

**The relationship between negative emotions and consumer compliant intention
following clothing retailers' in-store service failures**

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**The relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention
following clothing retailers' in-store service failures**

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Masters in Consumer Science (Clothing Retail Management)

In the

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Department of Consumer and Food Sciences
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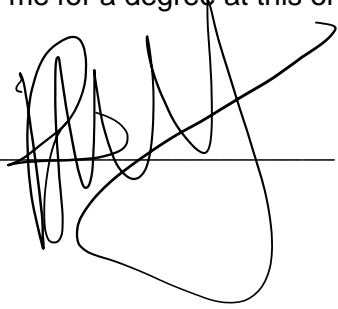
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November 2020

DECLARATION

I, Rut Meijer 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 been submitted by me for a degree at this of any other tertiary institution.

Signature: _____



Date: _____

9/11/2020

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SUMMARY

The relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures

by

Rut Meijer

Supervisor: Dr Bertha Jacobs
Co-supervisor: Dr Suné Donoghue
Department: Consumer and Food Sciences
Degree: Masters in Consumer Science (Clothing Management)

Delivering good service within a retail setting is becoming increasingly important to consumers. Therefore, retailers aim to deliver exceptional service to stay competitive and retain their customers. However, service delivery can be quite complicated, and despite retailers' best attempts to guarantee fault-free service, failures are inevitable. When a service failure occurs, some degree of dissatisfaction is bound to arise. Negative emotions are a common reaction experienced by consumers when dissatisfaction occurs after a service failure. Negative emotions and dissatisfaction as a result of a poor in-store service encounter, accordingly, act as a prompt for consumer complaint behaviour. The research aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between negative emotions and consumers complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Furthermore, the study explored the types of in-store service failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction for consumers in a clothing retail store, the negative emotions most frequently experienced by consumers after in-store service failures occur, and consumer complaint intention following in-store service failures.

The expectancy disconfirmation theory and cognitive appraisal theory served as the theoretical framework for the study. The expectancy disconfirmation theory proposes that consumers use expectations as a standard against which performance perceptions are evaluated. Negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the cognitive appraisal theory suggests that emotions arise in response to the cognitive appraisal of a stressful event or negative

outcome, such as service failures, and that these emotions determine the individuals coping behaviours.

The research followed a survey research design, quantitative approach and the purpose was exploratory-descriptive. Primary data were collected using an online self-administered questionnaire. Data were collected during June and July 2019. The link to the online self-administered questionnaire was shared with participants via email, WhatsApp, and various social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn). The questionnaire link was distributed by student fieldworkers. Data collection commenced after ethical approval was received from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science at the University of Pretoria. Due to time and financial constraints, a convenience sampling was employed to recruit willing participants. Together with the convenience sampling, quota and snowball sampling were used to ensure an appropriate sample of participants representative of the target population was reached. Statistical procedures included descriptive and inferential statistics (i.e., exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis).

The findings indicated that service failure dimensions related to personal interaction (i.e., *unfriendly staff, incompetent staff*), physical aspects (i.e., *unpleasant atmosphere*), reliability aspects (i.e., *stock availability issues*) and customer service (i.e., *long waiting time in queues*) would cause the most dissatisfaction. Participants also perceived incompetent staff, unpleasant atmosphere, and unfriendly staff as the most severe (serious) in-store service failures. Moreover, findings showed that the primary negative emotions consumers experience after an in-store service failure would be irritation, frustration, anger and disgust. With regards to consumer complaint behaviour, a consumer is most likely to tell their family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face). Multiple regression analysis was done to explore and describe the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intentions. Findings indicated that anger could be considered the main predictor for consumer complaint intention.

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CHAPTER 1: THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

Chapter 1 presents a general introduction to the study. This chapter sets the context for the study by providing background regarding the South African clothing retail industry, what in-store service delivery entails, and how service failures cause dissatisfaction and the negative emotions that could ultimately lead to consumer complaint behaviour. Important elements of this chapter include the background to the study, the research problem, justification for the study, and the overall aims and objectives of the study. Additionally, a list of terms and an outline of the remaining chapters are provided.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Consumers are becoming more demanding about the quality of service delivery (Kaur & Sharma, 2015) and therefore delivering exceptional service has become vital for retailers to stay competitive (Chan, Ha, Lee, Yung & Ling, 2016). Since the emergence of democracy in South Africa in 1994, the South African clothing retail industry has been flooded with international retailers (PWC, 2016). Consequently, consumers have a much wider variety of products and stores to choose from. However, the substantial number of local and international retailers in the South African retail landscape has led to an increase in competition; making it more important for clothing retailers to differentiate themselves from other retailers, improve service delivery, and ensure that they achieve customer satisfaction (Euromonitor, 2017; PWC, 2012). Wilson (2019), states that with increased competition, retailers need to be proactive and be quick to respond to the newest trends, consumer needs, and technology in this fast-paced, evolving industry (Wilson, 2019). Providing quality customer service should be seen as an essential tool for retailers in maintaining customer satisfaction and building long-lasting relationships (Kaur & Sharma, 2015).

The South African retail sector is the biggest and most sophisticated in sub-Saharan Africa (StatsSA, 2017). Within the retail sector, clothing retail is the second largest (16.6%) contributor to the South African economy (Kahla, 2019). In 2019, clothing and textiles were the key drivers of the growth in retail sales (StatsSA, 2019). This was followed up with a revenue amounted to R11.79bn in 2020 and an expected annual growth of 10.4% that could result in a market volume of R17.5mil by 2024 (Statista, 2020). The South African clothing retail industry is highly fragmented, consisting of a formal sector, which includes a mix of major local and international retailers, and an informal sector made up of small businesses and independent sellers (Marketline, 2020a). Moreover, South African retailers have adopted multichannel

retailing¹ models to keep up with international trends (Kim, Kim & Lennon, 2007). The Internet has transformed the retail sector in recent years as more and more retailers have moved into the multichannel sphere, looking for greater profits (Blázquez, 2014). The South African online retail sector has shown substantial growth and generated total revenues of R21bn in 2018, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 25.7% between 2014 and 2018 (MarketLine, 2020a). However, in-store retailing is still the dominant channel for purchasing clothing in South Africa and accounts for 68.7% of the overall retail industry's value (Marketline, 2020a). As South African consumers still prefer to shop in a physical clothing store, delivering quality customer service in stores can be considered one of the differentiation factors between retailers.

Customer service is actions intended to meet the needs and expectations of the customer, which in turn could lead to customer satisfaction (Fogli & Salas, 2006). To maintain customer satisfaction, it is imperative to deliver exceptional or quality in-store service. Service quality relates to how well-perceived service delivery aligns with consumers' expectations² about service delivery (Kasiri, Cheng, Sambasivan & Sidin, 2017). Delivering quality service is a way of being customer-centric as well as keeping customers satisfied (Shi, Mu, Lin, Chen, Kou & Chen, 2018). Customer satisfaction is the result of a consumer's expectations, regarding service, being satisfied or exceeded (Kursunluoglu, 2011; Levy & Weitz, 2012); which leads to customer loyalty and retention³ in the long term (Chopra, 2019; Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001). Customer-centricity is about creating a positive value-added experience for customers and never losing sight of ways to complete customer satisfaction (Hemel & Rademakers, 2016). In this highly competitive and rapidly changing industry, customer-centricity is achieved when retailers frequently interact and build relationships with customers (Hemel & Rademakers, 2016). Such retailers realise how quickly the needs of a consumer segment may change and how misunderstanding customers may cause retailers to lose their competitive edge and their loyal customers. (Brewster, 2001). Retailers should, therefore, strive to deliver positive service encounters to improve customer satisfaction and retention. However, due to the complexity of services and the service delivery process, service failures are inevitable and are bound to occur (Reynolds & Harris, 2009; Tsarenko & Strizhakova, 2013).

¹ Multichannel retailing is defined as a set of activities through which retailers sell products or services via more than one channel, for example, in-store and online (Levy & Weitz, 2012).

² Consumer expectations are the needs, feelings, and ideas that consumers have towards specific products or services; and can influence decision-making regarding product or service selection (Belyh, A. 2017).

³ Consumer retention is the process of getting existing consumers to continue purchasing products and/or services from your clothing retailing store (Patel, 2019).

Service failures, or service breakdowns, arise when actual service performance does not meet a consumer's expectations (Agarwal, Mehrotra & Barger, 2016). Service delivery can be highly complex, and many factors contribute to service failures (Heath, 2020). For example, employees who do not have sufficient product knowledge, have a bad attitude, do not respond to consumer queries rapidly, or are unhelpful can cause service failure (Heath, 2020). Service failures may cause different consumer reactions including, dissatisfaction (i.e., a discrepancy between perceived service performance and the expectation of the consumer) (Chen-Yu, Kim & Lin, 2017), strong emotional responses (e.g., anger, displeasure, or remorse), and unfavourable behavioural changes (e.g., switching between retailers or brands) (Agarwal *et al.*, 2016).

Furthermore, service failures can result in substantial costs to the retailer in the form of consumers telling friends and family about negative service encounters, the loss of consumers who switch to another retailer or negative publicity (Holloway & Beatty, 2003). Consumers' reaction to service failures also depends on the kind of service failure that occurred (Tsai, Yang & Cheng, 2014). Research distinguishes between outcome and process failure, where an outcome failure may cause less dissatisfaction, in comparison to a process failure (Luo & Mattila, 2020; Smith, Bolton & Wagner, 1999). An outcome service failure involves what customers received from the service, for example, there was no one at the cashier to pay for products, therefore receiving no service. While a process service failure involves how customers received the service, for example, the cashier was rude (Chuang, Cheng, Chang & Yang, 2012; Smith *et al.*, 1999). Furthermore, the customer's attitude towards the retailer may play a role in the perception of the severity of the service failure (Buttle & Burton, 2002; Petzer, De Meyer-Heydenrych & Svensson, 2017). Severity refers to the perceived intensity or seriousness of the service failure (Lai & Chou, 2015). Nonetheless, when a service failure arises, some degree of dissatisfaction is bound to occur.

Research proposes that a better understanding of satisfaction and dissatisfaction is possible by examining the emotions experienced by a consumer during a service encounter (Bickle, Burnsed & Edwards, 2015). It is vital to understand how emotions affect consumer complaint behaviour to allow the implementation of strategic courses of actions to build healthy and long-lasting relationships with consumers (Choraria, 2013). Dissatisfaction may cause negative feelings towards the retailer or specific characteristics of a consumption experience (Istanbulluoglu, Leek & Szmigin, 2017). The leading cause of dissatisfaction might not always be the product or the service itself; it could also be due to the manufacturer, retailer, salesperson, delivery or advertisement (Mahapatra, 2014). Alternatively, dissatisfaction may

occur due to external elements that cannot be controlled by the retailer, for example, the inability of consumers to use a product correctly or situational factors such as adverse weather conditions (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017a; Jacoby & Jaccard, 1981). Negative emotions are a common reaction experienced by consumers when dissatisfaction occurs after a service failure (Balaji, Roy & Quazi, 2017; Menon & Dubé, 2004).

Emotions are powerful drivers for consumer behaviour and “fuels” individual’s reaction to a situation (Fonberg, 1986, p. 302). If an individual is disappointed due to a negative situation, negative emotions are usually the result. When the individual struggles to maintain a good mental state, he/she will participate in numerous strategies to cope (Kim & Baker, 2020). Negative emotional reactions include feelings of unhappiness, and displeasure as well as feelings of betrayal, anger and sadness (Agarwal *et al.*, 2016; Giese & Cote, 2000; Wan, Hui & Wyer Jr, 2011). Anger has been found to be the most common emotion following an unsatisfactory service encounter (Ro, 2014). Dissatisfaction and negative emotions as a result of a poor in-store service encounter, consequently, triggers consumer complaint behaviour (Bougie, Pieters & Zeelenberg, 2003; Mei, Bagaas & Relling, 2019; Tronvoll, 2011).

Consumer complaint behaviour is defined as “a set of multiple (behavioural and non-behavioural) responses, some or all of which are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode” (Singh, 1988:94). Consumer complaints in the clothing retail industry have increased significantly over the last decade (Chan *et al.*, 2016). Consumer complaints mirror to the company what consumers are unhappy about (Kaur & Sharma, 2015). Consumer complaint behaviour is goal-driven, meaning consumers generally complain to achieve some outcome (McQuilken & Robertson, 2011). Alternatively, consumers complain not because they assume that changes will be made, but purely because it would make them feel better (Soares, Zhang, Proença & Kandampully, 2017). In some cases, consumers do not complain at all (Lervik-Olsen, Andreassen & Streukens, 2016). This should concern retailers because the retailer misses out on the chance to resolve the problem and retain a customer (Thomson, Whelan & Johnson, 2012). In the current competitive retail environment, having an excellent reputation and maintaining positive word-of-mouth is vital to increase competitiveness (Casaló, Flavián & Guinalíu, 2008). Clothing retail stores should consequently gather customer feedback to improve service quality (Chan *et al.*, 2016). It is vital to understand consumer complaint behaviour, as it is a powerful tool in ensuring customer satisfaction and could help clothing retail stores to turn a dissatisfied customer into a loyal customer (Kaur & Sharma, 2015). Therefore, an understanding of the context of service failures, how it influences consumers’ emotional reactions, and how it adversely affects consumer complaint behaviour

is imperative to assist retailers and service managers to develop quality in-store service experiences as well as effective recovery strategies or practices.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite retailers' best attempts to guarantee fault-free service, breakdowns, or failures are inevitable (Hoffman, Kelley & Rotalsky, 2016). The result of unfavourable service encounters is dissatisfied consumers who experience negative emotions that prompt complaining behaviour (Choraria, 2013). Retailers, marketers and academia have long been interested in consumer complaint behaviour, as it plays a significant role in ensuring customer satisfaction and customer retention (Tronvoll, 2008). Consumer complaint behaviour gives retailers a chance to address and resolve service failures and ensure that they do not occur again. However, if a service failure arises and dissatisfaction stays unaddressed, consumers are likely to defect to the competition or circulate negative word-of-mouth (Rosenmayer, McQuilken, Robertson & Ogden, 2018).

Consumer complaint behaviour has been studied in numerous research fields. Hirschman (1970) studied consumer complaint behaviour within the area of political science, while Day and Landon (1977) studied consumer complaint behaviour in the framework of product marketing. Research has revealed that there are various facets to consumer complaint behaviour, such as consumers' appraisal of the service failure and the emotions that accompany these appraisals (Donoghue, De Klerk & Isaac, 2012). According to Donoghue *et al.*, (2012) limited research has focused on how consumers in an emerging market context like South Africa handle dissatisfactory marketplace situations, what emotions occur in response to these situations and how they deal with these negative events. To date, most research on consumer complaint behaviour has been conducted in developed countries. Therefore, it has had a strong European and U.S. perspective (Laufer, 2002; Von der Heyde Fernandes & dos Santos, 2007). This raises questions regarding how applicable these findings are to developing countries, such as South Africa (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012). In culturally diverse populations, such as South Africa, consumer' understanding of consumption outcomes and their associated emotions and behaviours, might differ from consumers from more developed consumer markets (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012).

While studies have been conducted on consumers' perceptions of clothing quality in the South African context (Du Preez, Dreyer, Botha, van der Colff, Coelho & Pretorius, 2018) and on

service quality in a retail clothing retail store environment (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2003), there is very limited literature regarding clothing in-store service failures within the South African context. Similarly, research focused on negative emotions experienced following in-store service failures, specifically in the clothing retail context was very limited (Makopo, De Klerk & Donoghue, 2016). Studies have focused on the relationship between emotions and product performance failure as well as coping strategies following appliance failures but not clothing (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2013; Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Petzer, Mostert & Fourie, 2014). By filling these gaps in the literature, this study will consequently be beneficial to clothing retailers, marketers and academia. With the above evidence, it is clear that there is a gap in the literature on consumer complaint behaviour in developing countries such as South Africa. Also, little is known about consumer complaint behaviour in the context of clothing. Available research regarding South African clothing retailers does not evaluate consumers' negative emotions about in-store service failures but instead focuses on service recovery systems for service failures (Boshoff, 2012; Kincade, Giddings & Chen-Yu, 1998; Petzer *et al.*, 2014).

Research has indicated that understanding dissatisfied consumers' emotions is essential to interpret consumers' complaint behaviour (Bougie *et al.*, 2003; Choraria, 2013; Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Tronvoll, 2011). With in-store clothing retailers still being the dominant channel of purchasing in South Africa (Marketline, 2020a), understanding negative emotions and complaint behaviour in a store setting are crucial for clothing retailers to survive in the competitive economic environment. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailer' in-store service failures within the South African marketplace. The following research question was formulated: *What is the relationship between negative emotions and consumers' intention to complain following clothing in-store service failures?*

1.3 JUSTIFICATION

The research could shed light on the types of service failures causing the most dissatisfaction, what service failures evoke negative emotions, and how consumers consequently decide to complain based on the negative emotions. The findings of this study could have implications for clothing retailers, marketers, and academia.

Knowledge about complaint behaviour can give clothing retailers valuable insight into identifying common service failures (Tronvoll, 2008). Competition in the clothing retailing sector

is consistently increasing, and the development of innovative retailing formats are securing market positions rapidly. Therefore, more than ever before, clothing retailers need adequate knowledge of attributes that persuade customers to visit physical clothing retail stores (Chen-Yu & Seock, 2002; Janse van Noordwyk, 2008). Understanding the importance of in-store consumer decision-making and the factors that influence in-store decisions are crucial as numerous consumers only make their clothing choices once they are in the store (Holmlund, Hagman & Polska, 2011).

An understanding of customer emotions could have practical implications for clothing retailers as feelings about a negative service encounter consequently impacts customer satisfaction, switching behaviour, negative word-of-mouth, repeat purchase behaviour, complaining to third parties, as well as loyalty (Balaji, Roy & Quazi, 2017; Brady, 2003; Hino, 2017; Tao, Karande & Arndt, 2016). The findings could help clothing retailers to prevent future service failure, therefore leaving consumers more satisfied. Moreover, this study could describe the negative emotions experienced during service failure and how these emotions affect complaint behaviour. When these concepts are better understood, retailers will be able to address service failures more appropriately and in turn, ensure customer satisfaction and retention.

This study will have important implications for marketers for several reasons. Firstly, the study could provide theoretical insight into the negative emotions caused by in-store service failures and consumers' subsequent complaint intentions. Secondly, this study will help extend marketers way of thinking with regards to consumer complaint behaviour. The investigation of how consumers decide to voice or not voice their complaints after the occurrence of a service failure may help marketers to understand how consumers think. Understanding what emotions accompany specific service failures and the different types of complaint actions will assist marketers in having a greater understanding of their target audience and how marketing strategies should be constructed. Consequently, having better marketing strategies in place will ensure that the desired emotions will increase customer turnover and retail sales.

The study could make a theoretical contribution to the international body of literature, as it could assist academia to understand better how clothing retailers' in-store service failures cause dissatisfaction and the negative emotions that prompt consumer complaining behaviour. Lastly, this study could benefit the individual consumer. The research could help educate consumers on how and when to complain. If clothing retailers better understand consumer complaint behaviour and the negative emotions linked to it, they will be more likely to prevent

service failures and dissatisfaction. Consequently, this could lead to improved levels of customer satisfaction and an enhanced in-store purchasing experience.

1.6 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall research aim for this study is to explore and describe the relationship between negative emotions and consumers' complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The following research objectives were formulated for this study:

Objective 1: To explore and describe the types of in-store service failures that would cause consumer dissatisfaction in clothing retailers.

- 1.1 To explore and describe which in-store service failures (i.e., physical attributes, personal interaction, reliability, customer service) would cause the most consumer dissatisfaction.
- 1.2 To determine the level of dissatisfaction that consumer would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.
- 1.3 To explore and describe the severity of clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Objective 2: To explore and describe the negative emotions (i.e., anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness, and shame) that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

- 2.1 To explore and describe the negative emotions consumers would most frequently experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.
- 2.2 To explore and describe the relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions experienced following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Objective 3: To explore and describe the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

- 3.1 To explore and describe consumers' intention to complain after experiencing negative emotions associated with clothing retailers' in-store service failures.
- 3.2 To determine the different consumer complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.
- 3.3 To explore and describe the effect of negative emotions on consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Consumer complaint behaviour is defined as “a set of multiple (behavioural and non-behavioural) responses, some or all of which are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode” (Singh, 1988:94).

Customer service is actions intended to meet the needs and expectations of the customer, which in turn leads to customer satisfaction (Fogli & Salas, 2006).

Customer dissatisfaction occurs when consumer expectation is higher than actual experience after a service experience (Boadi, Li, Sai & Antwi, 2017).

Customer-centricity is creating a positive value-added experience for your consumers and is seen as a source of sustainable customer satisfaction (Hemel & Rademakers, 2016).

In-store retailing is the action of buying clothing from manufacturers/distributors and selling them to customers in a physical store environment (Steele, 2019).

Negative emotions are the effect of unfavourable service experience and usually results in prompting complaining behaviour amongst consumers with high levels of dissatisfaction (Boadi *et al.*, 2017).

Negative word-of-mouth (negative word-of-mouth) is defined as verbally communicating a negative experience to friends or family and thereby influencing their perception of a brand or retailer (Istanbulluoglu, Leek & Szmigin, 2017).

Personal interaction is the interaction between the employees of a store and the customer (Beneke, Hayworth, Hobson & Mia, 2012).

Physical aspects can be defined as the tangible aspects of the service (Kang & James, 2004).

Reliability refers to whether a store can deliver the service that it has promised to consumers accurately, and with no errors (Huang, 2009).

Service failures, or service breakdowns, arise when actual service performance falls beneath a consumer’s expectations (Agarwal *et al.*, 2016; Hoffman & Bateson, 2010).

Service quality relates to how well the delivered service aligns with consumers' expectations about perceived service (Kasiri, Cheng, Sambasivan & Sidin, 2017).

Store appearance is essentially a consumers' perception of physical attributes of the service delivery system, gives tangible clues about service quality and is commonly acknowledged as an essential determining factor of the shopping experience (Bitner, Booms & Tetreault, 1990).

Store atmosphere can be defined as the physical characteristics of a retail store that is used to attract customers and to create a specific image (Waters, 2019).

Store layout can be defined as the design of a store's floor space and how items within the store are placed (Heap, 2014).

1.8 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 presents a general introduction to the study. This chapter sets the context for the study by providing background regarding the South African clothing retail industry, what in-store service entails and how service failures cause dissatisfaction and negative emotions which could ultimately lead to consumer complaint behaviour. Important elements of this chapter include the background to the study, the research problem, the justification for the study, and the overall aims and objectives of the study. A list of terms and an outline of the remaining chapters are provided.

Chapter 2 comprises of the theoretical framework followed by an integration of relevant literature on the differences as well as the relationship between in-store service failures, negative emotions, and consumer complaint behaviour. All the relevant concepts are defined and discussed. In conclusion, a conceptual framework for the study is presented, which include the relevant concepts discussed in the literature review.

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology employed for the present study. Within this chapter, the research design, purpose and approach followed are discussed and explained. This chapter provides all of the information relating to the development of the instrument and the operationalisation of the objectives, the sample, sampling techniques used as well as the validity and reliability of the scales used to gather the required data. The researcher's consideration of ethical issues concludes this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study. The results are presented in terms of the objectives outlined in Chapter 1. Tables guide the discussion of the results. A brief overview of the sample demographics is provided. Analysis of the data are presented with descriptive and inferential statistics to provide an understanding of the in-store service failures causing the most dissatisfaction, what emotions are triggered by customer dissatisfaction, and customers' subsequent complaint intentions as well as the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intentions.

Chapter 5 concludes this study. Key findings, interpretation and conclusive remarks derived from the study's results are offered in the last chapter. Implications and recommendations for marketers and retailers are provided. In addition, the limitations of the study are evaluated and recommendations for future studies are outlined.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a broad introduction to the research study. It presented background information to provide insight into the research problem and a justification for the research. This chapter also introduced the main concepts and associated with this study as well as the research objectives set. A discussion follows in the next chapters, as stated in the presentation and outline of the study.

For referencing, the Harvard Reference style (as instructed by the Department of Consumer Science, University of Pretoria) was used and English (South Africa) was the choice of language for editing purposes.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The first section of this chapter comprises of the theoretical framework underpinning the research, followed by the relevant literature on the relationship between in-store service failures, negative emotions, and consumer complaint behaviour. All the relevant concepts are defined and discussed. In conclusion, the conceptual framework for the study is presented.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The expectancy disconfirmation theory and cognitive appraisal theory served as the theoretical framework for the study. The expectancy disconfirmation theory proposes that consumers use expectations as a standard against which performance perceptions are evaluated (Babin & Harris, 2018:294). Disconfirmation signifies cognitive appraisal that results in satisfaction judgments (Makopo *et al.*, 2016). In the context of this study, when in-store service failures occur when expectations of service performance are not met, meaning performance is less than expected (Wang & Zhang, 2018). Negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction (Um & Lau, 2018). Furthermore, the cognitive appraisal theory suggests that emotions arise in response to the cognitive appraisal of a stressful event (or negative outcome, such as service failures) and that these emotions determine the individuals coping behaviours (Obeidat, Xiao, Iyer & Nicholson, 2017). Hence, these theories are deemed appropriate to explore consumers emotions and coping strategies (complaint intentions) following appraisals of service failure.

2.1.1 Expectancy disconfirmation theory

The Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory proposes that individuals hold cognitive expectations about consumption events that are evaluated against actual performance perceptions (Oliver, 2014). It was developed to explain customer decision-making (Oliver, 2014). The model is represented in **Figure 2.1**.

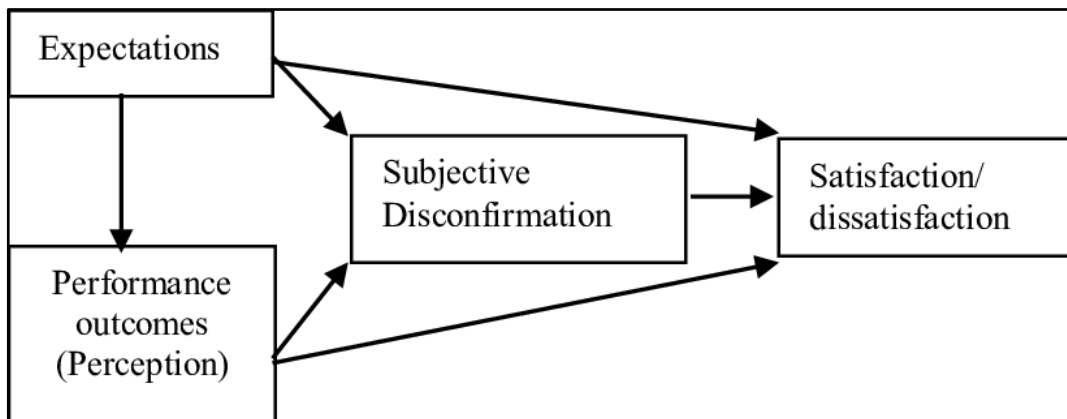


FIGURE 2.1: THE BASIC DICONFIRMATION PROCESS (Oliver & Burke, 1999)

The expectancy disconfirmation model comprises of four primary constructs, namely consumer expectations, performance perception, confirmation or disconfirmation, and customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Expectations can be defined as pre-consumption beliefs or ideas about the perceived performance of a product or service (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2009). Perceived performance refers to perceptions of the actual performance of the product or service (Munir, 2018). Disconfirmation occurs when a discrepancy exists between expectations and perceived performance (Rodgers, Negash & Suk, 2005). Positive confirmation occurs when the service experience exceeds the consumer's expectation; while negative disconfirmation occurs when the service experience is less than expected (Au & Tse, 2019; Rodgers *et al.*, 2005). Positive disconfirmation results in satisfaction, while negative disconfirmation results in dissatisfaction (Cheung & Lee, 2005; Giese & Cote, 2000; Tronvoll, 2007).

Consumers typically compare their preconceived expectations on how a service should perform or be delivered with the perceived performance and decide whether a difference occurred (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2009). Customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is usually conceptualised as a positive or negative emotion in response to a retail experience (Cheung & Lee, 2005). Customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction presents the emotional response to the confirmation/disconfirmation of expectations (Oliver, 2014). Customer satisfaction, simply put, is the feeling that results when the customer makes a positive evaluation or feel happy with an outcome (Suchánek & Králová, 2018). In contrast, customer dissatisfaction is the feeling when the customer makes a negative evaluation or feel unhappy with an outcome (TenHouten, 2006).

