.
- VISWANATHAN, M., GAJENDRIRAN, S. & VENKATESAN, R. 2008. Understanding and enabling market place literacy in subsistence contexts: the development of a consumer and entrepreneurial literacy educational programme in South India. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28:300-319.
- VISWANATHAN, M. & GAU, R. 2005. Functional illiteracy and nutrition education in United States: a research based approach to the development of nutritional education materials for functional illiterate consumer. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 25(2):187-201.
- VISWANATHAN, M. & HARRIS, J.E. 2000. Effects of Illiteracy and Innumeracy on Consumer Behaviour: The dark Side of Consumer Decision Making (July 2000) working paper No 00-0117. Available at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=206848>. [Accessed 2011-04-10]
- VISWANATHAN, M, ROSA, J.A & HARRIS, J.E. 2005. Decision Making and Coping of Functionally Illiterate Consumers and Some Implication for Marketing Management. *Journal of Marketing*, 69:15-31.
- VISWANATHAN, M., SRIDHARAN, S., GAU, R. & RITCHIE, R. 2009. Designing market place literacy education in resource-constrained contexts: implications for public policy and marketing. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 28(1):85-94.
- VISWANATHAN, M., TORELLI, C.J., XIA, L. & GAU, R. 2009. Understanding the influence of literacy on consumer memory: the role of pictorial elements. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*.
- VERNER, D. 2005. What factors influence world literacy? Is Africa different? *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*.
- WALSH G. & MITCHELL, V.W. 2005. Consumer vulnerability to perceived product similarity problems: scale development and identification. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 25(2):140-152.
- WALLENDORF, M. 2001. Literally literacy. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27:505-511.
- WALLIMAN, N. 2004. *Your research project*. 2nd ed. London. Sage.

WATSON, L. & SPENCE, M.T. 2007. Causes and consequences of emotions on consumption behaviour – a review of an integrative cognitive appraisal theory. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(5/6):487-511.

WHITCHURCH, G.G. & CONSTANTINE, L.L. 1993. *System Theory in Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods*. New York. Plenum.

YOO, S., BARANOWSKI, T., MISSAGHIAN, M., BARANOWSKI, J., CULLEN, K., FISHER, J.O., WATSON, K., ZAKERI, I.F., & NICKLAS, T. 2005. Food purchase patterns for home: a grocery store –intercept survey. *Public Health Nutrition*, 9(3):384-393.

YOUNGMAN, F. 2002. *An overview of adult basic and literacy education in Botswana*. *Adult basic and literacy education in education in SADC Conference*, 3-5 December, 2002 Centre for Adult education, University of Natal.



Addendum A
Permission letter



Dear respondent,

Thank you for participating in the study. The intension of the study is to investigate the problems that are encountered by consumers when purchasing food, the coping mechanisms that are used to overcome pertinent limitations and to make recommendations on how consumers' problems could be addressed to their benefits. Please give your honest opinion throughout.

I hereby give my permission to participate in the study.

I understand that:

- My participation is voluntary; if I choose to withdraw from the study I can do so at any time.
- The interview will be administered to me in my language.

Signature (Participant)

.....

Date

.....

Thank you for your participation.

Mondiya Nametso Morapane

Study leaders: Dr G du Rand and Prof Alet C Erasmus

Addendum B

Questionnaire

RESPONDENT NO: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>	For office use only
	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> V1 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please make sure that the respondents answer ALL the questions. Ask the respondent the questions below. Indicate the answer that the respondents give with an X in the relevant boxes.

