The clothing shopping behaviour of young females before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng

Venter, A (15052053)

DISSERTATION

M Consumer Science (Clothing Management)

January 2024

The clothing shopping behaviour of young females before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng

by

Angeliz Venter

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree

M Consumer Science (Clothing Management)

in the

Department of Consumer Science and Food Sciences
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: Dr Bertha Jacobs (University of Pretoria)
Co-supervisor: Dr Nadene Marx-Pienaar (University of Pretoria)

January 2024

DECLARATION

I, **Angeliz Venter**, declare that the dissertation which I hereby submit for the Master's in Consumer Science (General) in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences of the University of Pretoria is my own original work and has not been submitted at any other university.

I further declare that all sources cited are acknowledged in a comprehensive list of references.

ANGELIZ VENTER

01/12/2023

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to the following individuals for their great contribution towards the completion of the study:

- I would like to thank Dr Bertha Jacobs, my supervisor, for guiding and assisting me with this topic throughout and remaining patient when my "pregnancy brain" took over. It has been a few years since I graduated and I needed some extra help with getting back into studying. Thank you for always guiding me in the right direction and having faith in me to complete my masters.
- Dr Nadene Marx-Pienaar, my co-supervisor, provided guidance while subtly challenging my views and making me think out of the box and my immediate thought process. Thank you for making me explore different outlooks on the topic.
- My dear family and friends for their moral support throughout the study. The birth of our son contributed to several deadline extensions, and at first, I did not know how I would complete this study. However, with support from my fiancé Rémi, I was able to make the time to complete the study successfully. Thank you Rémi for your endless support and always making me recalculate and double check my work. You are the calmness I need when my impulsive and impatient nature take over!
- I would like to thank my mom, Ria Venter, for always believing in me and pushing me towards my goals, even if it sounds overwhelming at first. Thank you for providing financially for my degree and this masters study, without you I probably would not have started or even completed it.
- I would also like to thank my dad, Marius Venter, for his presence and ability to brainstorm ideas with me and motivating me to think bigger and stay creative.
- To my sister-in-law, Anne, seeing you complete your masters and how hard you work every day, inspired me to start my own dissertation, and I thank you for the incredible example you are of hard work.
- A big thank you to everyone who helped me look after and spend quality time with our son Gustave, while I completed this study, my mom, dad, Retha, Sibu and Rémi.
- Lastly, to our son, Gustave, throughout your birth and life so far, you inspired and pushed me towards my goals and make me want to be better and more educated to set a good example for you. Even if you did not give me enough hours of sleep to complete this study in the timeframe I wanted to, I would not change it for the world. I love you!

ABSTRACT

The clothing shopping behaviour of young females during the COVID-19 pandemic

by

Angeliz Venter

Supervisor: Dr B Jacobs
Co-supervisor: Dr Nadene Marx-Pienaar
Department: Consumer and Food Sciences
Faculty: Natural and Agricultural Sciences, University of Pretoria
Degree: M Consumer Science (Clothing Management)

The overall objective of this study was to explore and describe young females' clothing shopping behaviour before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa. The research focused more specifically on their clothing buying practices and shopping styles before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions. Clothing buying behaviour is highly dependent on the consumer, product, marketing and situational characteristics and can take on different forms, for example habitual or complex. Changes in shopping behaviour were evident during the COVID-19 pandemic as restrictions caused consumers to switch buying channels, change brands due to unavailability, and limit their frequency of shopping. Clothing retailers needed to adapt quickly to how they sold to their customers during and after the COVID-19 restrictions to retain brand loyalty and avoid becoming irrelevant in a short amount of time. The COVID-19 pandemic provided a unique situation to understand changes in how, where and what consumers shop.

Shopping styles are used by retailers and marketers as predictors and indicators to understand consumers' orientation towards brands, price, quality, and experiences. Based on their shopping styles consumers are then segmented and retailers aim to serve them better to ultimately maximise their profit. Sproles and Kendall's (1986) developed a consumer style inventory (CSI) consisting of eight shopping styles: 1) perfectionist and high-quality conscious, (2) brand conscious and price equals quality, (3) novelty and fashion conscious, (4) recreational and hedonic conscious, (5) price conscious or value for money, (6) impulsive and careless, (7) confused by over-choice, and (8) habitual and brand loyal. By using Sproles and Kendall's model of different shopping styles, it is assumed that consumers have different approaches and outlooks towards shopping through any channel.

A survey research design was followed. Data were collected with an online self-administered questionnaire from two samples in 2020 and again in 2023. Data were collected in 2020 and 2023 from convenience samples of young females (between 18-35 years) living in Gauteng, South Africa, to explore how their clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of shopping, channels of shopping and clothing categories) and shopping styles (i.e., eight styles from Sproles and Kendall) changed within the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as during and after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. For Study 2020, an online questionnaire was distributed to respondents during the COVID-19 restriction as part of a larger study focused on food and clothing consumer behaviour, and 188 questionnaires were usable. For Study 2023, an online questionnaire on only clothing buying practices and shopping styles was distributed, and 184 usable questionnaires were obtained.

The data analysis was done in correspondence with a statistician to ensure the reliability, accuracy and validity of all the data collected. This was done by systematically applying logic to the data that has been captured and utilising statistical methods to evaluate this data (Creswell, 2013). SPSS 29 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to analyse the data successfully. The use of descriptive statistical analysis also made way for an investigation into female South African consumers' shopping styles and shopping frequency, as well as for a description of the sample and their purchasing behaviour before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the descriptive analysis were displayed in graphical and tabular format to facilitate the reader's understanding and conclude the research objectives (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The theoretical constructs were used to determine the means and Cronbach's alphas.

Young female consumers indicated that they mostly shopped seasonally for clothing during the COVID-19 restrictions, in contrast to the majority of them indicating that they shopped 2-3 times a month for clothing before the COVID-19 restrictions. In line with international studies and other relevant studies in South Africa, young female consumers indicated that their preferred shopping channel before the COVID-19 restrictions was in-store shopping. However, during the COVID-19 restrictions, they switched to online shopping. After the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, they indicated that they prefer to shop in-store again but also now have a hybrid shopping model (i.e., in-store and online). Regarding the clothing categories young female consumers shopped for in South Africa before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, school uniforms were the most shopped for during all three times. This is because schools in South Africa were only closed momentarily due to the COVID-19 restrictions during alert level 5, from 26 March 2021 to 18 May 2021, when the South African government let children return to school in phases, starting with Grade 12.

There was a change in shopping styles for young female consumers in South Africa from before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the impulsive, careless, and confused by over-choice shopping style. There was also a change in shopping styles for brand conscious and price equals quality, novelty and fashion conscious, price and value for money conscious, impulsive and careless and habitual and brand loyal shopping styles during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. The perfectionist and high-quality conscious, recreational and hedonic conscious and confused by over-choice shopping styles did not experience any change during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. Lastly, only four of the eight predetermined shopping styles, namely perfectionist and high-quality conscious, novelty and fashion conscious, recreational and hedonic conscious and impulsive and careless shopping styles changed from before the COVID-19 restrictions to after the COVID-19 restrictions.

This indicates that they changed their shopping style briefly during the restrictions due to different stressors, and when their environment returned to a “normal” state, their shopping behaviour and style also adjusted back to how it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. This result aids retailers in Gauteng to understand their target markets better and how they react in emergency events. This indicates that retailers and brands need an emergency plan for black swan events but should not change their whole business plan and structure, as consumers will most likely return to their normal shopping behaviour.

It was evident that the COVID-19 restrictions heavily impacted young female consumers in Gauteng. It is also evident that international trends and studies can be used as a baseline for South Africa but cannot be applied due to the different economic development and climate of the South African market and different consumer needs compared to other international consumers. This gives industry role players in South Africa and, more specifically, in Gauteng, knowledge on how to prepare for future unprecedented events.

Keywords: clothing, buying behaviour, shopping styles, Gauteng, South Africa, COVID-19, young females

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ....iError! Bookmark not defined.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ....iiError! Bookmark not defined.

SUMMARY...iiiError! Bookmark not defined.

TABLE OF CONTENTS...viError! Bookmark not defined.

LIST OF FIGURES...xi

LIST OF TABLES x

LIST OF ADDENDA...xii

CHAPTER 1: THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE 1

1.1 BACKGROUND 1

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM 5

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY 6

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY 8

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS 8

1.6 PRESENTATION AND OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION 9

1.7 CONCLUSION... 10

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 11

2.1 THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC... 11

2.1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic and shopping restrictions 11

2.1.2 Clothing buying practices during the COVID-19 restrictions.................. 12

2.2 CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR 14

2.2.1 External influences 16

2.2.2 Internal influences... 18

2.3 CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS 19

2.3.1 Problem recognition.. 20

2.3.2 Information search.. 20

2.3.3 Alternative evaluation and selection.. 21

2.3.4 Outlet selection and purchase 21
2.3.5 Post purchase process 22
2.4 TYPES OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR 23
2.4.1 Complex or extended decision-making 24
2.4.2 Variety seeking decision-making 25
2.4.3 Habitual decision-making 25
2.4.4 Dissonance decision-making 26
2.5 CONSUMER SHOPPING STYLES 26
2.5.1 Perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style 27
2.5.2 Brand conscious and price equals quality shopping style 28
2.5.3 Novelty and fashion conscious shopping style 29
2.5.4 Recreational and hedonic conscious shopping style 29
2.5.5 Price conscious and value-for-money shopping style 29
2.5.6 Impulsive and careless shopping style 30
2.5.7 Confused by over-choice shopping style 31
2.5.7 Habitual and brand loyal shopping style 31
2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK 31
2.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES 33
2.8 CONCLUSION 34

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 35

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN, APPROACH AND PURPOSE 35
3.2 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES 36
3.2.1 Sample 36
3.2.2 Sampling techniques 39
3.3 MEASURING INSTRUMENT 40
3.4 CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION 42
3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE 46
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS 47
3.6.1 Descriptive statistics 48

3.6.1 Inferential statistics ... 49
3.7 QUALITY OF THE STUDY: VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ISSUES ... 49
3.7.1 Validity ... 50
3.7.2 Reliability ... 51
3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ... 51
3.9 CONCLUSIONS ... 52

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ... 54
4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE ... 54
4.1.1 Gender ... 54
4.1.2 Age ... 55
4.1.3 Level of education ... 56
4.1.4 Monthly household income ... 57
4.1.5 Population group ... 57
4.1.6 Area of residence ... 58
4.2 CLOTHING PRACTICES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ... 58
4.2.1. Frequency of shopping for clothing ... 59
4.2.2 Shopping channels used for clothing shopping ... 60
4.2.3 Clothing categories ... 63
4.3 CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES ... 66
4.4 THE CHANGES TO YOUNG FEMALES' SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS ... 70
4.5 CONCLUSION ... 79

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION ... 80
5.1 INTRODUCTION ... 80
5.2 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF THE SAMPLE ... 80
5.2.1 Gender ... 81
5.2.2 Age ... 81
5.2.3 Level of education ... 82

5.2.4 Monthly household income. 82

5.2.5 Population group 82

5.2.6 Area of residence 83

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF OBJECTIVE. 83

5.3.1 Young females' clothing buying practices 83

5.3.2 Young females' predominant clothing shopping styles 86

5.3.3 Changes in young females' shopping styles 88

5.4 THE STUDY IN RETROSPECT 89

5.4.1 Achievement of the objectives set out for this study 91

5.4.2 Significance of the research findings 91

5.4.3 Limitations of the study 92

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES 93

5.6 FINAL CONCLUSION 94

LIST OF REFERENCES 95

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1.1: DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS 8
TABLE 3.1: CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION 43
TABLE 3.2: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODS: STUDY 2020 AND STUDY 2023 . 52
TABLE 4.1: SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS 55
TABLE 4.2: FREQUENCY OF SHOPPING FOR CLOTHING BEFORE AND DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2020 59
TABLE 4.3: FREQUENCY OF CLOTHING SHOPPING BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2023 62
TABLE 4.4: THE USE OF SHOPPING CHANNELS BEFORE AND DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2020 64
TABLE 4.5: THE USE OF SHOPPING CHANNELS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2023 65
TABLE 4.6: CLOTHING CATEGORIES SHOPPED FOR DURING THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS 67
TABLE 4.7: CLOTHING CATEGORIES SHOPPED FOR BEFORE AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
TABLE 4.8: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS) 71
TABLE 4.9: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 89
TABLE 4.10: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS) 74
TABLE 4.11: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 75
TABLE 4.12: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS) 77
TABLE 4.13: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND AFTER COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS) 77
TABLE 4.14: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND AFTER COVID-19 (PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS) 77

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1: HAWKINS CONSUMER BEHAVIOURS MODEL 16
FIGURE 2.2: CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR 24
FIGURE 2.3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DETAILING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON YOUNG FEMALES BUYING DECISIONS AND SHOPPING STYLES 32
FIGURE 4.1: LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARTICIPANTS... 56
FIGURE 4.2: REPRESENTATION OF THE POPULATION GROUPS............................ 58
FIGURE 4.3: REPRESENTATION OF THE SHOPPING FREQUENCY 60
FIGURE 4.4: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SHOPPING CHANNELS.......................... 63
FIGURE 4.5: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CLOTHING CATEGORIES 65
FIGURE 4.6: YOUNG FEMALES' CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA 69

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

LIST OF ADDENDA

ADDENDUM A: ETHICS SUBMISSION: APPROVAL LETTER 107
ADDENDUM B: 2020 QUESTIONNAIRE.. 108
ADDENDUM C: 2023 QUESTIONNAIRE.. 106
ADDENDUM D: FREQUENCY TABLE OF CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.................................... 106
ADDENDUM E: TURNITIN REPORT 106

CHAPTER 1: THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter provides background and insight into the research topic, namely young females' clothing shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa. The research problem is outlined, followed by the justification of the study and thereafter, the research objectives for the study are presented. The chapter concludes with definitions of relevant concepts used in the research and an outline of the following chapters.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, retailers' biggest challenge has been the change in consumers' shopping behaviour. The pandemic made consumers re-evaluate and question their needs and wants and how they want to fulfil them (Meyer, 2020). In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic, a black swan event[1], confined consumers to their homes in an urge to stay safe and prevent unnecessary contact with others (Dulam, Furuta & Kanno, 2021). Soon after, multiple countries, including South Africa, declared a state of disaster and enforced strict lockdowns and restrictions to curb the spreading of the coronavirus. This instilled a sense of fear in consumers, ultimately changing how they reacted and approached their shopping (Cooper & Gordon, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic not only transformed consumers' shopping orientations regarding what they shop and where they shop but also challenged retailers to quickly adapt to their customers' changing shopping behaviour (Dulam *et al*., 2021; Yohn, 2020).