The expectancy disconfirmation model is appropriate for this study as it aims to explore and describe the process of how dissatisfaction is caused. It is applicable, as dissatisfaction

ultimately leads to negative emotions that cause consumer complaint behaviour. The next section explores the cognitive appraisal theory. This theory further describes the process of how emotions are experienced and how they consequently lead to consumer complaint behaviour.

2.1.2 Cognitive appraisal theory

Cognitive appraisal refers to the process through which an individual assesses whether a specific encounter with the environment is meaningful to his/her wellbeing, and if so, in what ways (Alhurani, Dekker, Ahmad, Miller, Yousef, Abdulqader, Salami, Lennie, Randall & Moser, 2018; Jiang, 2020; Lazarus, 1991; Watson & Spence, 2007). According to Bagozzi, Gürhan-Canli and Priester (2002:40), and Watson and Spence (2007), cognitive appraisal proposes a comprehensive way to describe the subtle nuances of emotions which are provoked through the interpretation of characteristics of events to determine behavioural responses. Emotion, from a cognitive appraisal perspective, is “a mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts” (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer 1999: 184). Appraisal theorists argue that the psychological appraisals made by an individual who experiences and interprets the circumstances or events are a key influence on positive or negative emotions experienced (Bagozzi, Gopinath & Nyer, 1999). Positive emotions are experienced in goal-congruent situations, while negative emotions occur from goal-incongruent situations (Soscia, 2007). Attributions can be considered critical when appraising a situation (Obeidat *et al.*, 2017). When a service failure occurs, a consumer may make a blame attribution, which leads to negative emotions (Gelbrich, 2010). These negative emotions can include anger and frustration (Gelbrich, 2010). Service failures, therefore, elicit negative emotions.

Mattila and Ro (2008) postulate that negative emotions experienced during a service failure are known to induce a coping mechanism. Folkman and Lazarus (1988) proposed different coping strategies, namely, problem-based coping and emotion-based coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). These two coping strategies have been characterized as complaining (problem-based coping) and noncomplaining (emotion-based coping) behaviours (Chebat, Davidow & Codjovi, 2005). Problem-based coping entails the consumer to act directly on a service failure. In contrast, emotion-based coping requires a more passive strategy, for instance, controlling your emotions or pursuing assistance from others (Menon & Dube, 2004). It is a mixture of a biased appraisal of a situation and the coping capability that decides the emotions to be induced (Lazarus, 1991). Subsequently, a more profound understanding of coping behaviours is required to comprehend the role of emotions in consumer responses to

a service failure (Mattila & Ro, 2008). Nevertheless, the link between particular emotions and coping strategies can be complicated, therefore leading to the belief that people could simultaneously participate in several coping strategies (McCrae, 1982).

The cognitive appraisal theory is appropriate for this study as the theory focuses on the causes and outcomes of emotions to describe the emotion's psychological process (Watson & Spence, 2007). It is applicable for the study, as the aim is to explore and describe how emotions are evoked and how these emotions may lead to consumer complaint behaviour.

2.2 IN-STORE SERVICE FAILURE

Service offerings that are free from errors improve the organisations' reliability and will ensure that the consumer trust the staff as well as the organisation (Garg, 2013). Still, service failures are certain to occur, and endeavours by retailers to avoid their occurrence is an exercise in futility (Waqas, Ali & Khan, 2014). Service failures can be defined as a deviation from the expected outcome (Van der Heijden, Schepers, Nijssen & Ordanini, 2013). Service failure occurs when the service provider (e.g. in-store clothing retailer) fails to respond sufficiently to a customer's expectations, leading to customer dissatisfaction (Bitner *et al.*, 1990). According to Van der Heijden *et al.* (2013), acting when these deviations occur, is an opportunity to create knowledge for improvement and implementing new procedures that will improve speedy service recovery.

The expectancy disconfirmation theory states that satisfaction/dissatisfaction results from a cognitive assessment where the actual real retail service performance is compared with expectations of performance (Arnold, Reynolds, Ponder & Lueg, 2005; Churchill Jr & Surprenant, 1982). Customers experience satisfaction when the perceived retail performance exceeds their expectations thereof (Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). Customers satisfaction is closely linked with customer loyalty and is, therefore, a vital determining factor when choosing which retailers are worth shopping at (Loureiro, Miranda & Breazeale, 2014).

Despite retailers' aspiration to deliver quality service to increase customer satisfaction, the intricacy of the service delivery process makes service failures inevitable, leading to customer dissatisfaction (Balaji *et al.*, 2017; Reynolds & Harris, 2009). Agarwal *et al.* (2016) state that consumers may respond to service failures in various ways. The most frequently examined reactions are changes in satisfaction (i.e., customer dissatisfaction), emotive reactions (e.g.,

anger, shame, sadness), and undesirable behavioural consequences (i.e., complaining to retailers or switching between retailers). Additionally, service failures vary in severity with some service failures being perceived as insignificant irritations, while others are seen as larger stressors that can have a significant effect on consumer complaint behaviour (McQuilken, McDonald & Vocino, 2013; McQuilken & Robertson, 2011). Service failures that could be classified as severe include long waiting time for service delivery, queueing for a too long, interacting with impolite or unresponsive employees, and billing errors (Bougie *et al.*, 2003). According to Bougie *et al.* (2003), these failures are known to lead to negative emotions such as anger.

One way of countering severe service failures is offering quality service (Wirtz & McColl-Kennedy, 2010). Service quality is a critical success factor that can contribute to the competitiveness of an in-store retailer. Service quality within a retail store is essential for satisfying consumers, as well as customer retention and creating customer loyalty (Naik, Gantasala & Prabhakar, 2010). Numerous studies have researched dimensions of service quality in the retail sector (Dabholkar, Thorpe & Rentz, 1996; Kang & James, 2004; Long & McMellon, 2004; Sirohi, McLaughlin & Wittink, 1998; Sweeney, Soutar & Johnson, 1997). Dabholkar *et al.*, (1996) distinguished between five basic service quality (SERVQUAL) dimensions for retail stores, namely physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction, problem-solving, and policy. **Figure 2.2** depicts Dabholkar *et al.* (1996) SERVQUAL model for retail stores. In addition, Vazquez *et al.* (2001) and Huang (2009) found that the prominent dimensions of service quality included physical aspects, personal interaction, and reliability. At the same time, Kang and James (2004) found customer service to be an important dimension of service quality to consider.

For this study, the following dimensions were adopted: *physical aspects; personal interaction; reliability; and customer service*. These dimensions were chosen as a means to be inclusive of possible dimensions proposed in the literature to might contribute to a service failure in clothing stores. Clothing retail stores should essentially understand the service quality factors that are important to their customers to improve the quality of their service and ultimately achieve customer retention and loyalty (Makgopa, 2018).

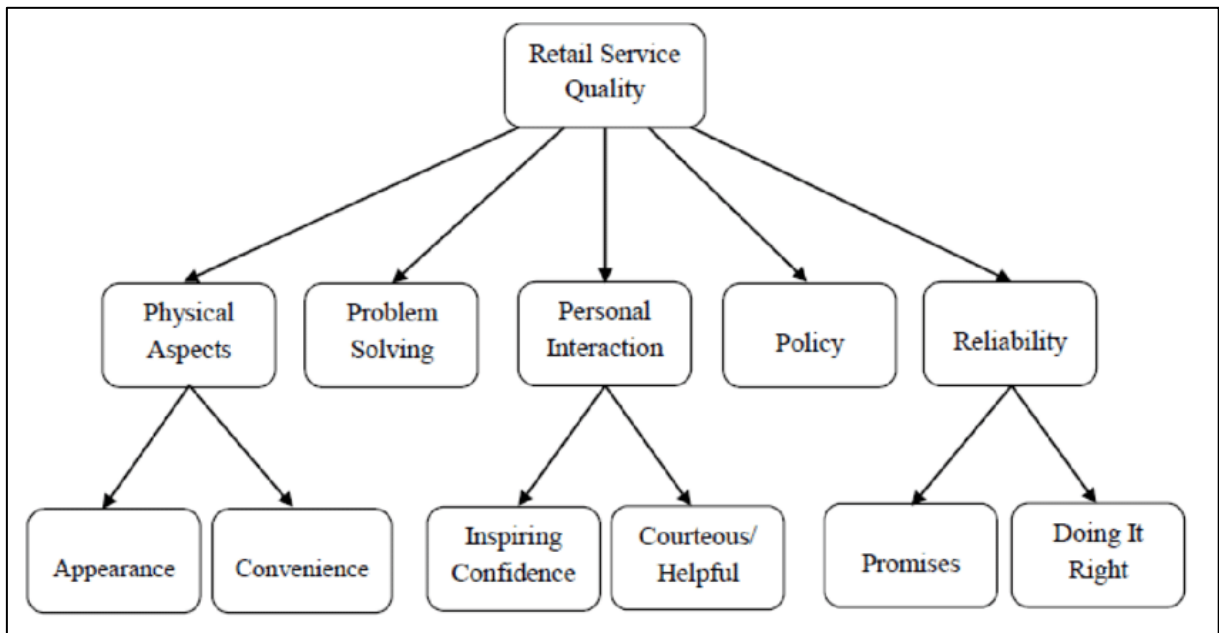


FIGURE 2.2 SERVQUAL MODEL (Dabholkar *et al.*, 1996)

2.2.1 Physical aspects

Physical aspects can be defined as the tangible aspects of the service (Kang & James, 2004). Physical aspects include dimensions such as retail *store appearance, layout and store atmosphere* (Huang, 2009). Literature has shown that the categories of clothing offered and the physical store environment is significant attributes consumers use to determine where to shop as well as to evaluate the service quality provided by retailers (Johnson, Banks & Seo, 2017; Roozen, 2019; Tomazelli, Broilo, Espartel & Basso, 2017).

The store environment, imagery and facilities have become features that retailers use to provide a competitive edge and influence customer satisfaction and therefore are important factors to consider (Dabholkar *et al.*, 1996; Otterbring & Lu, 2018). A study conducted in South Africa found that physical facilities such as appearance and atmosphere, service offered by sales employees, and store layout are of specific importance to Black female clothing shoppers (Kleinhans, Visser, Van Aardt & Du Preez, 2001; Mosquera, Olarte-Pascual, Ayensa & Murillo, 2018).

2.2.1.1 Store appearance

Store appearance is the physical attributes of a store and how it stands out from its surroundings, catches consumers' eyes and draws them to come into a store (Jiang, 2017).

Store appearance can include items such as clean, attractive, and convenient public areas (e.g., fitting rooms, queues, waiting areas) as well as modern-looking equipment and design (Abu, 2004; Aziz, Ghani & Niazi, 2020; Jiang, 2017). Van Riel, Semeijn, Ribbink and Bomert-Peters (2012) found that an untidy waiting area in a clothing retail store leads to a negative emotional response, while a tidy waiting area lessens the negative response.

A well-designed store, including factors such as appearance, wide aisles, cleanliness, departments in suitable places, and clear aisle directions, can enhance the shopper experience as well as overall perception of the merchandise quality (Konalingam, 2017). Messy shelves, irregular and narrow aisles could enhance consumers' perception of overcrowding, which consequently leads to dissatisfaction (Mohan, Sivakumaran & Sharma, 2013). Physical cues, like floor covering, shelves, and lighting, encountered by consumers when entering a retail store as well as the appearance of secondary equipment such as shopping bags and catalogues can significantly influence customer satisfaction (Mohan *et al.*, 2013). Retailers should try to enhance the perceptions consumers hold of physical cues related to the store improving customer satisfaction and retention (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001).

2.2.1.2 Store layout

Store layout can be defined as the design of a store's floor space and how items within the store are placed (Heap, 2014). Store layout describes how products and aisles are organized as well as the shape and size of these fixtures, and the spatial relationships between them (Mohan *et al.*, 2013). The store layout is intended to make in-store shopping enjoyable (Vazquez & Bruce, 2002). Store layout can influence a consumer's perception of the retail store, and if the layout is not done correctly can determine store patronage (Singh, Katiyar & Verma, 2014). A significant role of a store's layout is to showcase merchandise to shoppers to entice and interest consumers, and ultimately prompt purchasing of items (Mowrey, Parikh & Gue, 2018).

A well-designed store layout helps consumers find products and information with more ease, unlike a poor layout (Behera & Mishra, 2017; Thao, 2020). Likewise, well-designed store layouts can decrease shopper search time, improve service reliability, increase processing efficiency as well as facilitate consumer positioning within the service delivery system (Roy, 2018). These aspects help to counter consumer's frustration, especially when customers struggle to find the products they are looking for, even when these products are in the store (Fisher, Krishnan & Netessine, 2006). Poor store layout often leads to undesirable perceptions

or switching to a competitor instead (Fisher *et al.*, 2006; Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2009). Spies *et al.*, (1997) confirm that a poor layout may cause negative store perceptions which in turn could lead to customer dissatisfaction. In contrast, a well-designed store assists the consumer with having a positive, well-organized and enjoyable shopping experience (Hines & Bruce, 2012).

Literature suggests that store layout could induce positive or negative affect in a shopping experience (Tlapana, 2009). A positive mood-inducing retail store can lead to a positive shopping experience, consequently contributing to positive shopping intentions and customers satisfaction (Miranda, Kónya & Havrila, 2005). Whereas consumers experiencing frustration while shopping due to the store layout might walk out and never come back (Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2009). The challenge clothing retailers are faced with is finding ways to make the shopping experience efficient and entertaining by creating a good layout and store environment, which will reduce negative emotions and customer dissatisfaction (Štulec, Petljak & Kukor, 2016).

2.2.1.3 Store atmosphere

Store atmosphere can be defined as the physical characteristics of a retail store that is used to attract customers and to create a specific image (Waters, 2019). For clothing retailers to differentiate themselves from their competition, establishing a positive store image is essential, as store image tends to be used as the main criterion when selecting a store (Visser, Janse van Noordwyk & Du Preez, 2006). Choosing a retail store encompasses an assessment process whereby customers evaluate several store attributes in terms of the general perception of the store image, causing them to select or reject the store (Cornelius, Natter & Faure, 2010). While store appearance focuses on the physical attributes of a store such as cupboards and hangers, store atmosphere focuses more on the design elements of the in-store environment by stimulation of the five senses. Store atmosphere is composed of tangible elements (e.g., the building, fixtures, point-of-purchase decorations) as well as intangible design elements including colours, scents, temperature, music, and lighting that can affect service encounters (Hoffman & Turley, 2002; Weishar, 2005).

Store atmosphere can be viewed as being an influencing factor of store patronage decisions (Cho & Lee, 2017). A negative store atmosphere is known to result in avoidance behaviour; for instance, the need to leave the store or experiencing dissatisfaction (Akram, Hui, Khan, Hashim & Rasheed, 2016; Turley & Milliman, 2000). Studies have shown that atmospheric

elements such as scents and music, can affect consumers' in-store experiences (Bäckström & Johansson, 2006; Foxall & Yani-de-Soriano, 2005; Yalch & Spangenberg, 2000). Scents that are not naturally connected with products being sold in a store can manipulate consumers' perception of the store in a negative way (Utriainen, 2017). Scents and music that have positive connotations to consumers can frequently create the feeling of having spent less time in the store than was spent (Biswas, Lund & Szocs, 2019; Garaus, 2017; Helmfalk & Hultén, 2017). Loud music, on the other hand, can be extremely irritating and might cause physical discomfort prompting negative effect when shopping (Biswas *et al.*, 2019). Improper lighting can reduce the visual perception that could lead to a loss of customers and therefore reduced sales (Guido, Piper, Prete, Mileti & Trisolini, 2017).

The external design characteristics of a store can be manipulated to differentiate retail stores in the competitive marketplace (Cornelius *et al.*, 2010). Consumers tend to assess retail stores according to a specific set of attributes, and depending on an individual's preferences, patronise the most appropriate store (Hernant, 2009). Positive store atmospherics are vital to offer good in-store experiences and extremely important in influencing consumers' decision when assessing which retailer to patronage (Foxall & Yani-de-Soriano, 2005; Turley & Milliman, 2000). Retailers should understand what customers are searching for when choosing a store and should position themselves accordingly to meet the most favourable attributes. With the above literature, it is quite clear that physical retail store attributes are important factors to assess when considering the service quality of a retail store.

2.2.2 Personal interaction

Personal interaction is the face-to-face interaction between the employees of a store and the customer (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 2002). *Unfriendly staff, unhelpful staff and incompetent staff* are considered dimensions of personal interactions (Beneke *et al.*, 2012).

2.2.2.1 Unfriendly staff

Unfriendly staff seems to be uninterested in or rude towards customers and also appears to be ready to argue or fight (TenHouten, 2006). Unfriendly and unknowledgeable sales assistants are major causes of service failures in stores (Sann & Lai, 2020). Employee-based service is constantly judged by consumers in terms of how well staff deliver services or help customers (Al-hawari & Mouakket, 2012). During staff-customer interaction, customers continuously shift the image of the firm to either positive or negative, depending on the actions

of the staff (Vegholm, 2011). Therefore, the way customers are treated will affect their image of the retailer as a whole. Consumers' experience based on their interaction with sales staff has the ability to promote trust if positive interactions occur (Xu, 2018). Trust can affect the growth of positive consumer intentions, attitudes, and behaviours on a company's services and products (Ozmen, 2018). Sales staff can, therefore, through positive service encounters, establish trust and show that they have their consumer's best interests at heart (Al-hawari & Mouakket, 2012). Therefore, building long-lasting and strong customer relationships play a vital role in customer retention and developing a loyal customer base (Sweeney & Chew, 2002).

2.2.2.2 Unhelpful staff

Unhelpful staff is not willing to help a customer when they are seen struggling (TenHouten, 2006). Staff should assist customers with the merchandise in the store as well as with any questions they may have (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). Unhelpful staff may have an immediate negative effect on a customer's self-esteem and can make them feel less appreciated, which correlates with how they perceive the store image and the risk associated with the patronizing the store (Edwards, Rosenbaum, Brosdahl & Hughes, 2018; Latif, Alghazo, Maheswar, Jayarajan & Sampathkumar, 2020; Mitchell, 2001).

2.2.2.3 Incompetent staff

Customers expect staff to be knowledgeable about products, helpful, friendly and able to assist in sales to have a good shopping experience (Helm, Kim & Van Riper, 2020). The quality and knowledge of sales personnel can act as significant favourable store attributes for clothing shoppers (Visser *et al.*, 2006). Equally, employees must be equipped and have the necessary product knowledge to assist the customer (Hasan, 2018; Leigh, DeCarlo, Allbright & Lollar, 2014). Customers may be very disappointed when employees do not know much about the store's inventory (Yeap Ai Leen & Ramayah, 2011). Employee behaviour and actions can affect customer satisfaction, which could either lead to customer purchasing products or in the case of dissatisfaction result in customer loss (Helm *et al.*, 2020). Bitner *et al.* (1990), states that positive conversations between customers and employees can lead to customer satisfaction. With the clothing industry being highly competitive, consumers are finding sales personnel performance to be a key determinant whether or not to patronage the store (Ganesha & Aithal, 2020).

2.2.3 Reliability

The concept of reliability measures whether a store can deliver the service that it has promised to consumers accurately, and with no errors (Huang, 2009). Consumers view reliability as a mixture of 'doing it right' and keeping promises (Dabholkar *et al.*, 1996). Service reliability is fundamental to a majority of consumers (Janahi & Al Mubarak, 2017). Therefore, managers and staff should use each opportunity to ensure that things are done right the first time. When services are delivered reliably, all promises made to consumers are fulfilled, things are done right the first time without error, and consumers' needs and wants are satisfied (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). Reliable retailers must be able to keep promises, meet deadlines and deliver on time, and provide correct information to consumers (Newman, 2001; Xia & Zhang, 2010). Being a reliable retailer means consistently performing services without fail and accurately (Malhotra, Ulgado, Agarwal, Shainesh & Wu, 2005). Factors that form part of reliability are *stock availability, inaccurate pricing information and missing price tags*.

2.2.3.1 Stock availability

Merchandise on offer is the most vital contributing factor that influences consumers preference and choice of a store (Maziriri, Chuchu & Madinga, 2019). Having a comprehensive variety of merchandise assortment can help clothing retailers appeal to more consumers and encourage them to purchase goods (Maziriri *et al.*, 2019). It is, therefore, crucial to have a broad range of merchandise, furthermore, always having enough stock of the merchandise. Limited availability of stock can refer to a lack of reliability on behalf of the retailer and is likely to cause dissatisfaction for the consumer (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). A stock outage can cause the consumer to leave the store and search for the item elsewhere. This could harm future patronage and result in negative perceptions of the brand or store (Grant & Fernie, 2008; Zinn & Liu, 2001).

2.2.3.2 Inaccurate or missing price tags

Correct information includes clear and visible product pricing, along with accurate and precise information concerning the product (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). In the case of a missing or an inaccurate price tag, consumers can get irritated and decide to complain or switch to a different brand (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). When incorrect or missing price tags occur in-store, a consumer is likely to question the reliability of the clothing retailer (Strykowska, 2013). Clothing retail store managers should therefore include reliability matters in their mission statements, establish reliability standards, explain the significance of reliability in training employees, hire reliability

teams to study detailed services and recommend manners in which to improve reliability (Malhotra *et al.*, 2005; Strykowska, 2013).

2.2.4 Customer service

Customer service is defined as anything retailers do for the consumer that enhances the shopping experience (Harris, 2002). A customer service orientation is known to lead to enhanced salesperson efficiency, improved consumer commitment and satisfaction, and reduced consumer switching intentions (Brown, Widing & Coulter, 1991; Jones, Busch & Dacin, 2003; Patten, Ozuem & Howell, 2020). Dimensions that form part of customer service include *unfair or unclear return or exchange policies; refund and paying difficulties; long waiting time in ques.*

2.2.4.1 Unfair or unclear return or exchange policies

The main purpose for return or exchange policies is the preservation of customer relationships if the customer is unhappy with the product and would like to return or exchange the product (Jin, Caliskan-Demirag, Chen & Huang, 2020). According to Ramayah and Yeap (2017) essential criteria on which consumers assess retail stores, are the credit and charge account policies of the store and the ease with which stores return or exchange merchandise. Including product returns in customer value management is vital since product returns can be a considerable economic cost for retailers (Minnema, Bijmolt, Petersen & Shulman, 2018).

Extended policy periods essentially decrease the return rate, because the need to rush to return something is eliminated and consumers are willing to pay more for a product if it has a hassle-free return policy (Hazelton, 2018). Having an acceptable return policy is a key component of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Kaplan, 2019). Retailers should be careful when asking consumers an extra fee (equity-based return policy) to return a purchased product when retailers perceive that the consumer is at fault. When consumer see this policy as unfair, the post-return spending decreases by 75%–100% at the retailer (Minnema *et al.*, 2018). Customers value-free and easy return processes and are likely to review a return policy before making a purchase. According to Hazelton (2018), having a return policy of 60 to 90 days is considered the most satisfying to consumers. Thirty days is seen as the norm. However, any less than 30 days should be avoided.

2.2.4.2 Refund and payment difficulties

Refund difficulties are problems customers face when they want to refund the product they purchased, while payment difficulties take place during the payment of the product (Kim, Kim & Lee, 2010). Payment difficulties may include issues with card machine facilities, credit payment issues or not accepting cash (Karoubi, Chenavaz & Paraschiv, 2016). Refund difficulties include unreasonably strict refund policies, such as extremely short refunding periods (Davis, Hagerty & Gerstner, 1998; Zhang, Luo, Kwong, Tang & Yu, 2019). Customers are likely to exit the store if payment difficulties occur. If card facilities are not available, it can cause frustration under customers who do not have cash (Kaplan, 2019). Therefore, ensuring that credit, card and cash payment facilities are always available is crucial to ensure customer satisfaction. Consumers may view partial refunds as unfair because the store keeps the non-refundable portion (Xu, Li, Govindan & Xu, 2015). Moreover, with a partial refund, the retailer cannot advertise that they have a 100% moneyback policy, which may harm the seller's image and consumer loyalty (Davis *et al.*, 1998; Xu *et al.*, 2015).

2.2.4.3 Long waiting time in queues

Waiting in queues is known to negatively affect consumer evaluation of services and retailers (Park, Min & Lee, 2014), and is likely to reduce customer satisfaction (Antonides, Verhoef & Van Aalst, 2002; Cho & Kim, 2007). Moreover, waiting provokes negative emotions, such as anger and uncertainty (Van Riel, Semeijn, Ribbink & Bomert-Peters, 2012). The measurement of customer satisfaction with regards to waiting time is extremely subjective, and generally inverse in nature (as waiting time decreases, satisfaction increases) (Nosek & Wilson, 2001). Waiting for service in a retail store environment can lead to customer dissatisfaction and sequentially result in adverse effects on consumer patronage (Alvarado-Valencia, Tueti Silva & Montoya-Torres, 2017).

Failing to meet the customers' expectations or the occurrence service failures in any of the areas mentioned above could cause consumers to experience dissatisfaction or could be a trigger for complaining or switching brands.

2.3 DISSATISFACTION

When a service failure occurs, consumers are inclined to experience dissatisfaction and negative emotions (Balaji *et al.*, 2017). Customer dissatisfaction, simply put, is a customer who is unhappy with a related service or product (TenHouten, 2006). When service-related performance perceptions fail to meet expectations, negative disconfirmation arises, which in turn leads to feelings of dissatisfaction (Churchill Jr & Surprenant, 1982; Giese & Cote, 2000; Habel, Alavi, Schmitz, Schneider & Wieseke, 2016; Tronvoll, 2007). Customers who experience a positive service encounter are expected to be satisfied, talk favourably about the retailer, and choose to patronage the store again (Fliess & Volkers, 2019; Kim, Lee & Mattila, 2014; Sviri & Olsen, 2012). On the contrary, a negative service encounter is likely to result in some type of complaint behaviour (Maxham III & Netemeyer, 2003). Complaint behaviour is not just a matter of perceived dissatisfaction with a product or service. Factors such as demographic variable and cultural variable can also affect the level of dissatisfaction (Chan *et al.*, 2016; Donoghue, Strydom, Andrews, Pentecost & De Klerk, 2016).

A consumer's general satisfaction or dissatisfaction with retail service performance is related to numerous aspects, including satisfaction with the store, the product and the salesperson (Bitner *et al.*, 1990; Ertekin, Ketzenberg & Heim, 2020; Hunneman, Verhoef & Sloot, 2017; Ladeira, Nique, Pinto & Borges, 2016; Ladhari, Souiden & Dufour, 2017). When dissatisfaction occurs, it is crucial that the retailer addresses the reason for dissatisfaction rapidly and efficiently to retain customers (Clopton, Stoddard & Clay, 2001; Istanbuluoglu *et al.*, 2017b). The most common argument to explain complaint behaviour has been customer dissatisfaction (Moreira & Silva, 2016). Complaints, however, do not always stem from dissatisfaction. Therefore, dissatisfaction is not necessarily a sufficient condition for customers to complain (Day, 1984; Tronvoll, 2011). However, findings suggest that customers with negative emotions of anger and disappointment are prone to engage in various dissatisfaction responses such as complaining, negative word-of-mouth, and switching retailers (Lu, Lu & Wang, 2012). Similarly, dissatisfaction can act as a trigger for negative emotions, subsequently leading to complaint behaviour (Tronvoll, 2011).

2.4 EMOTIONS

Emotions can be defined as the psychological reactions or response articulated through facial or behavioural expressions in reaction to a specific event (Choraria, 2013). Emotions determine how individuals deal with events or people they encounter in the social world, whether positive or negative, emotions are adaptive responses to our body (TenHouten, 2006).

2.4.1 Positive emotions

Positive emotions comprise of desired or pleasant situational responses, varying from interest and happiness to love and joy (TenHouten, 2006). Positive emotions are markers of people's general well-being or happiness, but also enhance future development and success (Lopez, Snyder, Cohn & Fredrickson, 2012). Positive emotions also link to feeling more satisfied with an event and was found to have a positive impact on patronage behaviour (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002; Prayag, Mills, Lee & Soscia, 2020). On the contrary, negative emotions, which are there to give a quick response to a crucial threat, positive emotions arise in a safe and controllable environment (Lopez *et al.*, 2012). However, for this study, the focus is on negative emotions, as they are caused by service failures and tend to lead to consumer complaint behaviour.

