

**Female customers' expectations and satisfaction regarding custom-made  
apparel**

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apparel**

**By**

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# DECLARATION

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I, Mirriam Motlatsi Hedwig Makopo, declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree M. Consumer Science: Clothing Management at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



**Mirriam Makopo**

**July 2014**

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# ABSTRACT

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Today's marketplace is characterised by fierce competition and customer satisfaction has increasingly become important as a key element and strategy for businesses to remain competitive (Gocek and Beceren, 2012; Rad, 2011; Wang and Ji, 2009; Kincade, Giddings and Chen-Yu, 1998; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). A business needs to satisfy its customers against its competitors, in order to increase its medium and long term profitability (Peter and Olson in Gocek and Berecen, 2012). Customer satisfaction will lead to a return of sales, customer loyalty and customer retention. However, providing customer satisfaction requires an understanding of the customer's perception of quality. Consumers who wear custom-made apparel are a market segment with specific preferences that need to be satisfied. Prior to acquisition, consumers form certain quality standards and then purchase apparel products to satisfy these standards (Kincade *et al.*, 1998). Apparel quality evaluation can be very complex as consumers use specific product dimensions, which differ in their importance by product and the individual consumer. Since custom-made apparel products do not exist at the time of ordering, the complexity can intensify because evaluation of the quality can only take place when the product is complete and during wear and care. Inability to evaluate apparel quality before purchase could later lead to customer dissatisfaction (Kincade *et al.*, 1998). Customer dissatisfaction resulting from failure of the apparel product to meet customers' expectations could have negative impact on customer loyalty, customer retention and profitability.

Although several studies on apparel quality have been undertaken, only a few of them (De Klerk and Lubbe, 2008; De Klerk and Tselepis, 2007; De klerk and Lubbe, 2004; Tselepis and De Klerk, 2004; North, De Vos and Kotze, 2003) were in the context of South Africa, of which none specifically focused on custom-made apparel. Therefore, an empirical research study on the female custom-made apparel customers' expectations and satisfaction regarding custom-made apparel was conducted. The aim of the study was to explore and describe how female custom-made apparel customers evaluate the quality of custom-made apparel. The study further describes how female custom-made apparel customers appraise the performance of custom-made apparel, the emotions they experience following appraisals, the coping strategies used by the dissatisfied customers, as well as the consequent post-purchasing behaviours of satisfied customers.

The expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm and the cognitive appraisal theory were chosen as theoretical perspectives to compile a conceptual framework for the study. The research is

exploratory and descriptive, as it delves into an area of study on which no previous research could be traced in South Africa. A quantitative research style was employed. A survey was conducted by using a self-administered structured questionnaire to collect data. The theoretical background from the literature review was used to compile the questionnaire. In addition, the results of the one-on-one interviews conducted with twelve participants were used to facilitate the development of the questionnaire before it was finalised. The questionnaire included statements on a four-point Likert-type scale and a nominal Yes/No scale, which assessed the customers' expectations and satisfaction. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was pilot-tested on a sample of fifteen respondents and necessary adjustments were made. A non-probability purposive sampling method, combined with a snowballing technique was used to recruit respondents for the study. With the assistance of some fieldworkers and the designers who provide custom-made apparel, data were collected from 209 females, who resided in the East, South and West regions of Pretoria (Tshwane). The respondents were either satisfied or dissatisfied with their latest custom-made garment/outfit. Data were captured and analysed by descriptive statistical methods.

The findings revealed that the sensory, comfort, durability and emotional dimensions are significant in determining the quality of custom-made apparel. However, the respondents were not that satisfied with the performance of some of the dimensions they rated as important, especially the sensory and the emotional dimensions. More than three quarters of the respondents who were dissatisfied with the performance of their garments/outfits blamed the custom-made apparel businesses and they believed that the designers who made their garments/outfits could have prevented the poor performance. In a similar pattern, the satisfied respondents mostly praised the custom-made apparel businesses for the satisfactory performance of their outfits. Many of the dissatisfied respondents never contacted the designers to obtain redress. Instead, most of them spread negative-word-of-mouth and stopped to patronise their businesses. The findings suggest that external attribution of blame for the product's poor performance alone does not necessarily lead to direct complaint behavioural outcomes like contacting the business to seek redress. The entire appraisal process, including personal and situational factors played a role in determining the subsequent behavioural outcomes. The study recommends that custom-made apparel businesses encourage customer feedback, in order to get the opportunity to rectify problems and to retain existing customers, while attracting new ones. Small businesses that provide custom-made apparel have a niche to offer their customers what large manufacturers cannot. If properly managed, custom-made apparel businesses could provide employment in the informal sector of South Africa, where fewer jobs are available. The findings of the study contribute to existing theory on the subject of South African female apparel customers, particularly the female custom-made apparel customer.

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# **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

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CMA – Custom-made apparel

CMADs – Custom-made apparel designers

FCMACs – Female custom-made apparel customers

SARS – South African Revenue Services

SMEs – Small and medium size enterprises

SCMABs – Small custom-made apparel businesses

# CHAPTER 1

## THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

---

### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The textile and apparel industry worldwide is affected by the ever-growing global market, which challenges customers to constantly differentiate between products and services when choosing what they believe will meet their expectations. Customers who expect more from what they are prepared to pay (De Klerk and Lubbe, 2008; Du Preez 2003; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998) are truly driving the 21st century market. The challenge posed by customers' ongoing demands has influenced a shift in the focus from market share to customer share, in an attempt to deliver what the customers want (Wang, 2012; Brannon in North, de Vos and Kotze, 2003). The extent to which a product satisfies the customer's needs and requirements is determined by its quality (Pizam and Ellis, 1999). Because customers are an asset, without which no business exists (Gocek and Beceren, 2012), apparel manufacturers, retailers and marketers need to understand them and satisfy their unique preferences in order to survive in a competitive environment (Du Preez, 2003). Customer satisfaction has great meaning for the business as it improves existing customer loyalty, repurchases and awareness of the people about the business, as satisfied customers spread positive opinions about the product (Gocek and Beceren, 2012; Dubrovski, 2001; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998).

As more and more women personalize and customize their existing apparel items (Mendel in Foreman, 2007), this has imposed a great deal of pressure on manufacturers to shift their focus towards the design and manufacturing of apparel according to customer's specific preferences (Lamb and Kallal, 1992). Even retailers, like individual customers, also demand more products that are specialised and accommodate customised options for their customers (Foreman, 2007). The trend to personalize and have apparel custom-made indicates customers' desire to be different in this age of global brand (Foreman, 2007). Due to these changes in customers' priorities, apparel industries have found it difficult to satisfy the needs of the customers, as they have become progressively less satisfied with what the market offers (Dickerson in de Klerk and Lubbe, 2008). Custom-making is one of the strategies implemented in apparel design and manufacturing in order to meet specific individual customers' expectations and preferences.



Gaining more knowledge and insight into the factors that can enhance customer satisfaction can have considerable merit (Erasmus and Donoghue, 1998). A general belief is that in today's competitive world, retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than attracting new ones (Gocek and Beceren, 2012; Torres and Kline, 2006; Dubrovski, 2001; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). Every custom-made apparel business should attempt to identify the variables or features of a product that affect customer satisfaction and manage these variables to ensure and enhance continual customer loyalty, repurchases, and profitability of the business (Gocek and Beceren, 2012).

Regardless of several studies on the customers' viewpoint of apparel quality, the phenomenon remains ambiguous (Swinker and Hines, 2006). Existing literature on apparel quality (De Klerk and Tselepis, 2007; North *et al.*, 2003; Forsythe, Presley and Caton, 1996; Hines and O'Neal, 1995; Heisey, 1990; Eckman, Damhorst and Kadolph, 1990), focus more on ready-to-wear and mass-customisation apparel. Moreover, many of the studies focused on one specific quality dimension, such as aesthetics (De Klerk and Lubbe, 2004), fit (De Klerk and Tselepis, 2007; Tselepis and De Klerk, 2004), or a specific cluster of dimensions like intrinsic cues (Forsythe *et al.*, 1996; Fiore and Damhorst, 1992), and extrinsic cues (Teas and Agarwal, 2000). To date, very limited attention worldwide has been given to the subject of custom-made apparel. In South African context, no research could be traced on female custom-made apparel customers as a market segment and the manner in which they evaluate the quality of custom-made apparel. This study therefore aims at exploring and describing the female customers' expectations and satisfaction/dissatisfaction regarding the quality of custom-made apparel, the accompanying emotions resulting from both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the coping strategies the customers resort to when dissatisfied, as well as the post-purchasing behaviours that satisfied customers engage in. Research in this area could provide insight into the quality dimensions that female customers use when assessing custom-made apparel, as well as their relative importance to individual customers. Knowledge of how customers assess quality could be utilised effectively for business success (De Klerk and Lubbe, 2008). This will enable the custom-made apparel businesses to understand the meaning of quality from the point of view of the female custom-made apparel customers (FCMACs) and to enhance it in order to obtain maximum levels of satisfaction. Eventually this will lead to customer loyalty, customer retention and the profitability of custom-made apparel business.

## 1.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Before acquiring a product, consumers usually formulate certain expectations against which they later evaluate the performance of a product to determine whether satisfaction has occurred (Chen-Yu, Williams and Kincade, 1999; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Kincade, Redwine and Hancock, 1992). Pizam and Ellis (1999), point out that the customer's subjective perception of quality is very vital in identifying the customer's needs and ensuring customer satisfaction. Thus, apparel businesses that provide custom-made apparel have the advantage of differentiating themselves by focusing on providing for the individual needs and wants of a specific target group of FCMACs, which is something that large apparel manufacturers may overlook.

Custom-made apparel (CMA) can be defined as made from scratch and made-to-measure apparel (Harrop, 2010). Such apparel is measured, cut, sewn and fitted for a specific individual (Brown and Rice, 2014:40). In contrast, ready-to-wear apparel (also referred to as ready-made or off-the rack apparel), is mass produced (Brown and Rice, 2014:4). Apparel custom making is about individuality (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.), in the sense that it accommodates special sizes and widths that are not easily found in ready-to-wear garment stores (Harrop, 2010). This offers many advantages for individuals with heavier builds, slighter builds, tall, short and asymmetric body proportions. Therefore, CMA can ensure better fit and personal style than mass produced off-the-rack apparel (Peterson and Gordon, 2001). Customers who seek CMA are usually motivated by the desire for a high quality garment which is unavailable in the retail market, a need for a special occasion garment, or a need for special fitting (Bye, 2010:61). By approaching businesses that provide CMA, prospective customers anticipate that their specific quality needs and preferences will be satisfied (Peterson and Gordon, 2001). Moreover, since CMA demand more financial investment from the individuals who order it, it would be natural for customers to expect such apparel to be of high quality (Foreman, 2007; Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). For the purpose of the study, a custom-made garment/outfit shall refer to any garment/outfit that is made by a formal or informal small apparel business, according to certain specifications that will conform to the customer's body shape and unique preferences.

In South Africa, apparel custom making is commonly practised by businesses that operate on a small scale, which are referred to as small and medium size enterprises (SMEs). Although these enterprises can be classified into categories, using amongst others, the number of full time employees, maximum annual turnover as well as maximum total gross assets value (Ngwenya, 2012), the South African National Small Business Act 102 of 1996 collectively refers to all of them as small businesses (Bezuidenhout and Nenungwi, 2012). The Act

defines a small business as “a separate and distinct business entity, including co-operative enterprises and non-governmental enterprises, managed by one or more owners, including its branches and subsidiaries (if any), predominantly carried on in any sector of the economy (formal or informal), which can be classified as micro, very small, small or medium enterprise” (Pellissier and Nenzhelele, 2013:2). The formal small businesses are registered with the Companies and Intellectual Properties Commission (CIPC) or the South African Revenue Services (SARS) for tax and Vat purposes (Ngwenya, 2012). Such businesses are usually owner-managed and may employ between five and approximately fifty employees (Bezuidenhout and Nenungwi, 2012).

For the purpose of the study, the definition of a small business shall include micro, very small and small enterprises. Micro enterprises employ between one to five employees and they usually lack formality in terms of business premises and registration. Very small enterprises employ not more than ten employees and they operate in the formal sector and use technology. Small enterprises are generally more established than very small ones, formally registered and they operate from fixed premises with a maximum of fifty employees (Pellissier and Nenzhelele, 2012). Informal small businesses for the study will refer to the businesses not registered with SARS for tax purposes, home based, owner managed, not well known and rarely have employees. Such businesses usually do not engage much in marketing but rely on word-of-mouth as their means of advertising. The formal small businesses will refer to the ones that are registered with SARS for tax purposes, operate at premises separate from a residential home, are well known and have at least one employee. For this study, small businesses (formal and informal) that provide CMA shall be referred to as small custom-made apparel businesses (SCMABs). The individual in the business who specifically designs and produces CMA for the customers will be referred to as custom-made apparel designer (CMAD).

The importance of SMEs in creating economic wealth is globally recognised (Olawale and Garwen in Pellissier and Nenzhelele, 2013). In a developing country like South Africa, which has a high rate of unemployment, SMEs can alleviate poverty by creating employment opportunities, especially to the unskilled section of the population (Ngwenya, 2012). Almost half of new jobs in the South African economy are generated by small businesses (Kongolo, 2010). They contribute 56% of the employment in the private sector and 36% percent of gross domestic product (GDP) (Olawale and Gware in Pellissier and Nenzhelele, 2013). Even the South African government has high expectations for the small businesses to provide a steady stream of jobs (Bezuidenhout and Nenungwi, 2012). This is evidenced by the government’s implementation of policies and programmes to support small business development (Kongolo, 2010).

Small custom-made apparel businesses need to be competent in order to prosper and create employment opportunities. Part of being competent is to be aware of customers' expectations and be able to satisfy them. Dissatisfaction with the product's performance can lead to complaints to businesses, shopping behavioural changes such as boycotting the business, negative word-of-mouth, or even taking no action but remaining angry (Donoghue, De Klerk and Isaac, 2012; Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Day, 1984). Negative word-of-mouth, is a common response to dissatisfaction which entails telling friends and other members of one's social network about a negative product encounter with the manufacturer and advising them not to acquire the product from the same manufacturer (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004; Bougie, Pieters and Zeelenberg, 2003). Studies have shown that dissatisfied customers share their experiences with twice as much people as satisfied customers do (Rad, 2011; Dubrovski, 200; Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993:581). Therefore, negative word-of-mouth can be detrimental as the business can lose the opportunity to remedy the situation, consequently leading to loss of sales and profits. (Rad, 2011; Soscia, 2007).

### **1.3 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Because customer satisfaction and loyalty are the keys to the survival of any business and they indicate the actual quality of the product that the business delivers to the customers (Pizam and Ellis, 1999), knowledge on specific customers' expectations, which is crucial to successful product design and manufacturing is important (Zhang, Li, Gong and Wu, 2002). Quality in the same product can have different significance and weight for different customers, depending on specific characteristics of the product that will be given more weight by the customer (Kinkade, 2008:28; Dubrovski, 2001; Stamper, Humphries Sharp and Donnell, 1991:312). Therefore, it will be difficult to design and manufacture CMA products without understanding the importance of the dimensions of a product to the individual customer.

Although customers form expectations about the product and evaluate its future performance based on what they see before purchase and use, proper evaluation of performance can only occur when the product is in use (Erasmus and Donoghue, 1998; Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Abraham-Murali and Littrell, 1995; Swan and Combs, 1976). The main problem is that in most cases when the customer places an order for a custom-made garment, no tangible product exists as reference for the customer to evaluate the anticipated performance. At that stage, quality cues such as style, fit, material, construction and finishes may not be easy for the customer to communicate and translate to the designer. The customer's expectations of product performance for apparel and their relation to satisfaction are quite often unknown

(Swan and Combs 1976). Consequently, a customer may form unrealistic quality expectations that could be difficult for the CMAD to accomplish. When performance does not match the customer’s expectations during use and care, problems might arise for both the designer and the customer, as it could be too late at that stage to rectify the problem. Small custom-made apparel businesses are therefore faced with a challenge to be pro-active in avoiding customer dissatisfaction.

### 1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The literature review and the theoretical perspectives (see Chapter 2) were combined to compile a conceptual framework for the study (Figure 1.1).

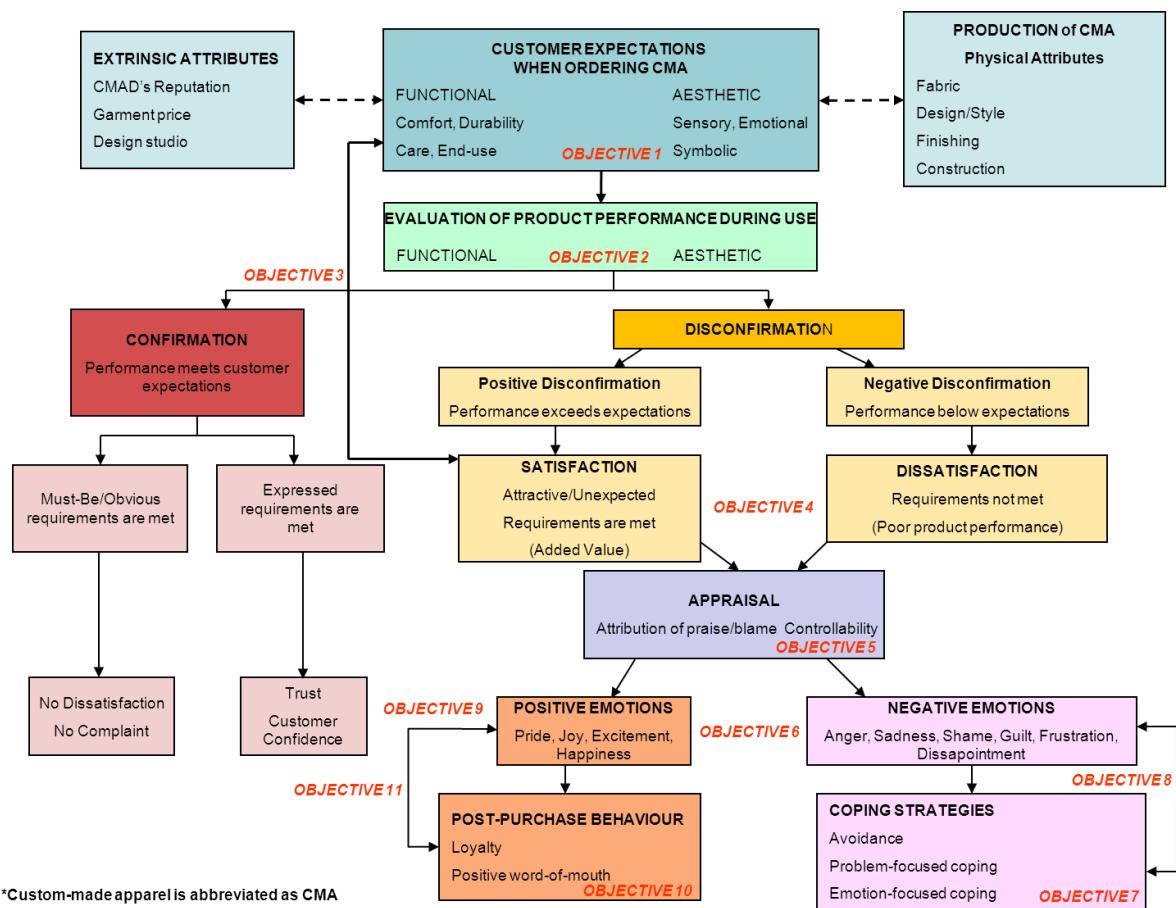


FIGURE 1.1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

When ordering a custom-made garment, the customer is aware that information is not readily available. Although the customer might have functional and aesthetic expectations of the garment/outfit she wants to order, evaluation is difficult, as no tangible apparel product exists yet. As a result the customer may rely on extrinsic cues like reputation of the business and

the design studio of the business as quality cues. During interaction with the CMAD, information on the anticipated product's attributes such as fabrics, style, colour (physical attributes), and price (extrinsic attribute) come to light. Such attributes become the basis for evaluating the anticipated product.

A two way communication process exists during ordering when the customer's prior expectations are re-evaluated and adapted, as the designer provides valuable information about the anticipated product. Following the discussions, new expectations might emerge and be adopted, after which the customer normally places an order. During the production process and fitting sessions, the physical product is partly evaluated when the garment is fitted and necessary adjustments are made where possible to meet the expectations. Proper evaluation of the garment will take place when it is complete and during wear and care. Only then will the customer be able to make a comparison between prior expectations and the performance of the garment. The result of the comparison could be either confirmation or disconfirmation of expectations. Confirmation means that the expectations have been met (indifference between expectations and product performance). This means that both the "must-be requirements" and "expressed requirements" have been met. Meeting the must-be requirements will prevent customer dissatisfaction and complaint behaviour, while meeting the expressed requirements will lead to customer confidence and trust in the designer. Disconfirmation on the other end can be positive or negative. Positive disconfirmation (when product performance exceeds expectations) will lead to satisfaction, while negative disconfirmation (when product performance is below expectations) will result into dissatisfaction.

The cognitive appraisal theory states that customers are always active in finding the meaning of events that happen around them. Following a satisfactory or dissatisfactory market encounter, a customer would normally appraise how significant the particular market encounter is to her well-being. During this process of appraisal, attribution of praise or blame and controllability (who had control over the encounter) takes place. When the customer is satisfied, praise and controllability can be attributed to either the business or the customer herself or other people, and positive emotions such as joy, happiness, pride, fulfilment or delight are usually evoked. These emotions could ultimately lead to positive word-of-mouth about the business and customer loyalty towards the business. When appraisal of a dissatisfying market encounter takes place, blame and controllability can be attributed to the customer self, the business or others. Depending on to whom blame is attributed, negative emotions such as shame, guilt, sadness, anger, frustration are usually evoked, which will require the customer to engage in one or a combination of the coping strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused or avoidance coping). The choice of coping strategies will depend



on the degree of significance of the event to the individual's well-being and the type and intensity of the emotion experienced.

In view of the foregoing background, the following objectives and sub-objectives were formulated for the study:

1. To explore and describe the importance of functional and aesthetic expectations to female custom-made apparel customers (FCMACs).
  - to explore and describe the importance of functional expectations to FCMACs.
  - to explore and describe the importance of aesthetic expectations to FCMACs.
2. To explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional and aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations.
  - to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional performance of CMA in relation to the expectations.
  - to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations.
3. To determine and describe the relationship between the importance of customer expectations and satisfaction with the performance of CMA.
4. To explore and describe the FCMACs' overall satisfaction with the performance of CMA.
5. To explore and describe the dissatisfied and satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and (or) controllability
  - to explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and controllability
  - to explore and describe the satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution
6. To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA.
7. To explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' coping strategies.
8. To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA and the coping strategies they use in terms of complaint behaviour.
9. To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA.
10. To explore and describe satisfied FCMACs' post-purchasing behaviours.
11. To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA and post-purchasing behaviours.

## **1.5 UNIT OF ANALYSIS, SAMPLING PROCEDURES AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Due to lack of information on small businesses that provide custom-made apparel in South Africa, the study was exploratory and descriptive. A quantitative survey research was conducted on a cross-sectional basis. Two hundred and nine (209) respondents participated in the study by completing a self-administered structured questionnaire.

### **1.5.1 The unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis for the study consisted of females who resided in the East, South and North and West of Pretoria (Tshwane), who had custom-made garments/outfit made for them in the past by a small custom-made apparel business. Quite a considerable number of them were recruited from the East and Centurion regions and were predominantly White. However, race and cultural differences were irrelevant to the study. The participants were of the ages 18 to 72. They fell under the LSM group 6 -10 because this population is assumed to have financial means to afford to have their apparel custom-made. Most of the garments were made for special occasions (excluding wedding gowns) by informal small custom-made apparel businesses, which were not registered with the South African Revenue Services (SARS) for tax purposes. These informal businesses mainly operated from residential premises by individuals who were both owners and managers. The respondents had to recall their experiences with their latest custom-made garment or outfit.

### **1.5.2 Sampling technique**

A non-probability purposive sampling, combined with a snowballing technique, was used to select the sample. This method was chosen because of the researcher's experience and knowledge that the target population is scattered and not easily accessible (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008:175; Walliman, 2005:279; Babbie and Mouton, 2001:167). The sample was however not representative of the entire population and the findings of the study could therefore not be generalised to the target population.

### **1.5.3 Data collection**

Quantitative data were collected by means of a self-administered structured questionnaire, which was evaluated by the supervisor and co-supervisor. The questionnaire was pre-tested on a sample of 15 respondents before it was administered to the respondents in the sample.



The questionnaire composed of four sections with 19 questions. A four-point Likert-type scale and a nominal scale of Yes/No were used for most of the questions. The sections covered the expectations and actual performance of the garment, the appraisals of the marketing encounter, including attribution and controllability, the emotions evoked, as well as the resultant post-purchasing behaviours of satisfied customers and post-purchasing complaining behaviours of dissatisfied customers.

## **1.6 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

### **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter presents a literature overview of the theory of apparel quality from the customer's perspective, the theory of aesthetics, the expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm and the cognitive appraisal theory. The role of functional and aesthetic features in the evaluation of apparel quality is highlighted. All the relevant concepts are conceptualized for the purpose of the study.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

An introduction into the research method that was employed in addressing the relevant objectives of the study is presented in this chapter. First, a schematic conceptual framework highlighting all the important concepts and the objectives of the study will be presented. Thereafter, the research design, the sampling procedure, the type of measuring instrument that was used, data collection procedures as well as data analysis methods are discussed. The chapter ends with the discussion of ethical concerns for the research study.

### **Chapter 4: Research results, discussion and interpretation**

The results of the data collected from the sample will be presented, following a specific sequence as set out by the objectives of the study. Data is analysed and summarised by means of descriptive statistics into frequencies and percentages, which are presented in the form of tables, figures and charts. Finally, the results are discussed and interpreted against the theoretical perspectives chosen for the study, the theories deemed relevant to the study, as well as the viewpoints of previous researchers in the field of study.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusions, implications and recommendations, evaluations, contributions to theory and suggestions for future studies**

The chapter begins by presenting an overall conclusion of the study. Implications of the findings of the study and recommendations for future are highlighted. A brief review of the research project including the methodology used and shortcomings is presented. In conclusion, contributions of the study to theory as well as suggestions for future studies are highlighted.

# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Based on the background and statement of the problem in chapter one, it is apparent that female custom-made apparel 'customers' (FCMACs) have specific needs for apparel products which are not being fulfilled by mass produced ready-to-wear apparel. Such needs influence the customers' expectations for specific apparel quality features, which they anticipate SCMABs to satisfy. When customer expectations are not met, the result could be customer dissatisfaction. The experience of dissatisfaction may even be more pronounced if the customer has no option to return the product. Customer dissatisfaction will negatively influence the SCMAB, because the customer may for example, decide not to patronise the business in future, or spread negative word-of-mouth about it. It is therefore crucial that SCMABs aim at preventing poor performance of apparel products, in order to avoid such negative consequences.

This chapter begins by conceptualising apparel quality and the performance dimensions, as they influence customers' evaluation of apparel products. Secondly, the theory of customers' expectations, perceived product performance and customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction is explained in terms of the expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm. Thirdly, the chapter focuses on the influence of cognitive appraisal of an encounter in triggering emotions. Finally, the influence that emotions have on post-purchasing behaviours of both dissatisfied and satisfied customers is discussed.

### 2.2 APPAREL QUALITY

Quality is an important factor used by customers when making purchasing decisions regarding textile products such as apparel (Kadolph, 1998:12). According to Fiore and Damhorst (1992), customers use judgments of quality to predict satisfaction with the purchase and extended use of apparel. Fiore and Kimle (1997:60), Stamper *et al.* (1991) and Clodfelter and Fowler (n.d.) view apparel quality as the superiority and excellence of an

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<sup>1</sup>The consumer of custom-made apparel is referred to as a "customer" in the study (Business dictionary). Therefore, the word "consumer" was replaced with "customer" when found in citations and sources referring to consumer theory.

apparel product. However, quality is a complex and multidimensional concept, relative and difficult to perceive (Swinker and Hines, 2006; Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). The definition of quality depends on the context in which it is being used, and it can be defined from a number of perspectives such as holistic, product, manufacturer, value-based and customer perspectives (Kadolph, 1998:13). Fiore and Damhorst (1992) are of the opinion that the quality of an apparel product can be approached from either the manufacturing perspective or customer perspective.

### **2.2.1 The manufacturing perspective of quality**

Defining apparel quality from the manufacturing perspective focuses on the physical properties that can be measured objectively (Abraham-Murali and Littrell, 1995; Clodfelter and Fowler, n.d.). The manufacturing-based perspective views quality as “conformance to requirements”. In terms of this perspective, excellence is equated with meeting the specifications and with making it right the first time (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). When a product meets the company’s standards and specifications, it has achieved the desired quality level (Kadolph, 1998:14). The implication is that a product, which is unfit to meet the requirements of the customer, may still be rated as good quality. However, Fiore and Damhorst (1992) point out that specifications established by the manufacturer do not necessarily make the product satisfy the customer’s “notion of quality”. This perspective places emphasis on what the manufacturer considers as quality without acknowledging what the customer perceives as quality.

### **2.2.2 The customer perspective of quality**

From an apparel customer’s perspective, apparel quality is “the degree to which an apparel item satisfies customer’s needs” (Yoon and Kijewski in Yurchisin and Johnson, 2010). According to Kadolph (1998), quality from a customer’s perspective depends on the dimensions of a product that are important to the user, and these dimensions differ by product as well as by the customer. In addition, Abraham-Murali in Forsythe *et al.* (1996), pointed out that customers’ perceptions of the quality of apparel products include both concrete and abstract features of the products. This viewpoint of quality is also referred to as “perceived quality” (Abraham-Murali and Littrell 1995; Clodfelter and Fowler, n.d.). Defining quality from this perspective implies that it is not universal and that the way the customer perceives it depends on her needs and preferences (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). This definition focuses entirely on the customer and how the customer thinks a product will fit its purpose (Gocek and Beceren, 2012). Perceived quality and customer satisfaction are interrelated concepts in that they both encompass the comparative process of evaluation

of products against expectations (Fiore and Damhorst, 1992). Thus, when a product performs according to the customer's perceived quality, customer satisfaction will be achieved. Quality from the customer's perspective is however more subjective and not easily verified (Fiore and Damhorst, 1992). The subjective nature of perceived quality implies that the perspective fits well within the context of CMA because the product features that are important to the customer determine such apparel's quality. The perspective therefore recognises the primary role played by the customer in determining whether a product meets or exceeds expectations (Kadolph, 1998:16).

Customers view an apparel product as an array of cues they can use to perceive its quality. A cue can be defined as an attribute of a product used by customers to assess the performance of the product during use (Abraham-Murali and Littrell, 1995). The manner in which customers perceive quality can be the result of a variety of attributes. When customers evaluate the quality of apparel products, only a limited set called "determinant attributes" play a critical role in determining a choice between alternatives. Determinant attributes refer to those specific attributes that are important to the customers and are variable across alternatives (Swan and Combs, 1976). The words attribute(s) and dimension(s) are used interchangeably in apparel quality literature. For the purpose of the study, the word dimension(s) will be used throughout. For a garment to satisfy the customer, it must perform well on the dimensions that are more important to the customer, but reach a certain minimum levels of performance on the other dimensions (Swan and Combs, 1976). Knowledge of the dimensions of CMA that are significant to the FCMACs is necessary for the SCMAB to meet the needs and preferences of its target customers.

However, the dimensions of a product that are important to the customer and their relationship to satisfaction are seldom clear (Swan and Combs, 1976). There is even more uncertainty regarding these dimensions in the case of CMA, since no tangible apparel item exists at the time the customer places an order. In the absence of a product for reference, customers often find it difficult to communicate their desires. The dimensions that play a role when customers evaluate the quality of apparel products will subsequently be discussed.

## **2.3 DIMENSIONS OF APPAREL QUALITY**

Apparel quality has two dimensions, namely, (1) the physical features (what the garment is) and (2) the performance features (what the garment does or can do) (Solinger in Brown and Rice, 2014:69).

### **2.3.1 Physical features**

The physical features of an apparel product, also known as intrinsic features, provide the garment's tangible form and composition and cannot be altered without changing the product itself (Brown and Rice, 2014:69). These include the design, materials, construction and finishes. For example, to make an A-line skirt from a pencil skirt, the whole skirt has to be redesigned, as this will be a different style and silhouette.

### **2.3.2 Performance features**

Performance features of an apparel item determine the standards the item meets and its benefits to the customer. The garment's physical features determine its performance features. For this reason, customers purchase garments with specific physical features that they believe will fulfill certain performance expectations (Brown and Rice, 2014:70). For example, a customer may order a garment made of a cotton fabric (physical feature), with the expectation that it will keep her cool in hot and humid weather (performance feature). However, it is not known whether customers have adequate knowledge regarding the performance qualities inherent in the physical features of a garment (De Klerk and Lubbe, 2008). Even though the physical features might be visible and tangible to the customer, a variety of newly introduced yarns, fabrics, advanced finishing and construction techniques can make it even more challenging for the customer to evaluate an apparel product's performance features. Moreover, the labeling often does not provide enough information. When the product to be evaluated is non-existent at the time of ordering, as it is with CMA, the evaluation process can become more complex. Performance features can further be categorised into functional performance features and aesthetic performance features (Brown and Rice, 2014:70)

#### ***2.3.2.1 Functional performance features***

The functional performance features of an apparel product refer to its utility aspects and durability aspects, which are the performance features other than the garment's appearance (Brown and Rice, 2014:70).

#### ***Utility aspects***

Brown and Rice (2014:70) describe the utility aspect of an apparel product as its usefulness and its appropriate function for its intended use. The utility of an apparel product is represented by features such as fit, comfort, ease of maintenance (care) and

appropriateness or suitability for intended end-use (Retief and De Klerk, 2003), which will be described below:

### *Fit*

Fit is one of the primary reasons to have a garment custom-made in the first place (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). Fit refers to a measure of conformance of the apparel product to the body, with considerations for ease of style and ease of movement (Kincade, 2008:231). The garment's design influences its fit, which in turn influences its functional comfort. However, fit can also be aesthetic, in the sense that the fit of an apparel product can influence emotional, sensory and symbolic aspects. For example, fit which is comfortable for movement is functional, while a "sexy fit" is aesthetic. Therefore, good fit in the eye of the customer is subjective but crucial to customer satisfaction (Brown and Rice, 2014:212).

### *Comfort*

Comfort refers to the way the body interacts with the apparel product, and the way the textile conducts heat, air and moisture (Kadolph, 2010:20). How comfortable an apparel product is to its wearer, will be answered by among other questions, will it absorb moisture in hot and humid weather? Will the fabric used not irritate or scratch the skin? Will the fabric not develop static charges or cling to the body?

### *Ease of maintenance (care)*

Care involves the treatment required to maintain a textile product's original appearance and cleanliness (Kadolph, 2010:20). It is about how the product will be affected following cleaning. For example, will its colour fade or bleed? Will cleaning cause fabric distortion? Will there be any yarn slippage during cleaning? Assessment of ease of maintenance of an apparel item can be based on its care instructions. However CMA products usually lack care instructions labels (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila (n.d.)), making it more difficult for the customer to perceive future performance of the apparel product when in use.

### *Appropriate fitness for intended end-use (suitability for end-use)*

Suitability for end-use refers to the general functionality and usability of a garment, which considers whether its style, fit, features, material and construction are in good harmony for it

to be fit for use (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila (n.d.). For example, does the garment's material, style and fit make it appropriate to wear to work( if it is a career wear item)?

### ***Durability aspects***

Durability refers to how well a garment will retain its structure and appearance after wear and care (Brown and Rice, 2014:70). This entails how long an apparel product will be usable for its intended purpose (Kadolph, 1998:28). Among other things, features such as colourfastness, seam strength, shrinkage resistance, tear resistance, abrasion resistance, and pill resistance determine the durability of a garment (Kadolph, 2010:20; Retief and De Klerk, 2003). For example, the durability of a dress is determined by answers to questions like does it retain its shape and size after wash? Does the zip still work after wear and wash? Is the fusible interfacing still intact after wash?

#### ***2.3.2.2 Aesthetic performance features***

Kadolph (2010:20) describes aesthetics as the attractiveness or appearance of the apparel product and how pleasing it looks for its intended use. The theory of apparel quality (Brown and Rice, 2014; De Klerk and Lubbe, 2008; Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Fiore and Kimle, 1997; Forsythe *et al.*, 1996; Swan and Combs, 1976), emphasises that assessment of the quality of an apparel item is not solely based on functional aspects such as durability, appearance retention, care and comfort, but also on aesthetic features such as line, style, rhythm and colour, which can evoke the wearer's emotions and consequently aesthetic experiences. Fiore and Kimle (1997:40) describe aesthetic experiences as those pleasurable experiences the wearer can derive from formal aesthetic qualities of an apparel product.

Apparel product customers often seek items that will convey particular messages about themselves (Lamb and Kallal, 1992) and therefore select items that appeal to their aesthetic senses (Eckman *et al.*, 1990; Kinkade *et al.*, 1998). For example, a customer may order a custom-made pure silk black tailored suit with white vertical stripes for work, because it will make her feel dominant (emotional), or the silk will make her look classy (symbolic). Aesthetic performance of an apparel product relates to the customer's aesthetic senses, which is the subjective experience of the look, feeling, taste, smell and sound of a product (Clodfelter and Fowler, n.d). Therefore, aesthetic experiences that the apparel product can bring about can be on a sensory, emotional or cognitive level (De Klerk and Lubbe, 2008) and it affects the body, soul and the mind of an individual (Fiore and Kimle, 1997:13). According to Fiore and Damhorst (1992), aesthetic aspects are relevant to perceived quality.



In addition, Brown and Rice (2014:70) emphasised the importance of addressing the wearer's emotional needs when evaluating the quality of an apparel product.

According to Fiore and Kimle (1997:6), the formal features of an apparel product can evoke the wearer's emotions like pleasure, dominance or excitement, and may be a symbol of something (symbolic content). Thus, in order to create aesthetic experiences for the wearer, attention should be given to the formal qualities of an apparel product. However, abstract factors related to product performance and customer satisfaction are very hard to define (Kadolph, 1998:34), which is why customers are often not able to express their emotional and symbolic preferences to the designers when ordering custom-made garments in the absence of tangible products as reference. Unfortunately, the result of this could be an unhappy customer who feels that her aesthetic needs have not been met. Functional and aesthetic performance features can at times overlap, as was demonstrated in the previous example how fit can be functional and aesthetic. Since the performance features of an apparel product are influenced by its physical features (fabric, style, finishing, and construction), it is important that the apparel product incorporates the specific physical features which will make the final product desirable to the customer on both functional and aesthetic aspects. Apparel designers should consider the aesthetic aspects of apparel to ensure customer satisfaction and consequently the profitability of the apparel business (Fiore and Kimle, 1997:4).

### **2.3.3 Extrinsic features**

Apparel products also have extrinsic attributes (Brown and Rice, 2014:71), which can be altered without changing the garment itself, and can influence the customer's perception of quality. However, common extrinsic cues visible at the point of sale for ready-to-wear garments (for example, brand, price and country of origin) do not exist at the point of ordering CMA.

## **2.4 EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF CMA**

The process of evaluating the quality of CMA products differs from that of evaluating the quality of ready-to-wear apparel in terms of the availability of cues. Koskenurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila (n.d.) proposed that an assessment of the quality of CMA occurs in three phases, namely, (1) before ordering, (2) during designing and construction process and (3) during use and storage.

### **2.4.1 Evaluation before ordering**

Due to the non-existence of a tangible product, anticipation of the product's quality could be more complex. The prospective client is aware that no information is readily available. Reputation is one of the primary contributors to perceived quality and it seems to be highly relevant when evaluating something that does not exist (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). Evidence has shown reputation to be more effectively based on existing CMA made for other customers, as well as the stories told. It can be regarded as a promise of quality, which attracts new prospective customers (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). However, many upcoming SCMABs lack reputation as they mostly operate informally without even properly advertising their businesses. As a result, prospective customers lack information about their products. Price, which is not readily available before ordering, is negotiated as the customer's specific requirements are being discussed and could become a quality signal for the anticipated apparel product's performance. The fact that proper evaluation of the garment's quality is difficult at this stage, can lead to customer dissatisfaction with the garment when in use, when the customer realizes that the outcome does not match the expectations.

### **2.4.2 Evaluation during the designing and construction process**

During this phase, certain techniques and materials are used to develop style, fit and other features to obtain fitness for use. The customer should be able to communicate her needs to the designer. Through sketches and material samples, verbal communication is facilitated (Koskennurmi and Pietarila, n.d.). However, it can be difficult for the customers to express their sensory, emotional and symbolic needs during this interaction. It is the CMAD's duty to translate the physical features of the apparel product in process into performance benefits for the customer, in order to enhance satisfaction during use and care. For example, the customer should be informed that the 80% cotton and 20% spandex fiber content in the fabric would keep her cool in hot and humid weather, but also allow comfortable body movement due to the stretch of the spandex. During this phase, (especially during fitting sessions), the customer is evaluating not only the emerging product, but also the interaction, information, and confidence of the designer (Koskennurmi and Pietarila, n.d.).

### **2.4.3 Evaluation during use and care**

During use and care, the customer's evaluation of quality to determine whether satisfaction has occurred depends on the product's performance. Cues related to functional performance (utility aspects such as comfort, care, fit, durability, aesthetics, appearance retention and

safety) become significant in determining quality (Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d.). According to Kinkade *et al.* (1998), failure to evaluate apparel quality before purchase is one of the reasons leading to dissatisfaction with the product since apparel customers purchase apparel based on colour, style and fit, and not necessarily on the physical properties that actually determine quality. This may present problems as proper judgment of the quality performance and satisfaction only occurs after purchase and when the product is in use (Erasmus and Donoghue, 1998; Kinkade *et al.*, 1998; Abraham-Murali and Littrel, 1995). For example, fabric shrinkage or colour bleeding will only show after washing the item. Brown and Rice (2014:52) proposed that when functional features are perceived to be unsatisfactory when the garment is in use, they eventually replace aesthetics as determinants of customer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Therefore, aesthetic criteria may encourage the customer to purchase, while performance criteria during use may determine whether the customer will be retained (Rosenau and Wilson, 2001:245). It can be assumed that, because no tangible apparel item exists before ordering CMA, customer dissatisfaction will be more pronounced with CMA than with ready-to-wear apparel during use and care.

## **2.5 THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

The expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm and the cognitive appraisal theory were chosen as relevant theoretical perspectives for the study. The following section will describe the FCMACs' evaluation of the quality of CMA in the theoretical perspectives.

### **2.5.1 The expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm**

Although quite a variety of approaches and explanations of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction have been noted, the expectation disconfirmation paradigm by Oliver (1980) is widely used to explain how customers reach satisfaction/dissatisfaction decisions (Sattari, 2007:29; Churchill and Suprenant, 1982). Most of the theories that examined the antecedents of satisfaction and attempted to develop a meaningful measure of the construct, have somehow used a variant of the paradigm as it provides good theoretical basis for understanding the formation of customer satisfaction (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982). An explanation of the theory from the marketing context is that customer satisfaction is a collective outcome of perception, evaluation and psychological reactions to the consumption experience with a product or service (Yi in Sattari, 2007:29). Customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction has three main predictors, namely, customer expectations, disconfirmation and perceived performance (Chen-Yu in Labat, Salluso and Rhee, 2007). In summary, the full expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm, according to Churchill and

Suprenant (1982) has four related constructs, namely (1) customer expectations, (2) product performance, (3) disconfirmation and (4) customer satisfaction, which will subsequently be discussed below.

### **2.5.1.1 Customer expectations and product performance**

Expectations are a set of beliefs held by users about a product's perceived level of performance (Gocek and Berecen, 2012; Teas, Szajna and Scamell in Sattari, 2007:29). Customers usually form expectations about the anticipated performance of products prior to purchasing or ordering (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2009; Sattari, 2007:30; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993:579) and they acquire the products that have specific physical features that they believe will fulfill their performance expectations (Brown and Rice, 2014:69). Satisfaction literature suggests that customers may use multiple types of expectations when forming opinions about a product's anticipated performance, which can relate to the product's performance, the product's symbolic meaning and their emotional needs (Laufer, 2002; Churchill and Suprenant, 1982).

Product performance of an apparel product describes the manner in which the product responds to use (Kadolph, 2010: 22). Empirical research has established that judgments of the relative quality of product performance are related to expectations (Swan and Combs, 1976). During use, a comparison is made between the customers' perceptions of product performance (quality) and prior standards held (expectations) (Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Swan and Combs, 1976). Since product performance is evaluated against customer expectations, customer expectations serve as a benchmark (a standard), against which the quality of a product is evaluated, in order to assess disconfirmation (Sattari, 2007:36; Churchill and Suprenant, 1982).

### **2.5.1.2 Disconfirmation**

While using the product, customers reach satisfaction decisions by comparing their prior expectations of the product's performance with perceived product performance and note if a difference occurs (Wang, 2012; Donoghue and De Klerk, 2009; Laufer, 2002; Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Kincade *et al.*, 1992). Whenever there is a discrepancy between prior expectations and actual performance, disconfirmation arises, which is according to Churchill and Suprenant (1982), presumably the dominant variable in the central position of the theory. An individual's expectations are (1) confirmed when the product performs as expected; (2) negatively disconfirmed when the product performs more poorly than expected; and (3) positively disconfirmed when the product performs better than expected (Sattari, 2007:31;

Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Dubrovski, 2001; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Churchill and Suprenant, 1982). Whereas some researchers like Swan and Combs (1976) believe that confirmation and positive disconfirmation result in satisfaction, other researchers like Day (1984) and Westbrook (1987) are of the opinion that confirmation leads to indifference (neutral situation), where the obtained outcome exactly meets the expected outcome. This implies that the customer is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Positive and negative disconfirmations are more likely to happen with CMA, because the garment is non-existent during order. It is only when the garment is complete that the customer might realise that its outcome is worse or better than expected.

### **2.5.1.3 Customer satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction can be briefly defined as the result of fulfillment of expectations (Sattari, 2007:15; Swan and Combs, 1976). By extension, Loudon and Della Bitta (1993:579) describe customer satisfaction as the customer's state of being adequately rewarded in a buying situation for the sacrifices he/she has made. Customer satisfaction begins with expectations of the purchasing customer (Kincade *et al.*, 1992). Satisfaction with a purchased product is a fundamental goal for all customers (Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999) and it generates profits for the business (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982). Therefore, products that appeal to customers and which continue to meet their expectations are beneficial to the manufacturer (Kincade *et al.*, 1998). Customer satisfaction is therefore essential for the survival of any business. It is the "leading criterion" for determining the quality of the product that is actually delivered to customers and the company's future (Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Matzler and Hinterbuber, 1998). The significant effect of customer satisfaction on the customers' intentions to repurchase can therefore not be ignored (He & Song in Chang, Chen, Hsu & Kuo, 2010). Hence, customers should be highly valued by SCMABs that aim at profitability and sustainability. However, to be successful in influencing customer satisfaction, the business needs to understand how customers' expectations are developed and updated (Sattari, 2007:29).

The expectancy/disconfirmation theory suggests that satisfaction/dissatisfaction is not only generated by the direction of the gap between prior expectations and perceived performance, but also the intensity of the disconfirmation effect (Sattari, 2007:29; Churchill and Suprenant, 1992). Customers tend to express a great feeling of satisfaction when performance significantly exceeds expectations (Kadolph, 1998:35). Sattari (2007:15) refers to this feeling as delight. Compared to customer satisfaction, customer delight is a much stronger, positive emotional state of customer engagement, which happens when customers experience a mixture of surprise and happiness because of a product which is not only

satisfying, but provides unanticipated satisfaction (Torres and Kline, 2006; Chandler in Oliver, Rust and Varki, 1997). Businesses therefore need to exceed customers' expectations and delight them, as a moderate satisfaction will not have a high impact on customer satisfaction (Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). In order to exceed customer expectations and delight the customers, a successful business should identify the product dimensions that have more than proportional influence on customer satisfaction, and be able to separate them from the ones that are an absolute must in the eyes of the customer (Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998).

The Kano's model, developed by Kano and his colleagues (1984), is a widely used tool for understanding customer requirements and their impact on customer satisfaction (Wang and Ji, 2009). This model distinguished between three types of requirements namely, (1) must-be requirements, (2) one-dimensional requirements and (3) attractive requirements, which influence customer satisfaction in different ways (Wang and Ji, 2009; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). According to this model, the must-be requirements are the basic requirements, which if not fulfilled will leave the customer extremely dissatisfied. Because the customer takes these requirements for granted, their fulfilment will not increase satisfaction, but only lead to a state of "not dissatisfied". For example, functional comfort of the garment, as well as fit according to the wearer's body measurements. The one-dimensional requirements are those that customers explicitly demand and their fulfilment proportionately influences customer satisfaction. For example, when the client specifically asks the designer to insert a zipper for the front opening of the jacket, rather than buttons and buttonholes. The higher the level of the fulfilment of the one-dimensional requirements, the higher will be the level of customer satisfaction, and vice versa. Attractive requirements are the attributes that have the greatest influence on customer satisfaction. These requirements are neither expected nor explicitly demanded by the customer. Fulfilment of these requirements leads to more than proportional satisfaction. However, their absence will not necessarily result into customer dissatisfaction. When attractive and unexpected product attributes are present, they will enhance customers' perceived value and their satisfaction (Wang and Ji, 2009; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). For example, adding a satin bias binding to finish the edges of seam allowances of a jacket instead of the usual overlocking can be unexpected and attractive enough to leave the customer delighted. Therefore, rather than focusing on the must-be requirements, which are already at the satisfactory level, a business needs to identify product dimensions that will have a great influence on customer satisfaction (Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998).

While customer satisfaction results from fulfillment of expectations (Sattari, 2007:15; Swan and Combs, 1976), customer dissatisfaction is the result of negatively unconfirmed expectations (Dubrovski, 2001). In emotion research, dissatisfaction is described as a



negative term related to anger, hatred and disgust (Storm and Storm in Bougie *et al.*, 2003). Bougie *et al.* (2003) view dissatisfaction as a relatively undifferentiated emotion that is non-specific, in the sense that it is a general reaction to some negative event. This negative event is also referred to as a “dissatisfying marketplace experience”. Stephens and Gwinner (1998) describe a dissatisfying market experience as those consumption events in which the customer’s performance perceptions compare negatively to some standard (when the product performs more poorly than expected).

### **2.5.2 The cognitive appraisal theory**

Cognitive appraisal is defined by Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, Longis and Gruen (1986) as a process through which an individual evaluates whether a particular encounter with the environment is significant to his/her personal well-being, and if so in what way. Lazarus and Lazarus (1994) and Folkman *et al.* (1986) popularised the cognitive appraisal theory, while studying consumption emotions and their impact on post-purchase behaviours . The cognitive appraisal theory has been widely used for better understanding of specific emotions on post consumption behavior, as it offers a more in-depth approach to explain the subtle distinctions of emotions (Wang, 2012; Watson and Spence, 2007). The notion behind the cognitive appraisal approach is that the customer is always active in finding the meanings of events in the environment (Elliot 1997 in Watson and Spence, 2007). Lazarus (1991) underlined the importance of cognitive appraisal in guiding individuals to grasp the significance of what is happening in their encounters with the environment, and in choosing among alternative values and courses of action.