1. How old are you? <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> years	V2 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>								
2. How many years of formal education/schooling do you have?									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">None</td> <td style="width: 5%;">1</td> <td style="width: 15%;">1-2 years</td> <td style="width: 5%;">2</td> <td style="width: 15%;">3-4 years</td> <td style="width: 5%;">3</td> <td style="width: 15%;">5 or more</td> <td style="width: 5%;">4</td> </tr> </table>	None	1	1-2 years	2	3-4 years	3	5 or more	4	V3 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
None	1	1-2 years	2	3-4 years	3	5 or more	4		
3. What is your TOTAL household income including the contribution of the other members living in your household?									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">< P500</td> <td style="width: 5%;">1</td> <td style="width: 15%;">P501-1000</td> <td style="width: 5%;">2</td> <td style="width: 15%;">P1001-P2000</td> <td style="width: 5%;">3</td> <td style="width: 15%;">P2001 +</td> <td style="width: 5%;">4</td> </tr> </table>	< P500	1	P501-1000	2	P1001-P2000	3	P2001 +	4	V4 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
< P500	1	P501-1000	2	P1001-P2000	3	P2001 +	4		
4.1 In which village in the surrounding of Gaborone do you live? <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>	V5 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>								
4.2 Do you live in a RURAL/ URBAN area? Mark with X.									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Rural</td> <td style="width: 5%;">1</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Urban</td> <td style="width: 5%;">2</td> </tr> </table>	Rural	1	Urban	2	V6 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>				
Rural	1	Urban	2						

SECTION B: FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD CHOICE

Please make sure that the respondents answer ALL the questions. Ask the respondent the questions as formulated below. Indicate the answers that the respondents give with an X in the relevant boxes.

		Mostly	Seldom	No/Never	
5. When buying food, which of the following FACTORS do you take into consideration and how strong is the influence?					
5.1 Do you look at different food products (i.e. do you look at more than one of the same type of food product when buying food, for example different brand names of sugar)?	3	2	1		V7 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
5.2 Do you compare the prices of food products before you choose a product?	3	2	1		V8 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
5.3 Do you consider different stores or places to buy food rather than going to the same place every time?	3	2	1		V9 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
5.4 Do you look for advertisements or any other information such as brochures or pamphlets that stores hand out or display to advertise their products before you buy food?	3	2	1		V10 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
5.5 Are you influenced by salespeople when you are in the store to buy foods?	3	2	1		V11 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
5.6 Do you prefer certain stores because they are willing to assist you when you experience problems or when you want to ask questions when you are in the store to purchase food products?	3	2	1		V12 <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>

		Yes/ Mostly	Seldom	No/Never
6.	WHERE do you buy food for your family?			
6.1	Do you buy from large supermarkets such as Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, Choppies, Supersave?	3	2	1
6.2	Do you buy from spaza shops ?	3	2	1
6.3	Do you buy from general dealers that are smaller than Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, Supersave?	3	2	1
6.4	Do you buy from food wholesalers such as Metro, Sefalana, Trade World, Metsef?	3	2	1
6.5	Do you buy from informal traders such as vendors, hawkers, street traders?	3	2	1
6.6	Do you shop at any other places that have not been mentioned already? Please tell me where you shop? _____	3	2	1

V13	
V14	

V15	
-----	--

V16	
-----	--

V17	
-----	--

V18	
-----	--

		Once per month	Once per week	Every day	Occasionally	Never
7.	HOW OFTEN do you buy food at the following stores or places?					
7.1	How often do you buy food from large supermarkets such as Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, Choppies, Supersave?	5	4	3	2	1
7.2	How often do you buy food from spaza shops ?	5	4	3	2	1
7.3	How often do you buy food from general dealers that are smaller than Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, Choppies, Supersave?	5	4	3	2	1
7.4	How often do you buy food from food wholesalers such as Metro, Sefalana, Trade World, Metsef?	5	4	3	2	1
7.5	How often do you buy food from informal traders such as vendors, hawkers, street traders?	5	4	3	2	1
7.6	How often do you buy food at any other place not mentioned already? Please tell me where and how often you buy there. _____	5	4	3	2	1

V19	
-----	--

V20	
-----	--

V21	
-----	--

V22	
-----	--

V23	
-----	--

V24	
-----	--

		Definitely	Maybe	Not at all
8.	Thinking of the places where you purchase foods more often, WHY do you buy there?			
8.1	Do you buy from those stores/places because you have no option as there are no other stores nearby?	3	2	1
8.2	Do you buy there because the store / place have friendly sales people ?	3	2	1
8.3	Do you buy there because the store / place have affordable prices ?	3	2	1
8.4	Do you buy there because you trust the store / place?	3	2	1
8.5	Do you buy there because the store/place is small and therefore it is easy to select food products?	3	2	1
8.6	Do you buy there because the store/place is near your home?	3	2	1
8.7	Do you have any other reason why you buy from the mentioned places apart from those mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1