2.4.2 Negative emotions

Negative emotions are unpleasant, regularly disruptive, and emotional reactions intended to convey negative effect (TenHouten, 2006). Negative emotions are the effect of unfavourable service experience and usually results in prompting complaining behaviour amongst consumers with high levels of dissatisfaction (Boadi *et al.*, 2017). Negative affect is described as the internal state of feeling that arises when a goal was not achieved or when one is not satisfied with the current situation (Vandenbos, 2020). Literature on service failure has been researched with negative emotions to link perceived injustice and behavioural outcomes (Baker & Kim, 2018; Balaji *et al.*, 2017; Du, Fan & Feng, 2011; Rychalski & Hudson, 2017; Shi, Liu & Zhang, 2011). Schoefer and Diamantopoulos (2008) found that perceived injustice elicits negative emotions in consumers, which consequently determines negative word-of-mouth (WOM), third-party action and repurchase intentions. Likewise, Gounaris, Tanyeri, Ozgen and Kurt (2012) believe that pre-recovery emotions from service failure influence recovery evaluation as well as post-recovery emotions. The perception of injustice is, therefore, likely to induce negative emotions, as consumers often view service failures as threats to their self-identity (Nikbin & Hyun, 2017; Zhu & Zolkiewski, 2015). Subsequently, emotional responses provoked by service failure encounters are expected to lead to a consumer to respond to the injustice (Schoefer, 2010).

When expectations of service quality are higher than the quality of service received, negative emotions are likely to be evoke due to the perceived injustice (Nikbin & Hyun, 2017). In

contrast, if service quality expectations are lower than the service quality received, positive emotions are likely to be generated (Xu, Liu & Gursoy, 2019). Consumers' expectation of service quality is influenced by numerous factors such as past experiences, implicit service promises and situational factors (Wang, Harris & Patterson, 2012). Earlier research on emotions and service has mainly focused on positive effects like satisfaction and loyalty (Svari & Erling Olsen, 2012), however, for this study, the core focus is on the negative emotions that consumers experience during in-store service failures. Customers are likely to experience high levels of negative emotions when the experience is an unfavourable service encounter (Tronvoll, 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2010; Zhao, Yan & Keh, 2018). Such negative emotionally charged service encounters can have substantial adverse effects which require dedicated employee attention and can determine a customers' perceptions of the service provider (Delcourt, Gremler, De Zanet & van Riel, 2017). According to the research of Liljander and Strandvik's (1997), negative emotions have a higher importance in exploring service delivery as they have a more significant effect than positive emotions on customer satisfaction.

Negative emotions are intricate forms of emotions accounting for major variation among consumer's emotional experiences (Ferreira, Brandão & Bizarrias, 2017; Tronvoll, 2011). Research divides negative emotions into five groups including anger, fear, sadness, shame and frustration (Choraria, 2013; Svari, Slåtten, Svensson & Edvardsson, 2011; Tronvoll, 2011) and found anger to be the most common negative emotion followed by irritation and unhappiness following a service failure. Diener, Smith and Fujita (1995) proposed four main categories of negative emotions (i.e., anger, fear, shame and sadness). Within these four main categories, 16 different negative emotions related to these four negative emotions (Diener, Smith & Fujita, 1995). **Table 2.1** summarises the four main negative emotions proposed by Denier *et al.* (1995) with their respective dimensions.

Based on the classification of Denier *et al.* (1995), Tronvoll (2011), and Choraria (2013) the following negative emotions were included for this study: anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness, and shame. These eight negative emotions were selected for this study as they have been linked to consumer complaint behaviour in previous studies (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Isaac, 2010; Tronvoll, 2011).

TABLE 2.1: NEGATIVE EMOTIONS DEFINED

Emotion	Definition	Dimensions	Definition
Anger	A negative, internal state of feeling associated with perceptual as well as cognitive deficiencies and distortions (e.g., misappraisals, and attributions of blame, injustice), action tendencies, physiological changes, and subjective labelling to participate in socially constructed and organized behavioural scripts (Kassinove & Sukhodolsky, 1995:7).	Disgust Irritation Rage	<i>Disgust</i> is defined as “something revolting, primarily in relation to the sense of taste, as actually perceived or vividly imagined; and secondarily to anything which causes a similar feeling, through the sense of smell, touch and even eyesight” (Darwin & Lorenz, 2003:253). <i>Irritation</i> can be seen as a state of feeling impatient, annoyed, or/and somewhat angry (Walter, 2008). <i>Rage</i> , can be seen as a violent and uncontrollable form of anger (Walter, 2008).
Fear	An emotion that aids the development of cognitive and perceptual processes required to assess danger and protect the self from harm (TenHouten, 2006).	Anxiety Worry Nervousness	<i>Anxiety</i> “includes fear and two or more of the fundamental emotions of distress, anger, shame (including shyness and guilt) and the positive emotion of interest – excitement” (Izard, 1972:47). <i>Worry</i> is defined as the state of being troubled and anxious over actual or possible problems (Walter, 2008). <i>Nervousness</i> nervous is a state of fright or worry about something that is happening, is about to happen or has happened (Walter, 2008).
Shame	Shame and guilt are comparable and are frequently confused with each other. Both can cause blushing, fear, and both are half-opposites since their other primary components are opposites – joy/guilt and sadness/shame. Guilt occurs from an isolated act that hurts or betrays another person, while shame occurs from personal traits that are relatively permanent (TenHouten, 2006).	Guilt Embarrassment Regret	<i>Guilt</i> occurs when fear and pleasure elements exist at almost equivalent intensity (TenHouten, 2006). <i>Embarrassment</i> is a response to perceived discrepancy between the persons actions and personal standards (TenHouten, 2006). <i>Regret</i> is a feeling of repentance, sadness, or disappointment over an incidence or something that has been done or failed to achieve (Walter, 2008).
Sadness	An emotion where person no longer wishes for action to be taken and remains stationary and inactive. The circulation becomes unenergetic, the face becomes pale and the eyelids droop (Darwin & Lorenz, 2003:253).	Loneliness Unhappiness Depression	<i>Loneliness</i> arises when a discrepancy exists between the social life an individual desire and what they have been able to attain (TenHouten, 2006). <i>Unhappiness</i> is the feeling of being unsatisfied or not pleased with circumstances (Walter, 2008). <i>Depression</i> is defined as the state of feeling unhappy and having no hope for the future (Walter, 2008).

2.4.2.1 Anger

Anger is defined as a negative, internal state of feeling associated with perceptual as well as cognitive deficiencies and distortions (Harrison-Walker, 2019; Kassinove & Sukhodolsky, 1995:7). According to McColl-Kennedy (2006), anger and dissatisfaction in particular have negative consequences for retailers such as a decrease in brand loyalty, additional customer attrition, reduced return on investment (ROI), and more negative word-of-mouth (McColl-Kennedy & Smith, 2006). Harrison-Walker (2019) states that anger arises when an event is considered controllable, deliberate and unjustified (Harrison-Walker, 2001). People link anger with emotions of wanting to explode, thinking about behaving aggressively or violently, and saying bad things (Bougie *et al.*, 2003). Compared to other negative emotions, anger produces different thoughts and action inclinations than other negative emotions (Izard, 2013). Once anger has been activated, it has the ability to change a person's perceptions of their decisions and guides their behaviour accordingly (Harrison-Walker, 2019; Lerner & Tiedens, 2006). A link exists between attribution and anger when the cause of the service failure is caused by the retailer (Diaz & Ruiz, 2002; Menon & Dube, 2004).

2.4.2.2 Anxiety

Anxiety is an emotional state of agitation or depression with feelings of distress (Spielberger, 2013). The emotion anxiety has been linked to complaining, as some people find it difficult to complain which cause feelings of anxiousness (Suomi & Järvinen, 2018). Furthermore, it is suggested that anxiety is a prominent emotion experienced when participating in negative eWOM, as individuals feel they might be scrutinized by their social media following (Krämer & Winter, 2008).

2.4.2.3 Disgust

Disgust is experiencing a sickening feeling resulting from a sensory input related to your taste, smell, touch or even something you see (Darwin & Lorenz, 2003:253). There is very limited research conducted on disgust regarding complaint behaviour; however, Westbrook (1987) found disgust to be a predictor of consumers' post-purchase satisfaction, complaining, and word-of-mouth behaviours.

2.4.2.4 Embarrassment

Embarrassment is a response to a perceived discrepancy between the persons actions and personal standards (TenHouten, 2006). Although limited research regarding complaint behaviour and the emotion embarrassment were found, Wan (2013) indicates that when an individual experiences embarrassment when a service failure arises, collectivists will have a

higher intention to complain than individualists (Wan, 2013). Individualists place emphasis on individual goals, while collectivists place emphasis on a group's goal (Riemer & Shavitt, 2011). Embarrassment is a unique emotion as well, as this emotion is induced when the situation is or perceived witnessed by others (Grace, 2009).

2.4.2.5 Frustration

Frustration can be defined as a feeling of annoyance and distress as a result of the inability to change something (TenHouten, 2006). Frustration generally experienced when customer attributes their blame to an external source and feel that the responsible party could have avoided the failure (Watson & Spence, 2007). Frustrated customers can voice their opinions and dissatisfaction on products, services, or companies with more ease than other negative emotions (Lee & Song, 2010). However, contrary to many beliefs, Sviri (2012) found that frustrated or angry customers are not necessarily more inclined to complain to the retailer when a service failure arises, rather than sad or ashamed customers.

2.4.2.6 Irritation

Irritation can be seen as a state of feeling impatient, annoyed, or/and somewhat angry (Walter, 2008). Research indicates that customers who feel extremely irritated by a service failure are more prone to switch retailers and engage in negative word-of-mouth, than customers who consider the failure as less irritating (Mattila & Enz, 2002). Sviri and Olsen (2012) are of the opinion when the retailer causes the service failure, feelings of irritation arise and customers will probably complain directly to the retailer, rather than remaining silent.

2.4.2.7 Sadness

Sadness is defined as a feeling of unchangeable loss (Demir, Desmet & Hekkert, 2009). Individuals experiencing sadness are inclined to express feelings of incompetence, vulnerability and a lack of control over the circumstance or event (Lazarus, 1994; Motoki & Sugiura, 2018). Sad individuals can become withdrawn and might essentially value themselves as having low coping capabilities (Sette, Colasante, Zava, Baumgartner & Malti, 2018). Individuals who are not sure whom to blame for the service failure or whether the failure was preventable are likely to experience feelings of sadness (Harrison-Walker, 2019; Oliver & Westbrook, 1993). Moreover, customers exhibiting feelings of sadness tend to be more loyal to the retailer (Mattsson, Lemmink & McColl, 2004). The feeling of sadness is usually thought to occur less often in complaint behaviour than anger because of its inward orientation and passive nature (Oliver & Kuipers, 1996). Sadness is more likely the result of a service failure

triggered by external attributes beyond the control of the retailer or the customer (Oliver & Kuipers, 1996).

2.4.2.8 Shame

Shame generally occurs out of a feeling of tension between an individual's self-identity and self-conception (Thomason, 2015). Things individuals usually feel ashamed about are part of their identities, and not commonly part of the self-conception (Chan, Tang & Sou, 2017; Thomason, 2015). Similarly, shame is experienced when the self is the chief object of negative evaluation (Isaac, 2010; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004). Shame is usually associated with private pain and can be seen as the internal voice that tells people that they have not lived up to their perceived ideals and norms (Lazarus, 1994; Trindade, Ferreira & Pinto-Gouveia, 2020). Research also shows that customers prone to feeling ashamed usually avoid confrontation and subsequently do not complain verbally (Sujithamrak & Lam, 2005).

Anger received more attention in research, indicating that when individuals experience anger, they are inclined to want to attack the retailer either verbally or non-verbally (Callaghan & Papageorgiou, 2014; Deffenbacher, Lynch, Oetting & Swaim, 2002; Donoghue & De Klerk, 2013; Kungpo, Kiran & Aaron, 2016; Min, Joireman & Kim, 2019). Occasionally this can lead to non-confrontational behaviours, such as exiting, negative word-of-mouth (negative word-of-mouth), boycotting, complaints to third parties; which all have a highly negative impact on the retailer (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2013; Stephens & Gwinner, 1998). In the next section, these concepts are further discussed. Negative emotions and dissatisfaction as a result of a poor in-store service encounter, consequently, act as a prompt for consumer complaint behaviour (Bougie *et al.*, 2003; Tronvoll, 2011). Consumer complaint behaviour is discussed in detail in the following section.

2.5 CONSUMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOUR

Consumers can express their dissatisfaction to retailers in a meaningful way by complaining (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012). Consumer complaint behaviour is defined as “a set of multiple (behavioural and non-behavioural) responses, some or all of which are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode” (Singh, 1988:94). Consumer complaint behaviour refers to any action that is triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase experience (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017b). The concept of consumer complaint behaviour can be closely linked to consumer dissatisfaction (Chan *et al.*, 2016; Chen-Yu & Seock, 2002; Istanbulluoglu

et al., 2017b; Von der Heyde Fernandes & dos Santos, 2007). Dissatisfaction is often seen as the primary cause of complaint behaviour, although other variables may also play a role. (Liu & McClure, 2001). Consumer complaint behaviour is associated with the theory of expectancy disconfirmation as well, as complaint behaviour would be the next step following dissatisfaction which occurs when a discrepancy arises between the consumers expectation and the perceived service or product performance (Oliver, 1993).

Istanbulluoglu (2017) argues that dissatisfaction can be triggered by negative feelings towards a retailer or specific characteristics of an in-store experience. Attitudes towards complaining, emotional attachment with the company and severity of the service failure, are aspects that are known to determine whether the consumer will engage in complaint behaviour (Ro, 2014). Severity refers to a customer's perception of the intensity or seriousness of the service failure (Lai & Chou, 2015). Research indicates that the severity of a service failure has a stronger influence on consumer complaint behaviour, for example, the more severe the failure, the more likely consumers are to complain or simply exit (McQuilken & Robertson, 2011). Mattila (2004) stated that an emotional relationship could cause customers to be more forgiving toward retailer during service failures. Hence, retailers should ensure that they stress building their relationships with their customers (Grâegoire & Fisher, 2008). An unfavourable service experience generally causes dissatisfaction leading to negative emotions experienced at the time of the event (Bower, 1981), that in turn could lead to consumer complaint behaviour (Choraria, 2013; Oliver & Westbrook, 1993). However, depending on the level of dissatisfaction experienced and the intensity of emotions, consumers, might sometimes not complain at all (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017b).

Many scholars have researched consumers' complaint behaviour (Andrie, Hartoyo & Netti, 2016; Berry, Tanford, Montgomery & Green, 2018; Day, 1977; Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Dyussebayeva, Viglia, Nieto-Garcia & Invernizzi, 2020; Heung & Lam, 2003; Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017b; Singh, 1988), as well as the taxonomies and models of consumer complaint behaviour (Clark, 2013; Day, 1977; Hirschman, 1970; Mattila & Wirtz, 2004; Richins & Root-Shaffer, 1988; Singh, 1988). Day and Landon (1977) differentiated between no action, private action, and public action as behavioural options for compliant behaviour. Mattila and Wirtz (2004) extended Day and Landon's research by adding interactive (online) and remote (offline) channel choices, and Clark (2013) further extended Mattila and Wirtz's model by adding social media as semi-interactive complaint channel. For this study, a combination of consumer complaint behaviour taxonomies of Day and Landon (1977), Matitila and Wirtz's (2004) and

Clark (2013) is used to explain consumers' complaint intentions. **Figure 2.3** shows a depiction of the classification of consumer complaint behaviour for this study.

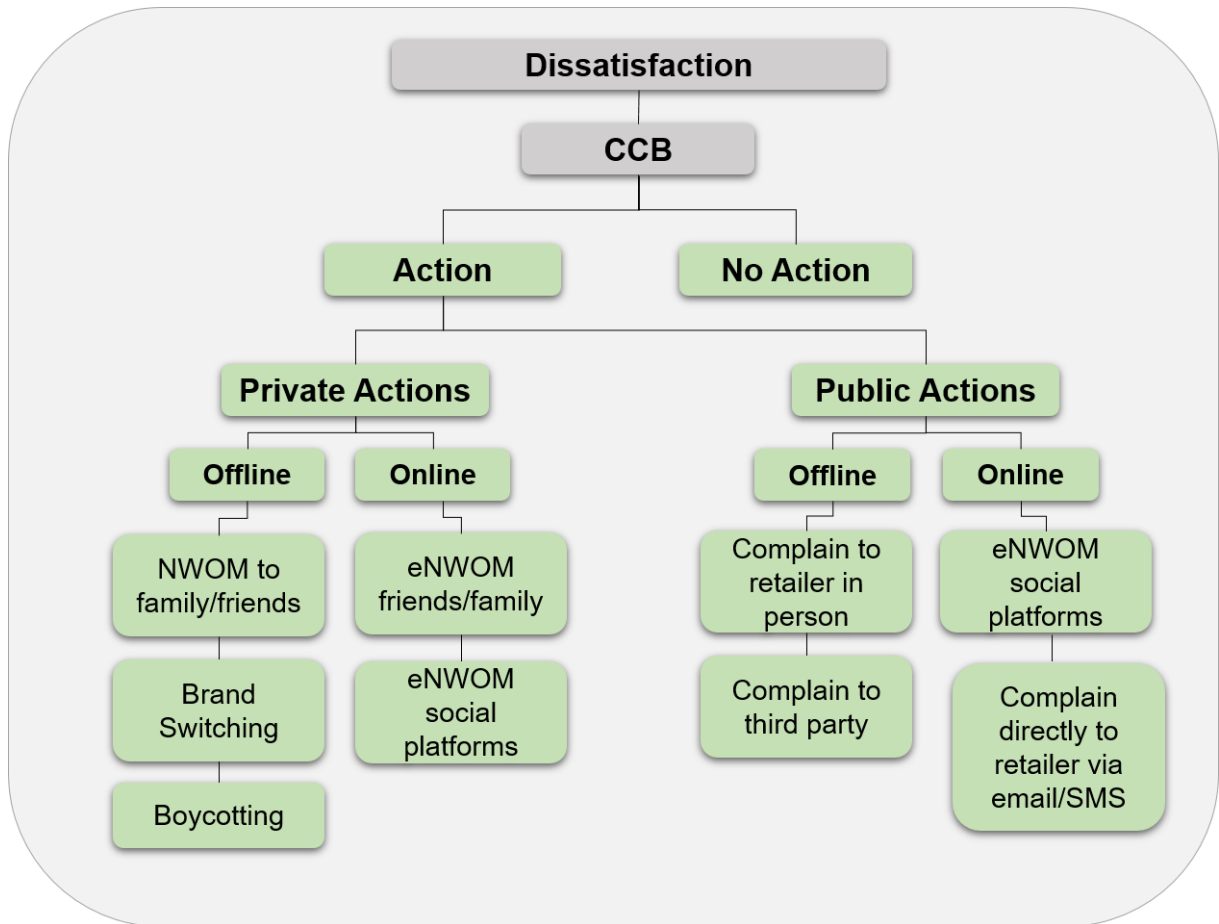


FIGURE 2.3: CLASSIFICATION OF CONSUMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOUR (adapted from: Day & Landon, 1977; Mattila, 2004; Clark, 2013)

2.5.1 No action

No action occurs when consumers are dissatisfied but do not want to or cannot participate in any active, visible complaint action (Malhotra, Ndubisi & Agarwal, 2008). More recent research has defined no action as customers who are loyal, as they do not take any action despite the severity of the service failure (Ekinci, Calderon & Siala, 2016). Day *et al.* (1981:88) describe non-complaining as “doing nothing”. Istanbuluoglu *et al.* (2017) explain that the reasons behind non-complaining could be the inability to complain or the neglect to complain. Loyal consumers, regardless of feeling dissatisfied, continue to stay supportive after a service failure because they have an emotional bond with the company (Bougoure, Russell-Bennett, Fazal-E-Hasan & Mortimer, 2016; Ting, Chin & Wong, 2020). No action of neglect can be defined as

a response from consumers who do not switch retailers or voice their dissatisfaction regardless of their level of dissatisfaction (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017b).

For several reasons, customers who do not complain to the retailer is of particular concern to management. Firstly, the retailer may lose the chance to remedy the problem and retain customers (Hirschman, 1970). Furthermore, the company is deprived of valuable feedback on the quality of its service delivery, hampering its ability to identify variances in quality and change (Kloviene & Pazeraite, 2017). Insightful management also wants to consider not only those who voice their grievances but also those who do not.

2.5.2 Action

Action can be defined as the process of doing something, particularly when handling an issue or difficulty (Walter, 2008). Day and Landon (1977) classify action into private and public actions. These actions are further discussed below.

2.5.2.1 Private action

Private action is activities that are not directly visible to the retailer (Clark, 2013). Private actions can be further broken down into *online* or *offline* actions (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Offline* actions include complaining to family and friends' negative word-of-mouth (negative word-of-mouth), switching brands/retailers or boycotting the retailer (Clark, 2013; Day, 1977; Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Online* action can be classified into negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) to family or friends or negative eWOM on social profiles for friends and family to see (Clark, 2013; Curina, Francioni, Hegner & Cioppi, 2020; Mattila & Wirtz, 2004).

- *Negative word-of-mouth to family/friends*

Word-of-mouth (WOM) is commonly defined as “oral, person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, concerning a brand, a product or a service” (Arndt, 1967, p.3). Negative-word-of-mouth is an exchange of negative information between consumers about their unsatisfactory consumption experiences (Bachleda & Berrada-Fathi, 2016). Offline negative word-of-mouth involves consumers complaining to their immediate family and friends through face-to-face or in-person communication (Curina *et al.*, 2020). These consumers do not communicate their complaints via channels that are visible to the company or the public. These activities are therefore limited to the consumers' private circle of connections rather than being publicly available.

Consequently, the company will only have no information about the problem that may have occurred (Clark, 2013; Istanbuluoglu *et al.*, 2017b).

- *Brand switching or boycotting*

Consumers may willingly terminate a relationship with a retailer by switching between retailers or boycotting retailers (Von der Heyde Fernandes & dos Santos, 2007). Brand switching involves customers switching to another retailer instead (McQuilken & Robertson, 2011). Brand switching occurs when consumers decide to terminate their relationship with the company, service, product, brand or retailer and rather patronage a different retailer (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004).

- *Negative electronic word-of-mouth to family/friends*

Negative eWOM refers to negative information that is communicated through online channels through the internet (Fernandes & Santos, 2008). Consumers may complain to their family and friends either through private communications channels, such on the phone or through online conversations such as instant messaging (Istanbuluoglu *et al.*, 2017b).

- *Negative electronic word-of-mouth on social media platforms*

Technological improvements have popularised social networking sites which enables individuals to maintain a greater number of relationships with others, than it was ever possible in the past (Nam, Baker, Ahmad & Goo, 2020). Social media platforms are internet-based platforms used by individuals for either personal or business purposes to promote, interact, share information and communicate (Lis & Fischer, 2020). Platforms include Facebook, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Twitter, Snapchat, and YouTube. Social media platforms have become popular in disseminating negative word-of-mouth more widely (Lis & Fischer, 2020). Online communication also increases the speed of dissemination; for example, if a Facebook user posts their complaint as a status on their Facebook profile, this complaint can reach their entire extended social circle immediately (Bayer, Triêu & Ellison, 2020). In this context, negative word-of-mouth is defined in a particular way to emphasise that the audience of such behaviours is only those who have access to the social media channels used for complaining, but not the public or the company (Nam *et al.*, 2020). Hence, these are sometimes labelled as private negative word-of-mouth activities in the literature.

2.5.2.2 Public action

Public actions are defined as identifiable complaints to the company (Clark, 2013). Public action can be divided into *offline action* and *online action* (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Offline action* includes voicing and seeking redress from the retailer and complaining to a third party. *Online action* includes negative eWOM and complaining to the retailer via email/SMS (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004).

- *Voicing and seeking redress*

Voicing a complaint may cover all constructive, informative and direct responses to the company (Hirschman, 1970). Hirschman (1970) stated that a consumer could voice a complaint to the seller or exit the relationship, depending on the degree of service failure and customer loyalty. Loyalty can essentially increase the probability of voicing, since loyal consumers are optimistic, have hope and seek improvement rather than walk out on the company (Hirschman, 1970; Miquel-Romero, Frassetto & Molla-Descals, 2020). Dissatisfied customers are more likely to voice their complaints and seek redress from the retailer when retailers provide compensation for service failures (Balaji *et al.*, 2017). Retailers should therefore keep in mind to emphasise seeking redress when a service failure has occurred because if they are compensated for the failure, they are less likely to spread negative word-of-mouth which could be very harmful to a brand image (Miquel-Romero *et al.*, 2020).

- *Third-party redress*

Third-party redress is defined as “an individual or organisation who is external to the consumer who initiates redress and is not directly involved in the dissatisfying transaction” (Reiboldt, 2003, p166). It includes complaining to public consumer protection organisation, media, voluntary organisations, or taking legal steps against the retailer. Third-party action is said to represent an insignificant percentage of complaints. However, it can mean a substantial amount of money to the retailer, such as lawsuit settlements, have public relations consequences, and constitutes an under-researched phenomenon (Singh, 1989). Complaining to a third-party represents a higher-order level of complaining than merely complaining to family, friends, or the company and is more likely to create issues with patronaging a store in the future (Feick, 1987).

- *Negative eWOM*

Negative eWOM includes internet-based communication between consumers who might or may not know each other and is typically in written form (includes platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn) (Bachleda & Berrada-Fathi, 2016). Combinations of private

and public actions are also likely to occur. Most consumers favour actions such as negative word-of-mouth (negative word-of-mouth) or switching to other companies (Svari & Erling Olsen, 2012). This could be of particular concern to the retailer because the company loses the chance to resolve the problem and retain a consumer (Stephens & Gwinner, 1998).

- *Complaining to Retailer via Email/SMS*

The Internet has made way for the development and growth of multiple channels for directing complaints to a retailer, for example, communicating through a website, email or via SMS (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017b). Research shows that customers may feel more at ease to complain via electronic means such as emails as they do not have to go through the emotionally uncomfortable experience of complaining face-to-face (Sparks & Browning, 2010). However, some individuals feel emailing a complaint is unnecessary effort and would not be as satisfying as complaining in person (Sann, Lai & Liaw, 2020).

Understanding consumer complaint behaviour is a vital tool to guarantee customer satisfaction (Chan *et al.*, 2016). Complaints are indicators for clothing retail stores to identify service failures and fix gaps. Clothing retailers should thus see a complaint as an opportunity to turn a dissatisfied consumer into a loyal one (Chan *et al.*, 2016).

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework (**Figure 2.4**) was developed to guide the research and indicates the relational influences as proposed by the research objectives of the study.

Clothing retailers aim to deliver good service encounters. Nonetheless, in-store service failures are bound to happen (Balaji *et al.*, 2017; Reynolds & Harris, 2009). In-store service-related failures include problems/failures occurring in the physical environment, interaction with personnel, with customer service, and reliability (Huang, 2009; Vazquez, Rodríguez-Del Bosque, Díaz & Ruiz, 2001). When an in-store service failure arises, dissatisfaction is experienced. Dissatisfaction is when there is a discrepancy between perceived service performance and the expectation the consumer had (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017b). Dissatisfaction was found to evoke negative emotions in consumers (Choraria, 2013). Negative emotions are complicated forms of emotions that account for the discrepancy among consumer's emotional experiences (Tronvoll, 2011).