### **Emotions and consumption emotions**

Emotions are among the various states that comprise affect, which are relatively intense reactions that are motivationally potent and tied to a specifiable behaviour (Gardener in Maute and Dube, 1999). Consumption emotions are specifically of interest to this study, as they have been used in customer behaviour theory and empirical research. Prior studies have shown their significant influence on various customer behaviours (Nyer, 1997). Consumption emotions have been found to be significant predictors of complaining behavior and word-of-mouth transmission (Nyer, 1997). Westbrook and Oliver in Maute and Dube (1999), describe consumption emotions as specific affective states elicited during product consumption. While most of the previous studies focused on consumers’ emotional responses to advertising, in the history of satisfaction literature, Westbrook (1987) became one of the first researchers to investigate consumption emotions and their relationship to several post purchasing behaviours (Laros and Steenkamp, 2005). Post purchasing

behaviours can be defined as those behaviors at the stage of the buyer decision process in which customers take further action after purchase, based on their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the outcome of consumption of the purchased product (Kotler and Armstrong in Chang *et al.*, 2010). Such behaviours should be of concern to the business, as they can influence customer loyalty and sales.

### **The role of cognition in emotion**

According to Lazarus (1991), an emotion is always a response to cognitive activity, which generates meaning. The author further emphasizes that cognition is both a necessary and sufficient condition, without which emotions cannot occur. Furthermore, for an emotion to be aroused, the event must be appraised as affecting a person in some way or the person must have personal stake in it (Watson and Spence, 2007; Bougie *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, the mere recognition that an individual has something to gain or lose generates an emotion (Lazarus, 1991). The basic theme that cognition causes emotion is often referred to as cognitive mediation (Lazarus, 1991). Researchers subscribing to cognitive theory of emotion posit that a causal relationship exists between appraisals and emotions in that cognitive appraisal effort of the person-environment situation play a role as the evoking elements of both positive and negative emotional reactions (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Lazarus, 1991; Day, 1984). Thus, emotional differences result from different patterns in which individuals appraise the environment (Demir, Desmet and Hekkert, 2009; Soscia, 2007; Bougie *et al.*, 2003; Desmet, 2003; Dijk and Zeelenberg, 2002). Consequently, neither the specific event as such nor the stimulus determines the emotional response, but rather the subjective appraisal of the stimulus in the context of the individual's needs and coping potential (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Nyer, 1997). This explains why two individuals can have different emotional reactions with different behavioural consequences to the same event (Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer, 1999). For example, anger and sadness can be evoked by the same event. Whereas a sad person may become inactive and withdraw, an angry person may feel energized to fight against the course of anger (Shaver *et al.*, in Laros and Steenkamp, 2005).

If a market experience is appraised as positive (beneficial to one's well-being), common pleasant emotions like joy occur. In contrast, a negative appraisal (harmful to one's well-being) is likely to evoke unpleasant emotions like anger (Demir *et al.*, 2009). Most theorists of emotion posit that the customer's emotional state of being dissatisfied with the consumption experience provides motivational basis for subsequent post-purchase complaining behaviours (Westbrook in Day, 1984). Post-purchase complaining behaviours comprise consumer-initiated communications to the manufacturer to obtain remedy for usage related



problems in a particular consumption transaction (Westbrook, 1987). According to Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004), complaining happens when customers communicate their discontent explicitly to the firm or a third party such as government body or consumer union. After experiencing a post-purchase failure, dissatisfied customers have complaint behavior options ranging from doing nothing while remaining angry, to engaging in some forms of complaint responses (Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Day, 1984). In terms of Day and Landon's taxonomy, dissatisfied customers would either take action or take no action. The taxonomy further makes a distinction between public action (such as seeking redress, seeking legal action, complaining to third party) and private action (such as negative word-of-mouth, boycotting the business). According to Chen-Yu and Hong (2002), the no action option usually happens when the product is non-durable, of low value or the degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction is not very high.

Appraisal takes place in two phases, namely, primary and secondary appraisals. The two appraisal phases converge to determine whether the person-environment transaction is regarded as significant for well-being (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994:143-145; Folkman *et al.*, 1986). During primary appraisal, the individual evaluates whether he/she has anything at stake in a specific encounter. For example, whether there is any potential harm or benefit to one's self-esteem. During secondary appraisal, the individual evaluates if anything can be done to overcome or prevent harm (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Folkman *et al.*, 1986). Secondary appraisal also involves the customers' assessment of their ability to cope with the marketplace problem, by evaluating various coping options (Folkman *et al.*, 1986). Secondary appraisal process takes into account blame attribution for the incident, evaluation of one's own coping potential and assessment of what might happen in the future (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Attribution of blame for the incident (knowing who is responsible) is a necessary process of secondary appraisal (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998).

### **2.5.2.1 Attribution**

Attribution is about who is responsible for the given situation and who or what had control over the stimulus event (Demir *et al.*, 2009; Watson and Spence, 2007). Disconfirmation of expectations often triggers an attempt by the customer to explain why the event (the product's failure to meet expectations) has occurred (Watson and Spence, 2007; Laufer, 2002). While attempting to explain the causes of the disconfirmation, customers may attribute the causes to external factors (someone else was responsible) or to situational factors (no one was responsible) (Weiner, in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). This dimension of attribution, which involves attributing product performance failure to either something within the person or to some outside agent like the manufacturer, is referred to as locus of control

(Laufer, 2002). When customers attribute the cause of failure to themselves, this is termed internal locus, while attributing the cause to the manufacturer or any other agent in the environment or the situation is termed external locus (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2009). The differences in individual customers' perceptions of attributions in terms of the locus, stability and controllability will generate differentiated emotional reactions (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2009).

In consumer behaviour context, when the product performs poorly, specific emotions resulting from cognitive appraisals vary according to the attribution of responsibility for the stressful situation (Donoghue and De Kerk, 2013). A person may only be blamed if he/she is perceived as being responsible and being in control of the event or outcome (Nyer, 1997). For example, Folkes' study revealed that when the cause of failure is attributed to the external source such as the manufacturer, who is believed to have control over the cause, customers would feel angry and have the desire to hurt the manufacturer's business (Laufer, 2002). In order to explain how consumers attribute blame, distinction is made between three dimensions of attribution, namely, locus of control, stability and controllability (Laufer, 2002). The dimension of stability signals whether the same problem can be expected to happen in the future, or whether it was a coincidence, which is not likely to recur in the future (Laufer, 2002). Controllability is a dimension of attribution which concerns the power available to the responsible party to control the variables that caused the situation to occur (Laufer, 2002). Previous studies of attribution in consumer post purchase behavior have shown the significant influence of attribution on complaints, redress seeking and word-of-mouth (Laufer, 2002).

In terms of the attribution theory, a customer who is dissatisfied, while attributing blame to himself/herself (internal) will react differently to the one who is dissatisfied and blames the manufacturer or the circumstances (Krishnan and Valle in Soscia, 2007). Prior research revealed that when a product failure is attributed internally, the manufacturer is not expected to provide remedy, and the customer is less likely to tell others about the negative event (Bougie *et al.*, 2003). Consequently, the customer may not only experience the emotion of sadness, but also self-conscious emotions like guilt, remorse and shame (Soscia, 2007; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). If product failure is attributed to an external source and the cause is viewed as uncontrollable, consumers tend to assess less blame to other entities such as the manufacturer (Laufer, 2002). On the other hand, when the cause of performance failure is viewed as controllable, blame is targeted to the perceived entity that had control (Laufer, 2002). Westbrook in Stephens and Gwinner (1998) points that only emotions arising from external attribution will have a systematic influence on customer's product related post-purchase behaviours such as direct action of complaining. When product failure is attributed

to someone else (externally), the outcome could be anger, disgust or contempt emotions (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). The customer in this situation is more likely to engage in post-purchasing complaint behaviour and negative word of mouth. One can assume that with CMA, even if customers attribute blame to the business, they will be less likely to engage in complaint behaviours since most of the SCMABs operate informally and they lack redress environment. This could discourage customers to engage in direct complaint behaviors, if it is unlikely that the garment can be returned for exchange or refund. The customers might resort to negative word-of-mouth or other means of coping.

### **2.5.2.2 Coping**

According to Donoghue *et al.* (2012) and Bagozzi *et al.* (1999), when the individual appraises a dissatisfying and stressful market encounter to be harmful for personal well-being, negative emotions like anger and sadness could be triggered. This usually leaves the individual in a state of disequilibrium, which will require him/her to engage in one or more coping strategies, in order to return to a normal state. Coping refers to the psychological and behavioural efforts undertaken by the individual to manage the demands of a stressful emotion-evoking event (Nyer, 1997). It involves what individuals do and think in an effort to manage stress and the emotions associated with it (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994:152). The component is about whether one can handle and (or) change the actual or expected harmful aspects of a situation (Demir *et al.*, 2009). For an event to be regarded as stressful, the situation should be taxing or exceeding an individual's psychological resources (Lazarus and Launier in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Nyer, 1997). A dissatisfying market experience therefore serves as the potential stressful event that will be evaluated via the cognitive appraisal process (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998), after which an individual will require coping. However, blame for the incident needs to be assigned for the individual to have a target for coping (Watson and Spence, 2007; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998)

Two major functions of coping have been identified as (1) to regulate stressful emotions and (2) to alter the troubled person-environment relation causing the distress (Folkman *et al.*, 1986). During the process of coping, individuals engage in some post-purchasing behaviours identified in the literature as coping strategies (Soscia, 2007; Watson and Spence, 2007; Mathur, Moschis and Lee, 1999; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994). Individuals use coping strategies to regulate their felt emotions, which include both cognitive and behavioural activities aimed at managing the stressful situation (Soscia, 2007; Folkman and Lazarus in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). The ultimate coping strategy choice is determined by the individual's coping potential. Coping potential is associated with one's perceived ability to deal with or change the situation (Watson and Spence, 2007). For

example, a customer who ordered a very expensive custom-made garment will be dissatisfied if it does not perform as expected. Should the customer appraise the whole event as stressful, (for example feeling that money had been wasted) and attribute blame to the designer, negative emotions such as frustration and anger will be elicited, which will require coping. If the customer intends to confront the designer to remedy the situation, he/she will be considered to have high coping potential. In contrast when the customer is anxious and afraid to confront the designer, this will be an indication of low coping potential, because the customer views himself/herself as having little or no power at all (Demir *et al.*, 2009). Sadness is an example of an emotion that is triggered by a loss for which one recognises that nothing can be done to restore it and is often accompanied by low coping potential (Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999). Low coping potential often leads to passivity, which is manifested in individuals physically or psychologically distancing themselves from the event, while trying to control their emotional responses. The individuals may even seek emotional assistance from others (Menon and Dube, 2004). While Lazarus and Folkman (1984) distinguished between two types of coping strategies, namely, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies, and classified avoidance coping as a type of emotion-focused coping (Mathur *et al.*, 1999), other researchers like Stephens and Gwinner (1998) regarded avoidance coping as a third coping strategy.

**Problem-focused coping** involves dealing directly with the dissatisfying consumption experience (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Customers who use this strategy feel harmed or threatened, but perceive themselves as having strong coping potential because they believe that something can be done about the situation (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). This form of coping strategy may be manifested by an individual's aggressive behaviour, which is directed towards the person that caused the unpleasant situation (Demir *et al.*, 2009). For example, dealing squarely with the problem by complaining to the SCMAB and demand that a new garment be made from scratch, or demanding a refund.

**Emotion-focused coping** is an inwardly directed and private coping strategy, where customers attempt to regulate their mental responses to problems in order to feel better (Lazarus and Launier in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Individuals use it to control distress and the dysfunction that might be caused by the unpleasant event when there is little or nothing else an individual can do (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994:156). The strategy aims at maintaining hope and optimism by denying the facts and implications of the dissatisfying consumption encounter. Rather than doing something, a customer may remain silent and engage in one of several deceptions like denial, self-blame or self-control, which are examples of emotion-focused coping tactics (Lazarus and Folkman in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). For example, rather than complaining to the designer, the CMA customer

might accept responsibility of error by convincing herself that she did not clearly specify to the designer the style and material she wanted (self-blame). Individuals who engage in this technique usually place responsibility for the dissatisfying market event on themselves (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Self-blame may be triggered by fear that complaining will result in other people viewing them negatively (Sorensen and Strahle in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Such individuals would rather blame themselves than face the challenges of seeking redress.

Self-control on the other hand takes place when an individual, even though attributing blame externally, simply remains silent and resists the urge to voice a complaint (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). This often happens because of two factors, firstly, when one feels powerless and believes that nothing can be done to change the situation that caused dissatisfaction, secondly, when one feels compassionate towards the party that caused the dissatisfying situation (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Lazarus in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998, defines compassion as a person's ability to understand and react based on another party's feelings. Compassion therefore acts as the moderator of emotional influence on coping strategies, and it is very common in women, as they have been found to be more empathetic and feeling more personal distress than men when dealing with people (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998).

Emotion-focused coping strategy usually takes place when customers place responsibility for the dissatisfying market event on themselves, and is usually triggered by the fear that other people might view them negatively if they complain (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). The strategy does however not necessarily erase the unhappy situation, but changes the way the customer thinks about the dissatisfying consumption experience (Donoghue and de Klerk, 2013; Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Lazarus and De Longis in Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). According to Mathur *et al.* (1999), Lazarus and Folkman (1984) posited that problem-focused coping strategies tend to be used more often in encounters appraised as controllable, whereas emotion-focused coping strategies tend to be used when an encounter is appraised as uncontrollable.

**Avoidance coping** means the individual physically withdraws from the situation (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). This form of coping strategy takes place when individuals try not to think about what is troubling them and rather focus on something else (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994:159). When engaging in avoidance coping, customers do not deceive themselves by trying to view the event in a positive light or convincing themselves that they are to blame, but they choose to do nothing at all. Such individuals would simply leave the situation, typically feeling that complaining is not worth their efforts, as it would not solve the problem (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Often individuals who engage in this strategy take action to

dissipate the anger by transmitting negative word-of-mouth to friends, family and acquaintances, or boycotting the businesses (Kincade *et al.*, 1998). Unfortunately, these behaviours deny the designer a chance to remedy the situation and can damage the reputation of the business. Consequently, the business will not only lose its existing customers, but also potential new customers.

Research on ready-to-wear apparel quality (Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Kincade *et al.*, 1992) has revealed that only a small portion of dissatisfied customers seek redress from retailers when an apparel product fails to perform as expected. According to Kincade *et al.*, (1998), an estimation of less than 50% of them seek redress from retailers. In light of these findings, it could be assumed that FCMACs would have none or limited problem-focused coping strategies available as SCMABs often lack proper systems for handling complaints concerning unsatisfactory products. This could lead to a tendency towards emotion-focused and avoidance coping strategies in dealing with the dissatisfying product performance. Although the three coping strategies can be distinguished from one another, empirical studies have suggested that individuals may use more than one form of coping strategies when managing stressful encounters (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2013; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998).

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

The goal of customers in every consumption situation is to derive satisfaction. When customers order CMA, they already have prior expectations regarding the performance of the apparel item on both functional and aesthetic aspects. These expectations relate to the perceived level of performance that the customers hope to achieve by using the apparel product. When the apparel product is in use, the customer will compare the initial expectations to its actual performance and see if expectations are confirmed. Confirmation and positive disconfirmation of expectations lead to indifference and satisfaction respectively, while negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction. The customer's cognitive appraisal of the product's performance is likely to evoke positive or negative emotions. When unpleasant emotions such as anger are generated due to the customer appraising the dissatisfying event as stressful, coping will be required to manage the situation. The type of coping strategies used to manage the situation will depend on the customer's subjective appraisal of the whole event. On the other hand, pleasant emotions resulting from customer satisfaction due to product performance that met or exceeded customer's expectations can lead to positive post-purchasing behaviours such as customer loyalty and repurchases, which are beneficial to the business. With the theoretical perspectives and literature in mind, a

schematic conceptual framework was developed to direct the study, which will be explained in Chapter 3.



# CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to explore and describe female custom-made apparel customers' expectations and satisfaction regarding the quality of CMA. This chapter will present the methodology used to address the research objectives for the study. Methodology involves a systematic explanation of the manner in which the research was conducted (Flynn and Foster, 2009:99). First, the conceptual framework and objectives of the study will be discussed. This will be followed by a discussion of the specific steps that were taken to address the objectives under the following headings: (1) research design, (2) sampling plan, (3) the measuring instrument, (4) data collection (5) data analysis (6) quality of data and (7) ethical concerns.

### 3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

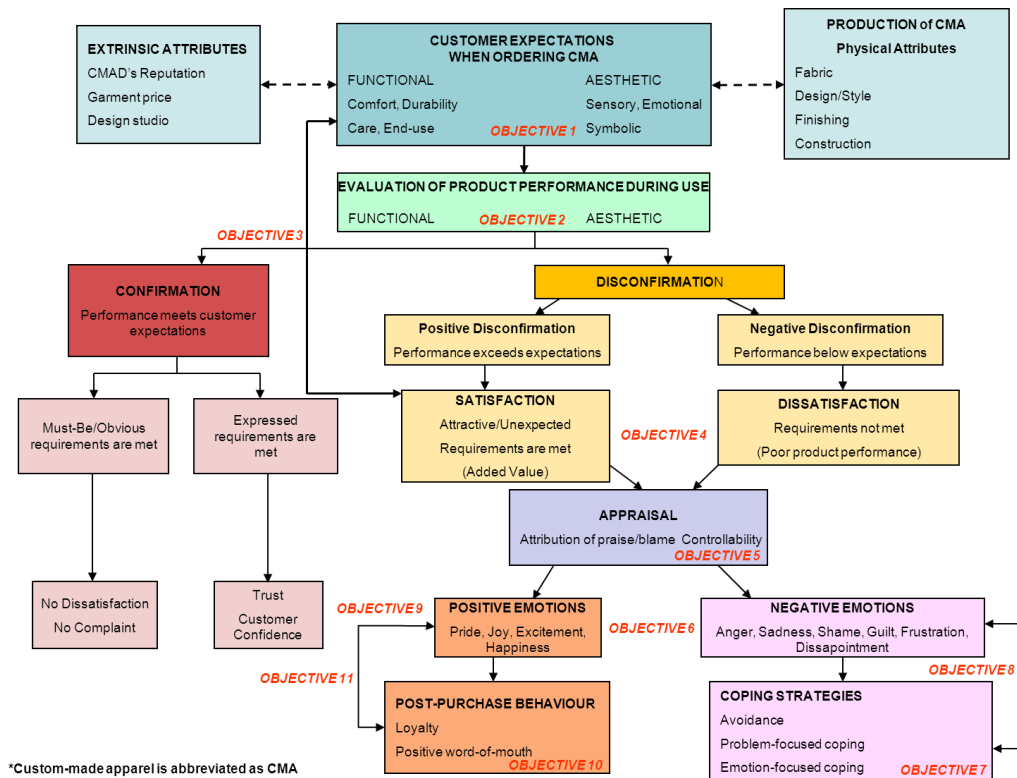


FIGURE 3.1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES



The literature review and the theoretical perspectives were combined to compile the conceptual framework for the study in Figure 3.1. When ordering a custom-made garment, the customer is aware that information is not readily available. Although the customer might have certain expectations on functional and aesthetic attributes of the garment when ordering, evaluation is difficult because no tangible apparel product exists yet. Even though there might be examples of garments on display, in most cases they are not necessarily exactly what the customer is looking for. As a result, the customer may rely on extrinsic cues like reputation and the design studio as quality cues. During interaction with the CMAD, information on the anticipated product's attributes such as fabrics, style, colour (physical attributes), and price (extrinsic attribute) come to light. Such attributes become the basis for evaluating the anticipated product.

During the discussions, a two-way process takes place when the customer's prior expectations are re-evaluated and adapted as the designer gives advice and makes suggestions. After discussions and agreement, the customer will place the order. During the production process, the physical product is partly evaluated when the garment is fitted and necessary adjustments are made. Proper evaluation of the garment will take place when it is complete and during wear and care. Only then will the customer be able to make a comparison between prior expectations and the performance of the garment. The result of the comparison could be either confirmation or disconfirmation of expectations. Confirmation means that the expectations have been met (indifference between expectations and product performance). This means that both the "must-be requirements" and "expressed requirements" have been met. Meeting the must-be requirements will prevent customer dissatisfaction and complaint behaviour, while meeting the expressed requirements will lead to customer confidence and trust in the designer. Disconfirmation can be positive or negative. Positive disconfirmation (when product performance exceeds expectations) will lead to satisfaction, and negative disconfirmation (when product performance is below expectations) will result into dissatisfaction.

According to the cognitive appraisal theory, customers are always active in finding the meaning of events that happen around them. Following a satisfactory or dissatisfactory market encounter, a customer usually appraises the significance of the particular market encounter to her well-being. During appraisal, attribution of praise or blame and who had control over the encounter (controllability) takes place. When the customer is satisfied, praise and controllability can be attributed to the CMAD or the customer herself or other people. The positive emotions that are usually evoked such as joy, pride, excitement or delight will depend on to whom praise is attributed. Positive emotions could lead to positive word-of-mouth about the business and customer loyalty towards the business. Similarly, when a

dissatisfying market encounter is appraised, blame and controllability is attributed to the customer self or the CMAD or others. Depending on the party blamed, negative emotions such as shame, guilt, sadness, anger or frustration are usually evoked. These emotions will require the customer to engage in one or a combination of the coping strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused or avoidance coping). The choice of the coping strategies depends on the degree of significance of the event to the individual's well-being and the type and intensity of the emotion experienced.

In view of the preceding background, the following objectives and sub-objectives were formulated for the study:

1. To explore and describe the importance of functional and aesthetic expectations to female custom-made apparel customers (FCMACs).
  - to explore and describe the importance of functional expectations to FCMACs.
  - to explore and describe the importance of aesthetic expectations to FCMACs.
2. To explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional and aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations
  - to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional performance of CMA in relation to the expectations.
  - to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations.
3. To determine and describe the relationship between the importance of customer expectations and satisfaction with the performance of CMA.
4. To explore and describe the FCMACs' overall satisfaction with the performance of CMA
5. To explore and describe the dissatisfied and satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and (or) controllability
  - to explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and controllability
  - to explore and describe the satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution
6. To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA
7. To explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' coping strategies.

8. To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA and the coping strategies they use in terms of complaint behaviour.
9. To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA.
10. To explore and describe satisfied FCMACs' post-purchasing behaviours.
11. To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA and post-purchasing behaviours.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design is a plan or strategy used by the researcher to conduct research (Flynn and Foster, 2009:121). A survey-based research design, which is associated with deductive approach, was used for the study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009:144). The research purpose was exploratory and descriptive. Exploratory research delves into the unknown, tackling new problem issues on which little or no previous research has been done (Walliman, 2005:249; Neuman, 2000:21). Due to lack of information on SCMABs in South Africa, the study was exploratory and it aimed at forming a base for further research. Descriptive research involves describing a certain phenomenon following observation. It is more concerned with examining persons, situations, social settings or relationships as they are and describing how things are, than explaining why things happen (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013:184; Robsons, in Saunders *et al.*, 2009:140; Neuman, 2000:22). For this study, the main purpose was to gain insight into the FCMACs' expectations and satisfaction regarding the quality of CMA and to describe that accurately.

The following elements were described in detail during the descriptive phase of the study: (1) the importance of functional and aesthetic expectations to FCMACs, (2) the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional and aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations, (3) the relationship between important customer expectations and satisfaction with the performance of CMA, (4) the FCMACs' overall level of satisfaction with the performance of CMA, (5) the FCMACs' appraisal of the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and controllability, (6) the emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA, (7) the dissatisfied customers' coping strategies, (8) the relationship between the emotions experienced following dissatisfaction and coping strategies, (9), the emotions experienced following satisfaction with the performance of CMA, (10) the satisfied customers' post purchasing behaviours and (11) the relationship between emotions following satisfaction and the post purchasing behaviours.

The research was predominantly quantitative in nature. When using quantitative research, precise measurements are used and quantities are expressed as numbers that can be analysed by statistical methods (Walliman, 2005:322). The data collection took place within a specific period from November 2012 to April 2013. The findings will therefore reflect on participants who resided in the specific Tshwane regions during the above-mentioned period.

### **3.4 SAMPLING PLAN**

#### **3.4.1 The target population**

The target population is the group of interest to the researcher to which the results of the study could be generalized (Lunenborg and Irby, 2008:165). For this study, the researcher targeted females who resided in the greater Tshwane (Pretoria) region and had custom-made garments made for them in the past.

#### **3.4.2 The unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis, which refers to the person or object from whom the social researcher collects data (Bless and Higson-Smith in Fouche and De Vos, 2005:104) consisted of females who resided in the East, South and West regions of Tshwane. Race and cultural differences were irrelevant. The participants in addition had to meet the following criteria:

- Age: 18 and above
- Income: They had to fall in the LSM group 6 -10
- Have had one or more custom-made outfit/garment owned and worn in the past

The LSM grouping 6 -10 population was chosen since they reside in urban areas and are aged 16 and above. Although this population group comprises of only 34% of the total adult South African population, they account for 79% of the total income. Approximately 50% of this population is comprised of females (Du Plessis and Rousseau, 2005:89-91). Based on this data, it can be assumed that females falling within this group would afford to have clothes that are custom-made.

#### **3.4.3 Sampling technique and size**

A non-probability purposive sampling method was used to recruit the sample for the study. Purposive sampling is based on the experience and the knowledge of the researcher that the subjects selected are a typical sample (Lunenborg and Irby, 2008:175; Walliman, 2005:279).

For this study, consumers who wear custom-made clothes (population of interest) are a specialised market with specific needs and preferences. Because these consumers are a small population that is not easily accessible, this sampling technique was appropriate to investigate this population. To reach out to more respondents, in addition to purposive sampling, a snowball technique was used, whereby additional respondents were obtained by requesting initial respondents to identify and refer others who met the criteria set for the sample (Walliman, 2005:279; McDaniel and Gates, 2004:287). This technique is most appropriate when members of a special population are difficult to locate (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:167). A sample of at least 200 respondents was suggested as appropriate to perform the necessary descriptive statistics.