Although some customers still preferred going into a brick-and-mortar store, there was a noticeable shift towards multi-channel buying, whether purely online shopping, "click and collect," or contactless in-store interactions (Dludla, 2020). A colossal increase in online shopping occurred (Meyer, 2020) as consumers could not exit their homes to do their clothing shopping, which made them explore other buying channels (Mathe & Smith, 2021). Clothing retailers adopted new strategies to keep selling to their customers during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to retain brand loyalty and avoid becoming irrelevant in a short amount of time (Grimmer, 2022). An overwhelming reality of the COVID-19 pandemic was that businesses had to actively prepare for changes in consumers' buying behaviour (Uribepriya, Basu & Lindelow, 2021).

[1] A black swan event can be described as an unexpected occurrence, that is unpredictable with possible serious consequences. A black swan event is used to characterize similar events and to learn from them for future reference. (Raikar, 2023)

Consumers' buying behaviour is reflected in their shopping styles (Eastman & Liu, 2012). A shopping style is how, where, and what the consumer wants to shop (Luomala, 2003). Research has for many years investigated how and why consumers shop the way they do and what ultimately impacts those decisions (Lysonski & Durvasula 2013). Similar retailers are interested in consumers' shopping styles as this provides them with a strategy to profile their target market into profitable clusters based on how they approach their buying decision-making process (i.e., information search, evaluation, and selection) (Nayeem, 2012). Consumers' different approaches when deciding to purchase a product are shaped by various factors like consumer, product and retailer characteristics (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). For example, a consumer might be more brand conscious when shopping for clothing, whereas another consumer is price conscious, and this orientation towards brands or price will direct their decision-making. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the factors determining a consumer's approach towards shopping for clothing could have changed.

Based on consumers' specific approaches and various factors that influence their decision-making, George Sproles and Elizabeth Kendall developed their consumer styles inventory (CSI). The CSI measures and evaluates the characteristics of a consumer's decision-making style, which consumers use subconsciously to negotiate their path through the decision-making process (Nayeem & Marie-IpSooching, 2022). How a consumer approaches the information, evaluation and selection stage while simultaneously moulding their shopping behaviour is reflected in their buying behaviour and ultimately their shopping style (Eom, Youn & Lee, 2020). Kendall and Sproles (1986) determined that there are three ways to profile consumers' shopping styles, namely: (1) the psychographic/lifestyle approach, (2) the consumer typology approach and (3) the consumer characteristics approach. From their research, Sproles and Kendall (1986) developed eight shopping styles within their consumer style inventory: (1) perfectionist and high-quality conscious, (2) brand conscious and price equals quality, (3) novelty and fashion conscious, (4) recreational and hedonistic conscious, (5) price conscious or value for money, (6) impulsive and careless, (7) confused by over-choice, (8) habitual and brand loyal. Although some of these shopping styles are more stable than others, shopping styles can change over time, and a consumer can possess more than one shopping style for different product categories (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003). Therefore, it is reasonable to acknowledge that an emergency event like the COVID-19 pandemic can change consumers' shopping styles.

Marketers, businesses and brands perform consumer profiling to identify their best customers, the common interests between them and their demographic information. In turn, consumer profiling provides integral information on the specific target market, their needs and wants, as well as their expectations (Gallimore, 2023). The CSI is used to study and understand consumers' way of shopping within different product categories, such as clothing (Nayeem & Marie-

IpSooching, 2022). Similarly, the CSI has been widely used in multiple countries and contexts, such as Australia, New Zealand, India, Malaysia, Korea, Germany and the United States as an accurate instrument to enable the segmentation of target markets and positioning of their products (Bauer, Sauer & Becker, 2006; Eom *et al*., 2020; Nayeem & Marie-IpSooching, 2022). Although the CSI has been used in multiple countries, a study by Mehta and Dixit (2016) comparing consumer decision-making styles across India and Germany, determined that it is better adapted and more appropriate in developed countries. It has been determined in a 2018 study, executed within the South African retail market, that consumers' purchasing behaviour is influenced by personal or individual characteristics, for example, personality, attitudes, knowledge and motivation (Olyott, 2018). This study included males and females and was conducted throughout South Africa and not only one province. Therefore, research is needed to understand young females' shopping styles and how the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to changes thereof in an emerging market such as South Africa.

In terms of this study young females refer to the age group that reaches young adulthood in the 21st century (Dimock, 2019). Young females are known to be the largest and most educated generation in the international economy, whereas in South Africa both young female and male are the most highly educated generation (Maluleke, 2018). Therefore, in-depth knowledge is required by retailers on their shopping styles and how to market to them (Kraljević & Filipović, 2017). Generation Y or millennials (age 25 - 45) require a different marketing strategy due to their shopping behaviours and styles compared to Generation X, consumers born between 1965 and 1980 (age 41 - 56) and baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964 (age 57 - 75) (Chaney, Touzani & Slimane, 2017). A study executed in Canada found that young females from the Generation Y age group showed trend, pleasure, price and brand shopping style tendencies when shopping online for fashion and clothing items (Ladhari, Gonthier & Lajante, 2019). A similar study found that Generation Z females are the first generation to be born and brought up with digital elements and devices, therefore most of their current shopping styles and decisions are being executed digitally (Desai & Kankonkar, 2020). Generation Z consumers puts comfort and functionality first when making decisions on clothing purchases. This is why they gravitate towards designs that allows them to move freely and effortlessly, while favouring a relaxed and oversized silhouette (FWO, 2023). An accurate example of this is lounge and sleepwear to go out as well as cargo pants. Generation Zs spend more online on new garments, because of the physical restrictions on public gatherings and clothing retail (FWO, 2023). Overall, females have a higher tendency towards hedonism, novelty orientation and price sensitivity than young males (Kraljević & Filipović, 2017; Mehta, 2020). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, young female consumers were found to be more brand conscious, fashion conscious, impulsive and recreational when shopping and have a higher tendency to shop online for clothing with their smartphones (Eriksson, Rosenbröijer & Fagerstrøm, 2017). Although these studies provide insight into differences in young female consumers' shopping behaviour and styles, more research is needed to understand females specifically within the South African market. Studies like this can be used to draw perspective into this study, on what consumers' shopping styles looked like before the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the retail sector in South Africa is slowly recovering after the nationwide lockdown in 2020, it is still under extreme pressure due to a decrease in consumer income, resulting in a change in buying behaviour (Nazir, 2021). According to Business Insider, the South African retail sector was one of the sectors least impacted, during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020 - 2022). Although this may sound reassuring the local and global retail landscape remains volatile for the near future (Writer, 2021). The serendipitous event of COVID-19 in 2020 changed how many consumers and businesses went about their day-to-day activities, and for the businesses that didn't change their approach to optimising their business in these turbulent times, over 2000 businesses closed in South Africa by the end of 2020, and a further 1000 was liquidated[2] by the beginning of 2021 (OECD, 2020). Liquidations increased by 46.2% in the second half of 2021, compared to the same date range in 2020 (OECD, 2020). A recent study has determined that customer satisfaction within South Africa with relevant COVID-19 readiness strategies of retail stores also had a positive and statistically significant effect on customer behavioural intentions (Rukuni & Maziriri, 2020). This indicates that brands and businesses that reacted efficiently and effectively retained most of their customers with these strategies. Although there is no evidence to suggest that this is true for retailers serving young females, it is a positive sign for businesses that focus on young females as their target market for clothing purchases (Rukuni & Maziriri, 2020).

This study aims to explore changes in young females' clothing buying behaviour and shopping styles during the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa. Understanding the changes in consumers' shopping styles during an emergency event can assist retailers and brands in accurately preparing for possible future pandemics and emergency events by adjusting their strategies, how their products and services can be reworked to accommodate their distressed customers, and how they can integrate different channels to assists their customers changing buying decisions with ease of use (Weber, 2021). The hypothesis for this study is that young female consumers in Gauteng changed their shopping styles due to the COVID-19 pandemic and although no business can accurately prepare for an unexpected shutdown of business activities for an undeclared amount of time, retailers can begin to understand how to address changing clothing consumer behaviour and always adapt to their consumers' ever-changing needs and wants.

[2] Liquidation refers to the situation where a business' liabilities exceed their assets and might be resolved or rectified by a court order or involuntary action (Kenton, 2019).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, retailers' biggest challenge has been the change in consumers' shopping behaviour (Yohn, 2020). The pandemic made consumers re-evaluate, and question their needs and wants and how they want to fulfil them (Meyer, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a change in consumers' wants and needs, translating into buying behavioural changes (Anakpo & Mishi, 2021). In the international context, in the early stages of the pandemic, consumers avoided crowded spaces and brick-and-mortar shopping where they could contract the virus, which indirectly pushed them towards online shopping (Kapetanios, Neuteboom, Ritsema & Ventouri, 2022). In contrast, the South African government implemented laws, as part of the Disaster Management Act, that did not give consumers the choice to avoid physical stores, but rather forced consumers to not visit brick-and-mortar stores or only in specific timeframes based on the area where the consumers lived (Government Gazette, 2017). Consumers' fluctuating buying behaviour, driven by inflexible decisions by the government and the uncertainty of the future, made it almost impossible for retailers to accurately forecast sales that impacted under- and overstocking certain products and items (Weber, 2021). Even though retailers have put measures in place to combat the impact of the pandemic on their sales and profit, they have struggled to understand consumers' behaviour during the unpredictable and unprecedented emergency situation (Anakpo & Mishi, 2021).

Because COVID-19 pandemic happened unexpectedly, the change in young females' shopping behaviour and styles was not initially apparent and evolved as the pandemic continued. Research indicated that during COVID-19 pandemic, young females moved their clothing shopping online (Henderson, 2023), they changed the type of clothing products they shopped for and preferred more versatile and comfortable clothing (FWO, 2023; Peshek, 2023). Different aspects also influenced them such as restrictions on their movement and emotional state (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). Also, 29% of Generation Z consumers admitted to being prone to anxiety which influenced their shopping behaviour during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Henderson, 2023). Although a previous study explored female's shopping behaviour in South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022), there is no study specific to compare females' clothing behavioural changes in terms of their buying practices and shopping styles from before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fact that consumers had suddenly adapted to the physical and mental changes within their society and their immediate environments when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, and some consumers are still adjusting to these changes, might have resulted in South African consumers changing their shopping styles and never returning to their previous shopping styles or now having to accommodate a mixture of different shopping styles (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

Although South African studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic related to more panic buying of food (Hassen, Bilali, Allahyari, Samman, & Marzban, 2022), specific channels used (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022) and changes in consumer behaviour (Kollamparambil & Oyenubi, 2021), little is known regarding how young females' clothing shopping styles evolved.