V25	
V26	
V27	
V28	
V29	
V30	
V31	

		Fresh fruits/ vegetables	Meat	Canned/Bottled food products	Cereal/cereal products
9.	Please indicate WHERE you mostly buy SPECIFIC TYPES OF FOOD products for your household.				
9.1	What types of food do you buy from larger supermarkets such as Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, Choppies, Supersave?	1	2	3	4
9.2	What types of food do you buy from spaza shops ?	5	6	7	8
9.3	What types of food do you buy from general dealers that are smaller than Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Spar, Choppies, Supersave?	9	10	11	12
9.4	What types of food do you buy from food wholesalers such as Metro, Sefalana, Trade World, Metsef?	13	14	15	16
9.5	What types of food do you buy from informal traders such as vendors, hawkers, street traders?	17	18	19	20
9.6	What types of food do you buy from any other place not mentioned above?	21	22	23	24

V32-V35					
V36-V39					
V40-V43					
V44-V47					
V48-V51					
V52-V55					

SECTION C: HOW CONSUMERS SELECT FOOD

Please make sure the respondents answer ALL the questions. Ask the respondent the questions as formulated below. Indicate the answer that the respondents give with an X in the relevant boxes.

10. Do you make a shopping list when you go to buy foods?

Yes/Definitely	1	Sometimes	2	No/Never	3
----------------	---	-----------	---	----------	---

V56

11. WHY do you make a shopping list?

	Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/Never
11.1 Do you make a shopping list because it makes your shopping easier ?	3	2	1
11.2 Do you make a shopping list so that you do not forget some of the food products?	3	2	1
11.3 Do you make a shopping list because it helps you to stick to your budget ?	3	2	1
11.4 Do you have any other reason for making a shopping list not mentioned? If yes, tell me.	3	2	1

V57

V58

V59

V60

SECTION D: MONETARY EXCHANGE IN THE MARKET PLACE

Please make sure that the respondents answer ALL the questions. Ask the respondent the questions as formulated below. Indicate the answer that the respondents give with an X in the relevant boxes.

12. Which of the following PAYMENT METHOD/S do you use to pay for your food products?

	Yes/Always	Sometimes	No/Never
12.1 Do you use cash to pay for the food products?	3	2	1
12.2 Do you use a debit card to pay for the food products?	3	2	1
12.3 Do you use cheques to pay for the food products?	3	2	1
12.4 Do you take food products on credit from stores/places or from informal traders?	3	2	1
12.5 Do you use coupons to pay for the food products?	3	2	1

V61

V62

V63

V64

V65

13. You have now told me which payment method/s you use when buying food, WHY do you use the specified payment method?

	Yes/Definitely	Maybe/sometimes	Not at all
13.1 Is it because the payment method is familiar to you?	3	2	1
13.2 Is it because it is the only method of payment accepted by the store/place?	3	2	1
13.3 Is it because the payment method was recommended by family or friends?	3	2	1
13.4 Is it because you have no other choice but to use the method?	3	2	1
13.5 Do you have any other reason not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1

V66

V67

V68

V69

V70

SECTION E: PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE MARKET PLACE WHEN BUYING FOOD PRODUCTS

Please make sure that the respondents answer ALL the questions. Ask the respondent the questions as formulated below. Indicate the answer that the respondents give with an X in the relevant boxes.

Indicate the PROBLEMS that you encounter in the market place when buying food products.