### **3.5 THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT**

#### **The structured questionnaire**

Prior to the development of the questionnaire, a thorough literature review was compiled. Because the research was exploratory, one-on-one interviews were conducted with twelve participants on their latest custom-made garments. Five of them were satisfied and seven dissatisfied with their garments/outfits. The researcher prepared in advance an interview schedule with a set of predetermined questions to guide the interview process by (Greeff, 2005:296). The voices were recorded and later transcribed. The main purpose of the interviews was to get insight into the indicators used by the FCMACs when evaluating the quality of CMA. The gathered information facilitated the development and completion of the questionnaire. This enhanced the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was structured because the same questions with the same answering options were given to all the respondents (Hofstee, 2007:132). A structured questionnaire is an appropriate measuring tool to obtain information from a large sample and it enables the researcher to receive responses to questions without having to talk to every respondent (Walliman, 2005:281). This ensured the respondents' confidentiality because the researcher did not interact with them or even observe them while completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire included items on a four-point Likert-type scale and a nominal Yes/No scale. A four-point Likert-type scale was used to avoid neutral responses such as "unsure" or "uncertain". This prevents people choosing such options in a rush to complete the questionnaire.

The supervisor, co-supervisor and the statisticians at the University of Pretoria evaluated the questionnaire to ensure that it addressed all the objectives of the study. In order to eliminate ambiguity of the concepts and possible errors, a registered language editor edited the questionnaire and the cover letter. According to Walliman (2005:282), a questionnaire should be pre-tested on a small number of people of a type similar to that of the intended sample, to anticipate any problems of comprehension or other sources of confusion. After editing, the questionnaire was pre-tested on a sample of fifteen respondents. Necessary amendments were made and one more question was added to section A, at the suggestion of the supervisors. A column was added to the right edge of the questionnaire in preparation for coding after data collection, to facilitate data capturing and statistical analysis (Neuman, 2000:506). The questionnaire included 19 questions, which were categorised into the following four sections:

### **Section A: Demographic information**

This section consisted of seven questions, which covered the demographic aspects like age and population group, while the rest addressed other issues related to the study such as reasons for choosing a custom-made garment, the time when the garment was made, the cost of the garment and the occasion for which the garment was made.

### **Section B: Performance expectations and satisfaction with the performance**

The section was divided into two parts as follows:

- **Part 1: Performance expectations**

The first part measured the expectations of customers regarding the performance of the garment/outfit at the time of ordering. Statements were used to ask the respondents to rate the importance of their expectations regarding the functional and aesthetic performance of the garment. Three statements measured each performance dimension. A four-point Likert-type scale (1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = less important and 4 = not important) was used.

- **Part 2: Satisfaction with the performance**

The second part measured the customers' satisfaction with the actual performance of their garments/outfits during wear and care. Three statements were used to measure the satisfaction with the performance per each dimension. The statements asked the

respondents to rate their satisfaction with actual performance of the garment on each dimension on a four-point Likert-type scale (1 = very satisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3 = dissatisfied and 4 = very dissatisfied). Following this, the respondents were asked to rate their overall level of satisfaction with the performance of the garment, also on a four-point Likert-type scale (1 = very satisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3 = dissatisfied and 4 = very dissatisfied).

### **Section C: Appraisal, attribution of blame, emotions and coping strategies**

Only the respondents who were dissatisfied with the performance of the garments/outfits had to complete this section. The respondents were asked to indicate the party they blamed for the poor performance of the garment/outfit, and to indicate if they believed the party could have prevented the poor performance. They were also asked to indicate the intensity of the emotions they experienced following dissatisfaction on a four-point Likert scale (1= extremely, 2 = very, 3 = reasonably, 4 = not at all). The emotions included sadness, anger, frustration, stress, shock, unpleasant surprise and disappointment. Finally, the respondents were asked to indicate the post purchasing behaviours they used to cope with their emotions following dissatisfaction by choosing from a list with options on a nominal Yes/No scale.

### **Section D: Appraisal, attribution of praise, emotions and post-purchasing behaviour**

Only the respondents who were satisfied with the product's performance had to complete this section. Respondents were asked to indicate the party they believed deserved to be praised for the satisfactory performance. They also had to indicate the intensity of the emotions they experienced following satisfactory performance on a four-point Likert-type scale (1 = extremely, 2 = very, 3 = reasonably and 4 = not at all). The emotions included were joy, happiness, excitement, pleasant surprise, and pride. Finally, they were asked to indicate the post-purchasing behaviours they engaged in following satisfaction with the performance of their garments/outfits on a nominal Yes/No scale.

## **3.6 DATA COLLECTION**

Data was collected from the respondents by means of a self-administered structured questionnaire.



## **The format of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire's format was paper-based and online-based. A cover letter with a brief explanation of the nature of the study was attached to the front of the questionnaire. The paper-based format was handed out at the respondents' places of convenience with the help of trained field workers. Some respondents completed and returned it immediately, while most opted to complete it at convenient times and to return it within a period specified by the researcher. Completed questionnaires were collected from respondents at their convenient times and places. In instances where it would have been difficult to collect the questionnaire, a self-addressed and stamped envelope was provided with the questionnaire, so that it could be returned by mail. The researcher also contacted a number of CMADs in the regions selected. The designers were given a briefing about the nature of the study and some agreed to assist. They helped by distributing the questionnaire to their own customers they were able to reach. A link with the online-based questionnaire was distributed via e-mail as it turned out to be a convenient method for some of the respondents. The same CMADs who assisted with distributing the questionnaires to their customers, were also requested to provide lists with names and phone contacts of other customers they could not reach at that time. The researcher contacted the customers, requesting their e-mail addresses and their permission to participate. The willing customers were sent the link with the online version of the questionnaire to complete.

Data collection took a period of six months from November 2012 to April 2013 due to the difficulty in finding suitable respondents, as well as getting back the completed questionnaires. Although 350 paper-based questionnaires were handed out, only 142 were complete and useful, resulting in a response rate of 41%. The online version of the questionnaire generated 67 responses, which were complete and useful. A questionnaire was considered incomplete and not useful if 15% or more of the questions were unanswered or incorrectly answered. In total, 209 useful questionnaires were retrieved.

### **3.7 OPERATIONALISATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Table 3.1 presents the operationalisation of the questionnaire in detail. Each research objective is linked to the questionnaire. The variables used to measure the objectives, as well as the statistical methods that were used to analyse the data are also specified.



**TABLE 3.1: OPERATIONALISATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Objectives	Sections	Variables	Statistical analysis
1. To explore and describe the importance of functional and aesthetic expectations to female custom-made apparel customers (FCMACs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to explore and describe the importance of functional expectations to FCMACs</li> <li>to explore and describe the importance of aesthetic expectations to FCMACs</li> </ul>	Section B Question 8	v8.1 – v8.21	Frequencies Percentages
2. To explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional and aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional performance of CMA in relation to the expectations</li> <li>to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations</li> </ul>	Section B Questions 9	v9.1 – v9.21	Frequencies Percentages
3. To determine and describe the relationship between the importance of customer expectations and satisfaction with the performance of CMA.	Section B Questions 8 & 9	v8.1 – v8.21 v9.1 – v9.21	Frequencies Chi-square Fisher's exact test p-value signification (5% level of significance)
4. To explore and describe the FCMACs' overall satisfaction with the performance of CMA	Section B Question 10	v10	Frequencies Percentages
5. To explore and describe the dissatisfied and satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and (or) controllability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and controllability</li> <li>to explore and describe the satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution</li> </ul>	Section C Questions 11 & 12 Section D Question 17	v11 & v12 v17	Frequencies Percentages
6. To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA	Section C Question 13	v13.1 – v13.7	Frequencies Percentages
7. To explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' coping strategies	Section C Question 15	v15.1 – v15.4	Frequencies Percentages
8. To determine and describe the relationship between FCMAC's emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA and the coping strategies they use in terms of complaint behaviour.	Section C Question 13 & Question 15	v13.1 – v13.7 v15.1 – v15.4	Frequencies Chi-square Fisher's exact test p-value signification (5% level of significance)
9. To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA	Section D Question 18	v18.1 – v18.6	Frequencies Percentages
10. To explore and describe satisfied FCMACs' post-purchasing behaviours.	Section D Question 19	v19.1 – v19.3	Frequencies Percentages
11. To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA and post-purchasing behaviours	Section D Question 18 & 19	v18.1 – v18.6 v19.1 – v19.3	Frequencies Chi-square test for association Fisher's exact test p-value signification (5% level of significance)

### 3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a necessary process that reduces data to a form such that logical interpretations are made and conclusions drawn in relation to the research problem under study (Kruger, De Vos, Fouché and Venter, 2005:218). It involves organizing and manipulating collected data to get them to reveal specific aspects about the phenomena

studied, as well as about the social world (Neuman, 2000:313). Descriptive statistics and some statistical tests (Cronbach's alpha coefficient, chi-square and Fisher's exact tests) were used to facilitate data analysis.

### **3.8.1 Data capturing**

Data were cleaned, captured and then analysed by using SAS 9.3 software.

### **3.8.2 Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics is a method of organising and describing quantitative data into an easily comprehensible and manageable form (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:459). Data were presented and described by using frequency tables, bar charts and pie charts.

### **3.8.3 Cronbach's alpha coefficient**

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a measure of internal consistency, which tests each set of items per construct (Du Plessis and Rosseau, 2005:293). Internal consistency describes the extent to which a set of items in a test measure a particular construct or concept, and is expressed as a number between zero and one (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). For this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient tests were done with the purpose of determining consistency between the three statements that measured each dimension for both important expectations and satisfaction. The result of  $\alpha \geq 0.7$  is usually an indication of internal reliability for the social sciences. However, for the purpose of this study  $\alpha \geq 0.65$  was set as an acceptable cut-off.

### **3.8.4 Chi-square and Fisher's exact tests**

The chi-square is a test of significance that ascertains whether there is a statistical significant relationship (association) between two variables (Krieg, 2012:200; Kruger, 2005:243; Walker and Maddan, 2013:85). It also indicates the strength of the relationship between two variables (Neuman, 200:340). The results of the test are determined by the difference between the observed and expected frequencies (Walker and Maddan, 2013:85), where the expected frequency refers to the frequency that would be found if there was no relationship between the variables (Foster, 2006:3). The expected and the observed frequencies are compared to determine if they differ significantly and whether the difference is real or is due to sampling error. The level of significance was established at 0.05, which is considered the standard for most science experiments. This level of significance is a point at which it can be

said with 95% confidence that the difference is not only due to chance (Walker and Maddan, 2013:83). However, in cases where a number of cells with expected frequencies were less than 5, the Fisher's exact test, which is an extension of the chi-square test was used instead to get more valid results (Walker and Maddan, 2013:85). For this study, the test was performed to determine the relationship between the following:

- The importance of expectations and satisfaction with the performance (Objective 3).
- Emotions following dissatisfaction and the coping strategies used (Objective 7).
- Emotions following satisfaction and the subsequent post-purchasing behaviours (Objective 10).

**TABLE 3.2: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE IMPORTANCE OF EASE OF WASHING AND SATISFACTION WITH EASE OF WASHING**

Frequency Expected Cell Chi-Square Percent Row Pct Col Pct	Table vv8_8 by vv9_8		Total
	vv8_8 (Important easy to wash)	vv9_8 (Satisfied easy to wash)	
	Less & Not	Satisfied	
Important	23 35.025 4.1284 11.44 17.97 41.82	105 92.975 1.5552 52.24 82.03 71.92	128   63.68
Less & Not	32 19.975 7.2389 15.92 43.84 58.18	41 53.025 2.727 20.4 56.16 28.08	73   36.32
Total	55 23.36	146 72.64	201 100

Frequency Missing = 8

Statistics for Table of vv8\_8 by vv9\_8

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	1	15.6495	<.0001
Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square	1	15.2664	<.0001
Continuity Adj. Chi-Square	1	14.3751	<.0001
Mantel-Haenszel Chi-Square	1	15.5717	<.0001
Phi Coefficient		-0.279	
Contingency Coefficient		0.2688	
Cramer's V		0.279	

Table 3.2 illustrates an example of the chi-square test results. Only 201 respondents answered this particular question completely. Sixty four percent (63.68%) of them indicated that it was important that the garment should be easy to wash. Of these, 82.03% were satisfied that the garment was easy to wash. The p-value for this test is < .0001, indicating a highly significant relationship between the importance of the garment being easy to wash and the satisfaction with it being easy to wash. The respondents who indicated that it was very

important and important that the garment was easy to wash, were satisfied that it was easy to wash. All the other tests for relationship were done and interpreted in a similar way.

### **3.9 QUALITY OF DATA**

Before data collection takes place, the researcher needs to ensure that the measurement procedures and the measurement instrument have acceptable levels of reliability and validity in order to obtain reliable and valid data (Delpont, 2005:160).

#### **3.9.1 Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which the measuring instrument measures what the researcher intended to measure (Leedy and Omrod, 2010:28; McDaniels and Gates, 2004:202). For a measuring instrument to be valid, it should accurately measure the concept in question (Delpont, 2005:160; Babbie and Mouton, 2001:122). The following aspects of validity were important for the study:

##### ***3.9.1.1 Theoretical Validity***

A proper literature review was done and clear definitions of concepts were given. Theoretical concepts were translated into a questionnaire to ensure that the same language was used for theory and the questionnaire, in order to combat ambiguity and vagueness of abstract concepts. Theoretical validity was also reinforced by including the terminology that emerged from the one-on-one interviews in the questionnaire.

##### ***3.9.1.2 Measurement validity***

- *Content validity*: This validity is concerned with the representativeness or sampling adequacy of the content of the measuring instrument (Delpont, 2005:160-161; McDaniels and Gates, 2004:203). It involves the extent to which the measuring instrument is a representative sample of the content of the phenomenon being measured. To ensure content validity, all statements and questions in the questionnaire were linked to the main objectives of the study and they reflected the various parts of the topic in appropriate proportions.
- *Face validity*: This concerns the extent to which, on the surface, a measuring instrument appears to be measuring a particular characteristic (Leedy and Ormrod,

2013:89). This validity is based upon the logical link between the questions and the objectives of the study (Kumar, 2011:179). The supervisor and co-supervisor evaluated the questionnaire to ensure that it accurately reflected what it was supposed to measure.

- *Construct validity*: This involves determining the degree to which an instrument successfully measures a theoretical construct (Delpont, 2005:162). In order to assess construct validity, the theoretical foundations underlying the obtained measurements should be understood (McDaniels and Gates, 2004:205). Through literature review, the constructs were clearly defined and confirmed by the one-on-one interviews. More than one indicator was used to measure each construct. The questionnaire was pre-tested on a sample of fifteen respondents in order to examine the ease of administration, appropriateness of terminology used and clarity of the questions.

### **3.9.1.3 Inferential validity**

This has to do with the conclusions drawn from the study. Through understanding of the literature, appropriate techniques were used to analyse the data to ensure that valid conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study. The statisticians at the University of Pretoria assisted by providing a report based on the data in a form that valid findings and conclusions were drawn. However, for valid inferences and conclusions to be drawn, the sample should be representative of the population being studied (Kruger *et al.*, 2005:218). Because a non-probability purposive sample was used for this study, the aim was not to generalise to the entire target population but to explore and describe an unknown phenomenon.

## **3.9.2 Reliability**

Reliability is the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields the same result with the same population or comparable populations if used repeatedly (McDaniel and Gates, 2004:125). The following techniques were applied to ensure the reliability of the measuring instrument:

### **3.9.2.1 Conceptualization**

All the relevant constructs were properly defined and conceptualised for the purpose of the study.

- One-on-one interviews were conducted before the questionnaire was finalised to ensure that its contents were reliable.
- More than one indicator was used in the questionnaire to represent each concept. It is always a good idea to have more than one item measuring the same concept to improve reliability (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011; Babbie and Mouton 2001:121).
- To ensure proper administration of the questionnaire, adequate and clear instructions were given to fieldworkers. A cover letter with instructions and additional instructions within the questionnaire itself was provided.
- The questionnaire was pre-tested on a sample of 15 before data collection took place.
- Following data collection, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient test was done to test internal consistency between the statements that measured each dimension.

### 3.10 ETHICAL CONCERNS

Research ethics are principally concerned with the effects of the research on people who are involved in the research process in one way or the other (Walliman, 2005:342). Researchers have ethical responsibility to those who participate in the study, as well as to the discipline of science to report the findings of the study in an accurate and honest manner (Gravetter and Forzano in Strydom, 2005:56). The following strategies were implemented to ensure proper ethical behaviour:

**Informed consent:** Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. A cover letter attached to the questionnaire provided the respondents with complete and accurate information concerning the research study, for them to make voluntary informed decision about their possible participation. Respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason if they so wished. They were also requested to sign at the bottom of the letter to indicate their agreement to participate.

**Protection from harm:** The researcher has a duty to guard against the dangers that can harm the subjects psychologically during the course of a social research study (Babbie, 2011:479). Respondents were informed beforehand about the nature of the investigation and were at no point subjected to any form of emotional harm. The researcher was careful not to extract very sensitive and personal information that could cause harm to the subjects.

**The right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality:** Any research study that involves human beings as participants should respect their rights to privacy (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013:107). The respondents were informed that their responses would be anonymous and

that codes, rather than their names would be used to label their response documents. To ensure confidentiality of the information given by the respondents, an envelope was attached to each questionnaire that was given to the designers who assisted with data collection. The respondents were requested to return the questionnaires in sealed envelopes.

**Competence of the researcher:** Researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation (Strydom, 2005:63). The postgraduate committee of the Department of Consumer Science approved the research proposal, qualifying the researcher to advance with the study.

**Honesty with professional colleagues:** Researchers have ethical obligations to their colleagues concerning the analysis of data and the way in which the results are reported (Babbie, 2011:487). The findings of the study were reported in a complete and honest manner, without any misrepresentation that might mislead others about the nature of the study. Limitations and any shortcomings of the study were made known to the readers.

**Avoidance of plagiarism:** Acknowledgement of sources consulted for the study remains a key ethical principle of scientific publication (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:527). Proper referencing of all the sources used was made to credit the authors.

**Ethics committee:** To ensure that the study fulfilled all the ethical requirements, the research proposal was presented to the University of Pretoria's ethics committee and an approval was granted before data collection started.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **RESEARCH RESULTS, DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATION**

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### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

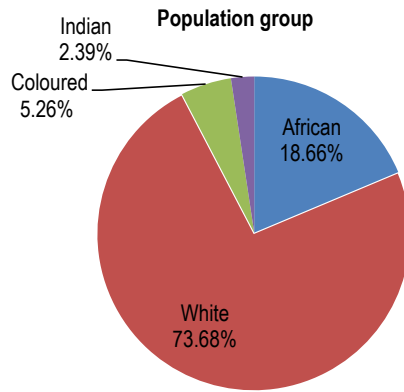
This chapter presents a descriptive summary of the findings from the sample. Data were described by means of descriptive statistics, analysed and interpreted in order to provide answers to the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics involves the interpretation and summarization of frequency distributions and percentage distributions (Rose and Sullivan, 1996:84). Data analysis involves categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising the data, while interpretation has to do with explaining and finding meaning out of the data (Kruger *et al.*, 2005:218). Data is expressed in terms of frequencies and percentages, and is presented in tabular and figural forms in order to make it easily comprehensible. For the purpose of the study, percentages are shown to two decimal places. The sample is first described in terms of its demographic characteristics and other descriptive characteristics that formed part of the questionnaire. Thereafter data is analysed in terms of the objectives and sub-objectives of the study. The respondents in the study answered the questionnaire based on a custom-made garment or outfit. However, for the purposes of analysis, the word garment(s) was used to refer to both garment(s) and outfit(s).

### **4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

Respondents were asked to indicate their population group and age.

#### **4.2.1 Population group**



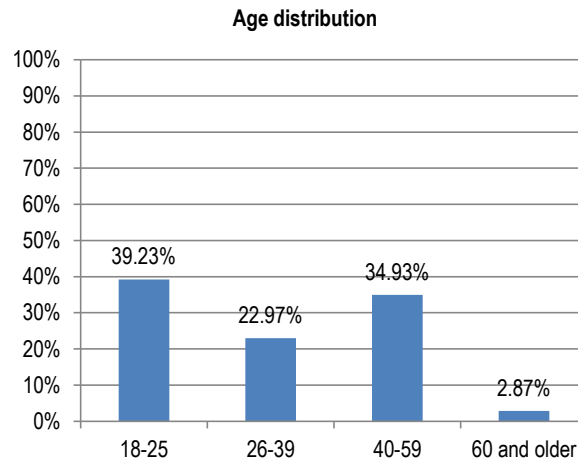


**FIGURE 4.1: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY POPULATION GROUP**

The results of the population group in Figure 4.1 indicate that nearly three quarters of the respondents (73.68%) were coincidentally White. Only 18.66% of the respondents were African while the rest (5.26% and 2.39%) were Coloured and Indian respectively. A high representation of White respondents could be ascribed to the sampling method. Firstly, most of the respondents were recruited from the East and Centurion regions of Tshwane, because some SCMABs in these regions were willing to assist by requesting their own customers to complete the questionnaire. These areas presumably have the highest concentration of the White population compared to the other population groups. A smaller proportion of the respondents were recruited from Pretoria West region of Tshwane. Secondly, most of the field workers who assisted with data collection were White, who could have conveniently identified mostly White respondents. However, racial and cultural differences were irrelevant to the study.

#### **4.2.2 Age distribution**

The respondents were asked to indicate their exact age in years. For the purpose of the study, their ages were grouped into categories for easier management of data.



**FIGURE 4.2: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY AGE**

Figure 4.2 represents the age profile of the 209 respondents who participated in the study. The respondents who fell within the age group of 18-25, who constituted 39.23% of the sample population were categorised as young adults, who were probably mostly tertiary students. Some of them are assumed to have just started working and still in the early ages of developing careers. The respondents who fell within the age group 26-39 were categorised as adults and less than a quarter of the sample (22.97%) fell in this group. While some of these adults are still in their early ages of developing careers, some are assumed to have already established careers and are likely to be married with young children. Approximately a third (34.93%) of the respondents categorised as middle aged, were between the ages 40-59. This middle age group is mainly composed of respondents who are matured and at the height of their careers. A proportionally smaller percentage (2.87%) were older people who were 60 years and above.

Although the highest representation came from young adults with 39.23%, it seems as if young adults and middle-aged respondents are the most likely to order CMA, as together they make up 74.16% (39.23% + 34.93%) of the population sample that ordered such apparel. This could be ascribed to the fact that young adults, especially those who have just started working and do not have many responsibilities yet, as well as middle-aged consumers who mostly have grown up adult children, have less financial responsibilities. Based on this, it can be assumed that these respondents have enough disposable income to spend on CMA, which usually requires more financial investment compared to ready-to-wear apparel (Foreman, 2007; Koskennurmi-Sivonen and Pietarila, n.d).

### 4.3 OTHER DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

#### 4.3.1 Occasion for which the garment was made

Respondents were asked to indicate the occasions for which the garments were made, and the results are illustrated in Table 4.1.

**TABLE 4.1: OCCASION FOR WHICH THE GARMENT WAS MADE**

Occasion for which the garment was made		
Occasion	Frequency	%
Day/Career wear	56	26.79
Special occasion	153	73.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.00</b>

n = 209

The results indicate that most of the respondents had their garments custom-made for special occasions. Garments for special occasion for the study excluded wedding gowns. Approximately a quarter (26.79%) of the respondents had their apparel custom-made for day or career wear. It appears as if female clothing customers are less likely to invest more money on day/career wear than on clothes for special occasion. A study by Smith (2010) on professional women's decision making when purchasing career wear, revealed that although the women had spending power, they were unwilling to spend large amounts of money on career wear.

#### 4.3.2 Months during which the garments were made

**TABLE 4.2: MONTHS DURING WHICH THE GARMENTS WERE MADE**

Month of ordering	%
January - April	15.79
May - Aug	27.76
Sep - Dec	46.89
Missing	9.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.2 illustrates that most of the respondents ordered their garments towards and during the end of the year (September to December). During this period of the year, people usually have special events and functions to attend, which explains why the demand for CMA is high. Table 4.1 indicated that most of the respondents had their garments made for special occasions.

### 4.3.3 Reasons for choosing a custom-made garment

Respondents were asked to indicate reasons for choosing a custom-made rather than a ready-to-wear garment and they could indicate more than one reason. The results are illustrated in Table 4.3.

**TABLE 4.3: REASONS FOR CHOOSING CMA**

Reason for choosing custom-made	Frequency	% (n=209)
Specific fit for body type	116	55.50
Something personal and unique	133	63.64
Specific colours and design	113	54.07
Something professionally made	60	28.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>422</b>	

n=209

As illustrated by Table 4.3, 63.64% of the respondents specified they chose custom-made garments because they were seeking something personal and unique, 55.50% wanted specific fit for their body types, 54.07% wanted specific colours and designs, while 28.71% were looking for something professionally made. The fact that only few respondents specified that they wanted something professionally made may suggest that most customers were not really concerned with how durable and neat the garment was in terms of construction, for as long as it fitted well, was unique and the materials used were of the colours they preferred. This is probably because most had their garments made for special occasions, of which some were probably worn once, making the durability of the garment in terms of seams and finishing to be of less importance. It is interesting to note that a specific fit for body type, was considered by only 55.50% of the respondents as the reason for seeking a custom-made garment, in comparison to having something personal and unique (63.64%).

### 4.3.4 Type of small business from which the garment was ordered

The definitions of formal and informal small businesses for the study were provided in Chapter 1. The respondents were asked to indicate on a nominal scale of Yes/No, the types of a small businesses from which they ordered their custom-made garments. The results are illustrated in Table 4.4.

**TABLE 4.4: TYPE OF SMALL BUSINESS FROM WHICH THE GARMENT WAS ORDERED**

Type of small business	Frequency	%
Formal	51	24.40
Informal	158	75.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>

n = 209

Table 4.4 clearly illustrates that a substantial number of respondents (75.60%) had their custom-made garments made by an informal kind of business as opposed to 24.40% who had theirs made by a formal business. These findings correspond with the Department of Trade and Industry's 2005-2007 Annual Review of Small Business statistics. According to the report, by 2007 South Africa had 2.4 million small enterprises of which only 595 000 were in the formal sector, while 1.4 million were classified as informal. Moreover, in 2012, more informal and owner managed enterprises existed, but were not captured in any statistics (Ngwenya, 2012:201).