Studies conducted in the USA (Di Crosta *et al*., 2021), Europe (Eger, Komárková, Egerová & Mičík, 2021), and the UK (Schulze, 2021) can be used for context to understand changes in consumers' shopping behaviour associated with an emergency event. It is important to keep in mind that these studies were conducted in developed countries and can only provide perspective from a developed country context, while little is known about the changes in the South African and emerging countries context. Thus, it cannot be compared to the South African economy, which is still developing. Similarly, clothing shopping practices and styles before the COVID-19 pandemic differ across developed and developing contexts (Sarabia-Sanchez, De Juan Vigaray & Hota). Though most of the world went through similar emotional, physical and financial stress, a global study can't be explicitly applied to South African consumers and young females who operate in an emerging market. Therefore, this research addresses the gap regarding the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had (and currently still has) on females' clothing buying behaviour. This research will explore and describe the changes in young females' clothing buying practices and shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

Shopping styles are used by retailers and marketers as predictors and indicators to understand consumers' orientation towards brands, price, quality, experiences, and segments and to serve target markets in order to maximise profits (Sarabia-Sanchez *et al*., 2012). This study is important because a standard or universal measure and response cannot be applied to all young female consumers' clothing shopping styles. Insight into how shopping styles changed is needed to determine effective measures for future retail strategies that can address similar emergency events in South Africa. By expanding on current literature and studies with the findings of this study, brands, small businesses and retailers, relating to clothing, can be assisted in understanding how a black swan event like the COVID-19 pandemic impacted clothing buying behaviour and shopping styles for young females. This can ultimately assist with avoiding liquidation, unattainable debt and unnecessary expenditure on business responses that are not tailored to their specific consumers and target markets (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Moreover, retailers need in-depth insight into their target markets' shopping styles and buying behaviour to identify future opportunities and hurdles when another crisis, similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, arises. Retailers must understand their consumers better now, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to serve them better and retain them (Subramanian, 2019).

Conventional retail strategies include launching a new product, improving existing products, diversifying, penetrating a new target market and developing the current target market (Zentes, Morschett & Schramm-Klein, 2011). During the COVID-19 pandemic, retailers had to adjust their retail strategies and product offerings to reduce the impact of the economic pressure and their target markets' changing wants and needs (Sayyida, Hartini, Gunawan & Husin, 2021). Clothing retailers also need to address their target market's current shopping styles as they develop and evolve from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In previous years, brick-and-mortar stores were the preferred channel for consumers to use when shopping for clothing. However, shopping in general, moved towards online shopping, due to in-store restrictions and consumers' fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Although strategies used in brick-and-mortar have changed over time especially with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which guided consumers towards online shopping brick-and-mortar stores will probably never completely disappear from the market (Seth, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, brick-and-mortar stores repositioned themselves by changing their locations for convenience, adding in-store experiences and adding value-added services (Seth, 2021). It is clear retailing will never be the same again. Young females might adopt a hybrid shopping style, incorporating different channels as well. This is why it is crucial for brands and retailers to understand the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on young females to accurately adjust their usage of multichannels and omnichannels.

This study will benefit consumers by emphasising how they reacted and shopped a certain way during the COVID-19 pandemic and making sense of how their emotional, financial and physical state related to their shopping decisions (Sayyida *et al*., 2021). It will also indicate to consumers appropriate measures that brands and retailers should have taken to accurately assist their target market through the COVID-19 pandemic and afterwards (Khayru, 2021). Consumers' needs and wants would be highlighted to retailers and businesses, resulting in increased customer satisfaction. Having this information as a consumer, it could instil brand loyalty towards a specific brand or business in the future, helping consumers make better choices, which in turn aids retailers who took and are taking the correct measures to combat the effect and aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (Khayru, 2021). The study could make a theoretical contribution to the international body of literature, as it could assist academia in understanding how and why young females react in a certain way before, during and after an emergency event similar to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study could also help retailers and marketers in Gauteng, South Africa on how to approach an intricate situation due to unprecedented events like the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of this study was to explore and describe changes in the clothing shopping styles of young females before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa. Therefore, the following objectives were formulated.

Objective 1: To explore and describe clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of buying, channels and clothing categories) of young females before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa.

Objective 2: To identify and describe young females' predominant clothing shopping styles before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa.

Objective 3: To explore and describe the changes in young females' shopping styles due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa.

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Definitions of important concepts and terms used throughout the study are given below in **Table 1.1** for comprehensiveness and to increase the theoretical validity of the study.

TABLE 1.1: DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Black swan event	A black swan event can be described as an unexpected occurrence, that is unpredictable with possible serious consequences. A black swan event is used to characterize similar events and to learn from them for future reference (Raikar, 2023).
Brand conscious and price equals quality	The consumer is oriented towards buying the more expensive, well-known brands (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Confused by over-choice	Consumer perceive too many brands and stores from which to choose and experiences information overload in the market (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Consumer behaviour	Consumer behaviour refers to the buying, usage and discarding activities of goods and services of individuals or groups (Marsden, 2001).
Generation Y or millennials	The age group who reaches young adulthood in the 21st century, is anyone who was born between 1981 and 1996 (Dimock, 2019).
Generation Z	Generation Z was born between 1995-2012 (Chaney et al., 2017). Their main characteristics are that they are money-driven, ambitious, prone to anxiety, known to set boundaries, are avid gamers and use social media in a unique way (Henderson, 2023).
Habitual and brand loyal	A consumer who repetitively chooses the same favourite brands and stores (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Impulsive and careless	A consumer who buys on the spur of the moment and appears unconcerned about how much he/she spends (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Liquidation	Liquidation refers to the situation where a business' liabilities exceed its assets and might be resolved or rectified by a court order or involuntary action (Kenton, 2019).

Novelty and fashion conscious	Consumers who like new and innovative products, and gain excitement from seeking out new things (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Perfectionistic and high-quality conscious	Consumer searches carefully and systematically for the very best quality products (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Price conscious and value for money	Consumers with a particularly high consciousness of sale prices and lower prices in general (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Recreational and hedonic conscious	A consumer who finds shopping a pleasant activity and enjoys shopping just for the fun of it (Kendall & Sproles 1986).
Shopping styles	A shopping orientation or style can be described as how, where, and what the consumer wants to shop and each person's shopping orientation can differ (Luomala, 2003).

1.6 PRESENTATION AND OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1: The study in perspective

This chapter introduces the research topic and details the nature and background of the topic. Important components of this chapter include the background, the research problem, the justification of the research, the overall aim and objectives, and definitions of concepts relevant to the research study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework, and a comprehensive overview of relevant literature obtained from various sources that are significant to this research. All the relevant concepts are defined and discussed. This chapter concludes with the conceptual framework that guided this study.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

Chapter 3 covers the research design, sample and sampling techniques, instrument development and pre-testing of the questionnaire, data collection, and statistical analysis of the data. The operationalisation of the objectives is also provided, and the measures taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. This chapter concludes with the ethical considerations for the study.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study, accompanied by discussions according to the objectives thereof. The data is presented in tables and graphs in relation to the objectives set out in Chapters 1 and 2.

Chapter 5: Conclusions of the study

Chapter 5 concludes the study. This chapter offers discussions, conclusions and implications of the findings presented in Chapter 4. In addition, this chapter outlines the research limitations of the study and provides recommendations for future research in the field.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 aimed to introduce a broad overview of this study by providing background information, insight into the research problem, and a justification for the research. Furthermore, definitions of the key concepts and an outline of the dissertation were included. In the next chapter (Chapter 2), the necessary definitions and descriptions will be provided for the reader to understand certain concepts related to this study. Firstly, the discussion commences with the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in changing consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour and decision-making are explained and discussed in terms of young females' clothing shopping styles, as well as the influences certain factors have on these styles. After this, the consumer decision-making process will be defined and the different shopping styles will be explored in depth. The chapter concludes with the conceptual framework and objectives for 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

This chapter aims to provide the literature, definitions and descriptions to understand certain concepts related to this study. Firstly, the discussion commences with the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in changing consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour and decision-making are explained and discussed in terms of young females' clothing shopping styles, as well as the influences certain factors have on these styles. After this, the consumer decision-making process will be defined and the different shopping styles will be explored in depth. The chapter concludes with the conceptual framework and objectives for the study.

2.1 THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic refers to the outbreak of the coronavirus disease in 2019, with the first case being reported in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 (WHO, 2021). A pandemic can be defined as a widespread phenomenon over a whole country or in the case of COVID-19, the whole world (Robinson, 2022), whereas a restriction indicates steps or a certain measure the controlling authority had to implement to ensure the safety of its citizens (Robinson, 2022). The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (WHO, 2021). On 5 March 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was reported in South Africa, where a strict lockdown with different alert levels shortly followed (South African Government, 2022). This was the first time that consumers became aware of the impending threat and the possible consequences it would have on their day-to-day lives and shopping habits (Tymkiw, 2022).

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020 (De Villiers, Cerbone & Van Zijl 2020). In accordance with countries worldwide, the South African government implemented a rapid and strict approach to stop the spread of the virus (Durizzo *et al*., 2021). A National State of Disaster was declared on 15 March 2020 in South Africa, followed by a national Alert Level 5 ('stay at home or lockdown') order on 27 March 2020 for 3 weeks. This order was extended to 5 weeks (South African Government, 2022). Up until 5 April 2022, the South African government implemented different "Alert Levels" with different rules and regulations.

2.1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic and shopping restrictions

Alert Level 5 regulations prevented individuals from leaving their houses, except for exceptional circumstances or being an essential worker. During Level 5, people were not allowed to go to work unless they were employed with essential services organisations and were restricted in terms of the products and services they could buy during this time (South African Government, 2022). During Alert Level 5, the purchasing of clothing, either online or in stores, was prohibited, and online stores could only courier certain items. Alert Level 4 was implemented on 16 June 2020, and it was approved for businesses and brands only to sell certain types of clothing, namely baby and kids clothing and seasonal items like jackets, long pants, underwear and blankets in preparation for the winter (South African Government, 2022).

Alert Level 3 applied from 1 June to 17 August 2020. This level still prohibited residents from leaving their homes between 22:00 and 04:00 but allowed limited social gatherings and interprovincial travel. Alert Level 2 was in effect from 18 August to 20 September 2020. Alert Level 1 was in effect from 21 September to 28 December 2020 (South African Government, 2022). Although the COVID-19 pandemic had an extensive impact on clothing retailers in South Africa, the biggest impact was inflicted by Alert Level 5, as most smaller clothing retailers had to close because shopping centres still required them to pay rent even if there were no customers to buy their items and shops were closed (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022).

Bigger clothing retailers were also heavily impacted by Alert Level 5, as they had to close off certain sections in their stores and only sell items deemed a “necessity”. For example, baby clothing and seasonal wear like jackets (Omarjee, 2020). One of South Africa’s biggest clothing retailers, Edcon was among the bigger retail stores impacted heavily by the initial restrictions. Edcon prioritised paying the salaries of employees, with CEO Grant Pattison taking a 100% cut on his salary and exco members agreeing to 30% cuts to their salaries during Alert Level 5 (Omarjee, 2020). Other big clothing retailers, such as Woolworths and Mr Price Group executives, also foregone parts of their salaries to support their employees and Truworths, Mr Price Group, Woolworths and Pepkor only paid 20% of their rent to their landlords during the lockdown period (Omarjee, 2020).

2.1.2 Clothing buying practices during the COVID-19 restrictions

A clothing buying practice is an umbrella term for how specific consumers interact with the brands and items they purchase (van der Weerd, 2023). In this study, clothing buying practices refer to the frequency, channels, and clothing categories females shop for. The **frequency** with which a consumer shops for clothing refers to how often or regularly they shop for clothing. Consumers who frequently visit stores (in-store and online) are inclined to spend more time and money and are targeted by retailers and marketers (Kunc, Reichel & Novotná, (2020). In this study, the focus was specifically placed on daily, weekly, monthly and seasonal shopping According to NielsenIQ South Africa, South African shoppers reduced the frequency of their monthly shopping trips for household items and clothing, which went down from five trips per month in 2019, to an average of three times in 2021 and about 500 000 South African households were forced to stretch their monthly shopping trips to longer than a month (NielsenIQ, 2021). However, even if consumers shop less frequently for clothes during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, when they eventually did shop, the average basket size increased with four more items (NielsenIQ, 2021).

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chains were heavily disrupted and consumers struggled to find their desired products and items of clothing (McMaster, Nettleton, Tom, Xu, Cao & Qiao, 2020). The South African clothing industry was also heavily impacted by the restrictions in different countries, and imports of fabric and finished garments were delayed (McMaster *et al.*, 2020). Clothing sales were reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa due to movement restrictions of consumers, a dampened need for fashion, a lack of appearance management, the adoption of a comfortable appearance, and a lack of appropriate sizes available in-store due to supply chain disruptions (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). This, alongside the physical and emotional turmoil consumers faced with shopping in stores, pushed them towards exploring different buying channels and using multichannels to shop (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022).