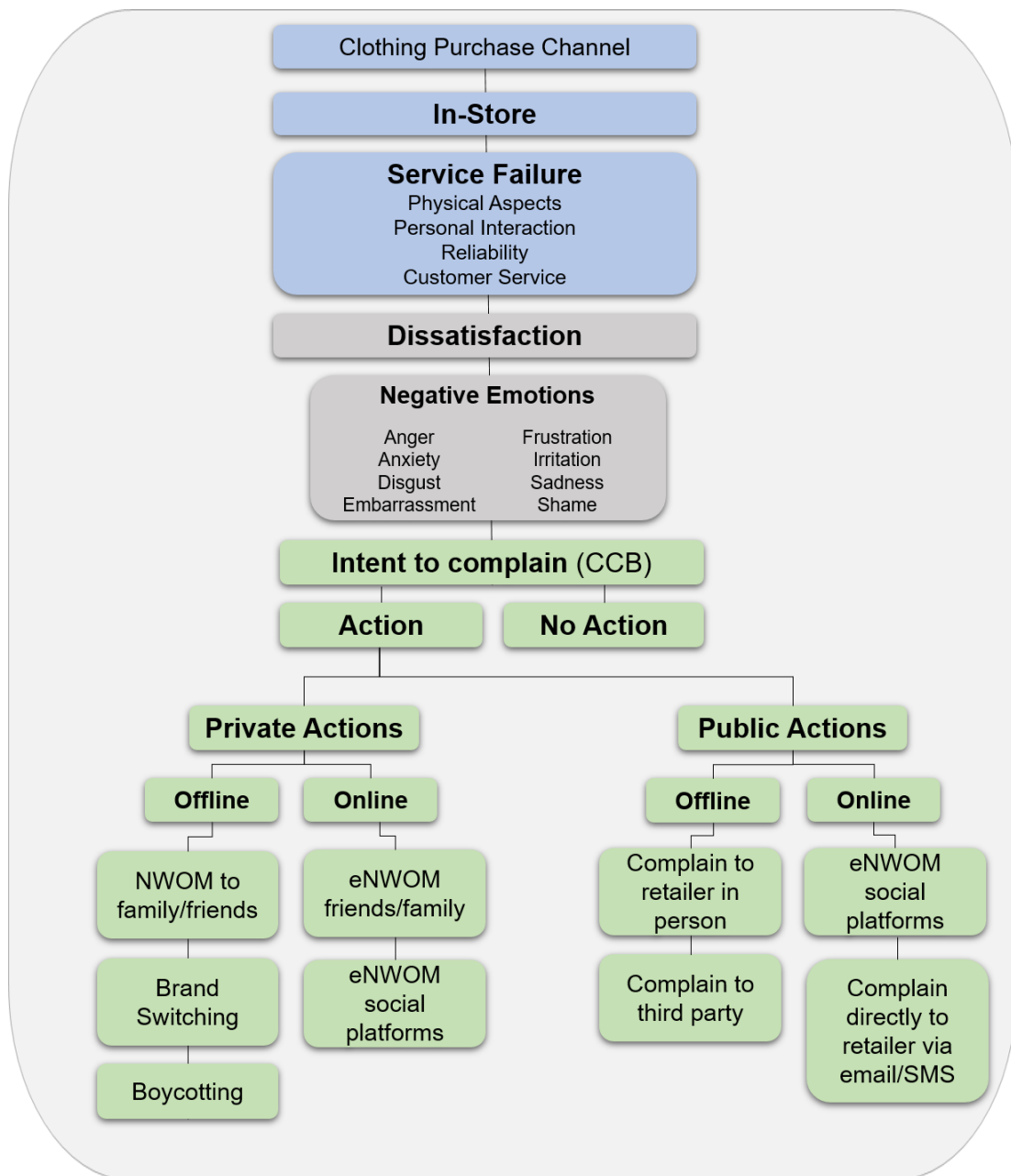


FIGURE 2.4: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

For this study, eight negative emotions were included (anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness, shame). These negative emotions act as triggers for a consumer to complain (Von der Heyde Fernandes & Dos Santos, 2007). Consumer complaint behaviour can be divided into action and no action (Day & Landon, 1977). When none of the above actions occurs, no action takes place. Day *et al.* (1981:88) describes not complaining as “doing nothing”. Action is classified by Day and Landon (1977) into private and public actions (Day & Landon, 1977). Private action includes activities that are not directly visible to the retailer (Singh, 1988). Private action can be further broken down into *online* or *offline* action (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Offline* action is classified into complaining to family and friends (negative word-

of-mouth), switching brands/retailers or boycotting the retailer (Clark, 2013). *Online* action is classified into negative eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) to family or friends or negative eWOM on social profiles for friends and family to see (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). Public action includes complaints that are visible to the company (Singh, 1988). Public action can be divided into *online action* and *offline action* (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Offline* action is, for instance, seeking redress from the retailer and complaining to a third party. *Online* action includes negative eWOM (Clark, 2013).

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter described and clarified the theoretical framework underpinning the research, relevant concepts for this study, and provided an overview of the literature applicable to the topic under investigation. It is apparent from the literature review that there is a relationship between in-store service failures, the negative emotions experienced by the customer and how these emotions prompt consumer complaint behaviour. In the next chapter, the research methodology employed for this study will be presented and discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology for this study and comprises of the research design, sample and sampling, instrument development, data collection, data analysis, methods used to ensure reliability and validity of the study, and lastly ethical considerations.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is the overall plan and procedure chosen to integrate the various components of the research study in a coherent way (Creswell, 2009:3). It represents the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Trochim, 2007). This study aimed to investigate the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailer's in-store service failures. A quantitative approach was adopted for the study as a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables numerically. The quantitative approach was suitable for the purpose of describing the phenomena and to make generalisations to the total population (Creswell, 2009:4; Babbie, 2013:557; Kumar, 2011: 394). A quantitative approach entails collecting and analysing numerical data (Babbie, 2013:25). Quantitative data collection methods are used to make predictions, discover patterns, test relationships, and generalise results to broader populations (Bhandari, 2020). Quantitative methods were appropriate for this study as it allowed for the statistical analysis of numerical data collected from a sample population (Creswell, 2009:145; Kumar, 2011:138). Additionally, a quantitative approach makes repeating the study possible, as data is standardised for collection protocols (Bhandari, 2020).

A survey research design was followed to explore and describe the research problem within the South African retail context. A survey research design was appropriate for the study, as large amounts of information can be collected that allows for greater statistical power when analysing data (Jones, Baxter & Khanduja, 2013). In addition, survey research designs are less expensive, as they can be conducted through online surveys which are not as costly as administering a paper survey or phone survey (DeFranzo, 2012). Survey research designs are also considered more dependable, as the anonymity of surveys let participants answer candidly, providing more valid answers (DeFranzo, 2012).

The research was exploratory-descriptive as new research questions were generated, insight was gained on a relatively unknown area of research, and data was described accurately

(Babbie, 2013:90-92). Exploratory research aims to explore unknown areas and gaps in the literature, while descriptive research aims to define a problem or phenomenon in a specific area (Kumar, 2011:385). Exploratory research was appropriate for the study, since the research problem of the study is relatively new, and limited research exists regarding service failure in the context of in-store clothing stores in South Africa (Salkind, 2011:1254). Descriptive research was appropriate as the study described the sample population and research problem at hand (Salkind, 2011:1254).

Primary data was collected as part of a cross-sectional study. Primary data refers to original data collected by the researcher (Salkind, 2011:1095). The study was cross-sectional as it was conducted at a certain point in time rather than over an extended period of time (Babbie, 2013:104). Cross-sectional studies, also called descriptive research, are observational in nature (Cherry, 2019). A cross-section design was appropriate for this study as it captures data at a specific point in time and contains several variables at the time of the data snapshot (Sedgwick, 2014).

3.2 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

3.2.1 Sample

The target population for this study was South African consumers who shop in-store for clothing. A sample can be defined as a set of individuals, selected from the target population to represent the population and combines characteristics of the population (Kumar, 2011:397). The sample requirements included an age limit of 19 and above, and individuals who live in South Africa. The sample requirements were included as screening questions at the beginning of the questionnaire to guarantee that participants adhere to the age requirements and represented South African consumers. The age limit of 19 and above was set to ensure that participants are independent enough to make their own choices, therefore, obtaining more reliable results.

Other demographic questions asked participants to make known their age, gender, income and level of education. Researchers aimed to include a representation of the population living in South Africa. The sample included participants from all population groups living in South Africa. The South African population is one of the most diverse and complex in the world (SA-Venues, 2020). The South African population consists of 57,73 million people (South African

population) and can be divided into five major population groups of which 80.9% are Black African, 8.8% are Coloured, 7.8% are White, and 2.5% are either Asian or Indian (Africa, 2018). The sample consisted of participants from all nine provinces in South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa (2018), Gauteng has the largest share of the South African population, with 25,4% of the people living in this province. KwaZulu-Natal has the second largest population, with 19,7%, followed by Western Cape (11,5%), Eastern Cape (11,3%), Limpopo (10%), Mpumalanga (7,8%), North West (6,9%), Free State (5,1%), Northern Cape (2,1%) (Africa, 2018).

Data suggest that the South African population is predominantly female. On average, the population consists of 48.2% of males and 51.7% of females (Stats, 2011). It is important to differentiate between male and female findings, as some researchers suggest that females are more inclined to complain when dissatisfied with a service failure (Fan, Wu & Mattila, 2018). How they complain may also differ (Fan *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, participants from both genders were included in the sample.

The sample consisted of individuals above the age of 19, as children under the age of 19 are considered minors and have limited capacity to act independently without being assisted by an adult (Strode, Slack & Essack, 2010). The age distribution in South Africa is as follows: 15-24 years make up 17.2%, 25-54 years make up 42.05%, 55-64 years make up 17.1% and over the age of 65 years makes up 5.81% (Africa, 2018). Considering the age in this study is important, as retailers segment their target market according to the age of the consumer.

Furthermore, the study considered the level of education of participants. The survey assessed what the participant highest level of education was, being primary school, high school or tertiary education. The study considered income levels of participants as well, as research found that those with a higher income, who are employed, or who have kids, might be less likely to complain (Raval, 2016). To ensure consumers who shop in-store are well represented in the study, females and males, over the age of 19, from different regions in South Africa and different population groups and living in South Africa were recruited to participate in the study.

3.2.2 Sampling techniques

Non-probability sampling techniques were employed for this study. Non-probability sampling implies that the sample is not selected on a random basis and, therefore, everyone did not have an equal chance to be included (Babbie, 2013:555; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:211; Zikmund

& Babin, 2010:58). Individuals beneath the age of 19 were excluded from the study. Non-probability sampling was appropriate for the study since it is very cost- and time-effective in comparison to probability sampling (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Non-probability sampling consists of five types of sampling techniques; however, for this study, only three were employed, namely: convenience sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling.

Due to time and resource constraints, convenience sampling was used (Matthews & Ross, 2010). With convenience sampling, participants are recruited based on their accessibility and close proximity to the researcher (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:174). Although this sampling method is not representative of the entire population, it was chosen as participants were easily accessible. Also, it is more cost-effective in terms of time and financial expenses (Kumar, 2011:192). For this study, friends, family and acquaintances were initially approached to participate. The link to the questionnaire was shared on social media platforms, email and WhatsApp to recruit participants.

To ensure an appropriate sample size, snowball sampling was employed. Snowballing involves obtaining access to a sample population through networking (Kumar, 2011:399). Snowballing was applicable for this study since participants were asked to share the questionnaire link with their friends and family via social media, email or WhatsApp. This ensured that a larger, more diverse sample could be reached (Naderifar, Goli & Ghaljaei, 2017).

Together with the convenience and snowballing sampling techniques, quota sampling was also utilised. Quota sampling is when a particular characteristic of a population is compensated for and represented in the results to the degree the researcher finds applicable (Kumar, 2011:394). Quota sampling was done in an effort to ensure that participants from all the provinces and demographic backgrounds were represented in the sample. Quota sampling was done by requesting fieldworkers to collect similar amounts of the questionnaires from different races, ages and genders. However, quota sampling was not effective, since the sample was still skewed towards White population and women.

3.3 INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

A self-administered online questionnaire (**Appendix C**) was developed to collect primary data. The questionnaire was developed on Qualtrics, using existing, reliable scales (**Table 3.1**).

Qualtrics is a user-friendly, web-based survey tool. It allows the easy development of online questionnaires. Built-in force response was used in developing questions to ensure participants do not skip questions and complete the questionnaire correctly. This also ensured that there were no missing data. A sharable link was created and distributed via an invitation on various online platforms (social media, email, WhatsApp) to facilitate respondents to access the questionnaire and forward the link.

This study formed part of a larger Consumer Complaint Behaviour research project focused on clothing retail in South Africa. The larger study focused on aspects that influence consumer complaint behaviour, such as in-store, online and product failures, as well as negative emotions and personality associated with complaint intention. Furthermore, the study considered motives for complaint intention. For this research project, only in-store service failures, negative emotions and consumer complaint intentions were considered. The questionnaire consisted of eight sections (A-H), however, only five sections were used for data analysis and related to this study.

A cover letter that consisted of a consent form was provided before the questionnaire to ensure that participants willingly agree to partake in the study. The consent form included the nature and purpose of the study, the research procedure, confidentiality statement, withdrawal clause and the potential benefits of the study. After participants read through the consent form and agreed to the terms and conditions outlined in the consent form, they were directed to two screening questions. The screening questions were done before the questionnaire to ensure that participants adhere to the prerequisites of the study, i.e., that they were old enough to partake in the questionnaire and live in South Africa. The screening questions were: (1) *“Are you older than 19 years of age?”* and (2) *“In which province do you live?”*

After participants answered the screening questions they could proceed to complete the questionnaire on their own time. Only the five sections (Section A, B, C, D, H) corresponding with the relevant constructs measured in **Table 3.1**, are discussed in the following section. The questionnaire consisted mostly of questions that participants had to rate their responses on a Likert type scale and closed-ended questions where participant had to choose between yes or no response options. Closed-ended questions ask participants to choose from a set of pre-defined responses, such as “yes/no” (Hyman & Sierra, 2016). Service failure, level of dissatisfaction, severity of service failure, emotional state and consumer complaint intention questions provided participants with a statement that they had to evaluate on a Likert-type scale.

Section A – Retailer information

Section A of the questionnaire consisted of a closed-ended question asking the participant to indicate whether they prefer in-store or online shopping. This question was followed by an open-ended question asking participants to fill in which retailer they mostly patronise or shop from.

Section B – In-Store Service Failure

Section B measured in-store service failures. Participants were exposed to a service failure scenario that would cause them the most dissatisfaction in an in-store clothing retail setting. Participants were provided with a list of 16 possible in-store service failures from which they had to choose the three service failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction. The scale items were based on the studies of Beneke *et al.*, (2012), Huang (2009), Vazquez *et al.* (2001) and Kang and James, (2004). The participants were then asked to indicate which one of the three service failures they selected would cause them the most dissatisfaction. Thereafter, participants had to rate their level of dissatisfaction with the specific service failure on a four-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Slightly dissatisfied; 2 = Moderately dissatisfied; 3 = Very dissatisfied; 4 = Extremely dissatisfied. Participants also had to indicate how serious they consider this in-store service failure to be on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Not at all severe; 2 = Slightly severe; 3 = Moderately severe; 4 = Very severe; 5 = Extremely severe.

Section C – Negative Emotions

Section C measured the participants emotional state following the service failure encounter. Scales were adapted from Diener *et al.*'s (1995) classification of emotions which grouped negative emotions into different types. For this study, eight negative emotions were included, as these emotions have been linked to consumer complaint behaviour in previous studies (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Isaac, 2010; Tronvoll, 2011). The eight negative emotions that were measured in the questionnaire were anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness and shame. Participants had to indicate the degree to which they would experience each of the eight negative emotions following the in-store service failure encounter on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Very; 5 = Extremely.

Section D – Consumer Complaint Intention

Section D first probed participants to indicate whether they would take action (complain) or take no action (do nothing) following the occurrence of the in-store service failure. Participants who answered that they would take action (complain), had to indicate their intention to

complain on a likelihood scale. Participants were provided with a list of 13 types of complaint actions or intentions which they had to rate using a four-point Likert-type scale: four-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Extremely unlikely; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Likely; 4 = Extremely likely. These scale items were based on scales from Day and Landon (1977), Mattila and Wirtz's (2004) and Clark (2013). The complaint intentions were categorised as follows:

- *Private action* – (Offline) telling friends and family face-to-face, brand switching and boycotting or (Online) telling friends and family using email, WhatsApp or social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn).
- *Public action* – (Offline) complaining to the retailer in person, complain to third party in person or (Online) e-negative word-of-mouth on social platforms, complain to the retailer by phone, email, SMS or on the retailer's website.

The last part of the questionnaire covered the demographic background of participants. Participants were asked to indicate their age, gender, population group, level of education, and income. To adhere to ethical aspects participants completed the questionnaire anonymously and voluntarily.

3.3.1 Pre-testing of questionnaire

A pre-test was done before the final distribution of the questionnaire to determine whether participants understood the questions (Hu, 2014). Pre-testing of the questionnaire took place in May 2019. After creating a link to the online questionnaire, the pre-test was conducted on 30 fourth-year students and five Master's students studying Consumer Science in Retail and Clothing Management at the University of Pretoria. These students had similar demographic characteristics as possible participants who would take part in the study, as the students would ultimately distribute the questionnaire to family and friends with similar demographic characteristics. After the pre-test was done, the researchers and students meticulously evaluated all questions to ensure all items were clear and easy to understand. Minor changes were made to question wording to ensure clarity. A pre-test was conducted since it contributes to better reliability and validity of the measuring instrument (Babbie, 2013:242).

3.3.2 Conceptualisation and operationalisation

Table 3.1 summarises the important constructs and dimensions of the study. The objectives are listed with the relevant constructs and items. The adapted measuring instruments of items to measure the concepts are also indicated.

TABLE 3.1: CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION OF OBJECTIVES

SECTION B: Objective 1: To explore and describe the types of in-store service failures that would cause consumer dissatisfaction in clothing retailers.						
Sub-Objective	Construct	Dimension	Indicator	Item	Q No	Statistical Analysis
1.1 To explore and describe which in-store service failures (i.e., physical attributes, personal interaction, reliability, customer service) would cause the most consumer dissatisfaction.	In-store service failure	<i>Select three in-store service failures that will cause you to be the most dissatisfied.</i>			V4	Descriptive statistics Frequencies Percentages
		Physical aspects Huang (2009)	Store appearance	Untidy store areas (e.g. fitting rooms, till points, etc.)	VS4.1	
			Store layout	Unorganised store layout (e.g. no room to walk, aisle not wide enough, etc.)	VS4.2	
			Store atmosphere	Unpleasant atmosphere (e.g. loud music/staff, uncomfortable room temperature, etc.)	VS4.3	
		Personal interaction Beneke <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Unfriendly staff	Unfriendly staff	VS4.4	
			Unhelpful staff	Unhelpful staff	VS4.5	
			Incompetent staff	Incompetent staff	VS4.6	
		Reliability Vazquez <i>et al.</i> (2001)	Stock availability	Stock availability issues (e.g. out of stock)	VS4.12	
			Missing/Inaccurate information/ Price tags	Inaccurate information (e.g. misleading product information, incorrect pricing of products)	VS4.13	
				Missing price tags	VS4.14	
		Customer service Kang & James (2004)	Unfair/unclear return/exchange policies	Unfair return/exchange policy	VS4.9	
				Unclear return/exchange policy	VS4.10	
			Refund and paying difficulties	Refund problems	VS4.11	
				Difficulties while paying (e.g. under-staffed, trainees serving customers, etc.)	VS4.15	
			Long waiting time in ques	Long waiting time in queues	VS4.16	
		Poor customer service support	Poor customer service support	VS4.7		
Poor communication	Poor communication with customers	VS4.8				
1.2 To determine the level of dissatisfaction that consumer would experience following in-store service failures.	Level of dis-satisfaction	<i>Which one of the three in-store service failures listed below [list of three service failures selected by participants from VS4.1-VS4.16], would cause you to be the most dissatisfied? Rate your level of dissatisfaction for this service failure.</i> (4-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Slightly dissatisfied; 2 = Moderately dissatisfied; 3 = Very dissatisfied; 4 = Extremely dissatisfied)			VS6	

1.3 To explore and describe the severity of clothing retailers' in-store service failures.	Severity	<i>How severe (serious) would you consider the service failure [service failure X selected to cause most dissatisfaction]?</i> (5-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Not at all severe; 2 = Slightly severe; 3 = Moderately severe; 4 = Very severe; 5 = Extremely severe)			VS7	
SECTION C: Objective 2: To explore and describe the negative emotions (i.e., anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness, and shame) that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.						
Sub-Objectives	Construct	Dimension	Indicator	Item	Q No	Statistical Analysis
2.1 To explore and describe the negative emotions consumers would most frequently experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. 2.2 To explore and describe the relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions experienced following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.	Emotions	<i>Please indicate your emotional state following the service failure.</i> (5-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Very; 5 = Extremely)			VS9	Descriptive statistics Frequencies Percentages Cross Tabulation
		Negative Emotions Diener (1995)	Anger	<i>I would feel angry</i>	VS9.2	
			Anxiety	<i>I would feel anxious</i>	VS9.1	
			Disgust	<i>I would feel disgusted</i>	VS9.7	
			Embarrassment	<i>I would feel embarrassed</i>	VS9.8	
			Frustration	<i>I would feel frustrated</i>	VS9.5	
			Irritation	<i>I would feel irritated</i>	VS9.6	
			Sadness	<i>I would feel sad</i>	VS9.4	
Shame	<i>I would feel ashamed</i>	VS9.3				

SECTION D: Objective 3: To explore and describe the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Sub-Objectives	Construct	Dimension	Indicator	Item	Q No	Statistical Analysis		
3.1 To explore and describe consumers' intention to complain after experiencing negative emotions associated with clothing retailers' in-store service failures. 3.2 To determine the different consumer complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. 3.3 To explore and describe the effect of negative emotions on consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.	Consumer Complaint Intention Day and Landon (1977), Clark (2013), Balaji <i>et al.</i> (2017), Mattila (2004)	<i>Following the product/service failure (In-store) how likely are you to _____</i> (4-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Extremely unlikely; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Likely; 4 = Extremely likely)				V10	Descriptive statistics Frequencies Percentages	
		No Action	Do not complain	Do nothing about the problem/failure		VSS10		
		Action	Private Action	Online	Text your family and friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)		VS10.2	Exploratory factor analysis Inferential statistics Multiple Regression Analysis
					Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see		VS10.3	
				Offline	Tell your family and friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them		VS10.1	
					Switch to another brand name		VS10.4	
					Stop buying at the retailer		VS10.5	
			Public Action	Online	Complain to the retailer by phone		VS10.7	
					Complain to the retailer by email		VS10.8	
					Complain on the retailer's website		VS10.9	
					Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see		VS10.10	
				Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website (e.g., hellopeter.com)		VS10.12		
		Offline	Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)		VS10.11			
Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)			VS10.6					

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Primary data was collected with an online, self-administered questionnaire, after ethical clearance was obtained. Data collection was done by 30 fourth-year Clothing Retail Management students as well as five Master's students at the University of Pretoria between June and mid-August 2019. The questionnaire link was shared by the undergraduate student fieldworkers and Master's students with family, friends and acquaintances via email and WhatsApp, as well as on their social media pages (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn). Due to the survey being online, participants required an internet connection to complete the questionnaire. The link opened with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and that it would take approximately ten minutes to complete. It also indicated that participation is anonymous and voluntary and involves no risks or harm for participants.

An advantage of using an online survey is that it offers access to individuals who would be difficult to reach otherwise, such as consumers in different provinces (Wright, 2005). Online surveys are known to have a reduced response time, lower cost and the ability to obtain additional response-set information is possible (Granello & Wheaton, 2004). Using an online survey makes it effortless to share it via social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. This is advantageous, as more possible participants can be reached. Likewise, online surveys make it easy to share the link of the survey on messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. These platforms make it easy to see whether the survey has been received, and it is possible to follow up with the participant easily. A disadvantage with regards to an online survey is that it automatically excludes individuals who do not have access to the internet, such as those who reside in remote locations. The opportunity to probe participants to explain further an answer, which can be very important when an open-ended question is being asked, is not possible (Granello & Wheaton, 2004).

Data cleaning was not necessary for data collection since the force response method was employed. This ensures that missing responses are deleted from the data, making it more reliable. However, incomplete questionnaires did arise since participants started the questionnaire but did not complete all the questions. This could be due to a lost internet connection or the participant deciding they do not want to complete the questionnaire anymore. The study formed part of a larger study on consumer complaint behaviour, a total of 2399 questionnaires were collected. Of the 2399 participants who started the questionnaire, only 1656 completed it, making the completion rate 69,03%. For this study, only 768 of the 1656 questionnaires were applicable to an in-store service failure scenario. The questionnaire was divided into different sections, namely, in-store service failure, negative emotions and consumer complaint intention. Seven hundred sixty-eight participants ($n = 768$) completed the

in-store failure and negative emotions sections. Of the 768 participants, 169 participants indicated they would take “no action”; therefore, the complaint intention section did not apply to them. A total of 599 participants indicated they would take action. To conclude the collection procedure, data was checked, organised and formatted for further data analysis.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data can be defined as the systematic process of applying suitable logical and or statistical techniques to evaluate data (Creswell, 2009:138; Babbie, 2013:390). Data collected from questionnaires were processed into numerical format for simpler interpretation. The data was coded before it was transferred to statistical software. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences’ (SPSS 26) was used to complete statistical analysis. Statistical analysis was done by a statistician at the University of Pretoria.

Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis was used for the study. Descriptive statistics succinctly summarise the key features of a dataset or population, whereas inferential statistics allow the researcher to make inferences from the data (Babbie, 2013:493-494). Descriptive statistics such as means, percentages and frequencies were used for demographic analysis. The various constructs (in-store service failure, negative emotions, consumer complaint behaviour) under study and their relationship with each other were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis. Inferential statistics such as exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and multiple linear regression were employed, while descriptive statistics such as means, percentages and frequencies were utilised. A statistician from The University of Pretoria assisted with the data analysis.

EFA was done to describe the underlying factors of the data set related to consumer complaint intentions (Samuels, 2017). EFA entails that observable and measurable variables can be reduced to fewer latent variables that share a common variance (Samuels, 2017). EFA allows the researcher to focus on essential factors rather than considering many variables that may be insignificant. Therefore, EFA was done to group constructs of consumer complaint behaviour into meaningful factors.

Cronbach’s alpha is defined as a measure of internal consistency, specifically, how closely related a set of items are as a group (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). An advantage of using Cronbach's alpha as a measure of reliability is that it offers a unique estimate of the internal consistency, (Taber, 2018). To ensure internal consistency of the constructs, Cronbach’s alpha (α) coefficient was calculated on the factors formed through the EFA. Cronbach’s alpha for

each factor is indicated in **Table 4.8**, Chapter 4. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or higher is considered a good measure of internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha indicated that the reliability for the factors that were measured was good (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014:123).

Multiple regression analysis is a statistical analysis technique used to explore and describe the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables (Hair *et al.*, 2014:151). The purpose of multiple regression analysis is to test and quantify the relative contribution that the multiple independent variables have in predicting the single dependent variable (Hair *et al.*, 2014:152). Multiple regression was performed to determine the relationship between negative emotions (independent variables) experienced after an in-store service failure and the different consumer complaint intentions (dependent variables).

3.6 QUALITY OF THE STUDY: VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ISSUES

Eliminating errors and correct data analysis is a way to achieve construct validity, face validity, measurement validity and content validity (Creswell, 2009:190; Babbie, 2013:260; Kumar, 2011:179-181). Validity and reliability are data quality indicators (Kumar, 2011:179-181). When the collected data is valid and reliable, the research study can be said to have precise and accurate data (Hair *et al.*, 2014:285).

3.6.1 Validity

Validity is the ability of an instrument to measure exactly what it intends to measure (Kumar, 2011:179). When considering the validity of a study, two types of validity are relevant: theoretical validity and measurement validity (Babbie, 2013:191).

- Theoretical validity

Theoretical validity was established employing a thorough literature review and a well-structured theoretical framework that was compiled from various sources, which presents clear definitions of relevant concepts. This study clearly defines concepts of in-store service failure, dissatisfaction following an in-store service failure, negative emotions experienced during service failures and consumer complaint intention followed by an in-store service failure.

- Content validity

Content validity was established as the content of the scales logically reflected the concepts that were measured (Babbie, 2013:192). All the main concepts, their dimensions and their indicators were thoughtfully identified and verified in agreement with literature to guarantee representation in the questionnaire. To ensure content validity, scale items were adapted from existing scales. Items pertaining to instore service failures were obtained from Huang (2009), Beneke *et al.*, (2012), Vazquez *et al.*, (2001) and Kang and James (2004). Items pertaining to negative emotions were obtained from Denier (1995). Items pertaining to consumer complaint behaviour were obtained from Day and Landon (1977), Clark (2013), Balaji *et al.* (2017) and Mattila (2004).

- Construct validity

Construct validity refers to the extent to which a scale index measures the relevant constructs (Kumar, 2011:381; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:92). Constructs were clearly defined to avoid confusion among participants. Likert-type scales were used as the main means of measurement in the questionnaire, based on its success in similar studies in the past (Beneke *et al.*, 2012; Schoefer & Diamantopoulos, 2008; Tronvoll, 2011), and its ease of understanding. The online self-administered questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that the constructs are correctly measured and that participants understood the questions.