14.	Which problems do you have when you buy FOOD products?	Yes/ Definitely	Maybe/ Sometimes	No / Never
14.1	Do you struggle because is difficult to find the food products that you want in the store/place?	3	2	1
14.2	Do you struggle because there is too much information on the food products?	3	2	1
14.3	Do you struggle because there is too little information on the food products?	3	2	1
14.4	Do you struggle because the food products that you wish to buy are not always in stock in the store/place?	3	2	1
14.5	Do you struggle because the same types of foods are not grouped together in the store/place?	3	2	1
14.6	Do you struggle because there is not enough choice in terms of different sizes of products in the store/place?	3	2	1
14.7	Do you struggle because is difficult to compare food products because sizes of the same products are different ?	3	2	1
14.8	Do you struggle because the stores/places stock new food products that you are not familiar with?	3	2	1
14.9	Do you struggle because the food packaging is not strong enough?	3	2	1
14.10	Do you have any other problem not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1

 V70

 V71

 V72

 V73

 V74

 V75

 V76

 V77

 V78

 V79

15.	Which problems do you have concerning the PRICES of food products?	Yes/ Definitely	Maybe/ Sometimes	No / Never
15.1	Do you get confused because there is more than one price tag on the food product?	3	2	1
15.2	Do you struggle because the price tags are difficult to read ?	3	2	1
15.3	Do you struggle because the price tags are not attached to the food product?	3	2	1
15.4	Do you struggle because the price tags are printed too small ?	3	2	1
15.5	Do you struggle because prices on food products are not clear ?	3	2	1
15.6	Do you struggle because the prices on the food products differ from what you have to pay for it?	3	2	1
15.7	Do you struggle because is difficult to calculate the cost of food product if food products are sold in bulk ?	3	2	1
15.8	Do you struggle because it is difficult for you to estimate the total cost of food products in your shopping trolley?	3	2	1
15.9	Do you struggle because is difficult to calculate prices which are reduced by percentages ? e.g. 2Kg sugar is reduced by 10% .	3	2	1
15.10	Do you have any other problem not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1

 V80

 V81

 V82

 V83

 V84

 V85

 V86

 V87

 V88

 V89

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never	
16.	Which problems do you have concerning the PLACES where you buy your food products?				
16.1	Do you struggle because the stores/places are too big ?	3	2	1	V90
16.2	Do you struggle because the stores/places are too small ?	3	2	1	V91
16.3	Do you struggle because the stores/places are crowded/ busy/ full of people ?	3	2	1	V92
16.4	Do you struggle because the stores/places are not clean/ dirty ?	3	2	1	V93
16.5	Do you struggle because the stores/places do not have enough light to see clearly ?	3	2	1	V94
16.6	Do you struggle because stores/places are far from where you live or work ?	3	2	1	V95
16.7	Do you struggle because the stores/places do not have enough food products in stock ?	3	2	1	V96
16.8	Do you struggle to find products in the store/place because the layout confuses you ?	3	2	1	V97
16.9	Do you struggle because traders are not always at their trading places ?	3	2	1	V98
16.10	Do you have any other problem not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1	V99

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never	
17.	Which problems do you have concerning the ADVERTISEMENTS of food products?				
17.1	Do you struggle to understand the information on the food advertisements because there is too much information ?	3	2	1	V100
17.2	Do you struggle because the food advertisements e.g. pamphlets, brochures etc. are not true e.g. prices of food in store and on advertisements papers are different ?	3	2	1	V101
17.3	Do you struggle because the food advertisements e.g. pamphlets, brochures etc. tempt you to buy unnecessary food products ?	3	2	1	V102
17.4	Do you struggle because the food advertisements e.g. pamphlets, brochures etc. are confusing because you do not understand how much you will spend or save ?	3	2	1	V103
17.5	Do you struggle because the food products advertised on brochures, pamphlets etc. are out of the stock in the stores ?	3	2	1	V104
17.6	Do you have any other problem not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1	V105

18.	Which problems do you have concerning SALES PEOPLE in stores/places where you buy food products?	Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/Never
18.1	Do you struggle because the sales people are not easily identifiable ?	3	2	1
18.2	Do you struggle because the sales people are not friendly ?	3	2	1
18.3	Do you struggle because there are not enough sales people in the store/places to help you?	3	2	1
18.4	Do you struggle because the sales people are not well informed about the food products?	3	2	1
18.5	Do you struggle because the sales people are not helpful ?	3	2	1
18.6	Do you struggle because the sales people do other things while they are helping you, therefore they pay little attention to you?	3	2	1
18.7	Do you struggle because you have to wait for the sales people to come and help you?	3	2	1
18.8	Do you struggle because sales people do not know your language ?	3	2	1
18.9	Do you have any other problem not mentioned already? If yes tell me. _____	3	2	1