The **channels for clothing shopping** were another aspect of clothing buying practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, shopping in-store for clothing was the dominant shopping channel, contributing to 68.7% of the overall retail value (Marketline, 2020). Specifically, if given the choice, females prefer to shop in brick-and-mortar stores to fit and evaluate garments (Sutinen, Saarijärvi & Yrjölä, 2021). However, when the COVID-19 pandemic started, online shopping grew by 30% compared to the previous year, with 68% of consumers preferring online shopping (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Before the pandemic, online shopping only comprised 2.8% of South Africa’s total retail spending (Daniel, 2021). This indicates that there is still a colossal opening in the market to grow online shopping within South Africa.

Rand Merchant Bank anticipates online shopping to grow by 150% by 2024, resulting in an increase of R244 billion (Thenga, 2020). The biggest factor that ultimately urged consumers towards a different channel (switching from in-store shopping to online) was that governments across the globe and in South Africa closed retail outlets to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 disease (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020). Many retailers temporarily closed their stores to switch to online shopping and began fundraising campaigns for local and international charities to support their employees (Anakpo & Mishi, 2021). When consumers saw these actions from brands and retailers, it also instilled a sense of brand loyalty towards these brands, which aided sales when the stores were open again for shopping (Dludla, 2020).

Clothing categories are defined by the setting they would be worn in, for example, casual or loungewear for when you are at home, formal wear for events, underwear, sleepwear, activewear, school uniforms, children's clothing and seasonal wear like winter jackets (Willimon, Birchfield & Walker, 2011). During the COVID-19 pandemic, casual wear increased globally as most consumers started working from home or on a hybrid working model (Achala, 2021). There was also an increase in the purchasing of activewear as consumers switched their workout routines to yoga and meditation to alleviate the stress from the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions (Achala, 2021).

A trend that became observed by many in South Africa, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic is "dopamine dressing". This is characterized by consumers purchasing and wearing bright and vibrant colours to ease the stressors of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and ultimately bring them more joy (Lupini, 2022). This is especially relevant in South Africa, due to a weakening economy, and high levels of unemployment, alongside loadshedding[3], contributing to a decline in retail growth and consumer satisfaction (Abe, 2023). The weakening economy pushed brick-and-mortar stores to re-evaluate their offerings and strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic and online stores to move towards a customer-centred approach (Abe, 2023).

2.2 CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour refers to buying, using, and discarding goods and services by individuals or groups to satisfy their needs and wants (Botha, Erasmus & Mpinganjira, 2019). Consumer buying behaviour can be referred to as a process that consumers undertake to evaluate their own purchasing decisions (Marsden, 2001). When this process was first developed and studied, it was called "buyer behaviour," emphasising that researchers at the time did not consider that the process could stretch beyond the initial act of buying an item (Solomon, Russell-Bennett & Previte, 2020). Consumer behaviour is closely linked to the consumer decision-making process (Jacoby, Johar & Morrin, 1998).

Consumer buying behaviour can be classified into three different models, compulsive buying behaviour, impulsive buying behaviour, and rational buying behaviour (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Compulsive buying behaviour is a buying practice that turns into a routine that is driven toward excessive buying, with the absence of impulse control (Ong *et al*., 2021). In contrast, impulsive buying is spontaneous and immediate, without any pre-conceived intentions before the shopping trip (Ong *et al*., 20201). Rational buying behaviour refers to consumers making purchasing

[3] Loadshedding refers to the action of reducing the stress or load on something. In South African this is related to the energy crisis, where the electricity is switched off for a certain amount of time per day, as highlighted in a schedule provided by Eskom the energy supplier. This is done to reduce the excessive load on the generating plant.

decisions out of necessity (Botha *et al.,* 2019). In the clothing and fashion context, this behaviour would refer to seasonal items, underwear, and socks, making this the behaviour that most consumers showcase (Hantula & Wells, 2014). A study on Chinese working women determined that consumer buying behaviour models are heavily influenced by a consumer's shopping style and can even be defined by their shopping style (Tai, 2005). This study can be used as a guideline for the South African market, but further research needs to be conducted within the South African context.

Likewise, consumer shopping styles are relevant during the information search and evaluation stages of the consumer decision-making process (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). Therefore, Hawkins, Best and Coney's (1998) consumer behaviour model was adopted as a theoretical model for this study. This model explains that consumer buying behaviour consists of a decision-making process influenced by various internal and external factors, as well as the consumer's self-concept and lifestyle, which in turn create needs and wants the consumer seeks to satisfy (Hawkins *et al*., 1998; Rani, 2014).

External and internal factors are some of the most prominent factors influencing a consumer's buying decision (Hawkins *et al*., 1998; Jacoby *et al*., 1998). External factors outside the consumer are marketing-related (i.e., product, price, economic, forces of nature, etc.) and socio-cultural factors (i.e., culture, sub-culture, family, social class, demographics) (Botha *et al*., 2019). Internal factors, such as perceptions, learning, motives, beliefs, personality, and attitude, are part of the consumer's experiences (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). During a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers' decision-making might change, and factors such as family, motivations and psychological factors could play a bigger role (Dulam *et al*., 2021). This is due to consumers' values shifting and a need for emotional reconnection being higher in their panic state driven by the COVID-19 pandemic (Arafat *et al*., 2020).

The role of external and internal factors differs between consumers, and only certain factors can be influenced by marketers or changed when they occur (Khalil & Raza, 2021). It is essential that marketers design their products and services with their target market's internal and external factors in mind (Kotler *et al.*, 2005). Understanding the impact of these factors on consumers' shopping styles could assist retailers when a significant change occurs in customers' behaviour. **Figure 2.1** illustrates the consumer behaviour model of Hawkins *et al*. (1998) with the various external and internal factors that influence a consumer's decision-making process and ultimately shape their clothing buying practices and shopping styles.

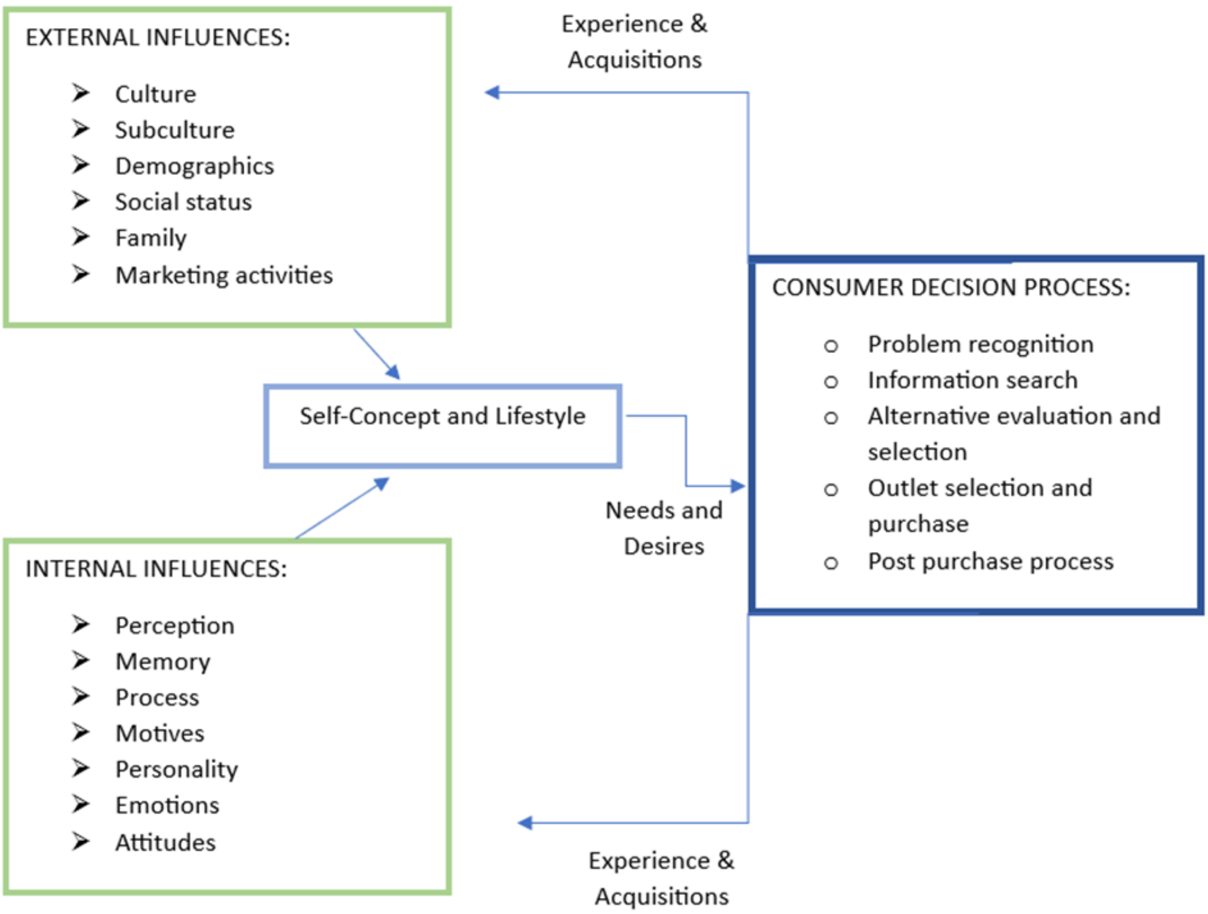


FIGURE 2.1: CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR MODEL (HAWKINS, BEST & CONEY, 1998)

2.2.1 External influences

Consumer shopping styles can be shaped and influenced by external factors as a study found female consumers with an impulsive shopping style is driven by external factors instead of internal factors when shopping for clothing (Khalil & Raza, 2021). External influences such as culture, sub-culture, demographics, social status, and family are used to segment consumers into groups that marketers, brands and retailers target in terms of their products and services (Botha *et al*., 2019). The *culture* of the consumer plays a vital role in their decision-making process and buying behaviour. It also makes it difficult for studies to determine a universal theory of buying behaviour because each country has different cultures to consider (Rani, 2014). Culture is the everyday lifestyle of a specific group of people within a larger society; it includes shared language, artefacts, knowledge, values, beliefs, customs, and traditions (Jacobs & Maree, 2019). Society also consists of *sub-cultures*, which can be categorised into groups that deviate from the mainstream culture and are categorised into religion, geographic regions, nationality and sometimes racial groups (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003). This means the way a certain group of people will consume products are highly influenced by the collective group's values and customs, and will vary between groups within the same society (Jacobs & Maree, 2019).

Demographics refers to the social characteristics (i.e., age, gender, income, population group, education) of a certain human population (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Demographics are used within the fashion industry to determine certain marketing tactics and market research for product development and forecasting (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020). For example, millennials are influential in the workplace, confident with technology, cautious about their personal data, quietly optimistic about the future, avid savers, love to travel, and are nostalgic and competitive (Henderson, 2023). These characteristics translates into their fashion and clothing purchases as well as their shopping styles and behaviour. For example, they prefer clothing that is versatile and can be suitable for daywear and nightwear or comfortable, yet suitable for office wear (Peshek, 2023). The fact that they are comfortable with technology made them more susceptible to facts as well as misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic, which in turn had a bigger effect on their shopping behaviours than older generations (Blandi *et al*., 2022; Mgiba & Nyamande, 2020). They were also the first generation to grow up in a digitally driven world that considered multimedia and smart devices essential for everyday activities and shopping (Klein & Sharma, 2021). Eger *et al*. (2021) found that generational cohorts' shopping styles differed during the COVID-19 pandemic due to different stress and external factors. Although each country's younger generations are different, millennials are the generation that is more similar to each other globally than any other generation (Blandi *et al*., 2022). This is due to globalisation, social media usage and the exportation of Western culture (Stein & Sanburn, 2013).

Gender is another demographic that influences consumer clothing buying behaviour. Women, for example, have a vastly different approach to shopping than men (Hoch, 2007). They are, in general, also the primary shoppers for clothing in their households, and even before the COVID-19 pandemic, they shopped for their family, themselves and their friends (Brennan, 2011; Brennan, 2023). During the COVID-19 pandemic, female clothing purchasing behaviour in the South African context changed drastically due to clothing retailers' compliance with the restrictions and protocols the South African government put in place as well as altered shopping experiences provided by the retailers due to the female consumers using altered shopping strategies (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

Social status is determined by a pre-set-up set of concepts in terms of social sciences and political theories in which consumers are grouped into hierarchical categories. Social statuses are categorised into lower, middle and upper class (Botha *et al*., 2019). A consumer's social status is heavily impacted by how and where they shop and affect their shopping styles (Chinwendu & Shedrack, 2018).

Family is a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage or adoption. The influence a person's family has on their purchasing decisions is extensive. It was also found in this study that a woman is the leading provider for her family in terms of clothing and this is a core example of how the composite of a family and their needs can influence how you shop for clothes and it is a testament to the fact that females are the main shoppers for clothing (Chinwendu & Shedrack, 2018).

Marketing tactics are the actions and strategies brands and retailers follow to direct their consumers and potential consumers to the launch or promotion of a product or item to influence their strategic marketing goals (Hamlin & McNeill, 2023). Marketing factors and promotions which emphasise the beauty and youth of a female, for example, bright colours, a theme and trendy music, make an impact on the female consumer, whereas men are more drawn to marketing that emphasises ambition and physical strength (Lakshmi *et al*., 2017).