#### 4.3.5 Amount of money spent on the garment

The questionnaire was based on either a custom-made garment or an outfit. A garment for the study refers to any individual piece of clothing item worn to cover the body, for example, pants, blouse, dress, skirt or jacket. An outfit refers to garments worn together as a set, for example, a skirt and blouse, jacket and pants suit, skirt and jacket suit. The respondents were asked to indicate the amount of money they spent on the garments/outfits to the nearest rand and this is illustrated in Table 4.5.

**TABLE 4.5: AMOUNT OF MONEY SPENT ON THE GARMENT**

Amount spent( in Rands)	Frequency	%	Combined %
500 and below	64	30.62	<b>54.54</b>
600 - 1000	50	23.92	
1100 - 3000	64	30.62	<b>40.67</b>
3100 +	21	10.05	
Missing	10	4.78	4.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

n = 209

It can be assumed that some of the respondents who spent R 500.00 and below had an individual piece item such as a skirt or blouse. Slightly over half (54.54%) of the respondents spent R1000.00 and below, while 40.67% spent R 1100.00 and above. Since both formal and informal businesses were included, it can be argued that the amount spent depended on

the type of business from which each customer ordered their CMA, as well as whether it was garment or outfit.

#### **4.4 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVES**

##### **4.4.1 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 1: To explore and describe the importance of functional and aesthetic expectations to FCMACs**

Sub-objective 1.1: to explore and describe the importance of functional expectations to FCMACs

Sub-objective 1.2: to explore and describe the importance of aesthetic expectations to FCMACs

Twenty one statements were used to assess expectations of a good quality custom-made garment. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each statement on a four-point Likert-type scale. For the purposes of analysis, the statements were grouped according to the dimensions they measured in order to get the average scores. Furthermore, the “very important” and “important” response categories were combined, while the less “important and “not important” categories were combined. Table 4.6 shows the results.

**TABLE 4.6: THE IMPORTANCE OF FUNCTIONAL AND AESTHETIC EXPECTATIONS TO FCMACs**

Construct	Statement in questionnaire	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Less important (%)	Not important (%)	Missing (%)	VERY IMPORTANT + IMPORTANT (%)	LESS IMPORTANT + NOT IMPORTANT (%)
Care v8.1	It should not crease easily	42.58	28.23	19.62	9.09	0.48	70.81	28.71
Care v8.8	It should be easy to wash	35.41	27.27	23.44	12.44	1.44	62.68	35.88
Care v8.15	It should need little or no ironing	21.53	31.10	33.01	12.92	1.44	52.63	45.93
<b>Average</b>		<b>33.17</b>	<b>28.87</b>	<b>25.36</b>	<b>11.48</b>	<b>1.12</b>	<b>62.04</b>	<b>36.84</b>
Durability v8.2	The material should be of quality that would last a long time	52.15	32.54	10.05	4.78	0.48	84.69	14.83
Durability v8.9	It should retain shape after wear and care	56.94	27.27	10.53	4.78	0.48	84.21	15.31
Durability v8.16	The construction and finishing should be strong	61.72	30.14	5.26	1.44	1.44	91.86	6.7
<b>Average</b>		<b>56.94</b>	<b>29.98</b>	<b>8.61</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>86.92</b>	<b>12.28</b>
Comfort v8.3	It should allow room for easy movement	63.64	27.27	6.70	2.39	-	90.91	9.09
Comfort v8.10	The material should not scratch my skin	72.73	19.62	5.26	1.91	0.48	92.35	7.17
Comfort v8.17	It should be comfortable for the season's weather	51.67	33.01	12.44	2.87	-	84.68	15.31
<b>Average</b>		<b>62.68</b>	<b>26.63</b>	<b>8.13</b>	<b>2.39</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>89.31</b>	<b>10.52</b>
Suitability for end-use v8.4	It should be suitable for the occasion for which it was made	81.34	16.75	0.48	1.44	-	98.09	1.92
Suitability for end-use v8.11	It should be possible to wear it to other occasions	30.62	33.01	24.40	11.48	0.48	63.63	35.88
Suitability for end-use v8.18	It should be possible to mix and match with other outfits	19.62	19.14	28.71	32.06	0.48	38.76	60.77
<b>Average</b>		<b>43.86</b>	<b>22.97</b>	<b>17.86</b>	<b>14.99</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>66.83</b>	<b>32.86</b>
Emotional v8.5	It should make me feel good about myself	88.04	8.13	1.91	0.96	0.96	96.17	1.92
Emotional v8.12	It should make me feel better dressed than others	31.58	33.01	23.92	10.05	1.44	64.59	11.49
Emotional v8.19	It should make me feel excited when wearing it	52.63	32.06	11.96	2.87	0.48	84.69	3.35
<b>Average</b>		<b>57.42</b>	<b>24.40</b>	<b>12.60</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>81.82</b>	<b>5.59</b>
Sensory v8.6	The style should suit my figure type	87.08	10.53	1.44	0.48	0.48	97.61	1.92
Sensory v8.13	The material should feel nice to touch	42.58	37.32	17.22	2.39	0.48	79.90	19.61
Sensory v8.20	The material should drape well on my body	69.86	25.36	3.83	0.48	0.48	95.22	4.31
<b>Average</b>		<b>66.51</b>	<b>24.40</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>1.12</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>90.91</b>	<b>8.61</b>
Symbolic v8.7	It should make me look appropriate for my social status	52.15	26.79	17.22	2.87	0.96	78.94	20.09
Symbolic v8.14	It should make me look like a celebrity when wearing it	20.57	28.71	29.67	20.10	0.96	49.28	49.77
Symbolic v8.21	It should make me look fashionable	47.85	29.67	15.79	6.70	-	77.52	22.49
<b>Average</b>		<b>40.19</b>	<b>28.39</b>	<b>20.89</b>	<b>9.89</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>68.58</b>	<b>30.78</b>

When focusing on the four functional dimensions (care, durability, comfort and suitability for end-use), based on the average score per dimension, it appears that the respondents had greater expectations for comfort which was rated as very important and important by 89.31% of them, followed by durability (86.92%). In support of the findings, a study conducted by Forsythe *et al.* (1996) found durability to be one of the key dimensions that significantly affected customers' perceptions of apparel quality. Suitability for end-use and care were rated relatively lower by 66.83% and 62.04% of the respondents respectively. Furthermore, Forsythe *et al.* (1996) noted that although care seemed to be important when customers made purchase decisions, it did however not appear as significant in predicting customers' perceptions of garment quality. Therefore, the findings of this study, which indicated care being rated the lowest, support the findings by Forsythe *et al.* (1996).

Among the three aesthetic dimensions (emotional, sensory and symbolic), the sensory dimension was rated as very important and important by 90.91% of the respondents, followed by emotional dimension (81.82%) and symbolic dimension (68.58%). For interpretation purposes, Cronbach's alpha coefficient tests were done to detect internal consistency between the three statements that measured each specific dimension, in order to determine whether the statements could be combined and interpreted together. Lack of consistency indicated that the statements did not measure the construct in the same way. The results of the tests are shown in Table 4.7.

**TABLE 4.7: TEST FOR CONSISTENCY: IMPORTANCE OF FUNCTIONAL AND AESTHETIC EXPECTATIONS**

Construct	Statement	Chronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Care	v8.1 (It should not crease easily) v8.8 (It should be easy to wash) v8.15 (It should need little or no ironing)	0.736128
Durability	v8.2 (The material should be of quality that would last a long time) v8.9 (It should retain shape after wear and care) V8.16 (The construction and finishing should be strong)	0.673769
Comfort	v8.3 (It should allow room to move) v8.10 (The material should not scratch my skin) v8.17 (It should be comfortable for the season's weather)	0.684723
Suitability for end-use	v8.4 (It should be suitable for the occasion for which it was made) v.11 (It should be possible to wear to other occasions) v8.18 (It should be possible to mix and match with other outfits)	<b>0.433704*</b>
Emotional	V8.5 ( It should make me feel good about myself) V8.12 (It should make me feel better dressed than others) V8.19 (It should make me feel excited when wearing it)	0.677593
Sensory	V8.6 (The style should suit my figure type) V8.13 (The material should feel nice to touch) V8.20 (The material should drape well on my body)	<b>0.630170*</b>
Symbolic	V8.7 (It should make me look appropriate for my social status) V8.14 (It should make me look like a celebrity when wearing it) V8.21 (It should make me look fashionable)	0.669553

\*Low consistency ( $\alpha < 0.65$ )



For this sample, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 ( $\alpha = 0.7$ ) would have indicated good consistency between the statements. However, for the purpose of this study, a 0.65 cut-off was accepted as criterion for the test. Where low consistency was found ( $\alpha < 0.65$ ), the statements were examined individually to find an explanation for the inconsistency. The results indicate that except for suitability for end-use and sensory dimensions, good consistency was determined between the statements that measured all the other dimensions.

**TABLE 4.8: TEST FOR CONSISTENCY: IMPORTANCE OF SUITABILITY FOR END-USE EXPECTATIONS**

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient with deleted variables		
Deleted variable	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Statement
v8.4	0.645466	It should be suitable for the occasion for which it was made
v8.11	-.160709	It should be possible to wear it to other occasion
v8.18	0.100900	It should be possible to mix and match with other outfits
$\alpha = 0.433704$		

Table 4.8 demonstrates the test results for suitability for end-use, with a very low consistency ( $\alpha = 0.433704$ ) between the statements. The response percentages between the three statements that measured this dimension differ (see Table 4.6). A considerable difference exists especially between v8.4 (importance that the garment is suitable for the occasion for which it was made) and v8.18 (importance that the garment can be mixed and matched with other existing garments). Ninety eight percent (98.09%) of the respondents indicated that it was very important and important that the garment was suitable for the occasion for which it was made, while 63.63% indicated that it was very important and important that the garment could be worn to other occasions. A comparatively lower percentage (38.76%) felt that it was very important and important that the garment could be mixed and matched with other existing garments. If statement v8.4 is deleted, the Cronbach alpha increases ( $\alpha = 0.645466$ ). This is because virtually everyone (205 out of 209 respondents) indicated that this statement was important. Therefore, the statement was not consistent with the other two.

It appears that it was more important to the FCMACs that the garment was suitable for the occasion that it was made for than it was possible to wear to other occasions and to be mixed and matched with other existing garments. This could be attributed to the fact that 73.21% of the respondents had their garments made for special occasions (refer to Table 4.1), suggesting that some had been worn only once for that particular occasion. This makes sense why most respondents were less concerned about the possibility of wearing the garment again to other occasions or mixing and matching it with other existing garments.

**TABLE 4.9: TEST FOR CONSISTENCY: IMPORTANCE OF SENSORY EXPECTATIONS**

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient with deleted variables		
Deleted variable	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Statement
v8.6	0.536477	It is important that the style should suit my figure type
v8.13	0.585216	It is important that the material should feel nice to touch
v8.20	0.490948	It is important that the material should drape well on my body

$\alpha = 0.630170$

Table 4.9 illustrates the Cronbach's alpha test results for the sensory dimension, with a low consistency ( $\alpha = 0.630170$ ) between the statements. The respondents rated v8.13 (the importance that material felt nice to touch) of lower importance (79.90%) in comparison to v8.6 (the importance that the style suits the figure type) (97.61%) and v8.20 (the importance that the material drapes well on the body) (95.22%). The draping of the garment on the body and the style of the garment being suitable for a specific figure type, have more to do with fit. Fit is not only related to functional aspects such as a comfortable fit in terms of enough room for movement, but also to the aesthetic aspect. For a garment to fit well, its style/design has to be suitable for a specific figure and its material should hang in such a way that it enhances the appearance of the wearer in a very pleasing way. It therefore appears that the respondents were more concerned about the fit of the garment than they were about its material feeling nice to touch. Because the garments were made according to their body measurements and other specific requirements, it was natural for the respondents to expect good fit.

#### **4.4.2 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 2: To explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with functional and aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations**

Sub-objective 2.1: to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional performance of CMA in relation to the expectations

Sub-objective 2.2: to explore and describe the FCMACs' satisfaction with aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations

The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction regarding the performance of their CMA on a four-point Likert-type scale. Twenty-one statements were used to assess satisfaction with the actual performance, where three statements measured each dimension. Similar to the expectations in the previous table (see Table 4.6), the statements were grouped according to the dimensions they measured and the averages were calculated. The

“very satisfied” and “satisfied” response categories were combined, while the “dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied” categories were combined. The results are illustrated in Table 4.10.

**TABLE 4.10: SATISFACTION WITH FUNCTIONAL AND AESTHETIC PERFORMANCE OF CMA IN RELATION TO THE EXPECTATIONS**

Construct	Statement in questionnaire	Very satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very dissatisfied (%)	Missing (%)	VERY SATISFIED + SATISFIED (%)	DISSATISFIED + VERY DISSATISFIED (%)
Care v9.8	It was easy to wash	33.49	37.32	18.66	8.13	2.39	70.81	26.79
Care 9.12	It needed little or no ironing	38.76	39.23	20.1	0.96	0.96	77.99	21.06
Care v9.18	It did not crease easily	36.84	44.5	14.35	3.35	0.96	81.34	17.70
Average		36.36	40.35	17.70	4.15	1.44	76.71	21.85
Durability v.9.2	The material was of a quality that would last a long time	51.2	41.15	6.22	1.44	-	92.35	7.66
Durability v9.7	The construction and finishing were strong	55.5	26.79	10.05	6.22	1.44	82.29	16.27
Durability v9.11	It retained its shape after wear and care	57.89	33.01	7.66	1.44	-	90.90	9.10
Average		54.86	33.65	7.98	3.03	1.44	88.51	11.01
Comfort v9.6	The material did not scratch my skin	57.42	31.58	8.13	2.39	0.48	89.00	10.52
Comfort v9.9	It was comfortable for the season's weather	44.98	43.54	6.7	3.83	0.96	88.52	10.53
Comfort v9.20	It allowed room for easy movement	50.24	35.89	11.48	2.39	-	86.13	13.87
Average		50.88	37.00	8.77	2.87	0.96	87.88	11.64
Suitability for end-use v9.4	It was possible to mix and match with other outfits	17.7	40.67	21.05	20.10	0.48	58.37	41.15
Suitability for end-use v9.10	It was suitable for the occasion for which it was made	72.73	22.49	2.87	1.91	-	95.22	4.78
Suitability for end-use v9.19	It could be worn to other occasions	32.54	34.93	19.62	11.00	1.91	67.47	30.62
Average		40.99	32.70	14.51	11.00	1.20	73.69	25.52
Emotional v9.16	It made me feel good about myself	56.46	32.06	5.74	4.31	1.44	88.52	10.05
Emotional v9.17	It made me feel better dressed than others	36.84	38.76	13.4	6.70	4.31	75.60	20.10
Emotional v9.21	It made me feel excited when I wore it	51.67	34.93	8.13	4.31	0.96	86.60	12.44
Average		48.32	35.25	9.09	5.11	2.24	83.57	14.20
Sensory v9.1	The style suited my figure type	62.20	30.14	5.74	1.91	-	92.34	7.65
Sensory v9.3	The material felt nice to touch	51.67	40.19	7.18	0.48	0.48	91.86	7.66
Sensory v9.5	The material draped well on my body	46.89	38.76	11.48	2.39	0.48	85.65	13.87
Average		53.59	36.36	8.13	1.59	0.48	89.95	9.73
Symbolic v9.13	It made me look fashionable	42.11	44.98	8.13	3.35	1.44	87.09	11.48
Symbolic v9.14	It made me look like a celebrity when I wore it	33.97	41.15	16.75	4.78	3.35	75.12	21.53
Symbolic v9.15	It made me look appropriate for my social status	47.85	35.41	11.96	3.35	1.44	83.26	15.31
Average		41.31	40.51	12.28	3.83	2.08	81.82	16.11

n=209

Regarding the functional dimensions, 88.51% of the respondents indicated they were very satisfied and satisfied with the durability performance, 87.88% were very satisfied and satisfied with comfort performance, 76.71% were very satisfied and satisfied with care, while 73.69%, were very satisfied and satisfied with suitability for end-use.

Considering the aesthetic dimensions, it appears that the sensory dimension was rated by the respondents as very important and important more than the other dimensions (Table 4.6). Ninety percent (89.95%) of the respondents were very satisfied and satisfied with the sensory aspects, 83.57% were very satisfied and satisfied with the emotional aspect and 81.82% were very satisfied and satisfied with the symbolic aspect. As it was with the expectations, Cronbach's alpha coefficient tests were performed to determine internal consistency between the three statements that measured each dimension, where  $\alpha = 0.65$  was accepted as criterion for the test. The results are illustrated in Table 4.11. Good consistency existed between the statements that measured all the dimensions indicated.

**TABLE 4.11: TEST FOR CONSISTENCY: SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Construct	Statement	Chronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Care	v9.8 (It was easy to wash) v9.12 (It needed little or no ironing) v9.18 (It did not crease easily)	0.756822
Durability	v9.2 (The material was of a quality that would last a long time) v9.7 (The construction and finishing were strong) v9.11 (It retained its shape after wear and care)	0.780271
Comfort	v9.6 (The material did not scratch my skin) v9.9 (It was comfortable for the season's weather) v9.20 (It allowed room for easy movement)	0.740558
Suitability for end-use	v9.4 (It was possible to mix and match with other outfits) v9.10 (It was suitable for the occasion for which it was made) v9.19 (It could be worn to other occasions)	0.658647
Emotional	v9.16 (It made me feel good about myself) v9.17 (It made me feel better dressed than others) v9.21 (It made me feel excited when I wore it)	0.902643
Sensory	v9.1 (The style suited my figure type) v9.3 (The material felt nice to touch) v9.5 (The material draped well on my body)	0.768061
Symbolic	v9.13 (It made me look fashionable) v9.14 (It made me look like a celebrity when I wore it) v9.15 (It made me look appropriate for my social status)	0.896012

#### **4.4.3 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 3: To determine the relationship between the importance of customer expectations and satisfaction with the performance of CMA**

Since customers had expectations that needed to be satisfied, it was necessary to determine whether the respondents who rated the dimensions as important were indeed satisfied with their performance. This information will assist in making the designers aware of specific customer preferences, which are unique to FCMACs, but are not being satisfied. Table 4.12 and 4.13 demonstrate the results of chi-square tests for statistical significant association between important expectations and satisfaction. The p-value of 0.05 was accepted as a criterion for the test.

Please note that in some instances, the response percentages for very important and important categories and very satisfied and satisfied categories in Tables 4.12 and 4.13 slightly differ from the ones illustrated in Table 4.6, because questionnaires with incomplete responses were excluded. This means, respondents who rated a specific dimension as very important and important in question v8, but did not indicate how satisfied they were with its performance in question v9, were excluded. The percentages were calculated based on the number of respondents who answered the questions completely, rather than on the total 209 respondents for the study. The first percentage column (column 1), illustrates the percentages of the respondents who rated the statement as very important to important, while the second percentage column (column 2), illustrates the percentages of the respondents who rated the statements as very important and important and also indicated that they were very satisfied and satisfied with the performance. For example, in Table 4.12, 63.68% of the 201 respondents who answered the question completely, indicated that it was very important and important that the garment was easy to wash. Of these, 82.03% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garment was easy to wash.

NOTE: Where 25% or 50% of the cells had expected counts less than 5, the Fisher's exact test, instead of the chi-square test was used to yield results that are more valid.

**TABLE 4.12: TEST FOR RELATIONSHIP: IMPORTANCE OF EXPECTATIONS AND SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA ( $p < 0.05$ )**

Very important and important		% (1)	Very satisfied and satisfied		% (2)	P value Chi <sup>2</sup> -test <sup>1</sup> Fisher's exact test <sup>2</sup>
Care v8.8	It should be easy to wash	63.68	Care v9.8	It was easy to wash	82.03	<.0001 <sup>1</sup>
Durability v8.9	It should retain shape after wear and care	84.62	Durability v9.11	It retained its shape after wear and care	93.18	0.0391 <sup>2</sup>
Comfort v8.3	It should allow room for easy movement	90.91	Comfort v9.20	It allowed room for easy movement	89.47	0.0002 <sup>2</sup>
Comfort v8.17	It should be comfortable for the season's weather	84.54	Comfort v9.9	It was comfortable for the season's weather	91.43	0.0536 <sup>2</sup>
Suitability for end-use v8.11	It should be possible to wear it to other occasions	64.22	Suitability for end-use v9.19	It could be worn to other occasions	83.21	<.0001 <sup>1</sup>
Suitability for end-use v8.18	It should be possible to mix and match with other outfits	39.13	Suitability for end use v9.4	It was possible to mix and match with other outfits	81.48	<.0001 <sup>1</sup>
Symbolic v8.7	It should make me look appropriate for my social status	80.39	Symbolic v9.15	It made me look appropriate for my social status	89.02	0.0002 <sup>1</sup>
Symbolic v8.14	It should make me look like a celebrity when wearing it	50.50	Symbolic v9.14	It made me look like a celebrity when I wore it	85.15	0.0137 <sup>1</sup>
<b>5% level of significance (<math>p = 0.05</math>)</b>						

A significant statistical relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) existed in all of the cases illustrated in Table 4.12.

**TABLE 4.13: TEST FOR RELATIONSHIP: IMPORTANCE OF EXPECTATIONS AND SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA ( $p > 0.05$ )**

Very important and important		% (1)	Very satisfied and satisfied		% (2)	P value Chi <sup>2</sup> -test <sup>1</sup> Fisher's exact test <sup>2</sup>
Care v8.1	It should not crease easily	71.36	Care v9.18	It did not crease easily	82.99	0.7797 <sup>1</sup>
Care v8.15	It should need little or no ironing	53.92	Care v9.12	It needed little or no ironing	80.91	0.4515 <sup>1</sup>
Durability v8.2	The material should be of quality that will last a long time	85.10	Durability v9.2	The material was of a quality that will last a long time	90.96	0.1372 <sup>2</sup>
Durability v8.16	The construction and finishing should be strong	93.10	Durability v9.7	The construction and finishing were strong	84.13	0.7050 <sup>2</sup>
Comfort v8.10	The material should not scratch my skin	92.79	Comfort v9.6	The material did not scratch my skin	90.16	0.2013 <sup>2</sup>
Suitability for end-use V8.4	It should be suitable for the occasion for which it was made	98.09	Suitability for end-use v9.10	It was suitable for the occasion for which it was meant	95.12	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
Emotional v8.5	It should make me feel good about myself	97.06	Emotional V9.16	It made me feel good about myself	89.90	0.4834 <sup>2</sup>
Emotional v8.12	It should make me feel better dressed than others	66.50	Emotional v9.17	It made me feel better dressed than others	80.92	0.5485 <sup>1</sup>
Emotional v8.19	It should make me feel excited when wearing it	85.44	Emotional v9.21	It made me feel excited when I wore it	87.50	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
Sensory v8.6	The style should suit my figure type	98.08	Sensory v9.1	The style suited my figure type	92.16	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
Sensory v8.13	The material should feel nice to touch	80.68	Sensory v9.3	The material felt nice to touch	94.01	0.0909 <sup>2</sup>
Sensory v8.20	The material should drape well on my body	95.65	Sensory v9.8	The material draped well on my body	86.87	0.1160 <sup>2</sup>
Symbolic v8.21	It should make me look fashionable	77.67	Symbolic v9.13	It made me look fashionable	89.38	0.3922 <sup>1</sup>

**5% level of significance ( $p = 0.05$ )**

Table 4.13 illustrates instances where no significant relationship existed between the importance of expectations and satisfaction with the performance ( $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that the respondents were not as satisfied as expected with the performance of their garments regarding these particular aspects of dimensions that they rated as important. The results of the tests for associations will be discussed further. All the associations were tested and interpreted in a similar way to the example in the methodology chapter (see Table 3.2).

**Care.** Seventy one percent (71.36%) of the respondents indicated it was very important and important that the garment did not crease easily. Of these, 82.99% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garments did not crease easily. No significant relationship was found ( $p = 0.7797$ ) between the importance that the garment did not crease easily and satisfaction that the garment did not crease easily. Of the 53% respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the garment needed little or no ironing, 80.91% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garment needed little or no ironing. Again, no significant



relationship was found ( $p = 0.4515$ ) between the importance that the garment needed little or no ironing and satisfaction that the garment needed little or no ironing. This means that although the respondents were satisfied that the garments did not crease easily and that they needed little or no ironing, they were not as satisfied as expected or not all of them were satisfied. This implies that although the respondents were satisfied that the garments did not crease easily and that they needed little or no ironing, the level of satisfaction was not as expected.

**Durability.** Of the 85.10% respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the garment's material was of quality that would last a long time, 90.96% were very satisfied and satisfied that the material was of quality that would last a long time. However, the results indicated no significant relationship ( $p = 0.1372$ ) between the importance that the material was of quality that would last a long time and satisfaction that the material was of quality that would last a long time. This implies that the respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the material was of quality that would last a long time were not as satisfied as expected that the material was of a quality that would last a long time. Ninety three percent (93.10%) of the respondents indicated that it was very important and important that the construction and finishing were strong. Of these, 84.13% were very satisfied and satisfied that the construction and finishing were strong. No statistical significant relationship ( $p = 0.7050$ ) was found between the importance that the construction and finishing were strong and satisfaction that the construction and finishing were strong. This suggests that the respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the construction and finishing were strong were not as satisfied as expected that the construction and finishing were strong. This is cause for concern because durability was rated the second most important amongst the functional dimensions and the third most important amongst all the dimensions when combined.

**Comfort.** Of the 92.79% respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the material did not scratch the skin, 90.16% were very satisfied and satisfied that the material did not scratch the skin. However, no significant relationship ( $p = 0.2013$ ) was found between the importance that the material did not scratch the skin and satisfaction that the material did not scratch the skin. This implies that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the material did not scratch the skin were not as satisfied as expected that the material did not scratch the skin. Because comfort was rated the most important among the functional dimensions and the second most important among all the dimensions when combined, these results are disturbing.