V106	<input type="checkbox"/>
V107	<input type="checkbox"/>
V108	<input type="checkbox"/>
V109	<input type="checkbox"/>
V110	<input type="checkbox"/>
V111	<input type="checkbox"/>
V112	<input type="checkbox"/>
V113	<input type="checkbox"/>
V114	<input type="checkbox"/>

19.	Which problems do you have regarding the ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE STORES/PLACES where you buy food products?	Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never
19.1	Do you struggle because the store/place does not offer discounts on food products?	3	2	1
19.2	Do you struggle because the store/place does not pay back money if you complain about food products and return the products?	3	2	1
19.3	Do you struggle because the store/place is not able to help you with your problems regarding food products?	3	2	1
19.4	Do you struggle because the store/place does not offer food products on credit ?	3	2	1
19.5	Do you have a problem with the shopping hours that are not convenient for you? i.e. the store/place closes too early.	3	2	1
19.6	Do you have any other problem not mentioned already? If yes tell me. _____	3	2	1

V115	<input type="checkbox"/>
V116	<input type="checkbox"/>
V117	<input type="checkbox"/>
V118	<input type="checkbox"/>
V119	<input type="checkbox"/>
V120	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION F: COPING STRATEGIES IN THE MARKET PLACE

Please make sure that the respondents answer ALL the questions. Ask the respondent the question as formulated below. Indicate the answer that the respondents give with an X in the relevant boxes.

If you experience problems in the market place WHAT DO YOU DO?

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never	
20.	When you experience problems with FOOD PRODUCTS, how do you react?				
20.1	Do you try to remember where the food products that you usually buy are displayed in store?	3	2	1	V121 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.2	Do you avoid buying the food product if you have the problem with the information?	3	2	1	V122 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.3	Do you go to other stores which has the food products that you need if you don't find everything in the store?	3	2	1	V123 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.4	Do you ask sales people or any other person in the store about the food products that you need to buy?	3	2	1	V124 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.5	Do you avoid trying new food products?	3	2	1	V125 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.6	Do you buy the food products with brands and symbols that you know?	3	2	1	V126 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.7	Do you pretend disease e.g. eye problem so that you can get help from other people and sales people in the store/place?	3	2	1	V127 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.8	Do you choose another food product brand with a stronger packaging if you see that packaging is not strong?	3	2	1	V128 <input type="checkbox"/>
20.9	Do you react in other way not mentioned already? If yes tell me. _____	3	2	1	V129 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.	When you experience problems with PRICES of the food products, how do you react?				
21.1	Do you go to other stores/places with simple prices that are easy to understand?	3	2	1	V130 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.2	Do you go to other places that sell food such as flea markets as you can ask and negotiate the price?	3	2	1	V131 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.3	Do you go shopping for food with a friend or family member ?	3	2	1	V132 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.4	Do you ask the sales people about prices in the store?	3	2	1	V133 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.5	Do you complain to the store if you struggle with prices?	3	2	1	V134 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.6	Do you go to stores/places which have true prices ? i.e. you trust their prices.	3	2	1	V135 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.7	Do you hand all the money to the cashier in the store/place to help you with the payment?	3	2	1	V136 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.8	Do you avoid buying food products with prices that are reduced by percentages that you do not understand?	3	2	1	V137 <input type="checkbox"/>
21.9	Do you react in other way not mentioned already? If yes tell me. _____	3	2	1	V138 <input type="checkbox"/>

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never		
22.	When you experience problems with PLACES where you buy food products, how do you react?					
22.1	Do you take a friend or relative along when you go shopping?	3	2	1	V139	<input type="text"/>
22.2	Do you ask for help from sales people or any other people in the store/places including strangers?	3	2	1	V140	<input type="text"/>
22.3	Do you buy from familiar stores /places?	3	2	1	V141	<input type="text"/>
22.4	Do you buy from stores/places with good lighting so that you can see food products?	3	2	1	V142	<input type="text"/>
22.5	Do you buy from stores/places near where you stay/work?	3	2	1	V143	<input type="text"/>
22.6	Do you buy from large stores such as supermarkets because they have a wide variety of food products?	3	2	1	V144	<input type="text"/>
22.7	Do you buy from the stores/place with good store layout?	3	2	1	V145	<input type="text"/>
22.8	Do you look for other informal traders that may be better?	3	2	1	V146	<input type="text"/>
22.9	Do you react in other way not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1	V147	<input type="text"/>