2.2.2 Internal influences

Internal factors, such as personal factors, are variables of the consumer that will change over time but has an immediate effect on their behaviour at the current moment. Examples of this include perception, memory, motivations, personality, emotions and attitude (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). *Perception* relates to how the consumer perceives the brand, retailer or specific clothing item. This can be influenced by the consumer's motivational state, emotional state, and experience during decision-making (Pantano, 2011). Cultural aspects can also influence a consumer's perception, such as purchasing traditional clothing items for special events (Jacobs & Maree, 2019). *Memory* is an internal influence that refers to the consumer's ability to remember and understand the marketing messages and allocate value and meaning towards it (Friesner, 2014). Other internal factors, such as thoughts, emotions, attitudes and lifestyle mainly influence the value and meaning allocated to these messages.

Process can be described as a series of actions or steps completed to achieve a certain desired outcome (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). A process is also related to personal factors, such as ageing, which can directly influence how consumers shop for clothing and change their shopping items over time. The consumer's process of buying clothing is closely related to the consumer decision-making process, which influences their shopping styles, as explained in section 2.3 of the study.

Motivation ultimately drives a consumer to purchase or express a certain behaviour based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Loh *et al*., 2000). It links to the expression of the need that becomes urgent enough for the consumer to want to satisfy it (Rani, 2014). The level of motivation that drives the consumer towards a certain behaviour is also significant as each consumer has different physiological, biological, and social needs and different levels of them (Loh *et al*., 2000). For example, shopping for pleasure can be classified as a hedonic motive, a type of motivation driven by a desire or impulse for pleasure and fun. Apart from the hedonic motive, another type of shopping motive is the utilitarian motive. It is a motivation that considers shopping as a functional or practical task (Ong *et al*., 2021).

Personality consists of characteristics or traits inherent to the consumer (2014). Personal preferences changes as a consumer's immediate situation change. Consumers have different personalities, views, methods and approaches to shopping specifically towards buying clothing products (Klein & Sharma, 2021). These orientations influence how they behave towards products and all attributes related to them. *Emotions* are a strong feeling directly related to or caused by a person's circumstance, environment and relationship with other people around him. Emotions are one of the key factors clothing retailers consider when formulating their retail strategies as it has a direct influence on the level of customer satisfaction after a purchase, which leads to consumers repurchasing or not repurchasing the same item again (Burns & Neisner, 2006).

A consumer's *attitude* is the intensive assessment they make about a retailer, brand or item based on their personal experience. It is also related to a customer's beliefs, feelings and behavioural intentions towards your brand (Ward & Barnes, 2001). A study executed in Indonesia concluded that psychological factors such as perception, attitude, motivation, emotion, and trust affect online buying, especially in relation to clothing (Nuradina, 2022). A recent study found a significant relationship between consumers' internal factors and their shopping styles and how it affects their credit card usage for purchasing fast fashion in-store during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Gawior, Polasik & del Olmo, 2022). As mentioned, further research is needed to properly assess internal factors' impact on young female consumers in South Africa.

2.3 CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The consumer decision-making process can be defined as the process where consumers become aware of and start identifying their own needs, collect information on how to best solve these needs, evaluate alternative options, make the decision to purchase an item to satisfy this specific need and then evaluate the purchase afterwards (Millwood, 2020). The consumer decision-making process consists of five steps, namely, (1) problem recognition, (2) information search, (3) alternative evaluation and selection, (4) outlet selection and purchase decision, and (5) post-purchase evaluation (Hawkins *et al*., 1998) (**Figure 2.1**). Consumers' buying decisions also relate to their actions and behaviour, online and offline, before buying a product or service (Attreya, 2018).

A consumer's shopping style has a remarkable impact on their decision-making process (i.e., information search and evaluation stages) when it comes to making clothing decisions. Shopping styles are linked to various aspects, for example, where, when, and how they shop, their motivations, and their attitudes toward shopping (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013).

2.3.1 Problem recognition

The first step in the consumer decision-making process is when the customer recognises the need for the clothing item. This can be promoted and brought on either internally or externally through targeted marketing by retailers (Lucid, 2017). A consumer’s shopping style could also influence how quickly they become aware of the problem and react to it. An example of this is when a potential customer is getting ready for the winter season but only has light summer jackets to wear. She then spots an advertisement by a retailer for warm winter jackets, and even though she could have achieved the desired body temperature by layering different clothing items, she recognises the need for a warmer jacket and justifies it by the fact that she does not have that particular jacket yet.

2.3.2 Information search

After recognising the need for an item, the consumer starts gathering information regarding this item, either consciously or subconsciously. Depending on the consumer’s shopping style, they might either look for information online or in-store through in-store displays and information (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). The consumer’s shopping style can also determine the amount of time and effort they spend gathering the required information. Customers also rely heavily on their interactions with the specific brand or item, directly or indirectly (Payne, Johnson & Bettman, 2009). Younger consumers were found to be very aware of fashion trends and view this as an important step as they extensively research brands and products before purchasing them and also consider the opinions of their family and friends (Wahab, Mohamed & Nagaty, 2023). At this step, brands and retailers should focus on presenting themselves as trustworthy sources of information and clothing items. With clothing, a customer would Google where to find a winter jacket or the specific winter jacket she saw in the advertisement or ask relatives and friends around her (Millwood, 2020).

2.3.3 Alternative evaluation and selection

When enough information is gathered about the desired clothing item, the customer starts weighing the differences between the desired item and alternatives. Alternatives that can influence the potential customers' decision are lower prices, additional benefits, product availability, or personal style influences. The consumer's shopping style can also determine the amount of time and effort they spend evaluating the alternatives and even urge them to completely bypass this step if they have impulsive shopping style tendencies. For example, the desired jacket is only available in bright red or orange, which is not the customer's preferred style. Another influence can be loyalty points that she might receive from another brand or retailer that could result in a discount and lower price for a similar winter jacket (Millwood, 2020).

2.3.4 Outlet selection and purchase

The customer selects how and when they would like to make the purchase, either online or in a brick-and-mortar store and makes the actual purchase (Yilmazi, Gungordu & Yumusak, 2016). A consumer's shopping style can greatly impact their preferred outlet selection and purchase step, which refers to the channel they choose to purchase. A consumer's shopping style consists of a wide variety of personal preferences, behaviours, and attitudes, which can impact where and how consumers prefer to shop. For example, a *brand conscious and price equals quality consumer* is brand loyal and would most probably follow the brand on social media or stay up to date with the newest products and promotions available. They would then purchase directly from the preferred brand online or in-store (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). In contrast, a *recreational and hedonic conscious consumer*, values the social aspect of shopping and enjoys shopping with friends or family in physical stores more than online, with no physical interaction (Mandhlazi, 2012). During the COVID-19 restrictions they might have used social platforms to discuss purchases, seek recommendations, and share shopping experiences (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

A *novelty and fashion-conscious consumer* would most probably view the desired product online through social media or in person and then research it online, read reviews and compare who is wearing the same or similar item before purchasing it either online or in a brick-and-mortar store (Luo et al., 2023). A *price or value for money conscious consumer*, is a shopper who enjoys looking for the best possible "deal", and they might often go to physical brick-and-mortar stores like discount shops, outlet malls, or warehouse sales and they would most probably not settle for a purchase if they did not think it was a "bargain." This consumer might use online platforms with various promotions, for example, One Day Only, Takealot.com, Zando, Superbalist and smaller online boutique stores with specific discounts.

An *impulsive consumer*, is a consumer who makes spontaneous purchases without any preconceived plan in place and can shop both online and in physical stores, but they may be more influenced by personalized recommendations and one-click shopping features online (Luo *et al*., 2023). A *confused by over choice consumer*, can easily be confused by in-store displays as well as pop-up advertisements online. Therefore, the channel they choose to shop through will be the least intruding and would most probably not be the most used channel for the specific item or the popular choice by other consumers shopping for the same or similar items (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). A *habitual and brand loyal consumer*, are brand loyal and would most probably follow the brand on social media or stay up to date with the newest items and promotions available. They would then either make a purchase directly from the preferred brand online or in a physical brick-and-mortar store. After making the purchase for the first time, they would most likely keep shopping through this one channel (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). A *perfectionist or high-quality conscious consumer*, would most probably prefer to shop in-store as they can physically touch and feel the items and evaluate if the desired quality is present. If this consumer does decide to shop online for a certain item, they would most likely make use of a platform with a functional and lenient return policy, for example, if they are unsatisfied with the quality, they can easily return it for a refund or exchange (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

It is worth noting that shopping styles are not fixed, and individual preferences can change over time or depending on the context (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). In the context of this study, consumers were forced to change their preferred shopping channel due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this, omnichannel retail strategies emerged, which aims to provide a seamless shopping experience across both physical and online channels. This gives consumers the ability to switch between buying channels more easily based on their current needs and preferences (Luo *et al*., 2023).

2.3.5 Post purchase process

After making the purchase, the customer starts to reflect on the item, and emotion plays a big role in this last step of the process. This last step can be heavily influenced by the retailer or brand to avoid the consumer having negative feelings towards the purchase afterwards (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). This can be mitigated by good customer service, a discount on the next purchase, and targeted marketing to make the customer feel like they made the right decision, even if it was an impulse decision in some cases (Payne *et al*., 2009). For example, an *impulsive and careless consumer,* makes purchases without giving it extensive premeditated thought, therefore, this consumer is more prone to having regrets about the purchase and returning it. They might also be susceptive to cognitive dissonance if they feel like they made an irrational purchasing decision (Mandhlazi *et al*., 2013). Whereas a *price or value for money conscious* *consumer*, is a shopper who enjoys looking for the best possible "deal" and they are prone to having a sense of accomplishment after purchasing an item and they are less likely to develop post-purchase regret if they believe they brought a good deal or received value for their money (Sarabia-Sanchez, De Juan Vigaray & Hota, 2012).

A habitual and brand loyal consumer, is brand loyal and would most probably not have any regrets after purchasing an item, because they have a strong affinity for the brand (Sarabia-Sanchez *et al.,* 2012). *A recreational and hedonistic conscious consumer*, values the social aspect of shopping may have post purchase regret if their shopping experience was not what they imagined. On the opposite scale, even if the item purchase was not to their liking, they would still have a positive post purchase sentiment if their shopping experience was positive (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

A consumers' shopping style can influence the post-purchase process by moulding the consumers' expectations, emotional responses, and likelihood of satisfaction or regret after making the purchase (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). Understanding the influence shopping styles has on a consumer after making the purchase can be valuable for brands and businesses to adapt their post-purchase customer support, return policies, and communication strategies to meet the wide variety of needs and preferences of different types of consumers, especially in emergency events like the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted into strict restrictions by governments.

2.4 TYPES OF CONSUMER BUYING DECISION-MAKING

Consumer buying decision-making is highly dependent on the product and the involvement with the product, and can therefore be classified into different types, from complex or extended, variety seeking, habitual or dissonance decision-making (Botha *et al*., 2019). Understanding how and why their target market consumes the way they do help retailers to better target and reach their customers (Yilmazi *et al*., 2016). When consumers, especially young females, decide to buy clothing it is the same process as buying any other item, that being food, a service, a home good or more, but when consumers purchase clothing, it is highly related to their status and how they want to be perceived (Eastman & Liu, 2012). With young females being the main driver behind shopping, it is crucial for brands and businesses to understand their decision-making process and types and how they relate to their shopping styles.

Figure 2.2 depicts the four different types of consumer buying decision-making and how each one relates to consumer involvement and the type of product or difference in product choices.