- Face validity

Face validity is the degree to which the measuring instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Babbie, 2013:201; Kumar, 2011:385). The questionnaire was divided into sections to categorise and organise it. Face validity was achieved by adapting measurement instruments from previous studies that dealt with similar constructs. Similarly, face validity was achieved by the use of data analysis methods such as EFA. This analysis grouped similar constructs, confirming that the correct constructs were measured.

- Criterion validity

Criterion validity is accomplished when what has been measured correlates with other standard measures of established criteria (Babbie, 2011:192). In order to attain a high degree of criterion validity, different items were used in each question of Section B (service failures) and Section D (consumer complaint intention) in the questionnaire to measure the same concept. Furthermore, scales were adapted and tested to accommodate the objectives and the scope of the study. Criterion validity was achieved by adapting the taxonomies of consumer complaint behaviour of Day and Landon (1977), Clark (2013), Balaji *et al.* (2017) and Mattila (2004) for the purpose of this study's objectives.

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which the measured variables will be free from errors of measurement, when the test is repeated the same results will be obtained (Hair *et al.*, 2014:2; Kumar, 2011:181; Babbie, 2013:188). Reliability can be influenced by the response rate, sample size, the questionnaire design and the method of data analysis (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:67). In order to ensure reliability, Cronbach's alpha was determined for EFA to see if questions were answered consistently, resulting in internal reliability of constructs. Furthermore, a questionnaire using Likert scales was used as it has been proven successful in multiple previous studies before (Hartley, 2014). The reliability of the study was ensured through pre-testing to guarantee that the correct constructs were measured and that the participants provided useful responses based on the format of the instructions and their understanding of the concepts. Lastly, adequate instructions were given to participants to avoid errors that might have occurred when completing the questionnaire.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethics provides guidelines on what constitutes appropriate moral behaviour in the sphere of research (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:286-287). Ethical behaviour is of the highest importance prior, during and after conducting a research study (Kumar, 2011:242). Approval to commence with this study was received from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria (**Appendix B**). The following ethical issues will be considered:

- Participants were invited to complete a questionnaire that would take approximately 15 minutes. It was made clear that their involvement in the research was voluntary and if the respondents chose to withdraw from the research, they could do so without any consequences.
- *Anonymity and confidentiality*: Anonymity is when the identity of the participant is not known to researchers (Wiles, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2006). Confidentiality is when the researcher knows the identity of a participant but takes steps to protect that identity from being revealed to others (Wiles *et al.*, 2006). A consent letter was attached to the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the study, the researcher's affiliation, and to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participant (Salkind, 2011:90). This was done to ensure that participants feel at ease when answering questions, as they might feel shy to answer honestly when their identity is exposed.

- *Voluntary participation and informed consent:* Voluntary participation is when the participant exercises free will in deciding whether to participate in the research study. Informed consent is a voluntary agreement to participate in research (Rose, Aburto, Hagemann & Shahnazarian, 2009). Participants were informed of the potential impact of the investigation. Participants' involvement was voluntary, and they were allowed to withdraw from the process at any given stage by not completing the questionnaire (Kumar, 2011:244). Voluntary participation and informed consent were implemented as ethics for this study since participants might not answer questions truthfully when feeling forced to participate. It is known that when participants have the choice to freely answer questions without the pressure of completing them, answers are more truthful and therefore more reliable (Boireau, Dufour & Praud, 2017).
- *Plagiarism:* Plagiarism is when the researcher turns someone else's work into their own by copying words or ideas without giving credit to the original source (Ranjan, 2013). The researcher ensured that all ideas and thoughts from other sources were well referenced and written into own words (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:103-104). This was done to ensure that work was original. A plagiarism declaration form was signed (**Appendix A**).

3.8 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presented the research methods involved in conducting this study. The research design, sample and sampling techniques were explained. This chapter also focused on the instrument development, operationalisation of constructs, data collection and data analysis. In addition, the reliability and validity aspects of the study as well as the appropriate ethical considerations were discussed. In the next chapter, the results of the study are presented and discussed.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter four presents the results of the study. The results are presented in terms of the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1. This includes an overview of the demographic characteristics of the sample; descriptive statistics related to the in-store service failures which caused the most dissatisfaction; the severity of the in-store service failures, the negative emotions triggered by the in-store service failures, and how these emotions relate to consumers' level of dissatisfaction. Results of the exploratory factor analysis based on consumer complaint intentions as well as the regression analyses between the negative emotions and different consumers complaint intentions are also included in this chapter.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Seven hundred and sixty-eight (**n = 768**) questionnaires were completed and analysed. The sample included males and females from different population groups living across the nine provinces of South Africa. Participants were above the age of 19 and shopped in-store for clothing. The following section represents an overview of the sample's demographic characteristics, which will provide background for the results given in this chapter. **Table 4.1** summarises the sample characteristics.

4.1.1 Gender

The sample included participants from two gender categories. The majority of the participants were females (74.60%), while a quarter of the participants were male (25.39%). According to Stats SA (2019), 51.7% of the South African population is female. Research shows that female consumers drive up to 80% of all purchases worldwide, as they are known to be primary caregivers for their household, implying women buy on behalf of the individuals living in their house (Brennan, 2015). The gender representation of participants is indicated in **Table 4.1**.

4.1.2 Age

Age was used to screen individuals for participation in the survey and only individuals 19 years and older could partake in the survey. This also ensured that individuals who partake in the survey were able to make sound decisions regarding in-store service failures and the implication thereof. For analysis, age was grouped into five groups: 19-23 years, 24-30 years, 31-39 years, 40-55 years, 56> years. Descriptive statistics indicated that almost a third (32.81%) of the participants were between 40-55 years old, which represents the Generation X cohort (Dhanapal, Vashu & Subramaniam, 2015). These consumers can be described as big spenders, particularly on clothing, food, and entertainment (Chaney, Touzani & Ben

Slimane, 2017). The second largest age group was 19-23 years (21.09%), followed by 24-30 years old group (19.01%). These two age groups form the Millennial cohort who are known to be educated and tech-savvy (Griffin, 2002). Since Millennials are the more tech-savvy generation, they are more comfortable shopping online than generation X (Son, Sun & Hughes, 2017). The remaining participants (14.71%) were 31-39 years old and the smallest portion of the sample (12.37%) was 56+ years. The age representation of participants is indicated in **Table 4.1**.

TABLE 4.1: SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

Sample variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender (n = 768)		
Male	195	25.39
Female	573	74.60
Age groups (n = 768)		
19-23 years	162	21.09
24-30 years	146	19.01
31-39 years	113	14.71
40-55 years	252	32.81
56 > years	95	12.37
Level of education (n = 768)		
Lower than Grade 10	8	1.04
Grade 10 or 11	7	0.91
Grade 12	166	21.61
Degree/ Diploma	391	50.91
Postgraduate	196	25.52
Total Monthly Household Income (n = 768)		
Less than R10 000	115	14.97
R10 001 – R19 999	132	17.19
R20 000 – R29 999	127	16.54
R30 000 – R49 999	142	18.49
R50 000 or more	252	32.81
Population (Classification according to the Employment Equity Act) (n = 768)		
White	562	73.18
Black	102	13.28
Indian	56	7.29
Coloured	26	3.39
Other	22	2.86
Residing Province (n = 766) (n=2 missing)		
Eastern Cape	15	1.96
Free state	12	1.56
Gauteng	548	71.35
KwaZulu-Natal	65	8.46
Limpopo	38	4.95
Mpumalanga	23	2.99
North West	28	3.65
Western Cape	37	4.82

4.1.3 Level of education

Participants had to indicate their highest level of education, as consumers with higher education tend to perceive service quality as highly important and are more likely to complain (Shurair & Pokharel, 2019). As indicated in **Figure 4.1**, half of the participants 50.91% had a degree or diploma and a quarter (25.5%) had a postgraduate degree. The remaining participants (21.60%) completed their Grade 12 certificates, and a mere 0.09% of the participants completed Grade 10 or 11. Eight participants (1.0%) had a level of education lower than Grade 10. Participants' level of education is illustrated in **Figure 4.1**.

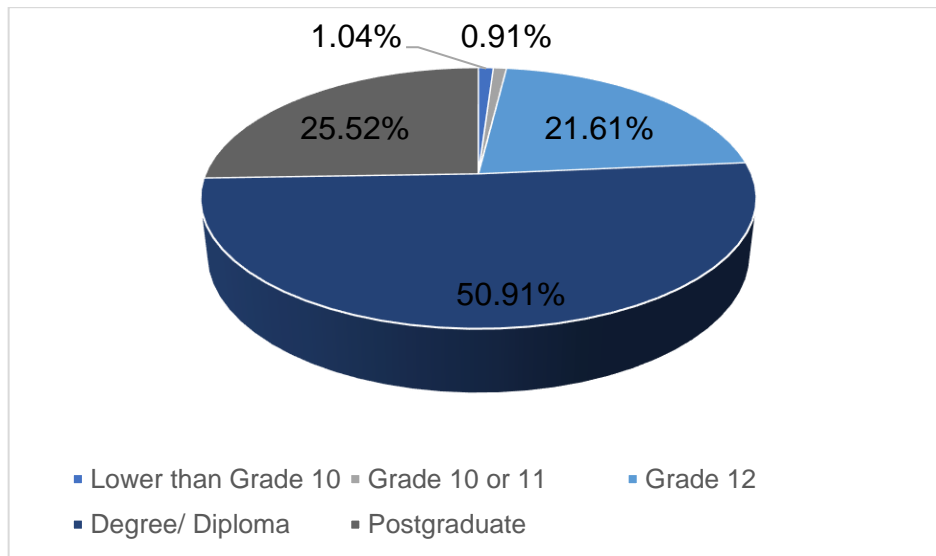


FIGURE 4.1: LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARTICIPANTS

4.1.4 Total monthly household income

Participants were asked to provide an approximate of their monthly household income as an indication of their level of spending power. Almost a third of the participants (32.81%) earned more than R50 000 per month and almost a fifth (18.49%) earned R30 000–R49 999. These two income brackets formed half of the sample, indicating that the sample of the study had a quite large spending power. The remaining participants (48,70%) were in the lower three income brackets and earned R20 000-R29 000 (16.54%), R10 001-R19 999 (17.19%) and less than R10 000 (14.97%) respectively per month. **Figure 4.2** presents the different income groups used for analysis.

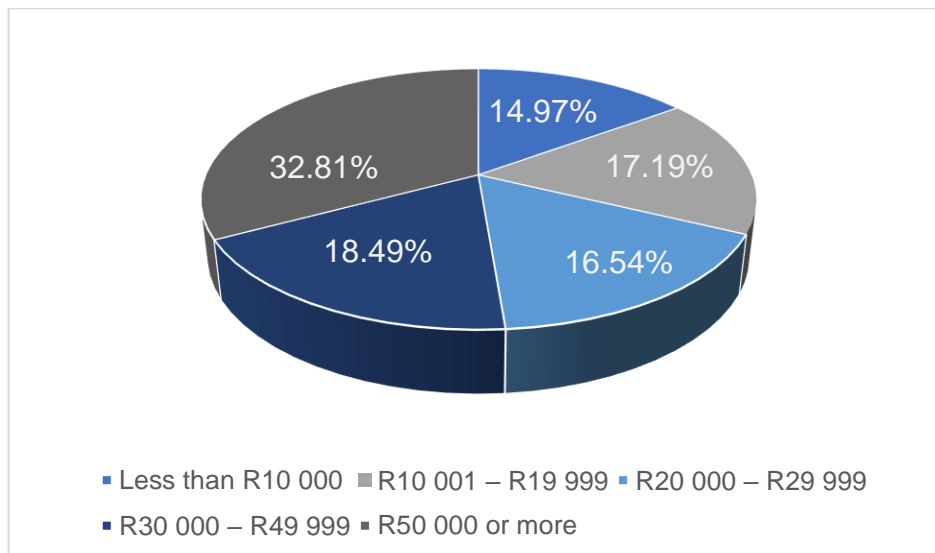


FIGURE 4.2: TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF PARTICIPANTS

4.1.5 Population group

Five population categories, according to the Equity Act of South Africa, were distinguished in the survey. As indicated in **Figure 4.5**, the majority of participants (73.18%) were White. The second-largest group of participants were Black (13.28%). Participants from other population groups formed only 13.28% of the sample, with 7.29% being Indian, 3.39% Coloured and 2.86% indicated Other. In South Africa, the majority of the population is Black (80.90%); therefore the sample was not representative of the South African population and can be considered skewed (Africa, 2018). **Figure 4.3** presents the different population groups used for analysis.

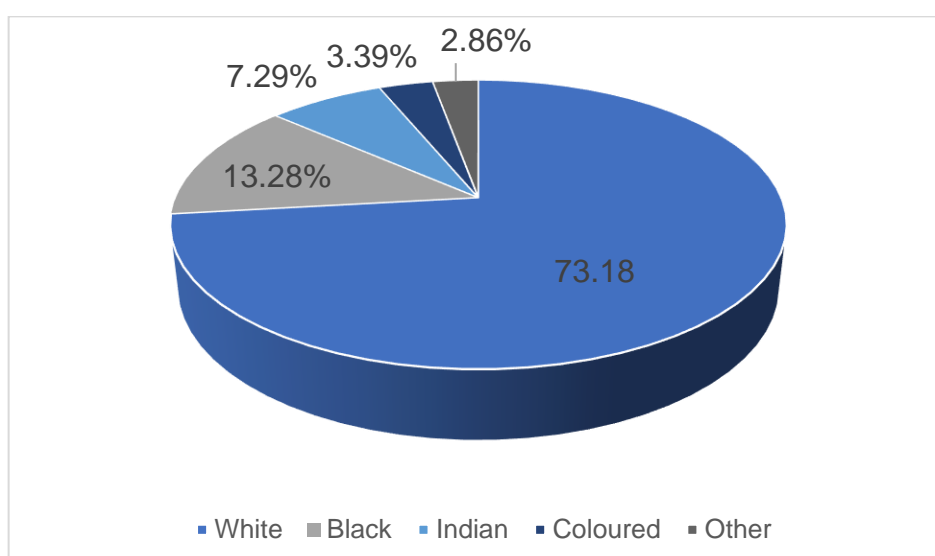


FIGURE 4.3: REPRESENTATION OF THE POPULATION GROUPS

4.1.6 Residing province

Residing in South Africa was a precondition to participate in the survey, because the study aimed to explore consumer complaint behaviour in the South African context. South Africa consists of nine provinces; however, responses from only eight provinces were collected. The majority of responses were collected from individuals residing in Gauteng (71.35%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (8.46%), Limpopo (4.95%), Western Cape (4.82%), North West (3.65%), Mpumalanga (2.99%), Eastern Cape (1.96%) and Free State (1.56%). No data were collected from Northern Cape which is also the lowest populated province in South Africa (Africa, 2018). According to Statistics South Africa (2018) the largest share of the South African population live in Gauteng (25,40%) KwaZulu-Natal has the second largest population, with 19,70%, followed by Western Cape (11,50%), Eastern Cape (11,30%), Limpopo (10%), Mpumalanga (7,80%), North West (6,90%), Free State (5,10%), Northern Cape (2,10%) (Africa, 2018). The sample was therefore somewhat representative of the population spread per province.

4.2 CLOTHING RETAILERS' IN-STORE SERVICE FAILURES

Objective 1 aimed to explore and describe the types of in-store service failures that would cause consumer dissatisfaction. Three sub-objectives were formulated for Objective 1. Sub-Objective 1.1 was to explore and describe which in-store service failures (i.e., physical attributes, personal interaction, reliability, customer service) would cause the most consumer dissatisfaction. Sub-objective 1.2 aimed to determine the level of dissatisfaction that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Sub-objective 1.3 set out to explore and describe the severity of clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Questions related to different types of in-store service failures were included in the questionnaire to gain insight into which types of in-store service failures would cause the most customer dissatisfaction. Service failure items in the questionnaire (**Table 3.1 in Chapter 3**) measured the following four in-store service failure dimensions: (1) *physical aspects* comprised store appearance, store layout and store atmosphere; (2) *personal interaction* included unfriendly staff, unhelpful staff and incompetent staff; (3) *reliability* included stock availability, missing/inaccurate information or price tags; and (4) *customer service* encompassed unfair or unclear return/exchange policies, refund and paying difficulties, long waiting time in ques, poor customer service support and poor communication.

4.2.1. In-store service failures causing consumer dissatisfaction

Participants were provided with a service failure scenario where they were asked to indicate three service failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction when shopping at a clothing retailer (**Appendix C**). **Table 4.2** indicates, in descending order, the in-store service failures selected by participants to most frequently cause dissatisfaction.

TABLE 4.2: IN-STORE SERVICE FAILURES

Variable number	In-Store Service Failures	Frequency	Percentage (%)
V4.4	Unfriendly staff	258	33.59
V4.3	Unpleasant atmosphere (e.g. loud music/staff, uncomfortable room temperature, etc.)	249	32.42
V4.12	Stock availability issues (e.g. out of stock)	232	30.21
V4.6	Incompetent staff	224	29.17
V4.16	Long waiting time in queues	210	27.34
V4.5	Unhelpful staff	204	26.56
V4.1	Untidy store areas (e.g. fitting rooms, till points, etc.)	201	26.17
V4.2	Unorganised store layout (e.g. no room to walk, aisle not wide enough, etc.)	168	21.88
V4.14	Missing price tags	131	17.06
V4.13	Inaccurate information (e.g. misleading product information, incorrect pricing of products)	111	14.45
V4.7	Poor customer service support	100	13.02
V4.15	Difficulties while paying	76	9.90
V4.9	Unfair return/exchange policy	59	7.68
V4.8	Poor communication with customers	30	3.91
V4.10	Unclear return/exchange policy	29	3.78
V4.11	Refund problems	22	2.86

Unfriendly staff (e.g. staff who are rude or show no interest in customers) would cause the most dissatisfaction amongst participants with a third of participants (33.59%) choosing it as one of their top three in-store service failures. Following unfriendly staff, other in-store service failures that caused frequent dissatisfaction for participants were: unpleasant atmosphere (32.42%), stock availability issues (30.21%), incompetent staff (29.17%), and long waiting times in queues (27.34%). In addition to these in-store service failures unhelpful staff (26.56%), untidy store areas (26.17%), unorganised store layout (21.88%) followed as service-failures to cause some dissatisfaction for participants. Interestingly other aspects related to reliability

(missing price tags, 17.06%; inaccurate information, 14.45%) and customer service (poor customer service support, 13.02%; difficulties while paying, 9.90%; unfair return/exchange policy, 7.68%; poor communication with customers, 3.91%; unclear return/exchange policy, 3.78% and refund problems, 2.86%) were rated low by participants as frequent causes for dissatisfaction.

Figure 4.4 shows the in-store service items grouped together within their respective dimension (i.e., physical attributes, personal interaction, reliability, and customer service). The top three in-store service failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction amongst participants are indicated red.

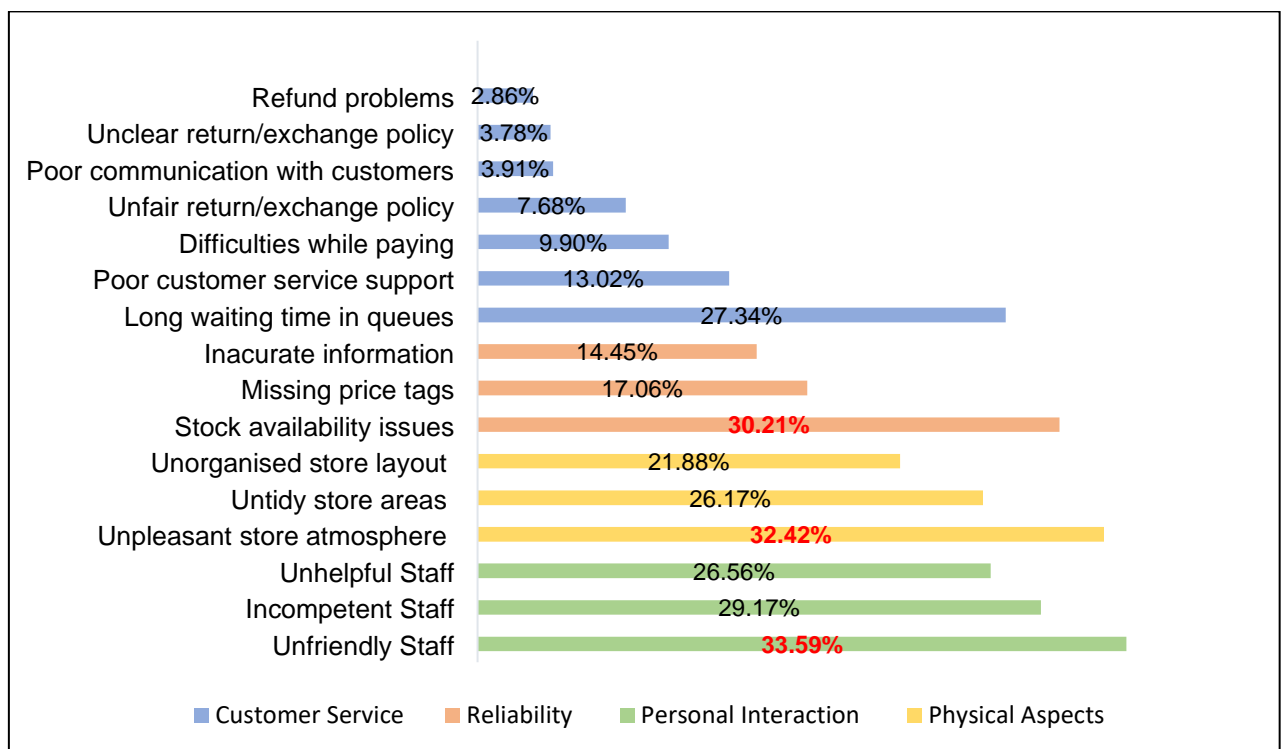


FIGURE 4.4: REPRESENTATION OF THE IN-STORE SERVICE FAILURE DIMENSIONS

The respective in-store service failure dimensions that would likely cause the most dissatisfaction is physical aspects and personal interaction. Personal interaction comprised of *unfriendly staff*, which caused the most dissatisfaction, followed by *unhelpful staff* and *incompetent staff*. Physical aspects consisted of *unpleasant atmosphere* (e.g. *loud music/staff, uncomfortable room temperature, etc.*), which caused the most dissatisfaction, followed by *untidy store areas* (e.g. *fitting rooms, till points, etc.*) and *unorganised store layout* (e.g. *no room to walk, aisle not wide enough, etc.*). Within the reliability dimension, *stock availability issues* were the in-store service failure that caused the most dissatisfaction. Reliability also consisted of *inaccurate information* (e.g. *misleading product information, incorrect pricing of products*) and *missing price tags*. Customer service included *unfair return/exchange policy, unclear return/exchange policy, refund problems, difficulties while paying* (e.g. *under-staffed,*

trainees serving customers, etc.), poor customer service support, poor communication with customers and lastly long waiting time in queues. Long waiting time in queues was the customer service item that would cause the most dissatisfaction within this dimension. Overall, personal interaction was the dimension that caused the most dissatisfaction, followed by physical aspects.

4.2.2 Level of dissatisfaction

Participants were asked to indicate their level of dissatisfaction that they would have after experiencing the in-store service failure they selected to cause the most dissatisfaction. Participants rated their level of dissatisfaction on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = Slightly dissatisfied; 2 = Moderately dissatisfied; 3 = Very dissatisfied; 4 = Extremely dissatisfied. **Table 4.3** presents the level of dissatisfaction experienced after the in-store service failure.

TABLE 4.3: LEVEL OF DISSATISFACTION

Variable number	Level of dissatisfaction following an in-store service failure	Frequency	Percentage (%)
V6	Slightly dissatisfied	45	5.86
	Moderately dissatisfied	120	15.62
	Very dissatisfied	301	39.19
	Extremely dissatisfied	302	39.32

Note: n =768

For reporting purposes, the descriptive statistics related to very dissatisfied and extremely dissatisfied were grouped together. Similarly, slightly dissatisfied and moderately dissatisfied were grouped together. The majority (78.51%) of the participants felt either very dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied. Only 21.48% of the participants felt that the service failure would cause slight (5.86%) or moderate dissatisfaction (15.62%). This indicates that clothing retailers' in-store service failures could cause high levels of dissatisfaction in consumers (**Table 4.2 and Figure 4.4**).

4.2.3 Severity of in-store service failure

To determine the severity of clothing retailers' in-store service failures, participants had to indicate how severe (serious) they would consider the service failure to be, which they initially rated would cause them the most dissatisfaction. **Table 4.4** presents, in descending order, the severity of in-store service failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction for participants.

TABLE 4.4: SEVERE/SERIOUS IN-STORE SERVICE FAILURES

Variable number	In-Store Service Failure	Frequency	Percentage (%)
V4.6	Incompetent staff	124	16.15
V4.3	Unpleasant atmosphere	106	13.80
V4.4	Unfriendly staff	90	11.72
V4.12	Stock availability issues (e.g. out of stock)	77	10.03
V4.5	Unhelpful staff	71	9.24
V4.16	Long waiting time in queues	69	8.98
V4.13	Inaccurate information (e.g. misleading product information, incorrect pricing of products)	46	5.99
V4.1	Untidy store areas (e.g. fitting rooms, till points, etc.)	42	5.47
V4.7	Poor customer service support	36	4.69
V4.2	Unorganised store layout	35	4.56
V4.14	Missing price tags	33	4.30
V4.15	Difficulties while paying (e.g. understaffed, trainees serving customers etc.)	15	1.95
V4.9	Unfair return/exchange policy	13	1.69
V4.11	Refund problems	5	0.65
V4.10	Unclear return/exchange policy	4	0.52
V4.8	Poor communication with customers	2	0.26

Note: n = 768

Incompetent staff (e.g. staff who are unknowledgeable regarding merchandise and store information) was considered to be the most severe in-store service failure as 16.15% of participants choose it. This was followed by unpleasant atmosphere (13.80%), unfriendly staff (11.72%), stock availability issues (10.03%) and unhelpful staff (9.24%). The remaining service failures were selected by less than 10% of the participants and were considered to not be as severe as the other in-store service failures.

4.3 NEGATIVE EMOTIONS FOLLOWING IN-STORE SERVICE FAILURE

Objective 2 aimed to explore and describe the negative emotions (i.e., anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness, and shame) that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Two sub-objectives were formulated for objective 2. Sub-objective 2.1 explored and described the negative emotions consumers would most frequently experience following in-store service failure that would cause them the most

dissatisfaction and Sub-objective 2.2 explored and described the relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions experienced following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

4.3.1 Negative emotions consumers most frequently would experience

Eight negative emotions were measured for the purpose of the study. The negative emotions included: (1) *anger*, (2) *anxiety*, (3) *disgust*, (4) *embarrassment*, (5) *frustration*, (6) *irritation*, (7) *sadness*, and (8) *shame*. These eight negative emotions were selected for this study as they have been linked to consumer complaint behaviour in previous studies (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Isaac, 2010; Tronvoll, 2011). Participants had to indicate their emotional state following the in-store service failure they experienced to cause the most dissatisfaction (**Appendix C**). Participants rated their emotional state on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = Not at all, to 5 = Extremely. **Table 4.5** indicates, in descending order, the negative emotions of participants following an in-store failure they experienced as being severe and would cause them to be the most dissatisfied.

For reporting purpose, this section reports on participants' rating of their emotional state of feeling "very" and "extremely" negative, after experiencing clothing retailers' in-store service failure that would cause them to be most dissatisfied. The majority (73.57%) of participants indicated that they would feel very/extremely irritated after clothing retailers' in-store service failure. Irritation was followed by feeling very/extremely frustrated (71.74%), angry (43.10%) and disgusted (35.94%). The other four negative emotions were rated by participants to play a lesser role following clothing retailers' in-store failure: anxious (16.28%), sad (13.03%), embarrassed (7.42%) and ashamed (6.64%). Findings indicated that the main negative emotions they would experience after an in-store service failure would be irritation, frustration, anger and disgust.