**Suitability for end-use.** Of the 98.09% respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the garment was suitable for the occasion for which it was made, 95.12% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garment was suitable for the occasion for which it was made. The results however revealed no significant relationship ( $p = 1.0000$ ) between the importance of the garment being suitable for the occasion for which it was made and satisfaction that the garment was suitable for the occasion for which it was made. This suggests that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the garments were suitable for the occasions for which they were meant were not as satisfied as expected that the garments were suitable for the occasions for which they were meant. These findings raise concern because suitability for the occasion for which the garment was made was rated the most important of the three aspects that measured suitability for end-use.

**Emotional.** Ninety seven percent (97.06%) of the respondents indicated that it was very important and important that the garments made them feel good about themselves. Of these, 89.90% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garments made them feel good about themselves. However, the results indicated no significant relationship ( $p = 0.4834$ ) between the importance that the garments made the wearers feel good about themselves and satisfaction that the garments made the wearers feel good about themselves. This suggests that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the garments made them feel good about themselves were not as satisfied as expected that the garments made them feel good about themselves. Of the 66.50%, respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the garments made them feel better dressed than others, 80.92% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garments made them feel better dressed than others. However, no significant relationship was found ( $p = 0.5485$ ) between the importance that the garments made them feel better dressed than others and satisfaction that the garments made them feel better dressed than others. This means that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the garments made them feel better dressed than others were not as satisfied as expected that the garments made them feel better dressed than others.

Of the 85.44%, respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the garments made them feel excited when wearing them, 87.50% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garments made them feel excited when wearing them. The analysis however revealed no significant relationship ( $p = 1.0000$ ) between the importance that the garments made them feel excited when wearing them and satisfaction that the garments made them feel excited when wearing them. This means that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the garments made them feel excited when wearing them, were not as satisfied as expected that the garments made them feel excited when wearing them. The emotional dimension was rated as second important of the aesthetic dimensions and among

the top four important when all the dimensions are combined. The fact that the respondents were not as satisfied as expected with all the aspects of this dimension is alarming.

**Sensory.** Ninety-eight percent (98.08%) of the respondents indicated that it was very important and important that the styles of the garments suited their figure types. Of these, 92.16% were very satisfied and satisfied that the styles of the garments suited their figure types. No significant relationship was found ( $p = 1.0000$ ) between the importance that the style suited the figure type and satisfaction that the style suited the figure type. The respondents who indicated that it was important that the style of the garment suited their figure types, were not as satisfied as expected that the garments suited their figure types. Of the 80.68% respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the material felt nice to touch, 94.01% were very satisfied and satisfied that the material felt nice to touch. Again, no significant relationship was found ( $p = 0.0909$ ) between the importance that the material felt nice to touch and satisfaction that the material felt nice to touch. The respondents who indicated that it was important that the material felt nice to touch, were not as satisfied as expected that the material felt nice to touch.

Of the 95.65% respondents who indicated that it was very important and important that the material draped well on the body, 86.87% were very satisfied and satisfied that the material draped well on the body. The results also revealed no significant relationship ( $p = 0.1160$ ) between the importance that the material draped well on the body and satisfaction that the material draped well on the body. This implies that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the material draped well on their bodies, were not as satisfied as expected that the material draped well on their bodies. Similar to the emotional dimension, the respondents were not as satisfied as expected with their garments' performance regarding the sensory dimension as a whole. This is very disturbing because the sensory dimension was rated as the most important of all the dimensions when combined.

**Symbolic.** Seventy eight percent (77.67%) of the respondents indicated that it was very important and important that the garments made them look fashionable. Of these, 89.38% were very satisfied and satisfied that the garments made them look fashionable. The analysis indicated no significant relationship ( $p = 0.3922$ ) between the importance that the garments made the wearers look fashionable and satisfaction that the garments made the wearers look fashionable. This suggest that the respondents who indicated that it was important that the garments made them look fashionable, were not as satisfied as expected that the garments made them look fashionable.

#### 4.4.4 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 4: To explore and describe the FCMACs' overall satisfaction with the performance of CMA

After indicating their level of satisfaction with the actual performance of their garments per each dimension, the respondents were asked to indicate their overall level of satisfaction with the performance of the garment and the results are demonstrated in Table 4.14.

**TABLE 4.14: OVERALL LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction	Frequency (n = 209)	%	Combined %
Very satisfied	108	51.67	84.21
Satisfied	68	32.54	
Dissatisfied	24	11.48	15.79
Very dissatisfied	9	4.31	
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

When combining the categories, 84.21% (51.67% + 32.54%) of the respondents were very satisfied and satisfied, while only 15.79% (11.48%+4.31%) were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied. Although the figures appear to indicate that the respondents were satisfied, the chi-square test results in Table 4.13 indicate that the respondents were not as satisfied as expected.

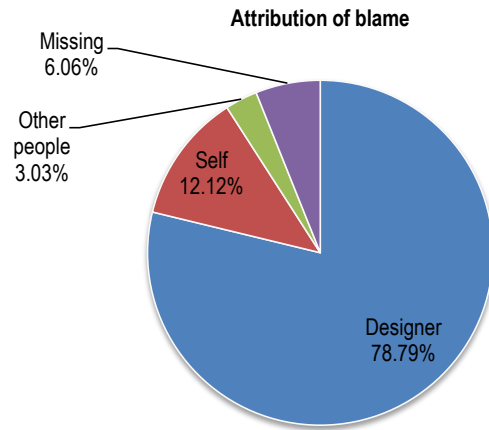
#### 4.4.5 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 5: To explore and determine the dissatisfied and satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and (or) controllability

Sub-objective 5.1: To explore and determine the dissatisfied FCMACs' appraisals following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution and controllability

Sub-objective 5.1: To explore and determine the satisfied FCMACs' appraisals following satisfaction with the performance of CMA in terms of attribution

##### 4.4.5.1 Attribution of blame for poor performance of CMA

Dissatisfied respondents were asked to indicate the party they held responsible for the poor performance of their CMA and the results are illustrated in Figure 4.3.



**FIGURE 4.3: ATTRIBUTION OF BLAME FOR POOR PERFORMANCE**

Only 33 respondents were expected to answer this question. The majority of them 26 (78.79%) attributed blame to the CMADs who made their garments. Fewer respondents 4 (12.12%) blamed themselves, while only 1 (3.03%) blamed other people.

#### 4.4.5.2 Controllability of preventing poor performance of the garment

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they believed the party blamed had any control in preventing the poor performance of the garment. The aim was to determine if the respondents believed that the party blamed could have prevented the poor performance. The results are illustrated in Table 4.15.

**TABLE 4.15: CONTROLLABILITY OF PREVENTING POOR PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

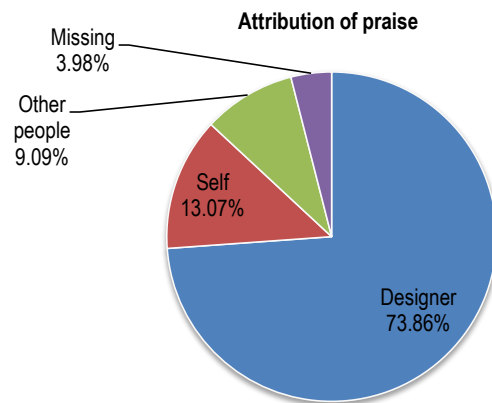
Controllability of preventing poor performance	Frequency	%
Yes	26	78.79
No	2	6.06
Uncertain	4	12.12
Missing	1	3.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

n=33

It can clearly be seen in Table 4.15 that a substantial number of respondents 26 (78.79%) believed that the party they held responsible could have prevented the poor performance. While 4 (12.12%) were uncertain, 2 (6.06%) did not believe that the party could have prevented it.

#### 4.4.5.3 Attribution of praise for satisfactory performance

A total of 176 (84.21%) respondents who indicated that they were very satisfied and satisfied with the overall performance of their CMA were asked to specify the party whom they believed deserved to be praised for the satisfactory performance, and the results are illustrated in Figure 4.4.



**FIGURE 4.4: ATTRIBUTION OF PRAISE FOR SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE**

As it was with the respondents who were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied, the majority of the respondents who were very satisfied and satisfied, which is 130 (73.86%), attributed praise to the CMADs. While 23 (13.07%) attributed praise to themselves, 16 (9.09%) attributed praise to other people.

#### 4.4.6 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 6: To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA

The respondents were asked to rate the intensity of the emotions they experienced following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA on a four-point Likert-type scale. For the purposes of analysis, the “extremely” and “very” emotional intensity categories were combined, while the “reasonably” and “not at all” emotional intensity categories were combined. The results are illustrated in Table 4.16.

**TABLE 4.16: EMOTIONS FOLLOWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Type of emotion	Intensity of emotion	Frequency	%	Combined %
Anger	1 Extremely angry	5	15.15	45.45
	2 Very angry	10	30.3	
	3 Reasonably angry	14	42.42	51.51
	4 Not angry at all	3	9.09	
	Missing	1	3.03	3.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99.99</b>
Sadness	1 Extremely sad	4	12.12	66.67
	2 Very sad	18	54.55	
	3 Reasonably sad	8	24.24	30.3
	4 Not sad at all	2	6.06	
	Missing	1	3.03	3.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Unpleasant surprise	1 Extremely unpleasantly surprised	6	18.18	57.57
	2 Very unpleasantly surprised	13	39.39	
	3 Reasonably unpleasantly surprised	10	30.3	42.42
	4 Not unpleasantly surprised at all	4	12.12	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Frustration	1 Extremely frustrated	16	48.48	72.72
	2 Very frustrated	8	24.24	
	3 Reasonably frustrated	6	18.18	24.24
	4 Not at all frustrated	2	6.06	
	Missing	1	3.03	3.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Stress	1 Extremely stressed	6	18.18	48.48
	2 Very stressed	10	30.3	
	3 Reasonably stressed	12	36.36	48.48
	4 Not at all stressed	4	12.12	
	Missing	1	3.03	3.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Disappointment	1 Extremely disappointed	19	57.58	75.76
	2 Very disappointed	6	18.18	
	3 reasonably disappointed	6	18.18	21.21
	4 Not disappointed at all	1	3.03	
	Missing	1	3.03	3.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Shock	1 Extremely shocked	2	6.06	33.33
	2 Very shocked	9	27.27	
	3 Reasonably shocked	14	42.42	63.63
	4 Not shocked at all	7	21.21	
	Missing	1	3.03	3.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

n = 33

Disappointment, frustration and sadness were the three emotions experienced by more than two thirds of the respondents. Of the 33 respondents who were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied, 25 (75.76%) were very to extremely disappointed, 24 (72.72%) were very to extremely frustrated and 22 (66.67%) were very to extremely sad. More than half of the respondents 19 (57.57%) were very to extremely unpleasantly surprised, 16 (48.48 %) were very to extremely stressed, 15 (45.45%) were very to extremely angry, and only 11 (33.33 %) were very to extremely shocked.

#### 4.4.7 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 7: To explore and describe the dissatisfied FCMACs' coping strategies

The respondents were asked to indicate if they took any form of action (for example, contacting the designer for redress or stopping to support the designer) following their dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA on a nominal scale of Yes/No and the results are illustrated in Table 4.17.

**TABLE 4.17: ACTION TAKEN FOLLOWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Action taken	Frequency	%
Yes	18	54.54
No	14	42.42
Missing	1	3.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

n = 33

Only 33 respondents were expected to answer this question. Action included among other things; talking to family, friends and acquaintances about the dissatisfying experience, stopping to support the designer, complaining formally to the designer or writing a letter to the press or to a consumer complaint website. Of the 33 respondents who were expected to answer this question, 18 (54.54%) of them indicated that they engaged in some form of action. Despite the dissatisfaction, 14 (42.42%) of the respondents did not take any action.

The respondents who indicated that they took actions were further asked to indicate the types of actions they engaged in to cope and the results are illustrated in Table 4.18

**TABLE 4.18: TYPES OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY RESPONDENTS FOLLOWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Types of private and public actions taken	Frequency	%
<b>Problem-focused coping</b>		
Contacted the designer to obtain redress, such as refund or alteration.	6	33.33
Complained in the social mass media (magazine/newspaper/Facebook/consumer complaint website)	0	0
<b>Emotion-focused coping</b>		
Informed friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	18	100
<b>Avoidance coping</b>		
Stopped supporting the designer	15	83.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	

n = 18

Although only 18 respondents were expected to answer this question, 39 responses were obtained as the respondents could choose more than one option. During analysis, the responses were categorised into coping strategies identified during literature review as illustrated in Table 4.18.

The results revealed that all the 18 respondents who indicated that they took action after being dissatisfied, informed friends, acquaintances and family about their bad consumption experiences (emotion-focused coping strategy). Fifteen respondents (83.33%) stopped supporting SCMABs that made their garments (avoidance coping strategy), while only 6 respondents (33.33%) contacted the businesses to obtain redress (problem-focused coping).

The respondents who indicated that they did not take any action following their dissatisfaction were asked to indicate their reasons for not taking action. The results are illustrated in Table 4.19

**TABLE 4.19: REASONS FOR NOT TAKING ACTION FOLLOWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Reasons for no action following dissatisfaction	Frequency	% (n=14)	Combined %
I did not want to make a nuisance of myself	5	35.71	64.28
I wanted to avoid confrontation	4	28.57	
I did not know what to do	3	21.43	
I did not think it was worth the effort and time to take action	8	57.14	
I did not trust that the designer could make it better	5	35.71	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>		

Only 14 respondents were expected to answer this question. However, the total number of responses was 25 as the respondents could choose more than one reason. Of these 14 respondents, 8 (57.14%) indicated it was not worth the effort and time to take any action, while 5 (35.71%) indicated that they did not trust that the designer could make the garment look better. It can be noted that some of the reasons stated for not taking action, namely, that they did not want to make nuisances of themselves 5 (35.71%) and that they wanted to avoid confrontation 4 (28.57%), were related to self-esteem.



#### 4.4.8 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 8: To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA and the coping strategies they used in terms of complaint behaviour

None of the dissatisfied respondents used social media such as Facebook, newspaper, magazine and consumer complaint website to complain or comment about the dissatisfying experience. Chi-square tests were done to determine the relationship between each emotion and each of the coping strategies used, where  $p \leq 0.05$  was accepted as a criterion for the test. For interpretation purposes, two tables were drawn to separate the tests in which a relationship existed, from those in which no relationship existed. Note that some of the emotional response percentages in the first column (column 1) of Table 4.20 and Table 4.21 slightly differ from the ones in Table 4.16, because the respondents who experienced the emotions, but did not indicate their coping strategies were excluded from the analysis.

**TABLE 4.20: TEST FOR RELATIONSHIP: EMOTIONS FOLLOWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA AND THE COPING STRATEGIES ( $p > 0.05$ )**

Emotion	% (1)	Coping strategies	% (2)	P value Chi <sup>2</sup> -test <sup>1</sup> Fisher's exact test <sup>2</sup>
Extremely angry and very angry	46.88	v15.2 = Stop supporting the designer	60.00	0.0818 <sup>1</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	33.33	0.0755 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely sad and very sad	68.75	v15.1 = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	59.09	0.4501 <sup>2</sup>
		v15.2 = Stop supporting the designer	50.00	0.4461 <sup>2</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	18.18	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely unpleasantly surprised and very unpleasantly surprised	57.58	v15.1 = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	68.42	0.0622 <sup>1</sup>
		v15.2 = Stop supporting the designer	52.63	0.3347 <sup>1</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	26.32	0.2085 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely frustrated and very frustrated	75.00	v15.1 = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	58.33	0.4235 <sup>2</sup>
		v15.2 = Stop supporting the designer	45.83	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	25.00	0.2964 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely stressed and very stressed	50.00	v15.1 = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	56.25	0.7232 <sup>1</sup>
		v15.2 = Stop supporting the designer	50.00	0.476 <sup>1</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	18.75	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely disappointed and very disappointed	78.13	v15.1 = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	60.00	0.2095 <sup>2</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	20.00	1.0000 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely shocked and very shocked	34.38	v15.1 = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	54.55	0.9072 <sup>1</sup>
		v15.2 = Stop supporting the designer	54.55	0.4651 <sup>2</sup>
		v15.3 = Contact the designer to obtain redress	27.27	0.3897 <sup>2</sup>

5% level of significance ( $p = 0.05$ )

Table 4.20 illustrates the results of the chi-square tests where no significant statistical relationship was found ( $p > 0.05$ ) between the emotions and the coping strategies.

**TABLE 4.21: TEST FOR RELATIONSHIP: EMOTIONS FOLLOWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA AND THE COPING STRATEGIES ( $p < 0.05$ )**

Emotion	% (1)	Coping strategies	% (1)	P value Chi <sup>2</sup> -test <sup>1</sup> Fisher's exact test <sup>2</sup>
Extremely angry and very angry	46.88	$\chi^2_{15.1}$ = Inform friends/family/acquaintances about the bad experience	73.33	0.0314 <sup>1</sup>
Extremely disappointed and very disappointed	78.13	$\chi^2_{15.2}$ = Stop supporting the designer	56.00	0.0105 <sup>2</sup>
<b>5% level of significance (<math>p = 0.05</math>)</b>				

Significant relationships existed between the emotions and coping strategies illustrated in Table 4.21. Fourty seven percent (46.88%) of the respondents indicated that they were very to extremely angry. Of these, 73.33% informed friends, acquaintances and families about their bad experiences. A significant statistical relationship was determined ( $p = 0.0314$ ) between anger and informing friends, family and acquaintances about the dissatisfying experience. Respondents who were angry told their friends, acquaintances and family about the dissatisfying experiences.

Of the 78.13% of the respondents who were very to extremely disappointed, 56.00% stopped supporting the SCMABs. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.0105$ ) existed between disappointment and stopping to support the designer. Respondents who were disappointed stopped supporting the designers or businesses.

#### **4.4.9 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 9: To explore and describe the FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA**

The respondents who were very satisfied and satisfied with the performance of the CMA were asked to rate the intensity of the emotions they experienced on a four-point Likert-type scale. For the purposes of analysis, the "extremely" and "very" emotional intensity categories were combined, while the "reasonably" and "not at all" emotional intensity categories were combined. Table 4.22 illustrates the results.

**TABLE 4.22: EMOTIONS FOLLOWING SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Emotion	Intensity of emotion	Frequency	%	Combined %
Proud	1 Extremely proud	89	50.57	<b>90.91</b>
	2 Very proud	71	40.34	
	3 Reasonably proud	11	6.25	<b>6.82</b>
	4 Not proud at all	1	0.57	
	Missing	4	2.27	2.27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Happy	1 Extremely happy	112	63.64	<b>94.89</b>
	2 Very happy	55	31.25	
	3 Reasonably happy	5	2.84	<b>2.84</b>
	4 Not happy at all	0	0	
	Missing	4	2.27	2.27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Excited	1 Extremely excited	104	59.09	<b>88.07</b>
	2 Very excited	51	28.98	
	3 Reasonably excited	17	9.66	<b>9.66</b>
	4 Not excited at all	0	0	
	Missing	4	2.27	2.27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Pleasantly surprised	1 Extremely pleasantly surprised	74	42.05	<b>82.96</b>
	2 Very pleasantly surprised	72	40.91	
	3 Reasonably pleasantly surprised	20	11.36	<b>13.06</b>
	4 Not pleasantly surprised at all	3	1.7	
	Missing	7	3.98	3.98
	<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Grateful	1 Extremely grateful	111	63.07	<b>90.91</b>
	2 Very grateful	49	27.84	
	3 Reasonably grateful	12	6.82	<b>7.96</b>
	4 Not grateful at all	2	1.14	
	Missing	2	1.14	1.14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Joyful	1 Extremely joyful	94	53.41	<b>87.50</b>
	2 Very joyful	60	34.09	
	3 Reasonably joyful	16	9.09	<b>9.66</b>
	4 Not joyful at all	1	0.57	
	Missing	5	2.84	2.84
	<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

n = 176

Table 4.22 clearly illustrates that of the 176 respondents who were expected to answer this question, 167 (94.89%) were very to extremely happy, 160 (90.91%) were very to extremely proud, 160 (90.91%) were very to extremely grateful, 155 (88.07%) were very to extremely excited, 154 (87.50%) were very to extremely joyful and 146 (82.96%) were very to extremely pleasantly surprised. In general, a substantial number of respondents experienced all of these emotions.

#### 4.4.10 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 10: To explore and describe satisfied FCMACs' post-purchasing behaviours

A total of 176 respondents who indicated that they were very satisfied and satisfied, were asked to indicate their post-purchasing behaviours. The results are demonstrated in Table 4.23.

**TABLE 4.23: TYPES OF POST-PURCHASING BEHAVIOURS FOLLOWING SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA**

Post-purchasing behaviour	Frequency	%
Informed the designer that you were satisfied	151	85.50
Recommended the designer to friends, family and (or) acquaintances	141	80.11
Ordered more garments from the designer	95	53.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	

n = 176

Because respondents could choose more than one option, 387 responses were obtained. It is clear from the table that 151 (85.8%) informed the designers that they were satisfied, while 141 (80.11%) recommended the designers to their friends, acquaintances and family. Even though 176 were satisfied, only 95 (53.98%) of them indicated customer loyalty by ordering more garments from the designers.

#### 4.4.11 RESULTS OF OBJECTIVE 11: To determine and describe the relationship between FCMACs' emotions following satisfaction with the performance of CMA and post-purchasing behaviours

Chi-square tests were done to determine relationships between the positive emotions and post-purchasing behaviours. The p-value of 0.05 was accepted as the criterion. The results of the tests are illustrated in two tables. Table 4.24 illustrates the cases where no significant relationships existed, while Table 4.25 illustrates the cases where significant relationships existed.

**TABLE 4.24: TEST FOR RELATIONSHIP: EMOTIONS FOLLOWING SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA AND POST-PURCHASING BEHAVIOURS (p > 0.05)**

Emotion	% (1)	Post-purchasing behaviour	% (2)	P value Chi <sup>2</sup> -test <sup>1</sup> Fisher's exact test <sup>2</sup>
Extremely proud and very proud	93.02	v19.2 = Recommended the designer to friends/family/acquaintances	81.25	0.257 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely happy and very happy	97.09	v19.1 = Informed designer you were satisfied	86.23	0.5328 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.3 = Ordered more garments from the designer	54.49	0.1849 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely pleasantly surprised and very pleasantly surprised	86.39	v19.1 = Informed designer you were satisfied	86.99	0.116 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.2 = Recommended the designer to friends/family/acquaintances	81.51	0.2598 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.3 = Ordered more garments from the designer	55.48	0.0646 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely grateful and very grateful	91.95	v19.3 = Ordered more garments from the designer	54.38	0.4074 <sup>1</sup>

5% level of significance (p = 0.05)

**TABLE 4.25: TEST FOR RELATIONSHIP: EMOTIONS FOLLOWING SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF CMA AND POST-PURCHASING BEHAVIOURS (p < 0.05)**

Emotion	%	Post-purchasing behaviour	%	P value Chi <sup>2</sup> -test <sup>1</sup> Fisher's exact test <sup>2</sup>
Extremely proud and very proud	93.02	v19.1 = Informed designer you were satisfied	87.50	0.017 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.3 = Ordered more garments from the designer	56.25	0.008 <sup>1</sup>
Extremely happy and very happy	97.09	v19.2 = Recommended the designer to friends/family/acquaintances	82.84	0.0492 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely excited and very excited	90.12	v19.1 = Informed designer you were satisfied	89.03	0.0006 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.2 = Recommended the designer to friends/family/acquaintances	83.23	0.0069 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.3 = Ordered more garments from the designer	57.42	0.0003 <sup>1</sup>
Extremely grateful and very grateful	91.95	v19.1 = Informed designer you were satisfied	87.50	0.0331 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.2 = Recommended the designer to friends/family/acquaintances	83.75	0.0002 <sup>2</sup>
Extremely joyful and very joyful	90.06	v19.1 = Informed designer you were satisfied	88.96	0.0007 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.2 = Recommended the designer to friends/family/acquaintances	82.47	0.0087 <sup>2</sup>
		v19.3 = Ordered more garments from the designer	56.49	0.0097 <sup>1</sup>

5% level of significance (p = 0.05)

Significant relationships existed between the emotions and post-purchasing behaviours that are illustrated in Table 4.25. Ninety three percent (93.02%) of the respondents who were very satisfied and satisfied with the performance of their garments were very proud to extremely proud. Of these, 87.50% informed the designers that they were satisfied, while 56.25% ordered more garments from the businesses. A significant relationship existed (p = 0.017)

between pride and informing the designer about being satisfied. Respondents who were proud with their garments informed the designers that they were satisfied. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.008$ ) existed between pride and ordering more garments from the designer. Respondents who were proud ordered more garments from the designers (businesses).

Of the 97.09%, respondents who were very to extremely happy with their garments, 82.84% recommended the designers to their friends, family and acquaintances. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.0492$ ) existed between happiness and recommending the designer to friends, family and acquaintances. The respondents who were happy, recommended the designers to their families, friends and acquaintances.

Ninety percent (90.12%) of the respondents who were very satisfied and satisfied were excited. Of these, 89.03% informed the designers that they were satisfied, 83.23% recommended the designers to friends, family and acquaintances, and 57.42% ordered more garments from the designers/businesses. A highly significant relationship ( $p = 0.0006$ ) existed between excitement and informing the designer about the satisfaction. Respondents who were excited about their garments informed the designers that they were satisfied. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.0069$ ) existed between excitement and recommending the designer to family, friends and acquaintances. Respondents who were excited recommended the designers to friends, families and acquaintance. A highly significant relationship ( $p = 0.0003$ ) existed between excitement and ordering more garments from the designer. Respondents who were excited ordered more garments from the designers/businesses.