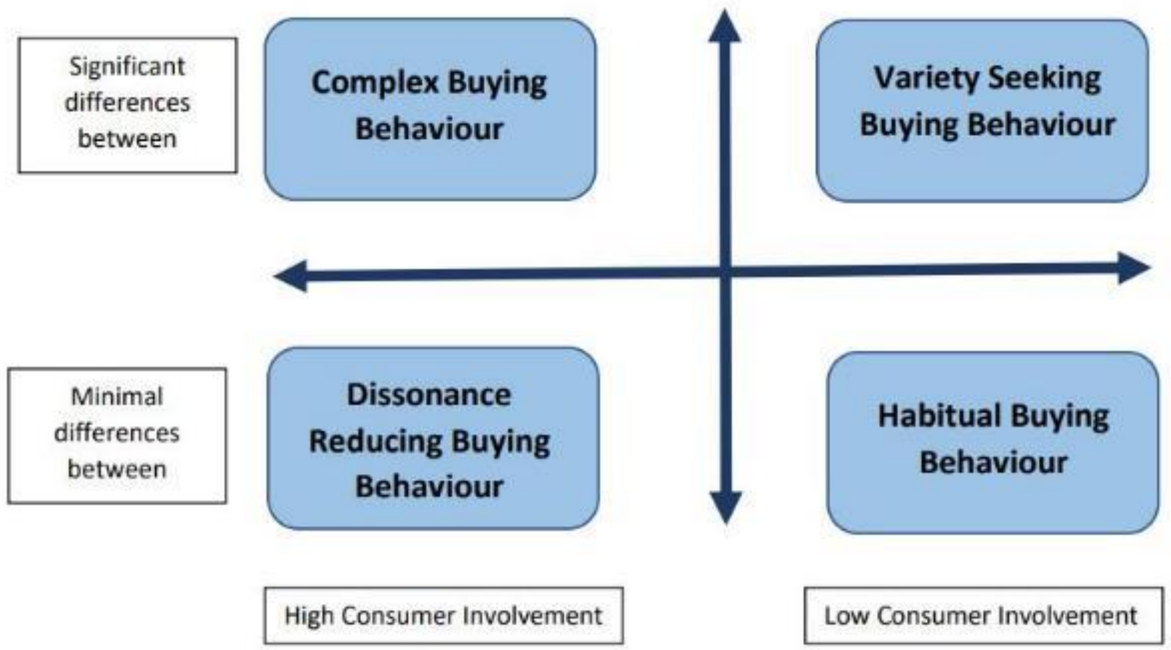


FIGURE 2.2: TYPES OF CONSUMER BUYING DECISION-MAKING (HOWARD & SETH, 1969)

2.4.1 Complex or extended decision-making

This decision-making process is usually found when consumers need to make an expensive purchase that will impact them extensively financially (Solomon, 2002). This purchase is not made often and requires adequate research from the consumer, which means they are highly involved when making this decision. During this process, the consumer will undergo a learning process, where he will first develop a belief about the purchase, thereafter attitudes and then make a thought-through decision about this specific purchase (Howard & Seth, 1969). When applying this decision to clothing, it will be high-end designer wear or expensive brands not purchased frequently. The consumer would usually consult friends and family before making the purchase because this would change his or her social status (Mandhlazi *et al*., 2013).

External factors strongly influence consumers' shopping styles when it comes to a high involvement purchase like a designer handbag (Nayeem & Casidy, 2013). Three clusters were identified: innovative informed, rational confused, and traditional habitual. Marketers and brands usually do not have to execute extensive marketing campaigns, but when they do, they should target their specific consumers with accurate information about the purchase (Solomon, 2002). Consumers involved in complex or extended decision-making were more inclined to purchase organic cotton items, which are priced higher and therefore regarded as a luxury item, although it was not necessarily a designer item (Oh & Abraham, 2015). Young females had higher product involvement when making clothing purchases (Wahab et al., 2023). This is due to females rather buying a garment that makes them feel "special", they are more aware of trends and they are more aware of new designs and would risk wearing new designs and trends.

2.4.2 Variety seeking decision-making

The consumer involvement for a variety seeking decision is low as there is a substantial difference between brands, and consumers will usually switch between brands often (Attreya, 2018). The expense of switching between brands is low, and customers will purchase different brands out of boredom or curiosity. Usually, these decisions are not made due to dissatisfaction with the brand or product but rather a desire to try something new or a different variety (Mihaela, 2015). Switching between brands usually happens unconsciously, and without intention; therefore, marketers and brands need to ensure there are no out-of-stock situations and frequent promotions and sales are run in stores as well as online (Solomon, 2002).

Young female consumers' shopping styles can greatly affect their type of decision-making. For example, a consumer with a variety seeking decision-making type would most likely switch between brands in-store as well as online to experience different environments and product selections (Lynch & Barnes, 2020). It has also been found that young females with a variety seeking decision making type, are drawn towards online shopping as it has a wide variety of items available and offers convenience (Mihaela, 2015). Brands and retailers can cater to this consumer by offering more products and implementing an omnichannel strategy.

2.4.3 Habitual decision-making

A consumer who makes habitual purchases has a low involvement in the decision-making process and finds minimal differences between the different brands available (Botha *et al*., 2019). For every day usage garments, for example underwear, basics T-shirts and socks, consumers will usually automatically look for and buy their preferred brand that they are familiar with and they do not put a lot of thought into these purchases (Mihaela, 2015). There is minimal brand loyalty for these consumers and they will easily switch to a different brand if it is on special next to their usual purchase. Consumers also do not research these purchases beforehand and are not educated on their decisions. Habitual buying behaviour is usually influenced by advertising through print media, radio and social media. Repetitive advertising is the main driving force behind these purchases as it forms brand familiarity (Attreya, 2018). Consumers who make habitual purchasing decisions are usually influenced by brands and marketers who has a wider variety of the same type of clothing item, who has more than one retail outlet or has an easily accessible online store (Oh & Abraham, 2015).

2.4.4 Dissonance decision-making

Dissonance can be defined as a lack of agreement or harmony between certain components (Mihaela, 2015). In terms of dissonance decision-making, the consumers' involvement during dissonance decision-making is very high, and this is usually a direct influence of high prices and infrequency of purchases. At the same time, there is low availability of different options for consumers, which causes limited decision-making. Consumers do not usually require a lot of information regarding the purchase and are influenced by price, promotions and advertising (Attreya, 2018). An applicable example would be a promotion where a designer item of clothing is sold with the same brand of designer perfume for a reduced price (Hasan, 2012). Brand and retailers should consider other factors when developing their strategies: information-seeking behaviours, social and peer networks, emotional and psychological factors, brand loyalty, product quality, convenience, sustainability, customer service, and cultural influences (Lynch & Barnes, 2020).

2.5 CONSUMER SHOPPING STYLES

Sproles and Kendall (1986) determined that consumers have different personalities, views, methods and approaches to shopping and specifically towards buying clothing items. These personalities influence how they behave towards products and all related attributes. Their eight defined shopping styles were grouped into two different sets of differentiated shopping styles by Zhou et al. (2010), namely, hedonic and utilitarian shopping styles. Hedonic shopping styles are a grouping of brand consciousness, novelty and fashion consciousness, recreational and hedonistic shopping and habitual/ brand loyalty consumers (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). The second set of shopping styles, the utilitarian shopping style, is a grouping of quality consciousness, price and value consciousness and confusion by over-choice consumers (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). In the current economic environment, it is not enough for retailers to rely only on the traditional marketing mix of product, place, price and promotion, but rather understand their consumers and how and why they shop in a certain way (Mihaela, 2015).

Shim and Kotsiopulos (1993) indicated that shopping styles can be used to segment different consumers by using them as predictors and indicators. By understanding their consumers and shopping styles, brands and retailers can maximise their profits and customer satisfaction through retail performance (Ladhari *et al*., 2019). By using Sproles and Kendall's outline of shopping styles to understand how young females changed their shopping styles due to the COVID-19 pandemic, brands and retailers could accurately prepare for future pandemics and black swan events. Sproles and Kendall's (1986) consumer style inventory (CSI) consists of eight shopping styles: (1) perfectionist and high-quality conscious, (2) brand conscious and price equals quality, (3) novelty and fashion conscious, (4) recreational and hedonic conscious, (5) price conscious or value for money, (6) impulsive and careless, (7) confused by over-choice, and (8) habitual and brand loyal.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, young female consumers were found to be more brand-conscious, fashion-conscious, impulsive and recreational when shopping and had a higher tendency to shop online for clothing with their smartphones (Eriksson *et al*., 2017). They also belonged to more loyalty programs and made use of more loyalty award schemes than young males, which in turn made them more susceptible to have brand consciousness/price equals quality and price or "value for money" shopping conscious shopping styles (Kraljević & Filipović, 2017).

2.5.1 Perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style

A perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style reflects an orientation that is focused on best quality products and consistently looks for these qualities (Nayeem & Marie-IpSooching, 2022). This characteristic of a consumer measures the degree to which he or she will search attentively and systematically for the best quality products (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). The perfectionist and high-quality consumer will not settle for a mediocre product or item and will most probably do extensive research and read reviews before making a purchase (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020).

Young females are not often found to be in this consumer group, as they are usually on a stricter budget and have not yet evolved in life to be able to afford purchases like these, because high quality items are often associated with a high price (Klein & Sharma, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, there were massive shortages worldwide due to supply chains being shut down because of different COVID-19 outbreaks and this could have affected the perfectionist and high-quality conscious consumers to behave differently when entering their buying journey during this time, because of the lack of options and high-quality items (Shih, 2020).

A recent study conducted in Australia found that most Australian clothing customers are "high-end" and quality focused consumers, which resulted in the findings that retailers in the specific region can use consumer decision-making styles to accurately identify their target market and use the theory behind it from Sproles and Kendal to accurately market their clothing items to them (Nayeem & Marie-IpSooching, 2022). This indicates that shopping styles can be used to group consumers related to their clothing purchases. Another study found that females are more perfectionistic than males when making the decision to buy a clothing item (Wahab *et al*., 2023). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of young female consumers, aged 18-35, in Johannesburg, South Africa and Lagos, Nigeria, had utilitarian dimensions, like a perfectionist shopping style (Duh & Iyiola, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic significantly influenced the behaviour of perfectionist and high-quality-conscious consumers. A study in the Philippines determined that these consumers prioritise quality and perfection while shopping for clothing and expect a high level of service and product excellence. These consumers became even more vigilant and attentive about product safety and quality during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this also directly caused them to choose online shopping over in-store shopping, even if the restrictions were lifted. A perfectionist and high-quality consumer acknowledged the high-quality brands that remained resilient throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, which instilled further brand loyalty towards them (Ong *et al*., 2021).

2.5.2 Brand conscious and price equals quality shopping style

A brand conscious and price equals quality consumer is very brand loyal and believes that a higher priced item from a well-known brand will equate to good quality (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020). These consumers will more frequently buy more expensive items with a popular name than items with the same function but a less well-known brand name (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020). It has been determined through a study in Taiwan that consumers who are generally brand conscious, are heavily influenced by quality, which could either have a negative or positive effect on them (Hsin *et al*., 2009).

As with the perfectionist and high-quality conscious consumer, the disruptions in supply chains could have impacted the quality of the items or prevented this consumer from allocating the desired brand or product (Shih, 2020). These disruptions caused this consumer to shift from in-store shopping to online shopping and buying brands with a clear social responsibility during the COVID-19 restrictions (Ong *et al*., 2021). If their preferred brand showed these characteristics and actions, it could instil a stronger sense of brand loyalty within the consumer (Ong *et al*., 2021). This study will assist in determining if these consumers switched to a different or even cheaper brand with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic or if their shopping style remained the same (Mandhlazi *et al*., 2013).

2.5.3 Novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style

This shopping style and consumer is driven by innovation and needs to be seen with the latest trends and fashion. This consumer also enjoys looking for the latest items and trends (Dlodlo &

Mahao, 2020). A recent study in South Africa found that Generation Y generally identifies as novelty and fashion-conscious consumers, focusing on fads and promoting them (Mandhlazii *et al*., 2013). Consumers being confined to their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for the novelty and fashion-conscious consumer to be seen with the latest items and trends. This could possibly be why many countries experienced a colossal increase in their use of social media in the year 2020, as consumers were confined to their homes and had more time to access social media (Statistics Research Department, 2022). Social media was used as an escape for consumers to be still deemed fashionable by shopping for the latest clothing items online and then posting about it on social media, without necessarily going to an event or being seen in person (Statistics Research Department, 2022).

2.5.4 Recreational and hedonic conscious shopping style

This is the extent to which a consumer enjoys shopping, either online or at a brick-and-mortar store. This consumer does not necessarily need or want the items being purchased but rather just enjoys the experience that comes with shopping. A recreational and hedonic conscious consumer is usually not price sensitive and will result in impulse buying from time to time (Sproles & Kendall, 1990).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, impulse buying reached an all-time high, especially for online sales, while brick-and-mortar stores were closed (Chauhan, Banerjee & Dagar, 2021). With the emotional pressures and distress of an unknown future, many consumers turned towards online shopping as an emotional and stress outlet. They shopped for fun, enjoyment, and stress relief (Chauhan *et al*., 2021). Young females are often part of this consumer group, with their need to socialise, frequently outweighing their budgetary constrictions. They often tend to shop for the latest trends and clothing items instead of household items (Klein & Sharma, 2021).

2.5.5 Price conscious and value for money shopping style

This is a consumer who has a high consciousness of sales, sale prices and lower prices in general (Klein & Sharma, 2021). This consumer is not particularly brand loyal and will switch between brands to save money (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). In a study done in 2010 of female students in South Africa, it was determined that female Caucasian students are more price conscious, compared to other female Chinese and Motswana students (Radder, Li & Pietersen, 2010). It has been determined that consumers reverted to 'panic buying' their essential items during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many disregarding specific brands but rather bringing what was available or on sale at the time (Helisz *et al*., 2021). Panic buying is a factor that impacted especially retail brands and businesses in general at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in

South Africa. Clothing items were not among the most purchased items in this stage, with consumers focusing on household items (Cooper & Gordon, 2021).
Young consumers before the COVID-19 pandemic were more price conscious and value for money consumer shopping style (Duh & Iyiola, 2020). A study in the Philippines determined that these consumers started reassessing if higher-priced items actually translated into better quality products due to budget constraints and cost- conscious decisions. This consumer became even more vigilant and attentive in their "search for value" during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this also directly caused them to explore discounts, promotions and sales, either in-store or online (Ong *et al*., 2021).