TABLE 4.5: NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Variable number	Negative emotions	Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total percentage agreement (%)
V9.6	Irritated	Not at all	14	1.82	73.57
		Slightly	62	8.07	
		Moderately	127	16.54	
		Very	322	41.93	
		Extremely	243	31.64	
V9.5	Frustrated	Not at all	20	2.60	71.74
		Slightly	55	7.16	
		Moderately	142	18.49	
		Very	339	44.14	
		Extremely	212	27.60	
V9.2	Angry	Not at all	64	8.33	43.10
		Slightly	162	21.09	
		Moderately	211	27.47	
		Very	234	30.47	
		Extremely	97	12.63	
V9.7	Disgusted	Not at all	183	23.83	35.94
		Slightly	142	18.49	
		Moderately	167	21.74	
		Very	201	26.17	
		Extremely	75	9.77	
V9.1	Anxious	Not at all	347	45.18	16.28
		Slightly	182	23.70	
		Moderately	114	14.84	
		Very	93	12.11	
		Extremely	32	4.17	
V9.4	Sad	Not at all	408	53.13	13.03
		Slightly	151	19.66	
		Moderately	109	14.19	
		Very	74	9.64	
		Extremely	26	3.39	
V9.8	Embarrassed	Not at all	561	73.05	7.42
		Slightly	99	12.89	
		Moderately	51	6.64	
		Very	40	5.21	
		Extremely	17	2.21	
V9.3	Ashamed	Not at all	587	76.43	6.64
		Slightly	81	10.55	
		Moderately	49	6.38	
		Very	37	4.82	
		Extremely	14	1.82	

4.3.2 Level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions

The second sub-objective explored and described the relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions experienced following clothing retailers' in-store service failure. A cross-tabulation was done between the eight negative emotions and the level of

dissatisfaction experienced (**Table 4.6**). Participants had to indicate their level of dissatisfaction with regards to the service failure they found most dissatisfying.

For the purpose of reporting, the level of dissatisfaction scale “very dissatisfied” and “extremely dissatisfied” were grouped together. Similarly, “very” and “extremely” were grouped together for the emotional state scale. These groupings were made to simplify data analysis and make clear conclusions. As indicated in **Table 4.6**, the majority (73.57%) of participants who were very/extremely dissatisfied, were very/extremely irritated after an in-store service failure. Similarly, many participants (71.74%) who were very/extremely dissatisfied, were very/extremely frustrated. Likewise, many participants who, respectively, were very/extremely angry (43.10%) and disgusted (35.94%), were very/extremely dissatisfied too. Negative emotions that were not experienced severely nor caused extreme dissatisfaction included: anxious (16.28%), sad (13.02%), embarrassed (7.42%), ashamed (6.64%).

To analyse whether a significant relationship existed between the negative emotions experienced and the level of dissatisfaction, the p -value was calculated. A significant relationship exists when the p -value is equal or lower than 0.05 (≤ 0.05), while a p -value higher than 0.05 (> 0.05) is not statistically significant. Of the eight negative emotions evaluated, seven indicated that a significant relationship exists between the variables, as they all had a p -value ≤ 0.05 . Irritated, disgusted, frustrated, angry and ashamed all had p -values of < 0.001 . This indicates that there is a significant relationship between negative emotions experienced and the level of dissatisfaction. The emotions anxious and embarrassed indicated significant importance as well, with a p -values of 0.032 and 0.017 respectively. Sad was the only emotion indicating no significant relationship between the emotion and level of dissatisfaction with a p -value of 0.245.

TABLE 4.6: LEVEL OF DISSATISFACTION AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Variable number	Emotional State		Level of dissatisfaction				Totals		
			Slightly dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Extremely dissatisfied	Total Combined frequency	Total combined percentage (%)	Sig. p-value
V9.6	Irritated	Not at all	4	4	3	3	76	9.90	<0.001
		Slightly	11	19	24	8			
		Moderately	14	40	52	21	127	16.54	
		Very	14	44	155	109	565	73.57	
		Extremely	2	13	67	161			
V9.5	Frustrated	Not at all	5	7	4	4	75	9.77	<0.001
		Slightly	12	17	21	5			
		Moderately	13	39	65	25	142	18.49	
		Very	12	43	158	126	551	71.74	
		Extremely	3	14	53	142			
V9.2	Angry	Not at all	11	18	25	10	226	29.43	<0.001
		Slightly	18	37	69	38			
		Moderately	7	39	99	66	211	27.47	
		Very	7	23	87	117	331	43.10	
		Extremely	2	3	21	71			
V9.7	Disgusted	Not at all	19	43	75	46	325	42.32	<0.001
		Slightly	13	32	62	35			
		Moderately	5	27	78	57	167	21.74	
		Very	7	14	67	113	276	35.94	
		Extremely	1	4	19	51			
V9.1	Anxious	Not at all	26	59	132	130	529	68.88	0.032
		Slightly	7	36	77	62			
		Moderately	5	16	46	47	114	14.84	
		Very	6	7	38	42	125	16.28	
		Extremely	1	2	8	21			

TABLE 4.6: LEVEL OF DISSATISFACTION AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS (continued)

Variable number	Emotional State		Level of dissatisfaction				Totals		
			Slightly dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Extremely dissatisfied	Total Combined frequency	Total combined percentage(%)	Sig. p-value
V9.4	Sad	Not at all	26	66	165	151	559	72.79	0.245
		Slightly	12	22	62	55			
		Moderately	3	18	34	54	109	14.19	
		Very	3	13	31	27	100	13.02	
		Extremely	1	1	9	15			
V9.8	Embarrassed	Not at all	32	74	227	228	660	85.94	0.017
		Slightly	9	26	40	24			
		Moderately	3	9	17	22	51	6.64	
		Very	0	9	12	19	57	7.42	
		Extremely	1	2	5	9			
V9.3	Ashamed	Not at all	30	94	226	237	668	86.98	<0.001
		Slightly	13	15	37	16			
		Moderately	0	8	22	19	49	6.38	
		Very	2	2	13	20	51	6.64	
		Extremely	0	1	3	10			

 Note: p -value ≤ 0.05 ; $n = 768$

4.4 NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND CONSUMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOUR

Objective 3 aimed to explore and describe the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Three sub-objectives were formulated for Objective 3. Sub-objective 3.1 set out to explore and describe consumers' intention to complain after experiencing negative emotions associated with clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Sub-objective 3.2 was to determine the different consumer complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The third sub-objective, Sub-objective 3.2 aimed to explore and describe the effect of negative emotions on consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

For the purpose of this study, consumer complaint intention was divided into action and no action as purposed by Day and Landon (1977). Day et al. (1981:88) describe no action as "doing nothing". Whereas action is classified by Day and Landon (1977) into private and public actions. Private actions are activities that are not directly visible to the retailer (Singh, 1988). Private actions can be further broken down into online or offline actions (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). Offline actions are classified into complaining to family and friends (negative word-of-mouth), switching brands/retailers or boycotting the retailer. Online actions are classified into negative eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) to family or friends or negative eWOM on social media platforms/profiles for friends and family to see. Public actions are defined as identifiable complaints to the company (Singh, 1988). Public actions can further be divided into online action and offline action (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). Offline actions are, for instance, seeking redress from the retailer or complaining to a third party. Online actions include negative eWOM. When none of the above actions occurs, no action takes place.

4.4.1 Consumers' intention to complain following in-store service failure

Participants were probed to indicate whether they would take action following the occurrence of in-store service failure. Of the total participants, more than a quarter (22.01%, n = 169) of the participants indicated they would not take any action whereas the majority of the participants (77.99%, n = 599) indicated that they would take action following the event of an in-store service failure. **Figure 4.4** shows the proportion of participants who would take action versus those who would not take any action.

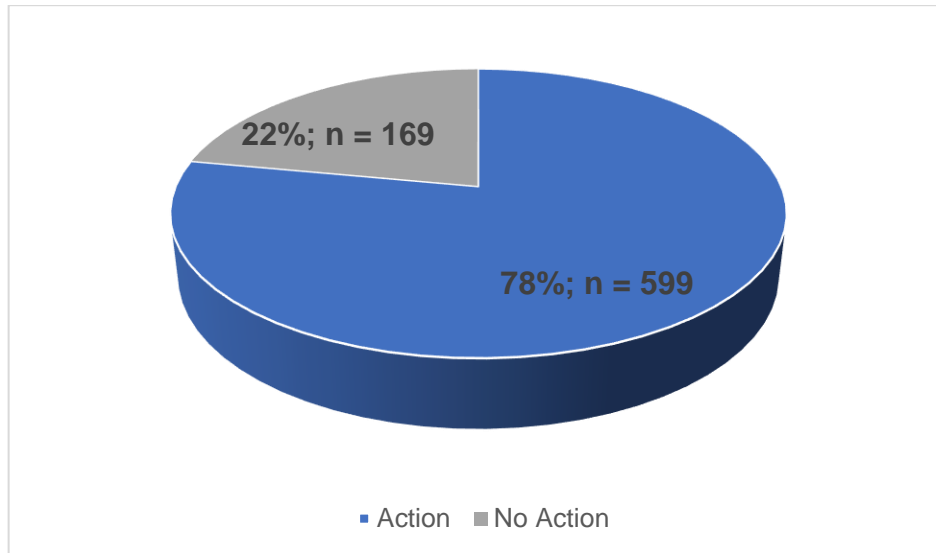


FIGURE 4.5: CONSUMER COMPLAINT ACTION

4.4.2 Different consumer complaint intentions following in-store service failure

To determine the different consumer complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures, participants had to rate how likely they were to complain using the various options of complaint action provided to them. The participants (n = 599) who indicated they would take action used a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = Extremely unlikely, to 4 = Extremely Likely to indicate their likelihood or probability to complain. **Table 4.7** shows, the descriptive statistics in descending order, for consumers' complaint intentions following in-store service failures.

For reporting purposes, "Likely" and "Extremely likely" responses were combined to determine the likelihood of specific complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The majority (86.14%) of participants would likely tell their family and/or friends about the failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them. Many (71.78%) of the participants would be likely to complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face). Numerous (69.45%) participants were also likely to switch to another brand name, while 62.11% would just stop buying at the retailer. Texting family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp) (48.24%), complaining to the retailer by e-mail (46.75%) or complaining on the retailer's website (41.90%), were also considered likely ways to complain by the participants.

TABLE 4.7: CONSUMER COMPLAINT INTENTIONS

Variable number	Consumer complaint intentions	Likelihood scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Combined Likelihood (%)
V10.1	Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them	Extremely unlikely	25	4.17	86.14
		Unlikely	56	9.35	
		Likely	340	56.76	
		Extremely likely	178	29.38	
V10.6	Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	Extremely unlikely	49	8.18	71.78
		Unlikely	120	20.03	
		Likely	287	47.91	
		Extremely likely	143	23.87	
V10.4	Switch to another brand name	Extremely unlikely	34	5.68	69.45
		Unlikely	149	24.87	
		Likely	325	54.26	
		Extremely likely	91	15.19	
V10.5	Stop buying at the retailer	Extremely unlikely	33	5.51	62.11
		Unlikely	194	32.39	
		Likely	270	45.08	
		Extremely likely	102	17.03	
V10.2	Text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)	Extremely unlikely	103	17.20	48.24
		Unlikely	207	34.56	
		Likely	205	34.22	
		Extremely likely	84	14.02	
V10.8	Complain to the retailer by e-mail	Extremely unlikely	118	19.70	46.75
		Unlikely	201	33.56	
		Likely	197	32.89	
		Extremely likely	83	13.86	
V10.9	Complain on the retailer's website	Extremely unlikely	117	19.53	41.90
		Unlikely	231	38.56	
		Likely	187	31.22	
		Extremely likely	64	10.68	
V10.7	Complain to the retailer by phone	Extremely unlikely	137	22.87	34.22
		Unlikely	257	42.90	
		Likely	154	25.71	
		Extremely likely	51	8.51	
V10.3	Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see	Extremely unlikely	249	41.57	19.03
		Unlikely	236	39.40	
		Likely	90	15.03	
		Extremely likely	24	4.01	
V10.10	Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see	Extremely unlikely	263	43.91	15.86
		Unlikely	241	40.23	
		Likely	75	12.52	
		Extremely likely	20	3.34	

TABLE 4.7: CONSUMER COMPLAINT INTENTIONS (continued)

Variable number	Consumer complaint intentions	Likelihood scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Combined Likelihood (%)
V10.11	Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)	Extremely unlikely	265	44.24	14.19
		Unlikely	249	41.57	
		Likely	70	11.69	
		Extremely likely	15	2.50	
V10.12	Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website	Extremely unlikely	298	49.75	10.35
		Unlikely	239	39.90	
		Likely	46	7.68	
		Extremely likely	16	2.67	

Almost a third (34.22%) of participants indicated that they would complain to the retailer by phone (34.22%) and almost a fifth (19.03%) would post their negative experience on their Facebook/Instagram profile for friends to see. A few participants indicated that they would post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see (14.19%) and 10.35% would write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website. Consumers are more likely to complain through negative word-of-mouth (e.g. telling friends and family) and to retailers directly or switch retailer or brand, than they would complain to a third party or post their experiences online/on social media platforms for everyone to see.

4.2.1.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used for this study to determine the underlying consumer complaint intentions. Exploratory factor analysis aims to unearth the number of factors present and see which variables fit together by grouping variables into categories (Samuels, 2017; Shkeer & Awang, 2019). Additionally an EFA is used to summarise or organise large datasets into relationships and patterns that are understandable and can be understood easily (Babbie, 2013). EFA helps to separate constructs and is used to discover relationships through researching datasets and testing predictions (Samuels, 2017).

SPSS software was utilised to carry out the EFA, using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) as the extraction method, and Varimax as rotation. Varimax rotation aims to maximise the variance of each factor so that the total amount of variance accounted for is redistributed over the extracted factors (Weide & Beauducel, 2019). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test is a measure of whether data is suitable for Factor Analysis (Shkeer & Awang, 2019). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin values between 0.8 and 1 indicate that the sampling is sufficient (Shkeer & Awang, 2019). The value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for the set of variables in this study was 0.733, which is adequate.

Bartlett's test of sphericity (Chi-Square 2222.962) showed that there were relationships in the data set that was appropriate for factor analysis. An eigenvalue of ≥ 1 is used to explain the variance of the variables (Shkeer & Awang, 2019). Four factors with eigenvalues above 1 and that explained 55.55% of the total variance were retained: Factor 1 (3.875), Factor 2 (1.654), Factor 3 (1.237) and Factor 4 (1.124) (**Table 4.8**). Items with factor loadings of ≥ 0.3 were included in the EFA analysis. Factor loadings are sensitive to the sample size, therefore a cut-off point of 0.3 was deemed suitable as the sample size was 768 (Mazzocchi, 2008:219).

Four meaningful factors were retained from the EFA. **Table 4.8** presents the retained factors and their respective factor loadings.

TABLE 4.8: COMPLAINT INTENTION FACTORS

Variable number	Consumer complaint intentions	Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer	Factor 2: Complain to third-party/ on social media	Factor 3: Switch retailer/ stop buying at retailer	Factor 4: Tell family/ friends
V10.8	Complain to the retailer by e-mail	0.83			
V10.9	Complain on the retailer's website	0.65			
V10.7	Complain to the retailer by phone	0.62			
V10.6	Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	0.36			
V10.12	Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website		0.81		
V10.11	Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)		0.65		
V10.10	Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/ Instagram pages for anyone to see		0.62		
V10.5	Stop buying at the retailer			0.83	
V10.4	Switch to another brand name			0.77	
V10.3	Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see				0.65
V10.2	Text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)				0.51
V10.1	Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them				0.30
	Eigenvalue	3.88	1.66	1.24	1.12
	% Variance explained	28.59	10.65	6.85	4.46
	Cronbach Alpha	0.75	0.79	0.79	0.55
	Means	2.45	1.70	2.76	2.46
	Standard Deviation	0.90	0.77	0.79	0.84

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

To ensure internal consistency of the constructs, Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient was calculated on factors formed through the EFA. An advantage of using Cronbach's alpha as a

measure of reliability is that it offers a unique estimate of the internal consistency (Taber, 2018). Cronbach's alpha for each factor is indicated in **Table 4.8**. Cronbach alpha values range from 0 to 1.0. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or higher is considered a good measure of internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha values indicated that the reliability for the factors was relatively high, varying from 0.75 (Factor 1), 0.78 (Factor 2), and 0.79 (Factor 3). Factor 4, however, was quite unreliable with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.55 below the suggested 0.7 value.

Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer

The EFA grouped four items namely, *complain to the retailer by e-mail*, *complain on the retailer's website*, *complain to the retailer by phone* and *complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)* into this factor which was labelled as *Complain directly to the retailer*. The grouping of items is practical, as all items included in this factor relate to complaint intention directed at the retailer. Day and Landon (1977) differentiated between no action, private action, and public action as behavioural options for compliant behaviour. Day and Landon (1977) classified complaining to the retailer as a public action. Similarly, Mattila and Wirtz (2004) further divided the classification of public action into offline action and online action. Offline action includes voicing and seeking redress from the retailer, while online action includes complaining to the retailer via email/SMS (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004).

Complain directly to the retailer had an Eigenvalue of 3.88 and explained 28.59% of the variance in participants' consumer complaint intentions. The mean of Factor 1 was 2.45 and indicated a high association in terms of respondents' agreement with the statements measuring complaining directly to the retailer. The standard deviation of 0.90 indicated moderate variation in the data. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 was achieved, indicating an acceptable internal consistency in responses to these items.

Factor 2: Complain to third-party/ on social media

Three items namely, *write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website*, *complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)*, and *post negative comments on the retailer's social pages for anyone to see* into loaded on to this factor. This factor was labelled as *Complain to third-party/social media (lodge complains electronically)*. Third-party action is said to represent an insignificant percentage of complaints (Berg, Slette-meås, Kjørstad & Rosenberg, 2020). However, it can mean a substantial amount of money to the retailer, such as lawsuit settlements, have public relations consequences, and constitutes an under-researched phenomenon (Singh, 1989). Day and Landon (1977) classified complaining to a third party

as a public action. Mattila and Wirtz (2004) divided public action into offline action and online action. Offline action includes voicing and seeking redress from a third party, while online action includes negative eWOM (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). However, this factor merged the online and offline public actions into one factor, indicating that the classification of Mattila and Wirtz (2004) of dividing actions into online and offline actions may not be an applicable classification for the South African perspective yet.

With an Eigenvalue of 1.66, this factor explained 10.65% of the variance in participants' intention to complain. The mean of 1.70 was the lowest, indicating a weaker association in terms of respondents' agreement with the statements measuring complaining to third-party/social media (lodge complains electronically) and with a standard deviation of 0.77 which showed moderate variation in the data. However, the Cronbach's alpha of 0.79 indicated that responses to items measuring Factor 2 were reliable and had good internal consistency.

Factor 3: Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer

The EFA grouped two items namely, *stop buying at the retailer* and *switch to another brand name* into one factor which was labelled as Switch/stop buying. This grouping of items is sensible, since both items involve stop shopping at the retailer. Consumers may willingly terminate a relationship with a retailer by switching between retailers or boycotting retailers (Von der Heyde Fernandes & Dos Santos, 2007). Brand switching involves customers switching to another retailer instead (McQuilken & Robertson, 2011). Brand switching occurs when consumers decide to terminate their relationship with the company, service, product, brand or retailer and rather patronage a different retailer (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). Day and Landon (1977) classified switch/stop buying as a private action. Private action is activities that are not directly visible to the retailer (Clark, 2013). Switching retailer or to stop buying from the retailer is a private action and retailers are generally not aware of these actions, therefore they are unable to amend the dissatisfaction. This can harm retailers financially since they lose their valuable customers and the chance to fix the service failure.

Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer had an Eigenvalue of 1.24 and explained 6.85% of the variance in participants' consumer complaint intentions. The mean of Factor 3 was the highest (M=2.76 on a 4-point scale), which point to a stronger association in terms of respondents' agreement with the statements measuring switch/stop buying from the retailer. The standard deviation of 0.79 indicated moderate variation in the data. This Cronbach alpha value of 0.79 confirmed the reliability of the factor and that responses were consistent.

Factor 4: Tell family/friends

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) grouped four items namely, *post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see, text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp) and tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them* into one factor which was labelled as Tell family/friends. Telling family and friends forms part of Day and Landon (1977) classification of private actions. Private action is activities that are not directly visible to the retailer (Clark, 2013). Actions include telling friends about the service failure face-to-face, via social media, via text or by phoning them. The grouping of this factor contradicts the classification of Mattila and Writz (2004) since online and offline actions were combined.

This factor had an Eigenvalue of 1.12 and explained 4.46% of the variance in participants' consumer complaint intentions. Factor 4's mean was 2.46, indicating participants had a high level of agreement with the statements measuring telling your family/friends. However, this factor had the lowest Cronbach's alpha (0.55), which indicated that the item did not have internal consistency and is not considered reliable. The standard deviation of 0.84 indicated moderate variation in the data.

4.4.3 Relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intentions

To determine whether negative emotions affect consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures, a multiple regression analysis was employed.

4.4.3.1 Multiple regression analysis

To predict a model for determining which negative emotions after an in-store service failure leads to what type of consumer complaint intention, multiple regression was performed using consumer complaint intention as the dependent variable and negative emotions as the independent variables. Multiple regression analysis is a statistical analysis technique used to explore and describe the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables (Hair *et al.*, 2014:151). The aim of the regression analysis was to explore and describe the significance and relationship of the impact of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable. First, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) regression was conducted. ANOVA was done as it provides more information regarding the levels of variability within a regression model and assists in forming a basis for tests of significance (Judd, McClelland & Ryan, 2017).

Secondly, a model summary was conducted with specific focus on the coefficient of determination (R^2). *R-squared* assesses the spread of the data points all around the regression line and is the percentage of the response variable variation that is described by the linear regression model (Frost, 2013). *R-squared* measures the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable on a 0% to 100% scale, where 100% represents a model that explains all of the variation (Frost, 2013). Thus, the explanatory power of the regression model becomes larger, as the value of R^2 become higher (Hair et al., 2014:170). Hair et al. (2014) suggested in scholarly research that *R-squared* values of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 for endogenous latent variables, can be respectively described as substantial, moderate or weak.

Thirdly, the significance of every construct of the model is explained by interpreting the standardized coefficients such as β -values, t -values, p -values and collinearity statistics. Regression coefficients are calculated in order to find the best potential predictors of the dependent variable by weighting every variable against the regression analysis procedure (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000). Regression coefficients indicate the contribution of the independent variable to the general prediction of the dependent variable, while independent variables that are not being measured are kept constant. The independent variable therefore forms the regression equation (Hair et al., 2014:153). Standardized regression coefficient (β -values) allows for a direct comparison between coefficients and their explanatory power of the dependent variable (Hair et al., 2014:152). The t -value measures the significance of the partial correlation of the variable mirrored in the regression coefficient (Hair et al., 2014:208).

The variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values were examined in order to diminish the possibility of multicollinearity between factors guaranteeing that the independent variables (negative emotions) are not highly correlated with each other (Miles, 2014). Determining whether there is multicollinearity is crucial since it may reduce the statistical significance of the independent variables (Miles, 2014). The tolerance value presents a proportion ranging from 0 (low) to 1 (high). A low tolerance value indicates high correlation between the independent variables and the possibility of multicollinearity (Miles, 2004). If the value of tolerance is less than 0.2 the multicollinearity is problematic (Miles, 2014). The variance inflation factor (VIF) detects multicollinearity as well. If the value of VIF is 10 and above, then the multicollinearity is problematic (Miles, 2014). Values between 1 – 5 indicated a moderate correlation.

For this study, four multiple regression analyses were performed where the dependent variables were assembled from the EFA factors conducted on consumer complaint intentions (i.e. *complain directly to the retailer; complain to third-party/social media; switch retailer or stop buying at the retailer; tell family or friends*) and the independent variables were the negative emotions (i.e., embarrassed, irritated, sad, anxious, disgusted, angry, frustrated, ashamed) experienced after an in-store service.

Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer

The ANOVA regression model results for the first complaint intention, *complain directly to the retailer*, are stipulated in **Table 4.9** below.

TABLE 4.9: FACTOR 1: ANOVA REGRESSION MODEL

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.054	8	2.507	5.735	<0.001
	Residual	257.887	590	0.437		
	Total	277.941	598			

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer

b. Predictors: (Constant): anxious, angry, ashamed, sad, frustrated, disgusted, irritated, embarrassed.

The first complaint intention ANOVA, *complain directly to the retailer*, had a *F*-value of 5.735 and the accompanying *p*-value of the *F* test was <0.001, showing the *F* test results were significant. A *F*-value close to 1.0 indicates less significant findings, while a larger value indicates more significance (Mrkvicka, Myllymaki, Jilek & Hahn, 2016). Therefore, the results indicate that the *F*-value and *p*-value can be considered significant, implying a relationship exists between the dependent and independent variables. However, the *complain directly to the retailer* regression model had a very low *R*² value of 0.072. This implies that only 7.20% of variability in the dependent variable (complain directly to the retailer) can be explained by the independent variables (i.e. negative emotions). The adjusted *R*² value (0.060) were also very low for *complain directly to the retailer* regression model. These low *R*² values indicate that the explanatory power of this regression model was not very significant. Results for the regression model related to consumer complain intention to complain directly to the retailer are indicated in **Table 4.10** below.

TABLE 4.10: FACTOR 1: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Dependent variable	Model 1 (Constant)	Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Collinearity Statistics	
		β -values			Tolerance	VIF
Complain directly to the retailer	Anxious	0.026	0.579	0.563	0.773	1.294
	Angry	0.183	3.690	<0.001	0.636	1.571
	Ashamed	0.011	0.207	0.836	0.528	1.895
	Sad	-0.008	-0.185	0.853	0.787	1.271
	Frustrated	0.071	1.363	0.174	0.581	1.722
	Irritated	-0.096	-1.827	0.068	0.574	1.744
	Disgusted	0.067	1.385	0.166	0.678	1.475
	Embarrassed	0.082	1.540	0.124	0.551	1.813

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer; p -value ≤ 0.05

The regression coefficients stipulate information concerning the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable and shows the type of relationship. A p -value ≤ 0.05 can be considered statistically significant. Based on the results in **Table 4.10** it can be summarised that felling angry ($\beta = 0.183$; $t = 3.690$, $p < 0.001$) is statistically the most significant predictor for complaining to the retailer. All the independent variables had a tolerance value above 0.2, with values ranging between 0.528 – 0.787, indicating the likelihood of multicollinearity is moderate. All the independent variables had values between 1.271 – 1.895, indicating a low correlation.

Factor 2: Complain to third-party/ on social media

The ANOVA regression model results for the second factor, *complain to third-party/on social media*, are stipulated in **Table 4.11** below.

TABLE 4.11: FACTOR 2: ANOVA REGRESSION MODEL

Model		Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.395	8	2.674	7.009	<0.001
	Residual	225.130	590	0.382		
	Total	246.525	598			

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 2: Complain to third-party/on social media

b. Predictors: (Constant): anxious, angry, ashamed, sad, frustrated, disgusted, irritated, embarrassed.

The ANOVA regression model for *complain to third-party/on social media* indicated that the F -value was 7.009 and the accompanying p -value of the F test was <0.001 , which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, results indicate that the F -value and p -value can be considered significant, implying a relationship exists between the dependent and independent variables.

Complain to third-party/on social media also had a very low R^2 value of 0.087. This implies that only 8.70% of variability in the dependent variable (*complain to third-party/on social media*) can be explained by the independent variable (negative emotions). The modified R^2 value ($0.074 = 7.40\%$) was very low for *complain to third-party/on social media*. These low R^2 values indicate that the explanatory power of the regression model is not very significant. Lastly, results for the regression analysis related to *complain to third party/on social media* are indicated in **Table 4.12** below.

TABLE 4.12: FACTOR 2: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Dependent variable	Model 1 (Constant)	Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Collinearity Statistics	
		β -values			Tolerance	VIF
Complain to third-party/ on social media	Anxious	-0.025	-0.548	0.584	0.773	1.294
	Angry	0.194	3.935	<0.001	0.636	1.571
	Ashamed	0.057	1.054	0.292	0.528	1.895
	Sad	-0.038	-0.846	0.398	0.787	1.271
	Frustrated	0.104	2.023	0.044	0.581	1.722
	Irritated	-0.117	-2.251	0.025	0.574	1.744
	Disgusted	0.071	1.482	0.139	0.678	1.475
	Embarrassed	0.089	1.681	0.093	0.551	1.813

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 2: Complain to third-party/social media; p -value ≤ 0.05

Based on the results in **Table 4.12** it can be summarised that felling angry ($\beta = 0.194$; $t = 3.935$, $p < 0.001$) is statistically the most significant predictor for *complain to a third party/on social media* for everyone to see. Furthermore, feeling irritated ($\beta = -0.117$; $t = -2.251$; $p = 0.025$) and frustrated ($\beta = 0.104$; $t = 2.023$; $p = 0.044$) can also be considered significant as both had p -values of ≤ 0.05 . The tolerance value presents a proportion ranging from 0 (low) to 1 (high). All the independent variables had a tolerance value of above 0.2, with values ranging between 0.528 – 0.787, indicating the likelihood of multicollinearity is low. All the independent variables had VIF values between 1.271 – 1.895, indicating a low correlation.