Of the 91.95% who were very to extremely grateful, 87.50% informed the designers that they were satisfied and 83.75% recommended the designers to friends, families and acquaintances. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.0331$ ) existed between being grateful and informing the designer about the satisfaction. Respondents who were grateful informed the designers that they were satisfied. A highly significant relationship ( $p = 0.0002$ ) existed between being grateful and recommending the designer to friends, family and acquaintances. Respondents who were grateful recommended the designers to their friends, family and acquaintances.

Ninety percent (90.06%) of the very satisfied and satisfied respondents indicated that they were very to extremely joyful. Of these, 88.96% informed the designers they were satisfied, 82.47% recommended the designers to friends, families and acquaintances and 56.49% ordered more garments from the designers. A significant relationship existed between joy and informing the designer about the satisfaction ( $p = 0.0007$ ). Respondents who were joyful

informed the designers that they were satisfied. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.0087$ ) existed between joy and recommending the designer to friends, families and acquaintances. Respondents who were joyful, recommended the designers to friends, family and acquaintances. A significant relationship ( $p = 0.0097$ ) existed between joy and ordering more garments from the designer. Respondents who were joyful ordered more garments from the designers/businesses.

#### 4.5 DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Interpretation is a systematic process that involves seeking the meaning and implication of results, and their congruence or lack of congruence with the findings of previous researchers (Kruger *et al.*, 2005:218). The results of the study will be discussed and interpreted against the theoretical perspectives, existing literature and the viewpoints of previous researchers.

The main purpose of the study was to explore and describe the FCMACs' expectations and satisfaction regarding the quality of CMA. First, the demographic profile of the sample is described. Second, the results are discussed and interpreted in a particular sequence of sections derived from the conceptual framework as follows: (1) the importance of functional and aesthetic expectations to FCMACs, (2) the FCMACs' satisfaction with the functional and aesthetic performance of CMA in relation to the expectations, (3) the relationship between important customer expectations and satisfaction with the performance of CMA, (4) the FCMACs' overall level of satisfaction regarding the performance of CMA, (5) the appraisals following dissatisfaction and satisfaction in terms of attribution and (or) controllability, (6) the emotions following dissatisfaction with the performance of CMA, (7) the dissatisfied customers' coping strategies, (8) the relationship between the emotions experienced following dissatisfaction and coping strategies, (9) the emotions experienced following satisfaction with the performance of CMA, (10) the satisfied customers' post purchasing behaviours and (11) the relationship between emotions following satisfaction and the post purchasing behaviours.

The demographic information revealed that the respondents were primarily white. Their age ranged from 18 to 72 years. Most were below the age of 60, with an average age of 38 years. Considering their ages, it can be assumed that most women are still part of the working force and they fall under the LSM group 6-10. Consumers who fall under this LSM group are assumed to have financial means to afford custom-made clothes. Almost three quarters of them had the garments made for a special occasions and their garments were made by informal SCMABs. A recall period was not specified in the questionnaire. Following



data collection, the questionnaires were assessed and only complete questionnaires were included in the sample, indicating that the respondents could still recall the consumption events.

According to the theory of perceived quality, customers form expectations about the performance of products prior to acquiring and using them (Sattari, 2007:30), and they purchase the products with specific physical features they believe will fulfil their performance expectations (Brown and Rice, 2014:69; Kincade *et al.*, 1998). Kadolph (1998:16) indicated that quality from a customer perspective depends on the dimensions of a product that are important to the user, which differ by product as well as by the customer. For example, aesthetic attributes may be of less significance in assessing the quality of career wear, but more significant as determinants of good quality for women's eveningwear. In support of this notion, the results revealed that both the functional and the aesthetic dimensions play a role when FCMACs evaluate the quality of CMA, but the degree of the importance varies between the specific dimensions. Previous studies on customers' perception of apparel quality (Swinker and Hines, 2006; Zhang *et al.*, 2002; Fiore and Damhorst, 1992) also noted how the importance of the various product dimensions used as selection criteria in judging the quality of different apparel items differed in the customer's mind. These different product dimensions can also affect the level of satisfaction the customer derives from the product in different ways (Wang and Ji, 2009; Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). For a garment to be regarded as good quality in the eye of the individual customer, it has to perform well on specific dimensions that are more important to the customer and reach certain minimum levels on the other dimensions.

In South African and African contexts, Jason (2011) and Nkambule (2010) found that although adult career women had preferences for both functional and aesthetic features for their career wear, they had higher preferences for functional features than for aesthetic features, especially for comfort, suitability for end-use and durability. However, in this study, suitability for end-use was explicitly not rated that important, while the respondents considered the sensory, emotional, comfort and durability dimensions highly important. In general, a major difference exists between career wear and clothing for special occasions. Most of the respondents in this study have indicated that they ordered custom-made garments for special occasions, which explains the superior importance of the sensory and emotional aesthetic dimensions relative to the importance of suitability for end-use.

The theory of satisfaction/dissatisfaction states that customer satisfaction results from fulfilment or exceeding of customer expectations (Sattari, 2007:15; Swan and Combs, 1976). It would be natural for the respondents to expect to derive satisfaction with their garments on



the dimensions that they rated as important. In order to determine whether satisfaction has occurred, during use, customers will compare their prior expectations with the perceived product's performance to determine if they are satisfied. The average percentage scores for each dimension (see Table 4.10) indicate the respondents' satisfaction with the performance of their CMA on each of the functional and aesthetic dimensions. Except for care and suitability for end-use, all other dimensions were rated as satisfactory by more than 80% of the respondents. From the figures, it appeared as if the respondents were most satisfied with the sensory aesthetic dimension (89.95%), which they rated as the most important quality dimension and least satisfied with suitability for end-use dimension (73.69%), which was rated of relatively lower importance. However, it was necessary to determine the extent to which the respondents were satisfied with the dimensions that they rated as important. From a small business point of view, it would be ideal for the customers to derive high satisfaction with the performance of the specific dimensions that they rated as highly important.

The chi-square test for association was performed to determine if the differences between the observed and the expected frequencies were statistically substantial to conclude that relationships existed between highly important expectations and satisfaction with the performance regarding those expectations. The test results only revealed significant relationships between the importance of expectations and satisfaction with the performance between the statements measuring eight dimensions (see Table 4.13). It is alarming to note that no significant relationship existed between any of the statements measuring the importance of expectations and satisfaction with the performance for the sensory and emotional dimensions. These two dimensions were specifically rated as highly important by most of the respondents. In the case of functional care and durability, also no significant relationship was found between two of the three statements that tested each dimension. However, care was not rated as highly important by most of the respondents.

Fiore and Kimle (1997) highlighted the importance of attention to the formal qualities of an apparel product in creating aesthetic experience for the wearer. Brown and Rice (2014:70) additionally stressed the importance of addressing the wearer's emotional needs when evaluating the quality of an apparel product. In their study, De Klerk and Lubbe (2008) also found that the three dimensions of aesthetic experience played a major role when female consumers evaluated the quality of apparel during the purchase-decision stage. The results of the study revealed that the customers who rated the sensory and emotional dimensions as important were not as satisfied with their performances as expected. This implies that the designers were not able to translate their emotional and sensory expectations into the formal qualities of apparel items, probably due to the customers' difficulties in verbalising their expectations. Another study by Nkambule (2010), also found no significant relationship

between career women's expectations and satisfaction regarding the sensory and emotional dimensions of the quality of career wear. This previous study by Nkambule (2010) and this study support the view of Kadolph (1998:34), that abstract factors related to product performance and customer satisfaction are often very difficult to express. The problem that arises in the context of CMA is that no complete tangible item is readily available for the customer to fit and evaluate until the process of designing and construction begins. Proper evaluation of quality only takes place when the garment is complete and in use.

Following dissatisfying market experiences, individuals engage into primary and secondary appraisals to evaluate whether particular encounters are significant to their personal well-being, and if anything can be done to prevent harm. This process takes into account attribution, controllability and coping potential (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Folkman, 1986). Data analysis revealed that more than three quarters 26 (78.79%) of the 33 respondents who were dissatisfied blamed the designers (external blame attribution) and 4 (12.12%) blamed themselves (internal blame attribution). While 26 (78.79%) respondents believed that the party blamed had control in the outcome of the event (meaning that he/she could have prevented the unpleasant event), 2 (6.06%) did not believe that the party could have prevented it.

The cognitive theory of emotion states that cognitive appraisal efforts of the person-environment situation play a role as the evoking elements of emotional reactions (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Lazarus, 1991; Day, 1984). The respondents rated disappointment, frustration and sadness in this particular order as the top three emotions experienced following their dissatisfaction with the performance of their garments. These emotions were reportedly experienced by more than two thirds of the 33 respondents. Sixteen (48.48%) indicated that they were stressed, while 15 (45.45%) indicated they were angry.

Literature has indicated that when customers are dissatisfied with a market event, they usually resort to coping strategies to deal with their emotions. Westbrook in Stephens and Gwinner (1998), posited that emotions arising from external attribution tend to have a systematic influence on the customers' post-purchasing behaviours related to direct action of complaining, such as contacting the designer to obtain refund. The theory of complaint behaviour states that dissatisfied customers have options ranging from doing nothing to engaging in some forms of complaint behaviour (Chen-Yu *et al.*, 1999; Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Day, 1984). None of the dissatisfied respondents complained in the social mass media such as Facebook, magazine, newspaper or consumer complaint website. The results of the chi-square tests however revealed interesting relationships between negative emotions and

coping strategies (Table 4.22), as well as between positive emotions and post-purchasing behaviours (Table 4.26).

### *Anger and coping strategies*

Anger is associated with the appraisal of a consumption experience as frustrating and harmful (Bougie *et al.*, 2003) and it occurs when the individual sees another person as the source of the unpleasant event (Menon and Dube, 2004; Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999). According to Bougie *et al.* (2003), Chen-Yu and Hong (2002), Lazarus and Lazarus (1994) and Day and Landon (1977), anger is often accompanied by high coping potential, which usually manifests itself into an aggressive behaviour directed towards the person who caused the unpleasant situation. Angry people often feel energised to fight against the cause of anger because they feel that someone else is to be blamed (Shaver in Laros and Steenkamp, 2005). Based on the literature, it would be reasonable to expect angry customers to take public complaint action such as complaining to the business and seeking redress. Analysis of the results revealed that only 18 (54.54%) of the 33 respondents who indicated that they were dissatisfied with the performance of their garments took action. Of these, only 6 (33.33%) engaged in problem-focused coping by contacting the businesses to obtain redress. The results demonstrate that although the dissatisfied customers mainly regarded the designers who made their garments as the sources of the unpleasant events, their anger was not very pronounced, because only 15 (45.45%) of them were very to extremely angry. Furthermore, no evidence of a significant relationship existed between anger and contacting the designer to obtain redress and between anger and stopping to support the designer.

Although the findings of this study do not support the foregoing literature that dissatisfied and angry customers usually take public actions like contacting the business for redress, they are consistent with the results of previous research studies on dissatisfied apparel customers (Chen-Yu and Hong, 2002; Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Kincade *et al.*, 1992). These studies have shown that when an apparel item fails to perform as expected, only a relatively small portion of customers seek redress from the manufacturer or retailer. Kincade *et al.* (1992) found in their study that only 43% of the respondents who were dissatisfied with the performance of their apparel items sought compensation through redress from the retailer. According to Kincade *et al.* (1998), an estimate of less than 50% of dissatisfied customers seeks redress from retailers. As a result, manufacturers and retailers are often not aware of performance failures customers experience concerning the products, since many people do not communicate their dissatisfaction to them (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2009).

Analysis further revealed a significant relationship between anger and informing friends, family and acquaintances about the bad experience. This implies that even though angry respondents did not contact the designers to obtain redress (problem-focused coping) and they did not stop to support the businesses (avoidance coping), they spread negative word of mouth by informing friends, family and acquaintances, probably in seek of support (emotion-focused coping). According to Stephens and Gwinner (1998), emotion-focused coping is often used when customers blame themselves for the dissatisfying market event. Seeking support is a common form of emotion-focused coping, which occurs when dissatisfied individuals appraise the encounter as uncontrollable (Mathur *et al.*, 1999), therefore causing them to feel powerless in the market place. Because they become reluctant to complain due to fear of being viewed negatively by others, they may dissipate their anger by telling others about the dissatisfying encounter in search for some emotional comfort (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Their reluctance to come back to complain and seek redress may cause the designers to wrongly assume that their customers were satisfied. This could consequently result into loss of customer loyalty and subsequently loss of sales.

#### *Disappointment and coping strategies*

Analysis revealed no significant relationship between disappointment and informing friends, family and acquaintances about the bad experience and between disappointment and contacting the designer to seek redress. There was however, a significant relationship between disappointment and stopping to support the designer (avoidance coping). According to Schimmack and Diener in Dijk and Zeelenberg (2002), disappointment stems from outcomes that are worse than expected (disconfirmed expectancies), and can be experienced without attributing blame to a particular person, but to circumstances in general. According to Westbrook's report (1987), previous studies found that emotions that tend to be aroused when the causal agency is attributed to unavoidable situational factors usually stimulate withdrawal behaviour. Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004) reported a significant relationship between disappointment and switching, where customers refrained altogether from the service. For example, an incident where the CMAD was involved in an accident, which caused the delay in completing all the details of the dress can be disappointing, but is unavoidable. Such an incident could easily lead to avoidance coping. The respondents' withdrawal from the situation by stopping to patronise the designers (businesses), because they were disappointed, supports the finding by Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004).

Previous research has shown that female consumers are more likely to complain when blame for an unsatisfactory product performance is attributed to the manufacturer than to the self (Donoghue and de Klerk, 2013; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Although the results of

the study indicated that 78.79% of the respondents attributed blame to the designers (see Figure 4.3), the results of the chi-square tests indicated no significant relationship between other emotions experienced by the dissatisfied respondents and contacting the designer to obtain redress (focused-coping strategy). These findings therefore do not support the findings by Donoghue and De Klerk (2013) and Stephens and Gwinner (1998). This may imply that, although 78.79% of the respondents blamed the designers, they probably appraised the encounters as uncontrollable, while perceiving themselves to have low coping potential, making them to feel powerless. The findings suggest that other factors might have played a role in shaping the appraisal process and subsequent coping behaviours, such as the following:

- Many SCMABs do not have established systems for customer complaints or redress environment, since they operate informally, therefore causing the customer to see no benefit in taking action. The results of this study indicated that 75.60% of the businesses were informal.
- Most of the women in the study might have remained silent because of their empathy towards the designers and the understanding of their situations. In support of this assumption, Stephens and Gwinner (1998) reported that previous research studies have found women to be more empathetic and to feel more personal distress than men in dealing with other people.
- Day (1994) suggested that certain personal and situational factors play a role in influencing consumer complaint intentions and behaviours beyond the intensity of customer dissatisfaction. These include factors such as the effort involved in contacting the designer, knowledge of complaining options, significance of the product in the customer's lifestyle, which might have contributed to the customers' tendency towards emotion-focused and avoidance coping. For example, some customers who intended to wear the garment only once for the specific occasion, might not have seen any further significance of the garment in their lifestyle and therefore did not find it worthwhile to take public action. Donoghue and De Klerk (2009), in addition, identified product-specific variables, redress environment variables and consumer-related variables as some of the factors that can influence the dissatisfied customers' decisions to engage in specific complaint behaviours.

When the respondents who indicated that they took no action following dissatisfaction were asked to state their reasons, 57.14% of them indicated that they did not think it was worth their time and effort to take any action, 35.71% reasoned that they did not want to make nuisances of themselves, while 28.58% indicated that they simply wanted to avoid confrontation. All these reasons are forms of avoidance coping strategies. Literature has

indicated that people who engage in avoidance coping strategies often privately dissipate their anger by transmitting negative word-of-mouth to others or boycott the designers (Kincade *et al.*, 1998). These behaviours are, according to Day and Landon's taxonomy classified as private action (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2013, 2009). The implication of these findings is that some of the respondents, who have indicated that they did not take action, might have in fact taken private action.

Finally, the results indicated that some of the respondents who experienced dissatisfaction and engaged in negative word-of-mouth as a form of emotion-focused coping, also made use of problem-focused coping and (or) avoidance-coping as additional coping strategies. This is consistent with existing literature (Donoghue and De Klerk, 2013; Stephens and Gwinwer, 1998) that the three coping strategies are not mutually exclusive. Combination of the strategies is determined by the outcome of the appraisal process, which encompasses the individual's personal and situational factors. Therefore, dissatisfaction alone is not the actual source of complaint behaviour, but it facilitates the influence that negative emotions can have on complaint behaviour.

According to data analysis, a substantial number of respondents who were satisfied (73.86%) praised the designers for the satisfactory outcome of their garments. All the emotions resulting from satisfactory performance of the garment were experienced by more than 80% of the respondents, with happiness being the most experienced by 94.89% and a pleasant surprise the least experienced by 82.96%. When chi-square tests were performed to determine any relationships between the positive emotions and subsequent post-purchasing behaviours, it was found that no significant relationship existed between a pleasant surprise and all the post-purchasing behaviours. However, some interesting significant relationships were found between positive emotions and post-purchasing behaviours. A significant relationship was evident between pride and informing the designer about the satisfaction and between pride and ordering more garments from the designers. According to Laros and Steenkamp (2005), pride occurs when the customer feels superior to another person, evaluating her own performance of outcome in a positive light. Probably most of the respondents who were satisfied with their garments felt proud because they believed that they had greater influence in the positive outcome of the garment. This could be the reason they ordered more garments, probably hoping that they would again influence the outcome.

There was evidence of a significant relationship between excitement and informing the designer about satisfaction, between excitement and recommending the designer to friends, acquaintances and family and between excitement and ordering more garments from the designer. Significant relationships were also determined between joy and informing the



designer about the satisfaction, between joy and recommending the designer to friends, acquaintances and family, as well as between joy and ordering more garments from the designers. Of all the positive emotions, excitement and joy were the only two found to be significantly related to all the three positive post-purchasing behaviours included in the study. According to Roseman (2013), joy and excitement can be classified as contact emotions, which increase contact and interaction with stimuli appraised as motive-consistent. In support of this view, the respondents who were joyful and excited had contacts with the designers by informing them of their satisfaction, referring other potential customers and ordering more garments from the businesses.

A significant relationship existed between happiness and recommending the designer to friends, acquaintances and family. Another significant relationship existed between gratitude and informing the designer about the satisfaction, while a highly significant relationship existed between gratitude and recommending the designer to friends, acquaintances and family. According to Chen-Yu and Hong, 2002, customers who are impressed with the market place event would under unusual circumstances inform the sellers about their satisfaction and congratulate them. The results of the study revealed that pride, excitement, gratitude and joy were the emotions significantly related to congratulating the designer, informing him/her about the satisfaction. According to literature, these are the pleasant emotions evoked when a situation is appraised as being consistent with what the individual wants. This component is referred to as motive consistency (Demir *et al.*, 2009).

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The results clearly indicated the specific aesthetic and functional dimensions that play a role when FCMACs evaluate the quality of CMA. The aesthetic sensory, aesthetic emotional, functional comfort and functional durability dimensions contributed most to the perception of CMA quality. This means that the respondents in the sample only considered a custom-made garment to be of good quality if it provided the sensory pleasure, it evoked the wearer's emotions, was comfortable and durable. The importance of aesthetic pleasure in appearance, particularly the sensory pleasure was highlighted. Attributing blame to the designers was not instrumental in shaping coping behaviours of the dissatisfied respondents, indicating that personal factors, situational factors, product-specific variables as well as redress environment variables could have played a role during the appraisal process in determining the consequent coping strategies. The results also revealed that when customers are not satisfied, only a few of them return to the business to seek redress. This however does not necessarily mean that they simply withdraw in silence, but they mostly

resort to various forms of private actions to cope with the situations. The conclusions drawn from the results of this study will be addressed in the next chapter.



# CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, EVALUATIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the FCMACs' expectations and satisfaction regarding the quality of CMA. The theories of apparel quality, aesthetics, complaint behaviour, as well as the expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm and the cognitive appraisal theory served as point of departure for the study. In view of the purpose and objectives of the study, this chapter presents conclusions of the research study, implications drawn from the findings, evaluation of the study, contributions of the study to existing theory, as well as recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

### 5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Because a non-probability purposive sampling method was used, the findings of the study cannot be generalised to the entire population of Tshwane female custom-made apparel customers.

#### 5.2.1 Demographic background of the sample

The respondents were 209 females, whose ages ranged from 18 to 72, with an average age of 38 years. Seventy four percent of them were White and were mostly recruited from the East and Centurion regions of Tshwane. Three quarters of them ordered their garments from informal SCMABs and they mostly had their garments made for special occasions. The respondents indicated their top three reasons for seeking custom-made apparel in their order as follows: "seeking something personal and unique", followed by "seeking specific fit for body type" and then "seeking specific colours and design".

#### 5.2.2 General conclusions

A conclusion can be drawn that the FCMACs are motivated by their needs and preferences for personal and unique appearances. The results revealed that the FCMACs have certain expectations for both functional and aesthetic dimensions for their CMA, but have exceptionally high expectations for the sensory, comfort, durability and emotional

dimensions. It can therefore be concluded that FCMACs will only consider a custom-made garment to be of good quality if it provides sensory pleasure, emotional pleasure, it is comfortable and durable. The sensory beauty and the emotional pleasures they derive from their appearances are more important to them than the symbolic appearance. Unfortunately, the respondents were not as satisfied as expected with some of the dimensions that they rated as exceptionally important, more particularly with the sensory and the emotional aspects.

More than three quarters of the respondents who were satisfied with the performance of their garments experienced the emotions of happiness, joy, excitement, pride, pleasant surprise and gratitude. The respondents mostly praised the designers, informed them that they were satisfied and spread positive word-of-mouth about the businesses. In a similar way, the dissatisfied respondents mainly blamed the designers for poor performance of their garments. More than two thirds of them were disappointed, frustrated and sad about their dissatisfying consumption experiences and they mostly attributed blame to the designers. However, most of them did not contact the businesses for redress, but spread negative word-of-mouth and stopped patronising the designers. Considering the above, it can further be concluded that regardless of blaming the designers for the wrong doing, most FCMACs would rather resort to emotion-focused and avoidance coping strategies than problem-focused. During the secondary appraisal phase, individuals evaluate their coping potential by assessing different coping options available to them. Lack of formal redress environment, which is the situation with the informal SCMABs, might have caused the respondents to perceive themselves as having low coping potential, leaving them with no option to engage in direct consumer complaint behaviours. The findings of the study have certain implications for the small businesses that provide CMA, which will subsequently be discussed.

### **5.3 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE**

In view of the conclusions drawn from the study, it can be said that the aesthetic dimensions of apparel that give pleasurable experiences to the wearer are very abstract and subjective, making them difficult to express. It is a challenge for FCMACs to explain the sense of beauty and the feelings they would want to have when wearing the garments in such a manner that the CMADs would understand. Three quarters of the respondents had their garments made by informal SCMABs that mostly do their business in a very casual manner. These informal businesses need to review the whole process of providing CMA and to introduce more interaction with their clients. Both the formal and informal small businesses that provide CMA need to be aware of the difficulties that customers have in expressing their preferences. The

SCMABs need to implement strategies that will assist them to encourage the customers to express their realistic preferences and needs. Custom-made apparel designers should make use of the opportunities to schedule consultations, in which they can interact with customers, which is an advantage that retailers do not have. During these consultations, valuable information is exchanged when customers discuss their needs and expectations, while the CMADs give advice regarding the anticipated end-product. To create aesthetic experiences by evoking the wearer's emotions, it is important that CMADs consider the uniqueness of every customer and determine the specific attributes of an apparel item that have to be incorporated. The designers could also play a role in improving customers' perception of quality by educating them about specific dimensions of apparel products that contributes to quality. It is proposed that during consultations, pictures and examples of basic garments, as well as fabric swatches in different colours, textures and fibre contents be used to give the customer the idea of the look, the fit and the feeling that can be anticipated.

The fact that only a third of the dissatisfied customers returned to the businesses to seek redress should be of concern to SCMABs. Unfortunately, many of these businesses are often not aware of the problems their customers experience with the performance of their products, since many customers never communicate their dissatisfaction. This could give the wrong impression that the customers are satisfied. It should be realised that even if there are no complaints from dissatisfied customers, their silence could lead to many destructive consequences. As it was revealed by the results of this study, customers who did not seek redress mostly resorted to negative word-of-mouth and stopped supporting the designers. Such behaviours could cost the business both existing and prospective customers and consequently be detrimental to the reputation and profitability of the business. Dissatisfied customers might have remained silent for some reasons such as bitter previous experiences with complaining, or not knowing how or where to complain. Among the reasons indicated in this study for being silent were "I wanted to avoid confrontation", "I did not know what to do" and "I did not want to become a nuisance". Feedback can be very valuable in providing the SCMABs with the opportunities to make rectify mistakes. Customer behaviour beyond purchasing is very crucial because it has an influence on the profitability and sustainability of the business. Therefore, SCMABs should implement strategies that will encourage dissatisfied customers to provide feedback on the performance of their garments and to assure them of the goodwill in which their complaints will be handled.

## **5.4 EVALUATION OF THE STUDY**

Evaluation of the research study is a necessary process that enables the researcher to judge how successful the research project was implemented, in terms of its purpose and objectives. Areas that need improvement for future research can be identified through this process. The study will be evaluated in terms of the validity and reliability of the data collected, which is determined by the choices of the research strategy, the sampling method, the measuring instrument and the data collection procedures. Validity and reliability ensures that the measuring instrument covers and measures all the concepts used in the study in an accurate manner that will yield consistent results.

### **5.4.1 The research strategy**

Because no empirical evidence of research on FCMACs could be traced in a South African context, the exploratory and descriptive research strategy was deemed relevant. The research was survey-based and quantitative data were collected by means of a structured questionnaire, which was compiled from the review of literature and the results of the one-on-one interviews. The interviews had advantages in that the researcher could probe for additional information and explanations for responses. In this process, new unexpected indicators and terminology used by FCMACs when relating their experiences emerged and were incorporated into the questionnaire. One major disadvantage of using a questionnaire is the difficulty in receiving adequate response. The majority of the people who received the questionnaires did not return them. Another disadvantage is the fact that a structured questionnaire requires that simple language be used, so that the majority of the population understand all the questions. Because the fieldworkers and the researcher were not necessarily available at all times to clarify any questions that the respondents might have had, this had drawbacks in that certain questions were unanswered, more specifically the ones pertaining to the emotions. The respondents might have encountered difficulties in making clear distinctions between certain emotions. Regardless of the drawbacks mentioned, using the questionnaire had its advantages. Even though the questionnaire did not offer the researcher an opportunity to interact with, or to observe the respondents, the participants could remain anonymous, ensuring their confidentiality. This reduces bias that might result from the personal characteristics of the researcher. Structured questionnaires are also easier to analyse and turn into quantitative results.