2.5.6 Impulsive and careless shopping style

An Impulsive and careless consumer tends to spend recklessly without consideration if there is an actual need for the product and the costs related to it (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). As with the price-conscious and value-for-money consumer, the COVID-19 pandemic and stress related to it, could have driven these consumers to revert to extreme panic buying unnecessary products and items (Corporate Finance Institute, n.d.).

On the contrary, it has been proven that the impulsive and careless consumer also prefers to visit brick-and-mortar stores and browse through different options resulting in impulse purchases (Klein & Sharma, 2021). This shopping characteristic could have led to this consumer being especially frustrated during the initial lockdowns, with limited stores being open, which could have then resulted in an influx of online purchases. This is especially true towards millennials, who are proven to be the first drivers for online shopping (Klein & Sharma, 2021).

2.5.7 Confused by over-choice shopping style

This consumer is easily confused by too much marketing information and an excess of similar products to choose from (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). This consumer can either be consciously or unconsciously confused by marketers by either a stimulus overload or stimulus similarities in their environment (Mitchell & Papavassiliou, 1999). During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, brands, retailers, and businesses didn't have time to prepare their marketing strategies, and later on in the pandemic, many of them cut their budgets for marketing. This could have given this consumer time to evaluate certain options without being overly stimulated, but at the same time retailers later on in the pandemic tailored all their marketing towards the COVID-19 pandemic and this could have confused this consumer even more (Blum, 2021).

2.5.8 Habitual and brand loyal shopping style

This is a consumer who repeatedly chooses the same brand or store and needs extensive convincing or for the product to be unavailable before purchasing another brand (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). As with the other shopping styles mentioned above, there could have been a shortage of the desired items, and the habitual and brand loyal consumer could have been forced to purchase a different brand or item (Shih, 2020). Most young females tend to stay away from this characteristic, as they are still determining their favourite brands and products and when decided, most of these items are fads, which quickly results into them switching to a different brand or product (Klein & Sharma, 2021). It has been determined that younger consumers, specifically Generation Y, are more brand loyal when purchasing fashion items (Luo *et al*., 2023).

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, habitual and brand loyal consumers had to change their preferred buying channel or make use of an omnichannel, due to budget constraints, as well as health and safety concerns (Ong *et al*., 2021). They also switched to buying brands with a clear social responsibility during the COVID-19 restrictions (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). If their preferred brand showed these characteristics and actions, it instilled an even stronger sense of brand loyalty within the consumer (Ong *et al*., 2021). This study will assist in determining if these consumers switched to a different or even cheaper brand with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic or if their shopping style remained the same (Mandhlazi *et al*., 2013).

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework (**Figure 2.3**) was developed to guide the research and to conceptualize the objectives formulated for this study. For this study, the focus was placed on the consumer buying behaviour, of young females before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Consumer buying behaviour can be classified into four different types of buying behaviour, namely, complex buying behaviour, variety seeking buying behaviour, habitual buying behaviour and dissonance reducing buying behaviour, during the COVID-19 pandemic **(Figure 2.2)**.

This study aims to specify how young females' shopping styles, specifically related to clothing, changed before, during, and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng. Consumers' shopping styles are defined into eight mental characteristics of their buying behaviours: perfectionism or high-quality conscious, brand conscious, novelty-fashion conscious, recreational-hedonistic shopping conscious, price-value for money conscious, impulsive, confusion over choice of brands, stores and consumer information and lastly habitual-brand loyal orientation towards consumption (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013).

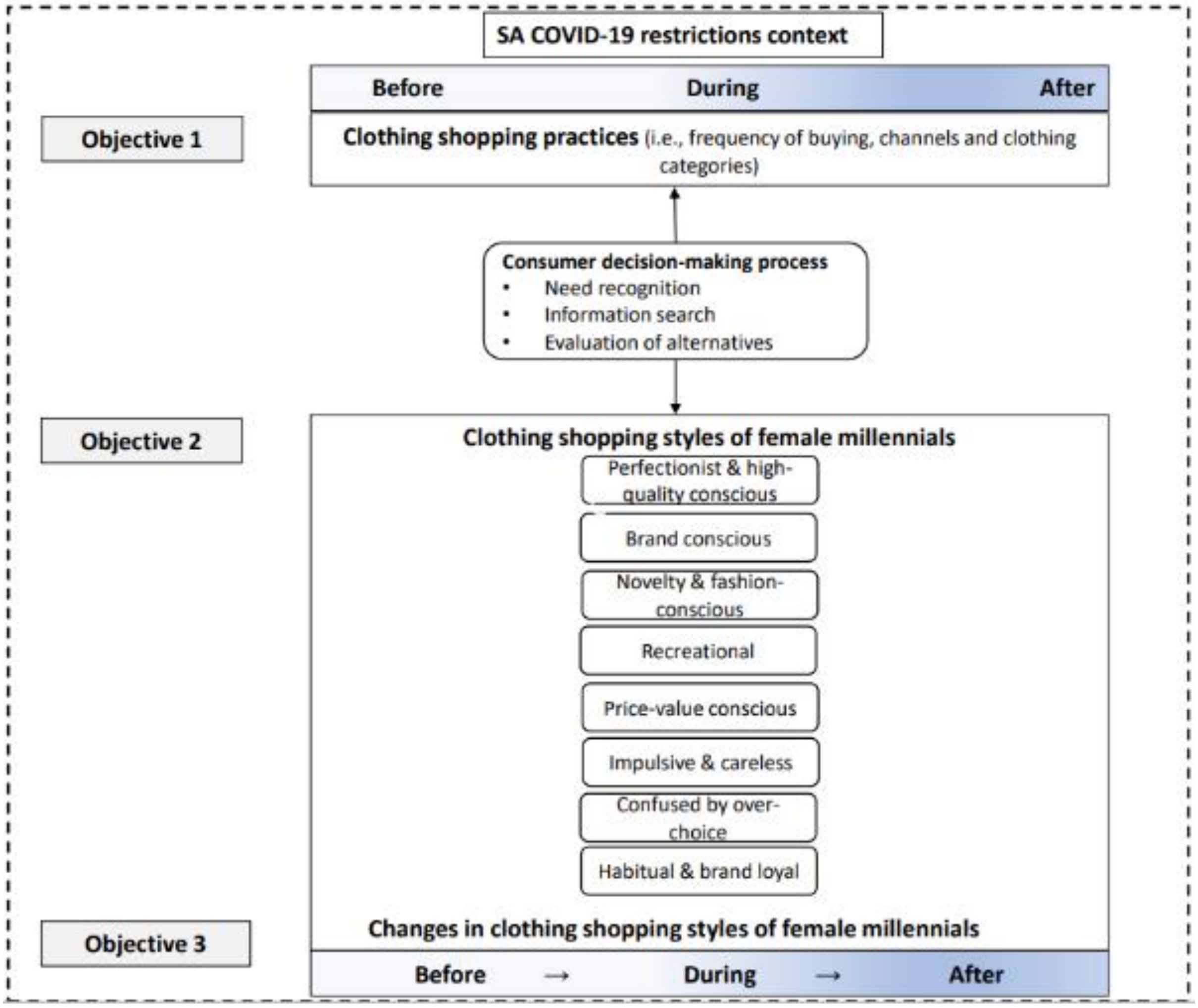


FIGURE 2.3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK YOUNG FEMALE'S SHOPPING PRACTICES AND SHOPPING STYLES

The conceptual framework indicates that consumers have different clothing shopping practices, in terms of the frequency they shop, the channels they use and the clothing categories that shop for. These practices inherently influence their consumer decision making process, defined as their need recognition, information search and evaluation of alternative items. The consumer decision making process leads into their different shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

By using Sproles and Kendall's model of different shopping styles, it is already determined that consumers have different approaches and shop through various channels that impacts how brands should approach their consumers and marketing towards them (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). The theory of Hawkins on consumer behaviour states that consumers display different behaviours before, during or after their purchasing decision (Rathje, Zumpfe & Schiffman, 2007). These behaviours can be predicted to an extent if the retailers and brands understand their target market and the shared experiences they are going through, in this case, the COVID-19 pandemic. This study will strive to determine if and how consumers, specifically young females in Gauteng were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to their clothing buying practices behaviour and how their shopping styles changed.

2.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Taking the research problem and relevant literature into review, the following research objectives were developed to explore and describe the changes in young females' clothing buying practices and shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa.

Objective 1: To explore and describe clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of buying, channels and clothing categories) of young females before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa.

Objective 2: To identify and describe young females' predominant clothing shopping styles before, during, and after COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa.

Objective 3: To explore and describe the changes in young females' shopping styles due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa.

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the literature related to clothing buying behaviour and shopping styles. The literature highlighted the influence different factors have on consumers' buying behaviour and ultimately their shopping styles. Research on this topic has more extensively been done in developed economies such as Europe and America during the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited research focused on an emerging economy such as South Africa related to young females. This chapter concluded with a conceptual framework and an outline of the objectives of this study. The research methodology will be discussed and justified in the next chapter (Chapter 3). Chapter 3 covers the research design, approach, and purpose as well as the target population, nature of the sample, and the sampling techniques. The questionnaire and relevant sections of the questionnaire used to measure the primary constructs are conceptualised, discussed and visualised in the operationalisation table. The data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability steps are then presented to ensure the quality of the data, and lastly, ethical considerations that apply to this study are presented.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research methodology followed in this research is explained and justified. The chapter covers the research design, approach and purpose and specifies the target population, nature of the sample, and the sampling techniques. Thereafter the instrument development is explained and the operationalisation table is displayed. The data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability aspects are then presented to ensure the quality of the data, and lastly, ethical considerations that apply to this research.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN, APPROACH AND PURPOSE

The aim of this study was to investigate changes in young females' shopping styles due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Gauteng, South Africa. A study's research design can be described as the specific methods used to identify, specify, collect and analyse the information collected to conclude the research examination (Swanepoel, 2015). A survey research design was used for this study and data were collected with an online questionnaire distributed in 2020 and 2023. A survey is a study of a specific population sample, where quantitative and numerical descriptions of their trends, attitudes or opinions can be drawn (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). A survey can, therefore, be used to collect specified demographic information from a targeted sample and information such as their buying practices and shopping styles from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. With a survey design, it was possible to generate a high response rate and collect data that could be conceptualised into quantitative data for understanding the sample population's behaviour (Swanepoel, 2015).

This research consisted of two studies – Study 2020 and Study 2023. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, an online questionnaire was distributed to both male and female respondents between the ages of 18-65 years in Gauteng, South Africa, as this questionnaire was part of a bigger study to determine the overall shopping behaviour and shopping styles during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study included questions relating to both clothing and grocery purchases. To ensure the first questionnaire was relevant to the following study, all responses to questions not related to clothing were removed, and demographics not part of the targeted sample (i.e., young females aged 18-35). In 2023, data collection was repeated by distributing an amended questionnaire focused on only clothing practices. This questionnaire was also only distributed to the targeted sample of young females aged 18-35 years in Gauteng, South Africa. This was called Study 2023.

A quantitative approach was used to design both questionnaires and numerical values were assigned to variegated variables to draw conclusions that may exist in the sample (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). A quantitative approach was used because of the rapid results and analysis that can be extracted from it. This approach is focused on a specific topic and assists with scientific and statistical analysis. Moreover, the research will be empirical due to the primary data used to draw conclusions and answers to the research problem (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). The research's purpose was exploratory-descriptive, which allows for useful exploration and description of the occurrence under investigation (Swanepoel, 2015). It is advantageous for the research to be exploratory-descriptive because it is mainly a low cost to the researcher, it aids in ensuring a foundation for the research that could possibly lead to further research on the topic, and it ensures the researcher has a firm comprehension of the research topic early on in the study (Swanepoel, 2015).

These two studies were cross-sectional, as multiple responses were recorded from respondents within two different timeframes but at one point in time (Swanepoel, 2015). A cross-sectional study is an observational study where data is analysed from a population and is widely used in the social sciences. This was the fastest approach to gain the most insight into the changes consumers experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic and the relevant demographics. By analysing this research, South African clothing retailers in Gauteng will be able to accurately prepare and understand their consumers for the next black swan event as well as understand their target market and how they shop in crisis situations more precisely.