Factor 3: Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer

The third factor's, *switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer*, ANOVA regression model results are stipulated in **Table 4.13** below.

TABLE 4.13: FACTOR 3: ANOVA REGRESSION MODEL

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.027	8	3.003	9.422	<0.001
	Residual	188.065	590	0.319		
	Total	212.092	598			

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 3: Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer

b. Predictors: (Constant): anxious, angry, ashamed, sad, frustrated, disgusted, irritated, embarrassed.

The ANOVA regression model for *switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer* had a *F*-value of 9.422 and *p*-value of <0.001, which indicated that the results for the *F* test were significant and a relationship between the dependent and independent variables exists. *Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer* had a low *R*² value of 0.113. This implies that only 11.30% of variability in the dependent variable (switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer) can be explained by the independent variables (negative emotions). The modified *R*² value was also very low for switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer (0.101 = 10.10%). These low *R*² values indicate that the explanatory power of the regression model is not significant. The results for the regression analysis are indicated in **Table 4.14** below.

TABLE 4.14: FACTOR 3: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Dependent variable	Model 1 (Constant)	Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Collinearity Statistics	
		<i>β</i> -values			Tolerance	VIF
Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer	Anxious	-0.003	-0.074	0.941	0.773	1.294
	Angry	0.181	3.719	<0.001	0.636	1.571
	Ashamed	0.059	1.097	0.273	0.528	1.895
	Sad	-0.039	-0.891	0.373	0.787	1.271
	Frustrated	0.069	1.357	0.175	0.581	1.722
	Irritated	0.025	0.490	0.624	0.574	1.744
	Disgusted	0.122	2.588	0.010	0.678	1.475
	Embarrassed	0.029	0.552	0.581	0.551	1.813

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 3: Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer; *p*-value ≤ 0.05

Based on the results in **Table 4.14** it can be summarised that feeling angry ($\beta = 0.181$; $t = 3.719$, $p < 0.001$) is statistically the most significant predictor for consumers to *switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer*. Similarly, feeling disgusted ($\beta = 0.122$; $t = 2.588$) can also be considered significant as it had a *p*-value of 0.010, smaller than, $p \leq 0.05$. The tolerance value presents a proportion ranging from 0 (low) to 1 (high). All the independent variables had a tolerance value above 0.2 and values ranged between 0.528 – 0.787, indicating the likelihood of multicollinearity is low. All the independent variables had VIF values between 1.271 – 1.895, indicating a low correlation.

Factor 4: Tell family/friends

The ANOVA regression model results for Factor 4, *tell family/friends*, are stipulated in **Table 4.15** below.

TABLE 4.15: FACTOR 4: ANOVA REGRESSION MODEL

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	26.693	8	3.337	10.103	<0.001
	Residual	194.854	590	0.330		
	Total	221.546	598			

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 4: Tell family/friends

b. Predictors: (Constant): anxious, angry, ashamed, sad, frustrated, disgusted, irritated, embarrassed.

The ANOVA regression model for *tell family/friends* had a *F*-value of 10.103 and an accompanying *p*-value of <0.001, indicating significant results (Mrkvicka *et al.*, 2016). The results indicate that the *F*-value and *p*-value can be considered significant, implying a relationship exists between the dependent and independent variables. *Tell family/friends* had a low *R*² value of 0.120. This implies that only 12.00% of variability in the dependent variable (*tell family/friends*) can be explained by the independent variables (negative emotions). The modified *R*² value was also very low for complain to third-party/social media (0.109 = 10.90%). These low *R*² values indicated that the explanatory power of the regression model was insignificant. The results for the regression analysis related to *tell family/friends* are indicated in **Table 4.16** below.

TABLE 4.16: FACTOR 4: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Dependent variable	Model 1 (Constant)	Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Collinearity Statistics	
		<i>β</i> -values			Tolerance	VIF
Tell family/friends	Anxious	0.015	0.336	0.737	0.773	1.294
	Angry	0.219	4.523	<0.001	0.636	1.571
	Ashamed	0.013	0.253	0.800	0.528	1.895
	Sad	0.031	0.713	0.476	0.787	1.271
	Frustrated	0.074	1.458	0.145	0.581	1.722
	Irritated	.031	0.610	0.542	0.574	1.744
	Disgusted	.088	1.882	0.060	0.678	1.475
	Embarrassed	-.016	-0.302	0.763	0.551	1.813

a. Dependent Variable: Factor 4: Tell family/friends

Based on the results in **Table 4.16** it can be summarised that feeling angry ($\beta = 0.219$; $t = 4.523$, $p < 0.001$) is statistically the most significant predictor to *tell family/friends*. The tolerance value presents a proportion ranging from 0 (low) to 1 (high). All the independent

variables had a tolerance value above 0.2, where values ranged between 0.528 – 0.787, indicating the likelihood of multicollinearity is low. All the independent variables had VIF values between 1.217 – 1.895, indicating a low correlation.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter presented the results of the study according to the objectives stated in Chapter 1. Non-probability, convenience and snowball sampling was employed. These techniques precluded the statistical generalisability of the results to the larger South African population. However, the results did provide meaningful insights into which in-store service failures cause the most dissatisfaction among consumers and how these service failures play a role in consumers' level of dissatisfaction, negative emotions and how the consumer ultimately decides to complain or not complain. This chapter included descriptive and inferential data analysis.

In the next chapter the conclusions drawn from the results are discussed, and the implications of the study, the limitations of the study, and some recommendations for future research are provided.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a brief overview of the study. This is followed by a discussion and interpretation of the results indicated in Chapter 4. The discussions and interpretations of the key findings within this chapter are presented according to the research objectives. As a closing argument the final conclusion, implications, limitations of this study, and recommendations for future studies are discussed.

5.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

An overview of the study is vital to ensure objectives were met, that findings are reliable and presented precisely, and that ethical processes were followed. First, a brief background on the subject at matter was discussed. The theoretical framework was reviewed, as it assists in connecting the researcher to existing knowledge. An overview of the research methodology was provided followed by a summary of results of the study.

Delivering quality service is becoming increasingly important to consumers, (Kaur & Sharma, 2015) making it essential for retailers to deliver exceptional service in order to stay competitive (Chan *et al.*, 2016). However, service delivery can be quite complex, and despite retailers' best attempts to guarantee fault-free service, failures are inevitable (Smith *et al.*, 1999). When a service failure occurs, some degree of dissatisfaction is bound to arise (Kwok, 2019). Consequently, negative emotions are a common reaction experienced by consumers when dissatisfaction occurs after a service failure (Balaji *et al.*, 2017; Menon & Dubé, 2004). Negative emotions and dissatisfaction as a result of a poor in-store service encounter, accordingly, act as a prompt for consumer complaint behaviour (Bougie *et al.*, 2003; Tronvoll, 2011).

The overall research aim for the study was to investigate the relationship between negative emotions and consumers complaint intention/actions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Furthermore, the study explored the types of in-store service failures that cause the most dissatisfaction for consumers in a clothing retail store, negative emotions experienced most frequently following in-store service failures and consumer complaint behaviour. In addition, this study investigated the relationship between negative emotions and the level of dissatisfaction as well as whether consumers would or would not complain and if they do, which complaint action they would most likely take .

The expectancy disconfirmation theory and cognitive appraisal theory served as the theoretical framework for the study. The expectancy disconfirmation theory proposes that consumers use expectations as a standard against which performance perceptions are evaluated (Babin & Harris, 2018:294). If there is a difference between their expectations and the perceived performance, it can lead to a positive or negative disconfirmation and respectively to satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Blodgett & Granbois, 1992; Churchill Jr & Surprenant, 1982; Day, 1984; Giese & Cote, 2000; Tronvoll, 2007; Woodruff, Cadotte & Jenkins, 1983). Negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction (Um & Lau, 2018). Furthermore, the cognitive appraisal theory suggests that emotions arise in response to the cognitive appraisal of a stressful event (or negative outcome, such as service failures) and that these emotions determine the individuals coping behaviours (Obeidat *et al.*, 2017). Hence, these theories are deemed appropriate to explore consumers emotions and coping strategies (complaint intentions) following appraisals of service failure.

The research followed a survey research design, quantitative approach and was exploratory-descriptive in nature. A self-administered questionnaire was designed in accordance with the specific research objectives of the study. The study was cross-sectional (Babbie, 2013:104) and primary data were collected with an online self-administered questionnaire from a sample of South African consumers (n= 768) over the age of 19 living in South Africa, that indicated they shop in-store for clothing. The questionnaire was developed on Qualtrics, using existing, reliable scales (Chapter 3, **Table 3.1**). The scale items for in-store service failures were based on the scales developed in the studies of Beneke *et al.*, (2012), Huang (2009), Vazquez *et al.* (2001) and Kang and James, (2004). For negative emotions, scales were adapted from Diener *et al.* (1995) classification of emotions which he grouped into 16 negative emotions. For this study, only eight of the 16 negative emotions were implemented, since they have been linked to consumer complaint behaviour in previous studies (Donoghue *et al.*, 2012; Isaac, 2010; Tronvoll, 2011). Consumer complaint intentions' scales were based on the studies of Day and Landon (1977), Mattila and Wirtz's (2004) and Clark (2013).

Although existing scales were used for this study, Cronbach's alpha were calculated for EFA of consumer complaint intentions to further validate the internal consistency of the measures. Before data collection commenced, a pilot test was done on the questionnaire to remove errors and improve the reliability of the instrument. Minor changes were made to question wording to ensure clarity. A cover letter that consisted of a consent form was provided before the questionnaire to ensure that participants willingly agree to partake in the study. The consent form included the nature and purpose of the study, the research procedure, confidentiality

statement, withdrawal clause and the potential benefits of the study. After a participant read through the consent form, they were directed to two screening questions. The screening questions were done before the questionnaire to ensure that participants agree with the consent form and that they were old enough to partake in the questionnaire.

Data were collected during June and July 2019. The link to the online self-administered questionnaire was shared to participants via email, WhatsApp, and various social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn). The questionnaire link was distributed by student fieldworkers through these channels to direct participants to the questionnaire. Data collection commenced after ethical approval was received from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science, at the University of Pretoria. Due to time- and financial constraints, convenience sampling was employed to recruit willing participants (consumers). Thereafter, quota and snowball sampling were followed to ensure that the sample represent the target population. Statistical procedures included descriptive and inferential statistics (i.e., exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis).

In the following section the conclusions of the study will be presented. Furthermore, the implications of the findings and limitations of the research are also presented. This chapter concludes with recommendations for further research and final conclusions of the study.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF THE SAMPLE

The sample included participants from all population groups living in South Africa. An effort was made to make the sample as representative as possible, consisting of all population groups, male and female, above the age of 19, from different levels of education and income groups. With non-probability sampling techniques (i.e., convenience, snowballing and quota sampling) used for this study, the results are sample-specific and cannot be generalised to a larger population. A total of 768 usable questionnaires were retrieved.

5.2.1 Gender

The majority (n=573, 74.60%) of the sample consisted of female participants, while only 25.39% were male. This imbalance could be due to the fact that women are the predominate shoppers in a household (Kuruvilla, Joshi & Shah, 2009), and women have a greater interest in shopping

for clothing than men (Birtwistle, Moore, Goldsmith & Flynn, 2005). Additionally, research indicates that women are generally more likely to participate in online surveys (Smith, 2008).

5.2.2 Age

Age was grouped into five groups: 19-23 years, 24-30 years, 31-39 years, 40-55 years, 56> years. Descriptive statistics indicated that 32.81% of the participants were between 40-55 years old. The second and third largest groups were between 19-23 and 24-30 years old, 21.09% and 19.01%, respectively. Convenience sampling was used to collect data; therefore, students collecting the data distributed the survey among their parents, friends and peers, explaining why a large majority of participants fall under these age groups.

5.2.3 Level of education

For data analysis, level of education was divided into five groups: Lower than Grade 10 (1.04%), Grade 10 or 11 (0.91%), Grade 12 (21.61%), degree or diploma (50.91%), and postgraduate degree (25.52%). The majority of participants had a degree or diploma or a postgraduate degree, indicating that the findings are subjective to educated individuals. A study found that an educated individual tends to shop differently as they rather search for higher-quality clothing and high-quality service (Reiter, 2012). Research suggests that consumers more likely to complain are younger individuals, educated, have professional jobs and have higher incomes than those who do not complain (Chan *et al.*, 2016). However, Singh (1988) is of the opinion that higher complaint frequency was found in less-educated individuals.

5.2.4 Total monthly household income

The study considered income levels of participants, as research found that those with a higher income, who are employed, or who have kids, might be less likely to complain (Raval, 2016). Contradictory, Singh (1989) and Warland (1975) found that higher income and more educated individuals are more likely to complain. Research indicates that consumers with higher income are more likely to seek redress from a third party (Chinedu, Haron & Osman, 2017; Warland, Herrmann & Willits, 1975). Participants were asked to provide an approximate of their monthly household income as an indication of their level of spending power. 51.30% of the participants were in the two highest income brackets, with 32.81% earning more than R50 000 per month.

5.2.5 Population groups

Five population categories were analysed. The majority of participants (n=562; 73.18%) were White. In South Africa, the majority of the population is Black African (80.9%); therefore, the sample was not representative of the South African population and can be considered skewed (Africa, 2018). Although a quota sampling strategy was followed, the skewed representation of population might be since the majority of fieldworkers were White. Consequently, the fieldworkers distributed the surveys to family and friends.

5.2.6 Residing province

South Africa consists of nine provinces; however, responses from only eight provinces were collected. The majority of responses were collected from individuals residing in Gauteng (71.35%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (8.46%), Limpopo (4.95%), Western Cape (4.82%), North West (3.65%), Mpumalanga (2.99%), Eastern Cape (1.96%) and Free State (1.56%). No data were collected from Northern Cape which is also the lowest populated province in South Africa (Africa, 2018).

Clothing retailers and marketers should acknowledge how different demographics choose to react to in-store service failure and consequently how they choose to complain. When retailers and marketers better understand how different demographics complain, they will be able to address complaints in a more appropriate manner. Literature suggests that female consumers are more inclined to complain after a dissatisfying service failure; however, men seem to be more likely to engage in face-to-face complaining (Heung & Lam, 2003). Higher educated consumers are also more likely to complain (Kim, Wang & Mattila, 2010). Clothing retailers and marketers should therefore understand that demographics influences consumer complaint behaviour and consequently how retailer and marketers should address complaint from different demographic profiles.

Based on the results of this research study, conclusions for the objectives of the study were made. Additionally, implications were mentioned for each objective and will be discussed in the next sections.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF OBJECTIVES

5.3.1 Clothing retailers' in-store service failures

Objective 1 aimed to explore and describe the types of in-store service failures that would cause consumer dissatisfaction. Three sub-objectives were formulated for Objective 1. Sub-Objective 1.1 was to explore and describe which in-store service failures (i.e., physical attributes, personal interaction, reliability, customer service) would cause the most consumer dissatisfaction. Sub-objective 1.2 aimed to determine the level of dissatisfaction that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Sub-objective 1.3 set out to explore and describe the severity of clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Service failure items related to the following four dimensions: (1) *physical aspects* included store appearance, store layout and store atmosphere; (2) *personal interaction* included unfriendly staff, unhelpful staff and incompetent staff; (3) *reliability* relates to stock availability, missing/inaccurate information/price tags; and (4) *customer service* included unfair or unclear return/exchange policies, refund and paying difficulties, long waiting time in queue, poor communication and poor customer service support (Beneke *et al.*, 2012; Ertekin *et al.*, 2020; Sum & Hui, 2009).

5.3.1.1 In-store service failures causing consumer dissatisfaction

Sub-Objective 1.1 was to explore and describe which service failures (i.e., physical attributes, personal interaction, reliability, customer service) cause the most consumer dissatisfaction. The expectancy disconfirmation theory proposes that consumers use expectations as a standard against which performance perceptions are evaluated (Babin & Harris, 2018:294). Consumers typically compare their preconceived expectations on how a service should perform or be delivered with the perceived performance and decide whether a difference occurred (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2009). When in-store service failures occur and when expectations of service performance are not met, meaning performance is less than expected, service failures occur (Wang & Zhang, 2018).

The findings for the most dissatisfying service failure indicated that unfriendly staff caused the most dissatisfaction amongst participants with the majority of participants choosing it as one of their top three service failures. Unfriendly staff was followed by unpleasant atmosphere, stock

availability issues, incompetent staff, and long waiting times in queues. In addition to these five in-store service failures unhelpful staff, untidy store areas and unorganised store layout were causes of dissatisfaction as well.

Personal interaction refers to unfriendly staff, unhelpful staff and incompetent staff (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). Unfriendly staff, incompetent staff and unhelpful staff were among the top tier of services failures causing consumers to be dissatisfied. Ertekin (2020) found that consumers have a better service experience in retail stores when staff are friendly, competent, and when the store atmosphere is pleasant. Ertekin (2020) further suggests that customers who perceive staff as competent strongly correlates with a perceived belief of higher product quality. Similarly, Beneke (2012) found personal interaction (including unfriendly staff, unhelpful staff and incompetent staff) to be very significant in his research. He states that customers highly value an environment in which staff are friendly, knowledgeable and eager to assist (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, Sum (2009) found that the service quality of staff has the highest impact on customer loyalty in Hong Kong's clothing chain stores. These findings are valuable to clothing retailers since the improvement of staff performance could drastically improve service delivery, which consequently, could prevent service failures and increase customer satisfaction. Clothing retailers should ensure that staff are adequately trained to ensure that they are knowledgeable of the product there are selling. Clothing retailers should also make sure they employ staff who are friendly and helpful, as this will increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, and ultimately increase sales.

Physical aspects refers to store atmosphere (Huang, 2009). Unpleasant atmosphere caused the second most dissatisfaction amongst participants with 32.42% of participants choosing it as one of their top three service failures. Beneke (2012) found physical aspects (including store appearance, layout and store atmosphere) to be the most significant predictor of customer satisfaction. He further states that the relationship was significantly stronger than any other relationship investigated. Therefore, it is essential that the physical environment is clean, well-structured and well maintained (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). Similarly, the research of Ertekin (2020) showed that improving store environment could offer twice the rewards of improving staff friendliness. However, contradictory to these findings, Sum (2009) found that the tangible dimension related to physical aspects had the lowest effect on customer loyalty in Hong Kong's clothing retail stores (Sum & Hui, 2009). Nevertheless, these findings could help clothing retailers to better their service delivery by improving physical aspects of their store such as incorporating a pleasant store atmosphere, organised store layout and clean and tidy store area. For clothing retailers to differentiate themselves from their competition, establishing a positive

store image is essential, as store image tends to be used as the main criterion when selecting a store (Visser *et al.*, 2006).

Reliability refers to stock availability issues (Huang, 2009). Participants rated stock availability issues to be the third most dissatisfying service failure that would cause them to be dissatisfied. Contradictory to this study, Beneke (2012) found the dimension of reliability (including stock availability issues) to be weakly correlated to customer satisfaction and that no significant connotation was found to exist. However, research by Sum (2009) confirms the results of this study. Sum (2009) found that the reliability dimension significantly affects customer loyalty in clothing retail stores. These findings are important to clothing retailers since retailers could improve their customer loyalty if they improve their reliability. Clothing retailers that want to ensure customer satisfaction should avoid out-of-stock situations. Therefore, in-store stock should always be stocked in the right sizes, colours and styles. By employing buyers and planners that makes sure the right stock is replenished when running low and that enough of each item is available.

Customer Service includes long waiting time in ques (Kang & James, 2004). Participants rated long waiting times in queues to be the third most dissatisfying service failure (27.34%). Research confirms these findings since it has been found that waiting in queues negatively affect consumer evaluation of services and retailers (Park *et al.*, 2014), and is likely to reduce customer satisfaction (Antonides *et al.*, 2002; Cho & Kim, 2007). Retailer should know that waiting for service in a retail store environment can lead to customer dissatisfaction and sequentially result in adverse effects on consumer patronage (Alvarado-Valencia *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, clothing retailers should ensure that there are enough cashiers in-store to minimize queues at all times. Clothing retailers should make sure that they have enough employees in order to enhance service delivery and increase the speed of service delivery, therefore minimizing que length.

To conclude, failing to meet the customers' expectations or the occurrence service failures in any of the areas mentioned above could cause consumers to experience dissatisfaction or could be a trigger for complaining or switching brands. Service failure prevention could therefore prevent dissatisfaction, negative emotions and consumer complaint behaviour. Clothing retailers should consider the items mentioned above in order to improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.

5.3.1.2 Level of dissatisfaction

Sub-objective 1.2 aimed to determine the level of dissatisfaction that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The majority of the participants felt either very dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied. Only a few of the participants felt that the service failure would cause slight or moderate dissatisfaction.

5.3.1.3 Severity of in-store service failure

Sub-objective 1.3 aimed to determine the severity of the service failure that caused most dissatisfaction in a clothing store. Severity refers to a customer's perceived intensity of the service failure (Lai & Chou, 2015). Incompetent staff (e.g. staff who are unknowledgeable regarding merchandise and store information) was experienced most severely amongst participants with 16.15% of participants choosing it as their top service failure. Incompetent staff is followed by unpleasant atmosphere (13.80%), unfriendly staff (11.72%), stock availability issues (10.03%) and unhelpful staff (9.24%).

Personal interaction refers to unfriendly staff and incompetent staff (Beneke *et al.*, 2012). Incompetent staff was rated the most severe service failure among participants. Unfriendly staff was rated the third most severe service failure among participants and unhelpful staff was rated fourth most severe. This indicates that the dimension, personal interaction, can be considered the dimension that causes the most severe service failures. Literature supports these findings, as Ertekin (2020) found that customers who perceive staff as competent strongly correlates with a perceived belief of higher product quality and that incompetent staff can be considered a severe service failure. Unfriendly and unknowledgeable sales assistants are major causes of service failures in stores (Sann & Lai, 2020). Clothing retailers should ensure that staff are adequately trained to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the product they are selling, friendly and helpful to the customer.

Physical aspects refers to store atmosphere (Huang, 2009). Store atmosphere was rated the second most severe service failure among participants (13.80%). Beneke (2012) found physical aspects (including store appearance, layout and store atmosphere) to be the most significant predictor of customer satisfaction. Store atmosphere is composed of tangible elements (e.g., the building, fixtures, point-of-purchase decorations) as well as intangible design elements including colours, scents, temperature, music, and lighting that can affect service encounters (Hoffman & Turley, 2002; Weishar, 2005). Retailers should understand what customers are

searching for when choosing a store and should position themselves accordingly to meet the most favourable attributes in order to improve service delivery.

Reliability refers to stock availability issues (Huang, 2009). Participants rated stock availability issues to be the fourth most severe service failure (10.02%). Literature indicates that a stock outage can cause the customer to leave the store and search for the item elsewhere. This could harm future patronage and result in negative perceptions of the clothing retail store (Grant & Fernie, 2008; Zinn & Liu, 2001). Clothing retailer should therefore ensure that stock planning is done efficiently in order to avoid stock outages.

Countering severe service failures is essential to offering quality service (Wirtz & McColl-Kennedy, 2010). Furthermore, service quality within a retail store is crucial for satisfying consumers, as well as customer retention and creating customer loyalty (Naik *et al.*, 2010). Clothing retailers should not take service failures lightly, since they can cause serious harm to the store's brand image. By understanding what consumers consider severe service failure, clothing retailers will be better equipped to implement better service delivery and recovery strategies. After a service failure, it is crucial for the staff of the retail store to apologise to the customer. Clothing store managers should therefore ensure that they train staff efficiently in areas of customer service and product knowledge to minimize complaint behaviour.

5.3.2 Negative emotions following in-store service failure

Objective 2 aimed to explore and describe the negative emotions (i.e., anger, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, frustration, irritation, sadness, and shame) that consumers would experience following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Two sub-objectives were formulated for objective 2. Sub-objective 2.1 explored and described the negative emotions consumers would most frequently experience following in-store service failure that would cause them the most dissatisfaction and Sub-objective 2.2 explored and described the relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions experienced following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Eight negative emotions were measured for the purpose of the study. The negative emotions included (1) *anger*, (2) *anxiety*, (3) *disgust*, (4) *embarrassment*, (5) *frustration*, (6) *irritation*, (7) *sadness*, and (8) *shame*. The majority of participants indicated that they would feel very/extremely irritated after a service failure. Irritation was followed by frustrated, anger and

disgust. The findings in this study are confirmed in multiple research papers (Choraria, 2013; Mattila & Ro, 2008; Menon & Dubé, 2000; Tavriss, 1984; Tronvoll, 2011). Irritated, frustrated and anger are used interchangeably in multiple studies (Choraria, 2013; Diener *et al.*, 1995; Svari, Slåtten, Svensson & Edvardsson, 2011). A negative disconfirmation of expectations is generally experienced by customers who experienced emotions of anger and anxiety after a service failure (Menon & Dubé, 2000), confirming the use of the expectancy disconfirmation theory. Research further indicates that anger and frustration were the two most commonly experienced negative emotions after a service failure (Dube & Menon, 1999). Confirming the results of this study, Tronvoll, (2011) similarly found shame to be a negative emotion least frequently experienced after a service failure. Wetzler *et al.* (2007) similarly found anger to be the most prominent negative emotion experienced, while irritation was experienced most intensely (Wetzler, Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007). In contradiction, one study found anger as the third most prominent with frustration occurring twice as often as irritation or anger (Harrison-Walker, 2019). Choraria (2013) classified frustration and irritation as part of anger in her study. Of all the emotions classified, anger was found as the most prominent negative emotion experienced after a service failure (Choraria, 2013).

When expectations of service performance are not met, meaning performance is less than expected, negative disconfirmation occur (Wang & Zhang, 2018). Negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction (Um & Lau, 2018). Furthermore, the cognitive appraisal theory suggests that emotions arise in response to the cognitive appraisal of a stressful event (or negative outcome, such as service failures) and that these emotions determine the individuals coping behaviours (Obeidat *et al.*, 2017). It is clear that negative emotions that arose from this study are confirmed in the studies above, as they all find either anger, frustration or irritation to be the most frequently experienced emotion after a service failure.

In conclusion, findings indicated that the main negative emotions they would experience after an in-store service failure would be irritation, frustration, anger and disgust. An understanding of customer emotions could have practical implications for clothing retailers as feelings about a negative service encounter consequently impacts customer satisfaction, switching behaviour, negative word-of-mouth, repeat purchase behaviour, complaining to third parties, as well as loyalty (Balaji *et al.*, 2017; Brady, 2003; Hino, 2017; Tao *et al.*, 2016). These findings could therefore assist clothing retailers in preventing future service failures, therefore leaving consumers more satisfied. Understanding what emotions accompany specific service failures and the different types of complaint actions will assist marketers in having a greater understanding of their target audience and how marketing strategies should be constructed.

Consequently, having better marketing strategies in place will ensure that the desired emotions will increase customer turnover and retail sales.

5.3.2.1 Level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions

The second sub-objective explored and described the relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and negative emotions experienced following clothing retailers' in-store service failure. A cross-tabulation was done between the eight negative emotions and the level of dissatisfaction experienced after an in-store service failure. Customer dissatisfaction, simply put, is a customer who is unhappy with a related service or product (TenHouten, 2006). When service-related performance perceptions fail to meet expectations, negative disconfirmation arises, which in turn leads to feelings of dissatisfaction (Churchill Jr & Surprenant, 1982; Giese & Cote, 2000; Habel *et al.*, 2016; Tronvoll, 2007).