## **5.4.2 Method of sampling**

A non-probability purposive sampling, combined with a snowballing technique, was used to recruit the respondents in the sample. Although females who have their clothes custom-made are available, they are a very scattered population, which makes it difficult to reach. Therefore, this method of sampling was found to be appropriate. Requesting SCMABs to assist was another convenient way to reach this market segment.

## **5.4.3 Quality of the results**

The following measures that were taken to ensure validity and reliability of the results have already been discussed in details in the methodology chapter (see Chapter 3).

### **5.4.3.1 Validity**

#### *Theoretical validity*

Proper literature review was conducted in order to accurately conceptualise all the relevant concepts used in the study. The theories of apparel quality, aesthetics, customer satisfaction, the expectancy/disconfirmation paradigm and the cognitive appraisal theory were studied and properly applied to develop a schematic conceptual framework used in this research study.

#### *Measurement validity*

The questionnaire was compiled from the literature review and the terminology used by the twelve respondents who participated in the one-on-one interviews. This form of interviewing was relevant, because the main aim of the study was to explore a phenomenon. The one-on-one interviews private and allow the interviewer to judge the quality of the responses and to notice when a question has not been properly answered (Walliman, 2005:284). These interviews normally include a standard set of questions, as well as one or more tailored questions that provide the researcher the opportunity to get clarification and to probe for adequate information (Babbie, 2013:190). During the interview sessions, new aspects related to the phenomenon under study emerge from the detailed explanations supplied by the participants, as the interviewer (researcher) probes for information (Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee, 2006:119).

The concepts and the objectives included in the theoretical framework were covered by the questionnaire. More than one indicator was used in measuring each construct to ensure construct validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pre-tested on a small sample of fifteen identified respondents who had the same characteristics of the target population and amended before being administered to the respondents in the sample. To ensure face validity, content validity and construct validity of the questionnaire, the supervisor and the co-supervisor approved it before it was administered. To enhance the internal validity of the questionnaire, during data analysis, Cronbach's alpha coefficient tests were performed in order to determine the internal consistency between three statements that measured each dimension for both expectations and satisfaction. The minimum acceptable alpha value for consistency was 0.7. Most of the tests indicated good consistency. Only suitability for end-use and sensory dimensions on the statements that measured expectations indicated inconsistency. Because the study was exploratory, an opportunity is provided to improve the measuring instrument for future research.

#### *Inferential validity*

The results of the study cannot be generalised to the greater population of female custom-made apparel customers because this was an exploratory study.

#### **5.4.3.2 Reliability**

The questionnaire had a cover letter explaining the nature of the study. The letter also assured the willing participants of their anonymity, also informing them that their participation was voluntary, giving them the option to withdraw from participation at any moment if they so wished. Fieldworkers also clarified the instructions where they could. Participants were also allowed to complete the questionnaire at convenient times. The issuing of questionnaires by the CMADs to their customers also ensured that only the people who qualified to be in a sample took part. Since no form of coercion was used to get the respondents to partake in the study, it can be assumed that participation was done willingly, therefore providing reliable data. The data were properly cleaned and coded before being captured and analysed. Chi-square tests were performed at 5% level of significance, to confirm the relationships between variables of interest before the results could be presented.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Because a purposive sampling technique was used, the findings cannot be generalized to the larger population of the entire Tshwane, but can only be limited to the sample. The study could have been expanded by including more respondents to yield more interesting results. However, because the study was not funded, no incentives were provided to fieldworkers and respondents to encourage response. As a result few people were willing to help as fieldworkers. Some difficulties were also experienced in finding the SCMABs who were willing to assist in handing the questionnaires to their customers. Most of them were skeptical and refused to get their customers involved.

Because many of the respondents were customers of the designers who assisted in the study, the designers might have purposefully selected customers who were satisfied with their garments, rendering the results of the study biased. This was unforeseen and might have influenced the outcome of the study, since more than three quarters of the respondents reported that they were satisfied. The study was more concentrated in two regions of Tshwane, namely, Centurion and Pretoria East, because these were the areas in which the researcher was able to find CMADs who were willing to assist. This, in addition to the choice of fieldworkers contributed to an unanticipated high frequency of White population in the sample. The questionnaire's sections on emotions (v13 and v18) were left unanswered by many respondents, rendering limited information on consumption emotions. Despite these limitations, certain patterns of emotional responses to satisfaction and dissatisfaction were identified and empirical relationships between the structure of these emotional states and consumer post-purchasing behaviours were affirmed. The study also provided empirical evidence that could contribute to theory and future research. The limitations of the study have in a way, offered possibilities for future research.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY**

The study begins to fill a gap in research on apparel quality, since previous studies have concentrated on mass produced ready-to-wear apparel. The results bring valuable contribution to existing theory in terms of FCMACs' evaluation of the quality of CMA. The FCMACs have to be understood as a target market with its own preferences and needs.

Regarding the role played by aesthetics in this study, results indicated that the statements that were rated of high importance were more about the individuals themselves than about others. The statements concerned the way the individuals felt about their garments and the



way the garments interacted with their bodies, than how other people thought of them when they wore their garments. In contribution to the theory of aesthetics, the study highlights the great importance of the sensory and emotional pleasurable experiences to the FCMACs, relative to the importance of symbolic aesthetic experiences. Style, colour and fit, which are often the features that mostly determine performance quality of an apparel item at the point of sale for ready-to-wear apparel (Eckman *et al.*, 1990), are however not readily available in the context of CMA due to unavailability of a tangible garment. Such features play an important role in determining the aesthetic performance of an apparel product. The reason why some customers were eventually not as satisfied as expected with their garments on aesthetic performances that were significant to them could be that it was not possible at the point of ordering the garments to evaluate the features that would evoke aesthetic pleasure. The study's contribution to the theory of aesthetics is that, dissatisfaction with aesthetically pleasurable experiences is more pronounced in the context of CMA due to unavailability of a tangible item to evaluate anticipated performance when ordering.

According to Westbrook in Stephens and Gwinner (1998), emotions that arise from external attribution will have a systematic influence on customers' product related post-purchase behaviours like direct action of complaining. Research studies by Isaac (2010) and Donoghue (2008) on household appliances established that the majority of the respondents attributed blame externally (to the manufacturers) and were mainly angry. Furthermore, proportionately more responses were obtained for problem-focused coping than for emotion-focused and avoidance-focused forms of coping. In a similar way, the findings of this study indicated that blame for poor performance of CMA was mostly attributed to the designers. However, dissatisfaction did not necessarily lead to greater reactions of anger. In contrast to the previous studies by Isaac (2010) and Donoghue (2008), despite a substantial number of respondents attributing blame to the designers, considerably high responses were found for emotion-focused coping (all the dissatisfied respondents engaged in this type of strategy), followed by voidance coping, while the lowest responses were obtained for problem-focused coping. Personal factors, situational factors, product-specific variables as well as redress environment variables might have played a role in shaping the subsequent coping behaviours of the respondents in this study. The fact that most of the SCMABs in the study were informal, points to the fact that no redress environment exists. This leaves no option for the dissatisfied customers to voice their concerns. This study added to the body of knowledge regarding the FCMACs' appraisal of poor performance of a product, the emotional responses elicited by their patterns of appraisals, as well as the subsequent post-purchasing behaviours. This opens avenues for feature studies with regard to the role of the individual characteristics that influence the individual's appraisal process, emotions and subsequent post-purchasing behaviours. Finally, this study clearly confirmed what previous studies on



apparel quality (Swinker and Hines, 2006; Hines and O'Neal, 1995; Fiore and Damhorst, 1992) have reported, that perceived quality of apparel is a multidimensional construct.

## 5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Due to lack of information available on CMA customers and the small businesses that cater for their needs, this was an exploratory study aimed at forming a base for further research. Based on the findings, certain propositions for future research will subsequently be discussed. The study was limited to a sample of 209 respondents and most of them were recruited by the SCMABs who were willing to help. The businesses were mostly situated in the East and Centurion regions of Pretoria. For future research, it would be interesting to include more participants from other geographical regions of Tshwane and other population groups. A comparison of emotional experiences and consequent post-purchase behaviours and coping strategies between different population groups would yield interesting results. Different racial groups may also have different expectations based on the different preferences perceptions of quality apparel products. Other future studies could concentrate on fuller figure women who wear CMA on regular bases to determine whether their expectations differ from those of other customers. It would be interesting to see whether different expectations and patterns of emotional responses, as well as different relationships between the emotions and behavioural consequences emerge from this particular market.

Further suggestions are made in future to narrow the study to focus on the dissatisfied customers. Events that trigger negative emotions tend to get the customer more involved in appraisal, in an attempt to find explanations for such events to occur. Analysis of the results suggested that more interesting findings concerning post purchasing behaviours linked to negative emotions that are triggered by dissatisfying market encounters could be revealed. The fact that almost two thirds of the sample consisted of respondents below the age of 40 suggests that future research could aim at middle aged and older CMA customers who have body changes that are not being accommodated by the mass produced ready-to-wear market. Another study could focus on customers who have their apparel custom-made on regular bases for day and career wear, or those who wear strictly custom-made apparel. However, such a study would have to cover a larger geographical area of Tshwane, in order to obtain a large enough sample. This will have financial implications.

Future studies could be broadened by including the examination of the services provided by CMADs during consultations, such as fittings, information and advises given. Not only the tangible product is being assessed, but also the whole interaction between the customer and

the designer could form part of quality assessment. Finally, it seems worthwhile to investigate the individual and situational factors that play a role in the FCMACs' appraisals of dissatisfying consumption experiences. Such studies could shed light into the characteristics that predispose FCMACs to specific emotional responses and the consequent post-purchasing behaviours.

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# ADDENDUM A

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

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UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Dear Participant

Custom-made apparel customers are a distinct target market with specific needs and preferences. In order for their businesses to survive and generate profits, custom-made apparel manufacturers should satisfy the needs and preferences of their customers.

The aim of this study is therefore to investigate the South African female custom-made apparel customers' expectations and their level of satisfaction regarding the quality of custom-made apparel. The findings of the study could help the custom-made apparel manufacturers to improve the quality of their product offerings in order to obtain higher levels of customer satisfaction.

You have been identified as one of the suitable participants for one-on-one interview sessions for the study. Please note that participation in the study is strictly voluntarily and you are free to withdraw at any stage of the study if you so wish without any intimidation. Feel free to voice your honest opinions, as there is no wrong or right answer. Your responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality and anonymity.

Should you have further questions regarding the study during the interview, please feel free to ask the researcher.

I greatly appreciate your time to participate in this study.

Kind Regards

**Miriam Makopo**  
**Department of Consumer Science**  
**University of Pretoria**

To indicate your consent to participate in the study, please read the statement below, print your name and provide your signature before commencing with the interview.

.....

**I HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH COMPLETE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY, AND AM WILLING TO VOLUNTARILY TAKE PART IN THE INTERVIEW SESSION.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# ADDENDUM B

## ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS ANALYSIS

### GROUP 1: DISSATISFIED PARTICIPANTS

Concept measured	Questions asked	Participants' statements
Expectations	<b>Question:</b> Why did you choose custom-made and not ready-to-wear garment/outfit	P7: "I expected something simple but stunning and extravagant" "I expected something unique"
Dissatisfaction with performance	<b>Question:</b> What are the things you were most unhappy about?	P 1: "The fit was not good at the top, it was too loose" P 2: "The pattern did not look like the picture" "The fit was not good, it was too big" P 3: "The material was not my choice The sewing was not finished neatly I wanted more of shape which was not there" P 4: "The fit was not correct" "The dress bubbled" "She changed the design and I did not like it" P 5: "Fit was not good" "The quality was poor because: The fabric was not what I expected. Sequins used on the belt instead of diamonds made the dress to look cheap." P 6: "The bodice did not fit correct" " It was stuffed with extra layer which made it thick" P 7: "The lace used was not the same as on magazine picture" "The fit at the hips was loose"
Appraisal of product performance (Attribution of blame)	<b>Question:</b> Whom do you think was responsible for the poor performance of the garment?	P 1: "I blame solely the designer because she misunderstood what I wanted" P 2: "It was the designer's fault. I think he was dishonest and incapable" P 3: "I blame the designer because she promised to do what I wanted" P 4: "There might have been some miscommunication between me and the designer" P 5: "It was the designer's fault". P 7: "I blame the designer"
Emotions following appraisal	<b>Question:</b> Describe how you felt after being dissatisfied with the performance of the garment	P 1: "I felt dissatisfied ... I felt misunderstood" P 2: "I was shocked, eeh! angry, frustrated" "It was not what I wanted and expected" P 3: "Disappointed because she made a promise" "I felt it was made in a rush" "I had lost trust in her" P 4: "I was unhappy because she changed the design to suit her" "Was sad because I trusted her to be a

		professional” P 5: “Was disappointed and sad” P 6: “I was disappointed. I felt she was not professional” P 7: “Very disappointed because I had trusted her”
Coping strategies (Action)	<b>Question;</b> What did you do after being dissatisfied?	P 1: “I did nothing” P 2: “Told him I was unhappy, refused to pay the balance and left” “I told family and a friend. I warned them never to go to him” P 3: “I told her to fix it” “I told family and friends” P 4: “I told her this was not what I expected, but took no further action” “I told friends and relatives about this” P 5: “Did not want to look at the dress again. I put it away, ignored everything and started making other plans” P 6: “There was nothing I could do. I never let her know I was unhappy” P 7: “Nothing”
No action	<b>Question:</b> Why did you not take action (did not do anything) after	P 1: “It was a matter of not wanting to be a nuisance” “I felt it was going to be much of an effort for her to fix it” P 4: “It was useless to complain. There was no time to get her to fix it” P 5: “It did not cost a lot of money to complain about” “I did not trust that the designer could make it better the second time” P 6: “To avoid confrontation” P 7: “Time was too short to fix it” “I was desperate cause the dress was made under pressure due to limited time”

## GROUP 2: SATISFIED PARTICIPANTS

Concept measured	Questions asked	Participants' statements
Expectations	<b>Question:</b> Why did you choose custom-made and not ready-to-wear garment/outfit	P2: “Wanted something more personal” “Wanted something special and unique” Fit was most important” P3: “Wanted one of a kind outfit” “Wanted something to suit my body type” “I wanted a very particular type of cut” P4: “Wanted specific fit for my body because my body is not proportional in size” “Wanted colours to match my skin tone”



		P5: "My body is not suitable for most designs" "Wanted something professional" "Because I expected good quality"
Satisfaction with performance	<b>Question:</b> What are the things you were most happy with?	P 1: "The fit was perfect" "The construction was good" P 2: "The fit was good" "The materials and colours were what I wanted" P 3: "I was happy with everything" P 4: "Everything made me happy" P 5: "Was satisfied with all of the things"
Appraisal of product performance  (Attribution of praise)	<b>Question:</b> Whom did you think was responsible for the satisfactory outcome of the garment?	P 1: "I praise the designer. She did a great job" P 2: "I praise the designer the most. He was very helpful" P 3: "I worked together with the designer. I aided by giving her the idea of what I wanted and expected to get" P 4: "It was efforts from both sides. The designer added her little touch into the final outfit" P 5: "I credit mostly the designer who did most of the great job"
Emotions after appraisal of satisfactory performance	<b>Question:</b> Describe how you felt after being satisfied	P 1: "I felt like a celebrity" "I felt like the most beautiful person in the dress" "I felt most fashionable" P 2: "Excited" "The dress made me feel special" P 3: "Very excited" "I felt beautiful in the dress" "It was exactly what I was looking forward to seeing" P 4: "Was happy that I decided to get it custom-made" P 5: "Very excited, very happy" "The dress came out even better than expected"
Post purchasing behaviour	<b>Question:</b> What did you do after being satisfied?	P 1: "I recommended the designer to everyone" P 2: "I told the designer I was happy and I recommended him to relatives and friends" P 3: "I referred one of my friends" "I spread positive word-of-mouth to many" P 4: "I recommended the designer to everyone who commented about how beautiful the dress was" P 5: "I told everybody including family and friends about how excited I was about the dress"

# ADDENDUM C

## QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences  
Department of Consumer Science  
05 November 2012

Dear Respondent

Consumers who wear custom-made clothing are a distinct target market with specific needs and preferences. Custom-made clothing designers should satisfy their customers' needs and preferences – not only to keep their customers happy, but also for their businesses to survive and generate profits.

This questionnaire forms part of a research study for my Master's degree in Consumer Science. The aim of the study is to investigate the South African female custom-made clothing customers' expectations and their level of satisfaction regarding the quality of custom-made clothing. The findings of the study could help the custom-made clothing businesses to improve the quality of their product and to obtain higher levels of customer satisfaction.

To take part in the study, respondents must reside in the greater Pretoria region (Tshwane) or greater Johannesburg region and must have had one or more garments custom-made in the past for any occasion, **excluding their own wedding dresses.**

You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire in the interest of this research. Please read the instructions at each section and question before answering.

Please note that participation in the study is strictly voluntary. Feel free to give your honest opinions, as there is no wrong or right answer. Your responses will be handled with strict confidentiality and anonymity.

Any further questions regarding the study or questionnaire can be directed to me.

Thank you for your participation.

Kind regards

---

**Miriam Makopo**  
(012) 420 4310  
083 653 1139  
mirriam.makopo@up.ac.za

To indicate your voluntary consent to participate in the study, please read the statement below, and provide your signature before commencing with the questionnaire.

**I HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH COMPLETE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY, AND AM WILLING TO VOLUNTARILY TAKE PART IN IT.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# ADDENDUM D

## QUESTIONNAIRE: CUSTOM-MADE CLOTHING

### SECTION A

Kindly complete this questionnaire based on the **most recent** custom-made outfit or garment you had made, **other than your own wedding dress**. Choose **only one** outfit or garment. Answer each question by marking with a **cross (X)** in the appropriate box **OR** provide a written answer where applicable.

1. Indicate your population group.

African	1
Caucasian/White	2
Coloured	3
Indian	4
Other (please specify)	5

v1

2. Indicate your age.

	Years
--	-------

v2

3. For what occasion was the outfit/garment made?

Day/Career wear	1
Special occasion (please specify)	2

v3

4. When was the outfit/garment made?

Month	Year

v4.1

v4.2

5. Why did you choose a custom-made and not a ready-made outfit/garment? **You may select more than one answer.**

I wanted a specific fit for my body type	1
I wanted something personal and unique	2
I wanted specific colours and design	3
I wanted something professionally made	4
Other (please specify)	5

v5.1

v5.2

v5.3

v5.4

v5.5

6. Indicate the type of business the designer who made your outfit/garment operates.

<b>A formal</b> and very well-known business	1
<b>An informal</b> , mostly home-based and not well-known business	2

v6

7. Indicate the amount you paid for the outfit/garment.

R

v7

**SECTION B**

At the time you ordered the particular outfit/garment in Question 3 (before it was made), you probably had some expectations regarding its performance during wear and care.

8. Indicate how important each of the following expectations were to you regarding the outfit's/garment's performance at the time of ordering.

It was important to me that ...	Very important	Important	Less important	Not important
It should not crease easily	1	2	3	4
The material should be of a quality that would last a long time	1	2	3	4
It should allow room for easy movement	1	2	3	4
It should be suitable for the occasion for which it was made	1	2	3	4
It should make me feel good about myself	1	2	3	4
The style should suit my figure type	1	2	3	4
It should make me look appropriate for my social status	1	2	3	4
It should be easy to wash	1	2	3	4
It should retain its shape after wear and care	1	2	3	4
The material should not scratch my skin	1	2	3	4
It should be possible to wear it to other occasions	1	2	3	4
It should make me feel better dressed than others	1	2	3	4
The material should feel nice to touch	1	2	3	4
It should make me look like a celebrity when wearing it	1	2	3	4
It should need little or no ironing	1	2	3	4
The construction and finishing should be strong	1	2	3	4
It should be comfortable for the season's weather	1	2	3	4
It should be possible to mix and match with other outfits	1	2	3	4
It should make me feel excited when wearing it	1	2	3	4
The material should drape well on my body	1	2	3	4
It should make me look fashionable	1	2	3	4

v8.1

v8.2

v8.3

v8.4

v8.5

v8.6

v8.7

v8.8

v8.9

v8.10

v8.11

v8.12

v8.13

v8.14

v8.15

v8.16

v8.17

v8.18

v8.19

v8.20

v8.21

When the outfit/garment was completed and during use and wear, you were now able to determine its real performance.

9. Indicate your level of satisfaction regarding the performance of the completed outfit/garment on each of the following:

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The style suited my figure type	1	2	3	4
The material was of a quality that would last a long time	1	2	3	4
The material felt nice to touch	1	2	3	4
It was possible to mix and match with other outfits	1	2	3	4
The material draped well on my body	1	2	3	4
The material did not scratch my skin	1	2	3	4
The construction and finishing were strong	1	2	3	4
It was easy to wash	1	2	3	4
It was comfortable for the season's weather	1	2	3	4
It was suitable for the occasion for which it was made	1	2	3	4
It retained its shape after wear and care	1	2	3	4
It needed little or no ironing	1	2	3	4

v9.1

v9.2

v9.3

v9.4

v9.5

v9.6

v9.7

v9.8

v9.9

v9.10

v9.11

v9.12

**For office use**

It made me look fashionable	1	2	3	4
It made me look like a celebrity when I wore it	1	2	3	4
It made me look appropriate for my social status	1	2	3	4
It made me feel good about myself	1	2	3	4
It made me feel better dressed than others	1	2	3	4
It did not crease easily	1	2	3	4
It could be worn to other occasions	1	2	3	4
It allowed room for easy movement	1	2	3	4
It made me feel excited when I wore it	1	2	3	4

- v9.13
- v9.14
- v9.15
- v9.16
- v9.17
- v9.18
- v9.19
- v9.20
- v9.21

10. Indicate your overall level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the performance of this particular outfit/garment.

Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	4

v10

If you were **DISSATISFIED** or **VERY DISSATISFIED**, answer only the questions in **Section C**.

If you were **SATISFIED** or **VERY SATISFIED**, answer only the questions in **Section D**.

**SECTION C**

11. If you were **very dissatisfied** or **dissatisfied**, indicate the party whom you blamed (held responsible) for the poor performance of the outfit/garment. (**Please select only one option.**)

<b>The designer</b> , e.g. she/he misunderstood what I wanted	1
<b>Myself</b> , e.g. I did not do enough research before choosing the designer	2
<b>Other parties</b> , e.g. a friend referred me to a bad designer	3

v11

12. Do you think that the party responsible for the outfit's poor performance could have prevented the failure?

Yes	1
No	2
Uncertain	3

v12

13. For each of the following descriptions please cross the number that best describes how you felt after the poor performance of the outfit/garment.

	Extremely			Not at all
Angry	1	2	3	4
Sad	1	2	3	4
Unpleasantly surprised	1	2	3	4
Frustrated	1	2	3	4
Stressed	1	2	3	4
Disappointed	1	2	3	4
Shocked	1	2	3	4

- v13.1
- v13.2
- v13.3
- v13.4
- v13.5
- v13.6
- v13.7

14. Did you do anything after being dissatisfied with the performance of the outfit/garment? (e.g. spoke to friends & family, stopped supporting the designer, complained formally to the designer and/or wrote a letter to the press, for instance to a newspaper/magazine or to a consumer complaint website)

Yes	1
No	2

v14

If your answer was YES to question 14, please answer question 15.

If your answer was NO to question 14, please answer question 16.

15. What did you do?

	Yes	No
Did you inform friends/family and/or acquaintances about the bad experience?	1	2
Did you stop supporting the designer?	1	2
Did you contact the designer to obtain redress? (Redress refers to remedy e.g. asked the designer for a refund/to make a new outfit/to alter the outfit, etc.)	1	2
Did you complain in the social mass media (e.g. newspaper, magazine, Facebook or a consumer complaint website)?	1	2

v15.1

v15.2

v15.3

v15.4

16. Indicate the applicable reason(s) for **not** doing anything. (Cross as many blocks as applicable and provide other reasons if relevant.)

I did not want to make a nuisance of myself	1
I wanted to avoid confrontation	2
I did not know what to do about it	3
I did not think it was worth the time and effort to take any action	4
I did not trust that the designer could make it better	5
Other (please specify)	6

v16.1

v16.2

v16.3

v16.4

v16.5

v16.6

v16.7

## SECTION D

17. If you were **very satisfied or satisfied**, indicate the party whom you believe should be praised for the satisfactory performance of the outfit/garment. (Please select only one option.)

<b>The designer</b> , e.g. she/he designed and made the outfit exactly as I wanted it	1
<b>Myself</b> , e.g. I did enough research before choosing the designer	2
<b>Other parties</b> , e.g. a friend referred me to a good designer	3

v17.1

v17.2

v17.3

18. For each of the following descriptions please cross the number that best describes how you felt after the **satisfactory** performance of the outfit.

	Extremely			Not at all
Proud	1	2	3	4
Happy	1	2	3	4
Excited	1	2	3	4
Pleasantly surprised	1	2	3	4
Grateful	1	2	3	4
Joyful	1	2	3	4

v18.1

v18.2

v18.3

v18.4

v18.5

v18.6

19. Indicate what you did after being satisfied.

	Yes	No
Did you inform the designer that you were satisfied with the garment?	1	2
Did you recommend the designer to your friends, family and/or acquaintances?	1	2
Did you order more garment(s) from the designer?	1	2

v19.1

v19.2

v19.3

Thank you for your participation!