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never		
23.	When you experience problems with ADVERTISEMENTS of food products, how do you react?					
23.1	Do you avoid looking for food products which are advertised i.e. food products on sale?	3	2	1	V148	<input type="text"/>
23.2	Do you enquire about advertised prices of food products and make sure they correspond with the prices in the store?	3	2	1	V149	<input type="text"/>
23.3	Do you get help about advertised food products from sales people, friends or family member ?	3	2	1	V150	<input type="text"/>
23.4	Do you stick to your shopping list ?	3	2	1	V151	<input type="text"/>
23.5	Do you carry limited cash to avoid buying unnecessary food products?	3	2	1	V152	<input type="text"/>
23.6	Do you plan food expenditure before you go shopping for food?	3	2	1	V153	<input type="text"/>
23.7	Do you compare food advertisements e.g. pamphlets, brochures from different stores?	3	2	1	V154	<input type="text"/>
23.8	Do you react in other way not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1	V155	<input type="text"/>

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/Sometimes	No/ Never		
24.	When you experience problems with SALES PEOPLE, how do you react?					
24.1	Do you buy from stores/places where you know the sales people?	3	2	1	V156	<input type="text"/>
24.2	Do you develop relationship with the sales people from new stores/places where you buy food?	3	2	1	V157	<input type="text"/>
24.3	Do you report to the store manager if you don't get enough help from the sales people?	3	2	1	V158	<input type="text"/>
24.4	Do you buy from store/places where they know your language ?	3	2	1	V159	<input type="text"/>
24.5	Do you ask the sales people to help you?	3	2	1	V160	<input type="text"/>
24.6	Do you go to other stores/places?	3	2	1	V161	<input type="text"/>
24.7	Do you react in other way not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1	V162	<input type="text"/>

		Yes/Definitely	Maybe/ Sometimes	No/ Never
25.	When you experience problems with HOW THE STORE/PLACE TREAT YOU how do you react?			
25.1	Do you buy from other stores/places where they offer better prices?	3	2	1
25.2	Do you buy from stores/places that are willing to give back your money and accept the returned food products if you have complaints?	3	2	1
25.3	Do you buy from the store/places that care about your problem and try to help you solve them?	3	2	1
25.4	Do you buy from supermarkets as they offer better services e.g. some supermarkets reduces food prices for the elderly.	3	2	1
25.5	Do you buy from stores/ places that offer credit facilities ?	3	2	1
25.6	Do you buy from stores/ places that have shopping hours that is more convenient to you?	3	2	1
25.7	Do you react in other way not mentioned already? If yes tell me.	3	2	1

V163	
------	--

V164	
------	--

V165	
------	--

V166	
------	--

V167	
------	--


V168	
------	--

V169	
------	--

Addendum C

Screening test

A	B
	
<p>If you have to choose between these two products in the store, which one would be better to buy? A or B? EXPLAIN your decision</p>	

C	D
	
<p>If you have to choose between these two products in the store, which one would be better to buy? C or D? EXPLAIN your decision</p>	



The store advertises that you will get the small can of tomato paste FREE if you buy 4 cans of baked beans. How much money do you have to spend to get the tin of tomato paste free?

E	F
<p>Sunshine D Original Margarine 500g Brick Each</p> <p>959 SAVE 130</p>	<p>Sunshine D Lite Medium Fat Spread Tub 1 kg</p> <p>1549</p>

If you have to choose between these two products in the store, would you buy E or F? Explain your decision.

If you had to choose between these two products in the store, which one would you choose: G or H? Explain your decision.