The majority of participants who were very/extremely dissatisfied, were very/extremely irritated after an in-store service failure. Similarly, many participants who were very/extremely dissatisfied, were very/extremely frustrated. Likewise, many participants who, were very/extremely angry and disgusted, were very/extremely dissatisfied too. Of the eight negative emotions evaluated, seven indicated that a significant relationship exists between the variables, as they all had a p -value ≤ 0.05 . "Irritated", "disgusted", "frustrated", "angry" and "ashamed" all had p -values of < 0.001 . This indicates that there is a very significant relationship between negative emotions experienced and the level of dissatisfaction. The findings of this study agree with Mattila and Ro (2008) who found that feelings of anger had a negative impact on satisfaction. Similarly, Bougie (2003) found that highly angry customers were also highly dissatisfied following a service failure (Bougie *et al.*, 2003). These findings were indicative when a negative disconfirmation is experienced through means of a service failure, it consequently prompts negative emotions and dissatisfaction.

Understanding the relationship between negative emotions and the level of dissatisfaction experienced after an in-store service failure can assist clothing retailers and marketers in having a better understanding of how certain emotions influence the level of dissatisfaction. Consequently, retailers will be able to address complaint behaviour better since they will understand which emotions caused the dissatisfaction and complaint behaviour. Complaint behaviour that arises from negative emotions caused by a service failure is usually challenging to handle since the customer may have an aggressive behaviour (Balaji *et al.*, 2017). Retailers should encourage customers to express their anger and frustration before an aggressive

outburst occurs since the retailer may still have a chance to reverse dissatisfaction caused by a service failure.

5.3.3 Negative emotions and consumer complaint intentions/action

Objective 3 aimed to explore and describe the relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Three sub-objectives were formulated for Objective 3. Sub-objective 3.1 set out to explore and describe consumers' intention to complain after experiencing negative emotions associated with clothing retailers' in-store service failures. Sub-objective 3.2 was to determine the different consumer complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The third sub-objective, Sub-objective 3.2 aimed to explore and describe the effect of negative emotions on consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures.

Consumer complaint behaviour can be divided into action and no action (Day & Landon, 1977). When none of the above actions occurs, no action takes place. Day *et al.* (1981:88) describes not complaining as "doing nothing". Action is classified by Day and Landon (1977) into private and public actions (Day & Landon, 1977). Private action includes activities that are not directly visible to the retailer (Singh, 1988). Private action can be further broken down into *online* or *offline* action (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Offline* action is classified into complaining to family and friends (negative word-of-mouth), switching brands/retailers or boycotting the retailer (Clark, 2013). *Online* action is classified into negative eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) to family or friends or negative eWOM on social profiles for friends and family to see (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). Public action includes complaints that are visible to the company (Singh, 1988). Public action can be divided into *online action* and *offline action* (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004). *Offline* action is, for instance, seeking redress from the retailer and complaining to a third party. *Online* action includes negative eWOM (Clark, 2013).

5.3.3.1 Consumer complaint action

The first sub-objective was to explore and describe if consumers will complain after experiencing in-store service failure. Findings indicated that 599 participants would take action, while 169 would do nothing. Day *et al.* (1981:88) describes not complaining as "doing nothing", while action can be defined as the process of doing something, particularly when handling an issue or difficulty (Walter, 2008). Istanbuluoglu *et al.* (2017) explains that the reasons behind non-

complaining could be the inability to complain or the neglect to complain. According to Hirschman (1970), loyal consumers, regardless of feeling dissatisfied, continue to stay supportive after a service failure because they have an emotional bond with the company (Hirschman, 1970). Past studies indicated that two-thirds of customers fail to complain to retailers (Kloviene & Pazeraite, 2017).

For several reasons, customers who do not complain to the retailer is of particular concern to management. Firstly, the retailer may lose the chance to remedy the problem and retain customers (Hirschman, 1970). Furthermore, the company is deprived of valuable feedback on the quality of its service delivery, hampering its ability to identify variances in quality and change (Kloviene & Pazeraite, 2017). Insightful management also wants to consider not only those who voice their grievances but also those who do not.

5.3.3.2 Consumer complaint intentions

The second sub-objective was to determine the different consumer complaint intentions following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The findings of this study show that the majority of participants would likely tell their family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face). Several of participants would be likely to complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face). Numerous participants were also likely to switch to another brand name, while many would just stop buying at the retailer.

Private Offline Actions relates to participants that complain by negative word-of-mouth to family and friends and switching brands or stop buying at the retailer. Most participants would choose this channel to complain. Donoghue (2013) found that telling others about the bad experience was the most frequent way participants would act upon dissatisfaction. Molise (2017:76) similarly found the majority (75%) of the participants of the study would tell their friends and family face-to-face or via SMS/text about the about the dissatisfactory experience (Molise, 2017:76). Previous research confirms that customers are more inclined to complain privately, by spreading negative word-of-mouth to friends and/or family, switching to another retailer, or stop patronizing the retailer (De Klerk, 2016).

Public Offline Actions refers to participants would be likely to complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face). Seeking redress was also found a prominent method of complaint, followed by switching to another retailer (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2013). Dissatisfied customers are more likely to voice their complaints and seek redress from the retailer when retailers provide

compensation for service failures (Balaji *et al.*, 2017). Retailers should therefore keep in mind to emphasise seeking redress when a service failure has occurred because if they are compensated for the failure, they are less likely to spread negative word-of-mouth which could be very harmful to a brand image (Miquel-Romero *et al.*, 2020).

Exploratory factor analysis was done to describe a data set of consumer complaint intentions using fewer variables (Samuels, 2017). To ensure internal consistency of the constructs, Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient was calculated on factors formed through the EFA. Four meaningful factors were retained from the EFA that best explained the correlation amongst the measured variables. The Cronbach's alpha indicated that the reliability for the factors that were measured was relatively high, varying from 0.75 (Factor 1), 0.79 (Factor 2), 0.79 (Factor 3). Factor 4, however, was quite unreliable (0.55). Although the study made use of Mattila and Wirtz (2004) classification of online and offline actions, EFA grouped items together from online and offline actions, indicating that the classification is not applicable for this study's population.

Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) grouped four items namely, *complain to the retailer by e-mail*, *complain on the retailer's website*, *complain to the retailer by phone* and *complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)* into one factor which was relabelled as *Complain directly to the retailer*. This factor included public online and offline actions including actions towards the retailer. Participants rated complaining to the retailer face-to-face as the second most likely method of complaining.

Factor 2: Complain to third-party/social media (lodge complains electronically)

Three items namely, *write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website*, *complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)*, *post negative comments on the retailer's social pages for anyone to see* into one factor which was relabelled as *Complain to third-party/social media (lodge complains electronically)*. This factor included public online and offline actions towards a third party as well as the retailer.

Factor 3: Switch/stop buying

The EFA grouped four items namely, *stop buying at the retailer* and *switch to another brand name* into one factor which was relabelled as *Switch/stop buying*. This factor includes private offline actions. Participants rated these two items as the third and fourth most likely channels to complain.

Factor 4: Tell family/friends

The EFA grouped four items namely, *post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see, text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp) and tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them* into one factor which was relabelled as Tell family/friends. This factor includes private and public online and offline actions. This factor includes the item that the majority of participants rated as the most likely method to complain (tell friends/family face-to-face).

With three of the top four complaint intention items falling under private offline actions, it is clear that South African consumers prefer to complain directly to the retailer, switch brands or spread negative word-of-mouth to family and friends. Clothing retailers should be concerned since many consumers either spread negative word-of-mouth or simply switch brands or stop buying from the retailer. Clothing retailers should therefore attempt to empower consumers to speak up about dissatisfying encounter, therefore retailers have a chance to amend the service failure, which could leave the consumer very satisfied. Marketers should employ advertising campaigns that focus on 100% satisfaction guarantee policies, since this empowers the consumer to complain when they are not satisfied (Stephens & Gwinner, 1998). Retailers should also encourage feedback by employing staff to request feedback from customers at paying points.

5.3.3.3 Relationship between negative emotions and consumer complaint intentions

Sub-objective 3.3 explored and described the effect of negative emotions on consumer complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. The overall aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between negative emotions and consumers complaint intention following clothing retailers' in-store service failures. A multiple regression analysis was conducted with the four factors derived through the EFA. Consumer complaint intentions being the dependent variables while negative emotions (i.e., anxious, angry, ashamed, sad, frustrated, irritated, disgusted, embarrassed) were the independent variables.

Factor 1: Complain directly to the retailer

Based on the results in **Table 4.11**, Chapter 4 it can be summarised that feeling angry is statistically the most significant predictor for complaining to the retailer. It can be concluded that the negative emotion anger can be considered a main predictor of complaining directly to the retailer. Denier et al (1995) classified the emotions irritation and disgust as part of the emotion

anger. It is therefore important to understand that these emotions are very closely linked and may be experienced simultaneously. Customers voicing a complaint face-to-face to a retailer has been found a common form to express the negative emotion anger (Singh, 1989). The study supports the cognitive appraisal theory by confirming negative emotions have an effect on consumer complaint behaviour. Furthermore, Mattila (2008) found anger to directly link with face-to-face complaining. Moreover, angry customers are known to be overtaken by their emotions and usually want to get back at the retailer therefore they usually partake in complaint behaviour (Bougie *et al.*, 2003).

With in-store clothing retailers still being the dominant channel of purchasing in South Africa (Marketline, 2020a), understanding how anger may lead to complaint behaviour in a store setting is crucial to clothing retailers. Staff should be trained to handle pre-complaint situations and should be able to recognise and cope with customers who express anger, since these customers have such a strong influence on complaint behaviour. Staff should be encouraged to give care, support and understanding in such a way that it reduces the feelings of anger.

Factor 2: Complain to third-party/on social media (lodge complains electronically)

Based on the results in **Table 4.14**, Chapter 4 it can be summarised that anger is statistically the most significant predictor of complaining to the retailer. Furthermore, irritation and frustration can be considered slightly significant as well with p -values of 0.025 and 0.044 respectively.

It can be concluded that the negative emotion anger is a major predictor for complaining to a third-party (such as South Africa's Consumer Good and Service Ombud) or on the social media platforms. Frustration and irritation can also be considered predictors of this complaint behaviour. Denier *et al* (1995) classified the emotions irritation and disgust as part of the emotion anger. Furthermore, research indicates that anger is an effect of the internal tension caused by feelings of frustration and individuals generally experience frustration and anger as one emotion (Filippello, Harrington, Buzzai, Sorrenti & Costa, 2014). Angry consumers are known to be more likely to complain and engaged a third-party action (Iyiola, 2013). Similarly, angry customers are also more likely to use the social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc., to spread negative word-of-mouth (Iyiola, 2013). Therefore, it is crucial for retailers to prevent service failures that lead to negative emotions such as anger, irritation and frustration, since it could seriously harm the retailer's brand when negative word-of-mouth is spread.

Factor 3: Switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer

Based on the results in **Table 4.17**, Chapter 4 it can be summarised that anger is statistically the most significant predictor of complaining to the retailer. It can be concluded that the negative emotion anger can be considered a main predictor of switching retailers or stop buying at the retailer. Similarly, feeling disgusted can be considered a significant predictor to switch retailer/stop buying at the retailer as well. Denier et al (1995) classified the emotions irritation and disgust as part of the emotion anger. Mattila (2008) and by Bougie *et al.* (2003) found anger to directly link to switching behaviour. Clothing retailers could benefit from these findings because recognising angry customers' responses could assist retailers in improving their service delivery. Angry customers could express their feelings in an aggressive manner. Retailers should therefore equip their staff with skills to cope with angry customers' responses (Bougie *et al.*, 2003).

Factor 4: Tell family/friends

Based on the results in **Table 4.11**, Chapter 4 it can be summarised that anger is statistically the most significant predictor of complaining to the retailer. It can be concluded that the negative emotion anger can be considered a main predictor of telling family and friends about the service failure. Mattila (2008) found anger to directly link with negative word-of-mouth. Furthermore, anger causes confrontative coping which is known to lead to negative word-of-mouth and vindictive complaining, while frustration causes support-seeking coping which leads to negative word-of-mouth and problem solving complaining (Gelbrich, 2010). Clothing retailers should therefore extend their staff development and training to incorporate a discussion of the role of consumer emotion. Staff training could be expanded that employees are able to recognise the emotional responses of customers, so they are able to respond accordingly.

5.4 CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEORY

In a South African context, a limited body of research has addressed how negative emotions experienced after an in-store service failure influences consumer complaint behaviour, specifically concerning the retail clothing sector. This study expands our understanding of consumer complaint behaviour by introducing negative emotions and in-store service failures experienced in a clothing store as influencers. The cognitive appraisal theory was adopted for this study and suggests that emotions arise in response to the cognitive appraisal of a stressful

event (or negative outcome, such as service failures) and that these emotions determine the individuals coping behaviours (Obeidat *et al.*, 2017). This theory is confirmed in the finding of this study since it is clear that negative emotions, especially anger, has a direct impact on consumer complaint intention.

This study provides descriptive and empirical evidence of which in-store service failures cause the most dissatisfaction, which negative emotions are experienced most severely after service failures and how customers consequently decide to complain. This study did not only measure the negative emotion experienced most severely; it also examined the relationship between negative emotions and dissatisfaction as well as whom the customer blames for the failure. Furthermore, the study investigated the relationship between the negative emotions experienced and consumer complaint intention/action.

The abundance of literature on consumer complaint behaviour mainly focuses on complaints following product failure or evaluations of complaint handling, but not specifically on how negative emotions after a service failure in clothing store environment are linked to complaint behaviour. The findings of this study propose opportunities for improving service delivery quality as it allows for a better understanding of consumer complaint intentions following a service failure in a clothing store environment.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RETAILERS AND MARKETERS

Consumers are becoming more demanding about the quality of service delivery and delivering exceptional service has become vital for retailers to stay competitive. Guaranteeing good customer relations can be seen as a tactic for better service delivery and to sustain a competitive edge. However, service failures are inevitable and are bound to cause some degree of dissatisfaction. Emotions can be the driver of customer behaviour and influence the relationship with the service provider and how they respond to a service failure. It is, therefore, crucial for retailer and marketers to understand the emotions of their customers.

The results of the study established that there is a strong relationship between the negative emotions experienced after an in-store service failure and the consumer complaint behaviour in clothing stores. By identifying the key negative emotional influencers of consumer complaint behaviour, the retailers can successfully handle the pre-complaint situation and control their customers' behaviour. Effectively controlled negative emotions will decrease their intention to

complain and indirectly strengthen the relationship between the retailer and the customer. Therefore, retailers wishing to build long-lasting relationships with their customers need to focus on their customer's negative emotions which may have a substantial impact on the whole service outcome.

Literature and findings on consumer complaint behaviour can also give clothing retailers useful insight into detecting service failures (Tronvoll, 2008). As previously mentioned, competition in the clothing retailing sector is constantly growing and development of new retailing formats are securing market positions rapidly. Therefore, clothing retailers need suitable knowledge of aspects that persuade customers to visit physical clothing retail stores (Chen-Yu & Seock, 2002; Janse van Noordwyk, 2008). Understanding the importance of in-store decisions and factors that influence in-store decisions is crucial, as numerous consumer decisions are not made until the consumer is in the store. This study provides insight on factors that cause most dissatisfaction in a clothing store. Retailers could, therefore, use these findings to ensure that they do things the right way.

Customer emotions similarly have significant practical implications, since how customers feel about a service encounter consequently impacts customer satisfaction, switching behaviour, negative word-of-mouth, repeat purchase, complaining to third parties, as well as loyalty (Brady, 2003; Stephens & Gwinner, 1998). This study will be beneficial to clothing retailers as it will improve service failure recovery methods and prevent future service failures, therefore leaving consumers more satisfied. Moreover, this study will shed light on the negative emotions experienced during a service failure and how negative emotions affect complaint behaviour. When these concepts are better understood, retailers will be able to address service failures in a more appropriate manner and in turn have greater customer satisfaction and retention.

This study has important implications for marketers for several reasons. Firstly, the study could provide theoretical insight of consumer complaint behaviour and negative emotions caused by in-store service failures. Secondly, this study could help extend marketers way of thinking with regards to consumer complaint behaviour. The investigation of why consumers decide to voice/not voice their complaints after the occurrence of a service failure may help marketers better understand how consumers think. Understanding what emotions accompany which service failures and methods of complaining, could assist markers in having a greater understanding of their target audience and how campaigns should be constructed. Consequently, having better campaigns that trigger the desired emotions will increase customer turnover and retail sales.

5.6 LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite the measures taken to ensure the reliability, validity and ethicality of the study, the results of this study should be viewed cautiously since limitations were recognised in the data collection process and interpretation of the results.

The findings of the study could not be generalised to the whole South African population as non-probability sampling, and convenience sampling was used to collect data. Although quota sampling was employed to ensure a representative sample of the South African population, the sample was still skewed towards the White population and women. This could be due to the fact that fieldworkers who distributed the questionnaire were White and female and shared the questionnaire with friends, family and acquaintances who have similar demographical backgrounds. Additionally, women have a greater interest in shopping for clothing than men (Birtwistle *et al.*, 2005) and research indicates that women are generally more likely to participate in online surveys (Smith, 2008). Time and financial constraints also caused limitations in terms of the sample, and the sample was relatively small ($n = 768$). Non-probability sampling was used since a random sample of the general South African population might not have concluded in a significant number of participants. A convenience sample is known to limit the study's accuracy inevitably (Berndt *et al.*, 2011).

Findings of this study were limited to the participants, which were male and female over the age of 19. Moreover, the majority of participants were female (25%), less than 30 years old, were part of the White population group (73.18%), earns more than R30 000 per month and 51% had a degree or a diploma. This sample is not representative of South Africa's population since the majority of people are Black (80.90%), while the majority of this study consisted of White individuals. It is recommended that future studies use a bigger sample that could be more generalized to the population of South Africa. This can be done by ensuring that fieldworkers collecting data include more Black individuals to better represent South Africa's majority population.

The study focused only on in-store service-related variables in clothing stores and negative emotions that could influence complaint intention/action. Future research studies could conduct further research in online or offline product related variables with regards to negative emotions experienced when a failure occurs. In the context of South Africa, there is limited research regarding failure occurring online or offline, what emotions are experienced after the failure and how this has an impact on how consumers complain. Future studies could further investigate

these topics by including a larger sample for better generalisation. Furthermore, futures studies could investigate whether a relationship exists between the type of service failure that causes the most dissatisfaction and the complaint intention following the service failure, rather than analysing the relationship between the negative emotions and consumer complaint intention.

5.7 FINAL CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of emotions and consumer complaint behaviour is complex. Customers experience numerous emotions simultaneously during in-store service failures. Therefore, the emotional reactions of customers must be cautiously considered in the attempt to explain consumer complaint behaviour and the effectiveness of service recovery. Emotional responses evoked by an in-store service failure can determine a customers' behavioural outcomes. Therefore, clothing retailers should be mindful of how in-store service failures provoke emotional responses consequently leading to consumer complaint behaviour. An inadequate recovery strategy may amplify customers' negative emotions and encourage them to participate in complaint behaviour. Clothing retailers should take adequate steps to deliver service recovery strategies that reduce customer dissatisfaction and guarantee customer loyalty and retention.

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APPENDIX A: PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The Department of Consumer Science places great emphasis upon integrity and ethical conduct in the preparation of all written work submitted for academic evaluation. While academic staff teaches you about referencing techniques and how to avoid plagiarism, you too have a responsibility in this regard. If you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required, you should speak to your lecturer before any written work is submitted.

You are guilty of plagiarism if you copy something from another author's work (e.g. a book, an article or a website) without acknowledging the source and pass it off as your own. In effect you are stealing something that belongs to someone else. This is not only the case when you copy work word-for-word (verbatim), but also when you submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (paraphrase) or use a line of argument without acknowledging it. You are not allowed to use work previously produced by another student. You are also not allowed to let anybody copy your work with the intention of passing it off as his/her work.

Students who commit plagiarism will not be given any credit for plagiarised work. The matter may also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious contravention of the University's rules and can lead to expulsion from the University. The declaration which follows must accompany all written work submitted while you are a student of the Department of Consumer Science. No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and attached.

Full names of student: **Rut Meijer**

Student number: **15013597**

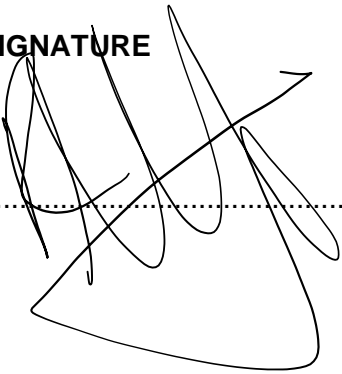
Topic of work: **The Relationship Between Negative Emotions and Consumer Complaint Intention Following Clothing Retailers' In-Store Service Failures**

Declaration

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.

2. I declare that this research proposal is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.
3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke, is written over a horizontal dotted line.

APPENDIX B: ETHICS APPROVAL



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Ethics Committee

E-mail: ethics.nas@up.ac.za

ETHICS SUBMISSION: LETTER OF APPROVAL

Dr S Donoghue
Department of Consumer and Food Sciences
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science
University of Pretoria

Reference number: NAS169/2019

Project title: The role of consumer-related variables in consumers' complaint behavioural intentions following product or service failure in the clothing retail context

Dear Dr S Donoghue,

We are pleased to inform you that your submission conforms to the requirements of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Research Ethics committee.

Please note the following about your ethics approval:

- Please use your reference number (NAS169/2019) on any documents or correspondence with the Research Ethics Committee regarding your research.
- Please note that the Research Ethics Committee may ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification, monitor the conduct of your research, or suspend or withdraw ethics approval.
- Please note that ethical approval is granted for the duration of the research (e.g. Honours studies: 1 year, Masters studies: two years, and PhD studies: three years) and should be extended when the approval period lapses.
- The digital archiving of data is a requirement of the University of Pretoria. The data should be accessible in the event of an enquiry or further analysis of the data.

Ethics approval is subject to the following:

- The ethics approval is conditional on the research being conducted as stipulated by the details of all documents submitted to the Committee. In the event that a further need arises to change who the investigators are, the methods or any other aspect, such changes must be submitted as an Amendment for approval by the Committee.

Post approval submissions including application for ethics extension and amendments to the approved application should be submitted online via the Ethics work centre.

We wish you the best with your research.

Yours sincerely,



Chairperson: NAS Ethics Committee

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Department of Consumer and Food Sciences
1 July 2019

CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This research project forms part of the requirements for the completion of the 2019 final year B Consumer Science Clothing Retail Management degree. The purpose of this research project is to **explore consumers' dissatisfaction, emotions and behavioural intentions following clothing product failure and in-store/online service failure associated with clothing retailers.**

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

You will be asked to indicate whether you mostly purchase clothing at brick-and-mortar retailers (in the store) or online. Based on your choice of shopping channel, you will be randomly asked to complete questions about clothing product failures or clothing retailers' service failures, and your subsequent dissatisfaction emotions and intentions.

Please note: No prior preparation is needed to complete the questionnaire. Participation is voluntary, with no penalty or loss of benefit if you decide not to take part. Completion of the questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes. The procedure is completed by a word of appreciation for your time and effort.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Participants' responses are strictly confidential, and only members of the research team will have access to the information. Your response will be bulked with those obtained from other participants and appropriate statistical analysis will be performed on the bulked data. At no time will personal opinions be linked to specific individuals. Data will be safely and securely stored and will not be accessible from the public domain. The privacy and anonymity of your participation are therefore ensured.

WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE AND RIGHTS OF ACCESS TO DATA

Participants may withdraw at any stage of the research without having to explain why. By no means will your withdrawal be held against you. As a participant you also have the right of access to your data.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

The findings derived from this research could assist clothing retailers to improve the quality of their product and service offering, to better understand their customers and to developing effective complaint handling strategies to promote customer satisfaction.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

DR Suné Donoghue can be contacted at sune.donoghue@up.ac.za or at (012) 420 2488 for further information about the research project.

CONSENT

I have read the above information relating to the research project and declare that I understand it. I have been afforded the opportunity to contact and discuss relevant aspects of the project with the project leader, and hereby declare that I agree voluntarily to participate in the project.

I indemnify the University and any employee or student of the University against any liability that I may incur during the course of the project.

V72 (Q15) -I agree to the terms and conditions as stated above:

- Yes, I agree (1)
- No, I do not agree (2)

Before we continue, we just want to ensure that you belong to the group we are targeting.

Are you older than **19 years** of age?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

In which **province** do you live?

- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga
- Northern Cape
- North West
- Western Cape

Consumer complaint behaviour questionnaire

Section A – Retailer information

V1 Where do you prefer to buy your clothing (excluding shoes, accessories and jewellery)?	In-store	1	Online	2	
V2 From which retailer (Retailer X) do you mostly buy clothing for yourself?					

Section B – Failure scenario

In-store service failures
In-store (VS3) Imagine that you are shopping for clothing for yourself at retailer X. During your shopping experience you <i>realise that you are not completely satisfied with the in-store service delivery.</i>
VS4 Select three in-store service failures that will cause you to be the most dissatisfied .
In-store service failures (VS) VS4.1 Untidy store areas (e.g. fitting rooms, till points, etc.) VS4.2 Unorganised store layout VS4.3 Unpleasant atmosphere (e.g. loud music/staff, uncomfortable room temperature, etc.) VS4.4 Unfriendly staff VS4.5 Unhelpful staff VS4.6 Incompetent staff VS4.7 Poor customer service support VS4.8 Poor communication with customers VS4.9 Unfair return/exchange policy VS4.10 Unclear return/exchange policy VS4.11 Refund problems VS4.12 Stock availability issues (e.g. out of stock) VS4.13 Inaccurate information (e.g. misleading product information, incorrect pricing of products) VS4.14 Missing price tags VS4.15 Difficulties while paying (e.g. under-staffed, trainees serving customers, etc.) VS4.16 Long waiting time in queues
VS5 Which one of the three in-store service failures listed below [list of three service failures selected by participants], would cause you to be the most dissatisfied ? VS5: List VS4.1-VS4.16
VS6 Rate your level of dissatisfaction for this service failure [selected <i>in-store failure from list VS4.1-VS4.16</i>]. (1 = Slightly dissatisfied; 2 = Moderately dissatisfied; 3 = Very dissatisfied; 4 = Extremely dissatisfied)
V7 How severe (serious) would you consider the in-store service failure [selected <i>service failure from list VS4.1-VS4.16</i>]? (1 = Not at all severe; 2 = Slightly severe; 3 = Moderately severe; 4 = Very severe; 5 = Extremely severe)

Section C – Negative emotions

VS9 Please indicate your emotional state following the **in-store** service failure [*selected service failure from list VS4.1-VS4.16*].

(1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Very; 5 = Extremely)

I would feel ...	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
VS9.1 anxious					
VS9.2 angry					
VS9.3 ashamed					
VS9.4 sad					
VS9.5 frustrated					
VS9.6 irritated					
VS9.7 disgusted					
VS9.8 embarrassed					

Section D – Consumer complaint intention

VSS10 Following the in-store failure [<i>selected service failure from list VS4.1-VS4.16</i>], would you take action?	YES	(1)	NO	(2)
Action means: Informing family and friends about the problem/failure, switching the brand name/retailer, complaining to the retailer, and complaining via social media, etc.				
VS10 Following the in-store service failure [<i>selected service failure from list VS4.1-VS4.16</i>] how likely are you to _____				
(1 = Extremely unlikely; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Likely; 4 = Extremely likely)				
Possible items				
VS10.1 Tell your family and friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them				
VS10.2 Text your family and friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)				
VS10.3 Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see				
VS10.4 Switch to another brand name				
VS10.5 Stop buying at the retailer				
VS10.6 Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)				
VS10.7 Complain to the retailer by phone				
VS10.8 Complain to the retailer by e-mail				
VS10.9 Complain on the retailer's website				
VS10.10 Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see				
VS10.11 Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)				
VS10.12 Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website (e.g. hellopeter.com)				

Section H – Please tell us more about yourself (Demographic questions)

V26 Answer every question and mark every relevant answer with an X.										
V26.1 What is your gender?	Male	1		Female	2		Other	3		
V26.2 What is your age?								Years		
V26.3 What is your highest level of education?	Lower than Grade 10	1	Grade 10 or 11	2	Grade 12	3	Degree/ diploma	4	Post- graduate	5
V26.4 What is your approximate total monthly HOUSEHOLD INCOME?	Less than R10 000	1	R10 001 to R19 999	2	R20 000 to R29 999	3	R30 000 to R49 999	4	R50 000 or more	5
V26.5 To which population group do you belong according to the SA Population Equity Act?										
Black	1	Coloured	2	Indian	3	White	4	Other:	5	

Thank you for taking time to participate in the study.