G	H
<p>Jungle Oats 1 kg</p> <p>1599 SAVE R2.90</p>	<p>Jungle Oats Instant 750g</p> <p>1899</p>

J	K
	
<p>If you had to choose between these two products in the store, which one would you choose: J or K? Explain your decision.</p>	

 <p style="text-align: right;">L</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">M</p>
<p>If you have P50 in your purse, how much change would you get if you purchased these two products?</p>	



If you have P50 in your purse, how much change would you get if you purchased these two products?



P. Can you afford all of these products if you have R100 in your purse?



Q Explain the difference between these two products that are offered in the store?

R1

Trading hours on weekends
8:00 to 13:00

If the store has this notice on the door, what does it mean?

N2

This cashier does not accept cash

If this notice is at the cashier, what does it mean?

Addendum D

Observation checklist

PARTICIPANT NO DATE OF OBSERVATION

RETAIL OUTLET

ITEM	OBSERVATION	COMMENTS
1.	Payment methods Cash yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Voucher yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Debit Card yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Take goods on credit yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	Monetary exchange Hands all money to cashier yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Hands the right amount yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Have cashier pick out how much money they should give yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Short of money yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Products in trolley Meat yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal products yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Canned food products yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled food products yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Fruits yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	In the retail outlet Reading before putting in the trolley yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Check expiry dates yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Ask salespeople yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Ask other people in shops yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Manages traffic flow in shops well yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Use small trolleys yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Use big trolleys yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Take less time (less than hour) yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Take more time (more than hour) yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	Relationship with sales personnel Ask them yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> Speak in low voices yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>	

Addendum E

Interview schedule



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF RETAILERS

INTERVIEW

Good day. My name is Nametso am currently collecting data for my dissertation. My topic is **An explication of Functionally illiterate Botswana Consumers food purchasing behaviour**. May I please use a few minutes of your time to ask you some questions. The interview should take about 15 minutes. I wish to assure you that information from this interview will be treated with the outmost confidentiality and all information will be used for research purposes only.

Date of interview.....

Location.....

Retail classification.....

Retail name.....

Respondent No and position.....

1. What is the nature of your business? Supermarket/spaza/family shop/others

.....

2. Describe the objective of your business apart from making profits?

.....

3. How do you give back to the society?

.....

4. I am aware that your market segment includes consumers of different socio economic factors including those with limited literacy. Do you have any strategies to help these consumers?

.....

Addendum 7

Ministry permission letter

TELEPHONE: 3655408
TELEX: 2944 THUTO BD
FAX: 3655408
REFERENCE E 1/20/ 2 VIII (33)



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG 005
GABORONE
BOTSWANA

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

24th May 2010

To: **Mondiya Nametso Morapane**
P.o.Box 402499
Gaborone,Botswana

RE: REQUEST FOR A PERMIT TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

We acknowledge receipt of your application to conduct a research study. This serves to grant you permission to conduct your study at Gaborone and surrounding Areas to address the following research objectives/questions:

To: Investigate and Describe the choice and Purchasing behaviour of Functioning Illiterate consumers in Gaborone and Surrounding Areas.

It is of paramount importance to seek Assent and Consent from the Department of Non-Formal education as well as women you are going to interview ,observe as well administering questionnaires. We hope and trust that you will conduct the study as stated in your Proposal and to strictly adhere to the Research Ethics. Failure to Comply, with the above Regulations will result in Immediate Termination of the Research permit.

Please note that this permit is valid for a period of one year effective from 24th May 2010 to 24th May 2011.

You are furthermore requested to submit a copy of your final report of the study to the Division of Planning, Statistics and Research, Ministry of Education, Botswana.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully

K.Mathabathi
For / Permanent Secretary

Addendum H

Letter from ethics committee



Ref: EC100624-028

05 July 2010

Dr G du Rand
Department of Consumer Sciences
University of Pretoria
Pretoria
0002

ETHICS COMMITTEE
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
University of Pretoria
Pretoria
0002
Tel: 012-4204107
Fax: 012-4203290

Dear Dr du Rand

Re: EC100624-028 An explication of functionally illiterate Botswana consumers' food purchasing behaviour.

Kind regards


Prof NH Casey
Chairman: Ethics Committee