3.2 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

3.2.1 Sample

A population is a group of individuals with similar characteristics (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). This study's target population is female individuals within Gauteng, South Africa. Young females are known to be the largest and most educated generation in the international economy (Maluleke, 2018). Therefore, retailers require in-depth knowledge on their consumers' shopping styles and how to market to them (Kraljević & Filipović, 2017). When referring to "young" females, this includes any female between the age of 18-35. This includes a section of millennials born between 1988 and 1994 and a section of Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2005.

Generation Z was born between 1995 and 2012 (Chaney et al., 2017). Their main characteristics are that they are money-driven, ambitious, prone to anxiety, known to set boundaries, are avid gamers and use social media in a unique way (Henderson, 2023). It has been determined, in a different study, which includes both males and females, that 29% of Generation Z consumers admitted to being prone to anxiety and this influenced their shopping behaviour during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, as the stressors of the pandemic increased anxiety worldwide (Henderson, 2023). Generation Z consumers puts comfort and functionality first when making decisions on clothing purchases. This is why they gravitate towards designs that allow them to move freely and effortlessly while favouring a relaxed and oversized silhouette (FWO, 2023). An accurate example of this is lounge and sleepwear to go out as well as cargo pants.

The whole millennial group was born between 1980-1994. The most prominent characteristics of millennials are that they are influential in the workplace, confident with technology, cautious about their personal data, quietly optimistic about the future, avid savers, love to travel, and are nostalgic and competitive (Henderson, 2023). These characteristics translate into their fashion and clothing purchases, shopping styles, and behaviour. For example, they prefer clothing that is versatile and comfortable and can double up as office wear (Peshek, 2023). Being comfortable with technology made them more susceptible to news and misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic, which in turn had a considerable effect on their shopping behaviours than older generations (Blandi *et al*., 2022).

South Africa's population currently consists of 55.6 million people, who are officially accounted for in the form of a census, this number is divided into five population groups, namely, Africans, Caucasians, Coloureds, Indians and Asians, according to the Population Equity Act of South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2015) 51% of the nation is female 49% is male, with 80.5% being Africans, 8.3% Caucasians, 8.8 % Coloureds and 2.5% are either Indian or Asian (Statistics South Africa, 2015). The youth (anyone aged between 18-34 years) in South Africa makes up more than a third of the population, which is 17.84 million people. 30% of this youth lives in Gauteng, 19,4% in Kwa-Zulu Natal, 4,7% in the Free State and only 2% in the Northern Cape (Statistics South Africa, 2015). This research only targeted young females in this province because 30% of South Africa's youth live in Gauteng.

For this research, the unit of analysis can be described as the smallest criteria to be included in the study to make up the collective requirements (Swanepoel, 2015). Young South African females were selected as the target population. These consumers came from a wide variety of different educational backgrounds and levels of household incomes. The focus was placed on females because they are the main drivers for fashion and clothing purchases (Hoch, 2007). Young females were specifically analysed and surveyed because they were the most accessible target market to research at the given time, and they are the majority of consumers who make fashion and luxury fashion purchases (Netzer, 2020). Young females are a primary source of income for clothing retailers and therefor this study is very relevant to clothing brands and businesses (Hoch, 2007).

For Study 2020, females and males between the ages of 18-65 were recruited across Gauteng in South Africa, but only the aged relevant female responses were used. Thereafter, only the responses of the targeted young females between 18-35 years were used for this study and all irrelevant questions unrelated to clothing and shopping styles were deleted. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents living in Gauteng. This province hosts the majority of the total population of South Africa, with 24.5%, which results into 15 810 388 people (Statistics South Africa, 2021). For Study 2023, only females between the ages of 18 and 35 years living in Gauteng were recruited. A sample included the subsection of the larger population that the researcher aims to examine (Swanepoel, 2015). The sample for Study 2020 included consumers who met the following criteria:

- ✓ Females who were currently living in Gauteng, South Africa. The research used this geographic location to draw the sample and the study on young females' shopping behaviour before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Females who were between the ages of 18-35. These consumers formed part of the economically active population (StatsSA, 2019). They were also at an age where they were likely to purchase clothing.
- ✓ Females who understood English so that they could accurately respond to the survey questions and their shopping behaviours.
- ✓ Females who had access to a cell phone or laptop to complete the web-based survey electronically.

The sample for Study 2023 included consumers who met the following criteria:

- ✓ Females who were currently living in Gauteng, South Africa. The reasearch used this geographic location to draw the sample and the study on young females shopping behaviour before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Females who were between the ages of 18-35. These consumers formed part of the economically active population (StatsSA, 2019). They were also of an age where they were likely to be purchasing clothing.
- ✓ Females who understood English so that they could accurately respond to the survey questions and provide assistance with their shopping behaviours.
- ✓ Females who had access to a cell phone or laptop to complete the web-based survey electronically.

The sample size refers to the number of respondents who accurately completed the online survey without opting out before it was finished (Swanepoel, 2015). For this research, a total of 188 respondents that fit the sampling criteria were filtered from the 2020 data set and completed the online questionnaire for Study 2020. For the 2023 study, 184 completed questionnaires were retrieved.

3.2.2 Sampling techniques

A non-probability sampling technique was used meaning that the sample selection was not sporadic and random, and not everyone in the population had a chance to be recruited for the research (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). Using a non-probability sampling technique is the most efficient for this study as it complements the fact that it is exploratory research. This indicates that it is a methodology approach that explores research questions that have not been answered or studied before in a specific scenario. Due to time and cost constraints, this was the most suitable sampling technique. This convenience sampling method is regrettably not a fair representation of the South African population or the Gauteng province, but due to financial constraints, this method is faster and more economical (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2019). A convenience sampling method is a non-probability sampling that indicates that a sample is drawn from a part of the population that is easily accessible to the researchers (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). The samples for Study 2020 and Study 2023 were recruited through social media channels like WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and emails, with a link taking the potential respondent directly to the questionnaire.

The first questionnaire was distributed at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, targeting females and males between the ages of 18-65 across Gauteng in South Africa. This questionnaire was part of a larger study researching both clothing and grocery shopping behaviours and styles during the COVID-19 restrictions. After that, only the responses of the targeted young females between 18-35 years were selected for this study. A second follow-up questionnaire was distributed at the beginning of 2023 to gain an accurate insight into how young female consumers' shopping styles have changed since the onset of the pandemic in 2020.

3.3 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Instrument development refers to the measurement tool that is constructed to validate the collected data and process it into measurable quantitative data (Kumar, 2014). The instrument development used in this study was the development of an online questionnaire from with which the survey was distributed to respondents. A questionnaire is a research instrument used to gather quantitative and/or qualitative data from respondents by asking a series of relevant questions (Fowler, 2013). The advantage of using a questionnaire is that data obtained can be numerically quantified to allow for a statistical analysis (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). Moreover, questionnaires are considered cost efficient and allow for accurate regularity of the data, provide access to a broad audience of respondents as well as anonymity to them (Kumar, 2014).

Questionnaires for Study 2020 and Study 2023 were constructed using the Qualtrics online platform, which is a user-friendly web-based survey tool. The questionnaires were designed to meet the ethical requirements for studies conducted on human participants to produce reliable and valid results. The use of this online platform allowed for the utilisation of different types of questions. Forced response questions were utilised to reduce missing data instances with the addition of ‘prefer not to say’ options on any sensitive questions. This also ensured that there were no missing data. A total of 38 items measured the various shopping styles on a 5-point Likert-type scale with varying degrees of agreement and disagreement. Respondents were required to indicate their agreement by selecting 1 as strongly disagree and 5 as strongly agree. The questionnaires aimed to collect data for the relevant research constructs which were analysed and presented in Chapter 4 and 5. The objectives, constructs, dimensions and items are presented in **Table 3.1**. This questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

Consent letter: A cover letter that consisted of a consent form was provided before the questionnaire to ensure that participants willingly agreed to partake in the study. The consent form included the nature and purpose of the study, the research procedure, the confidentiality statement, the 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 three screening questions.

Screening questions: The screening questions were done before the questionnaire to ensure that participants adhered to the prerequisites of the study; for example, that they were old enough to partake in the questionnaire, they were female and lived in Gauteng, South Africa. The screening questions were: (1) “Are you between the ages of 18 and 35 years?”, (2) “In which province do you live?”, (3) “Do you identify as female, male or prefer not to say”. After participants answered the screening questions, they could proceed to complete the questionnaire on their own time. The questionnaires were divided into three sections namely Section A, B and C.

Section A: Section A was used to determine the demographics (i.e., age, gender, population group, income and highest level of education) of the respondents, through direct and close-ended questions.

Section B: The frequency, shopping channel and shopping categories were also in Section A. Respondents were asked to indicate their general clothing shopping frequency before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions by indicating if they shopped 1 = daily, 2 = weekly, 3 = 2-3 times a month, 4 = once a month or 5 = seasonal. They were also asked to indicate their preferred clothing shopping channel before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions by rating how often they shopped either in-store (e.g., Woolworths or PnP clothing), online (e.g., Shein or Superbalist), both (in-store and online) and informal retailing (e.g. flea market). They could rate these items by selecting 1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = about half of the time, 4 = most of the time and 5 = always. To measure how the respondents shopped different clothing categories before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, they were asked to drag and drop the categories in order of importance. The clothing categories were leisure or casual wear, active or sportswear, seasonal clothing (e.g., swim wear or winter jackets), formal or work wear, underwear, sleepwear, children's clothing, speciality clothing (e.g., cocktail and evening dresses) and school uniforms.

Section C: Section C was developed from Sproles and Kendall's (1986) consumer decision-making styles scale. Items from Sproles and Kendall's (1986) scale were adapted to measure the different clothing shopping styles during COVID-19 restrictions as well as before and after. The shopping styles measured were (1) perfectionist and high-quality conscious (five items), (2) brand conscious and price equals quality (four items), (3) novelty and fashion conscious (four items), (4) recreational and hedonic conscious (six items), (5) price-conscious or value for money (five items), (6) impulsive and careless (six items), (7) confused by over-choice (four items), and (8) habitual and brand loyal (three items). Lysonski & Durvasula (2013) were used to reword and reference the shopping styles. Respondents had to indicate their agreement on a Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

In academic studies, there is basic guidelines that need to be followed when developing and conducting a questionnaire, to yield the best quality respondents and data (Swanepoel, 2015). Because of these basic guidelines ambiguous, complex academic jargon and leading questions were avoided when constructing the questionnaires. As the structured self-administered online questionnaires were developed from existing scales it needed to be pre-tested before sending it to respondents. Questionnaires are pretested to eliminate errors and avoid an unnecessary waste of time (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). Once the questionnaires were completed using Qualtrics, it was available to be reviewed and tested by the researchers as if they were one of the respondents. This allowed for any immediate errors to be identified before pre-testing and publishing the survey on others. This ensured that the questions were understandable and concise while meeting the objectives of this study. It was also evaluated to determine if any of the questions was biased, offensive or difficult to understand. The questionnaires for both Study 2020 and Study 2023 were pretested. Study 2023 was pretested on 66 respondents of whom only 30 successfully completed the whole questionnaire. After the pretesting spelling errors were corrected, colours like green and red was introduced to the longer questions with the word "before" in green and "after" in red. Questions were moved around as some respondents indicated that they were fatigued by seemingly repetitive questions, this is also translated into the high dropout rate of the pilot questionnaire, which is more than 50%.

3.4 CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION

Operationalisation involves defining and measuring the key constructs and objectives that support and inform the study (Kumar, 2014). Key constructs identified for this study included exploring and describing the clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of buying, channels and clothing categories) of young females before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions (objective 1). To identify and describe young females' predominant clothing shopping styles before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa (objective 2). To explore and describe the changes in young females' shopping styles as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the South African market (objective 3). Each construct is further broken down into measurable dimensions, indicators and applicable questionnaire items to ensure the study adheres to the research aim and objectives (Kumar, 2014).

Table 3.1 summarises the objectives, the primary constructs, the dimensions, as well as the indicators pertaining to each construct. The adapted measuring instruments used to measure the concepts are indicated in the table with the appropriate references.

TABLE 3.1: CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION

Objectives	Construct	Dimensions	Indicators	Adapted Items & scales Frequency scales	Q# 2020 During	Q# 2023 Before	Q# 2023 Post
Objective 1: To explore and describe clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of buying, channels and clothing categories) of young females **<u>before, during and after the</u> COVID-19** restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa.	Clothing buying practices	Frequency of buying Channels Clothing categories	Daily, weekly, 2-3 times a month, once a month, seasonal In-store, online, both, informal leisure /casual wear, active wear, seasonal clothing, formal / work wear, underwear, sleep wear, school uniforms	Please indicate your general shopping frequency <u>before, during and after</u> the COVID-19 restrictions (i.e., Daily, weekly, 2-3 times a month, once a month, seasonal)	Q16	Q6	Q6
				How frequently did you shop through the following channels (i.e., retail stores, online, both, informal retailers)	<u>Q19</u>	<u>Q7</u>	<u>Q8</u>
				<u>Before, during and after the</u> COVID-19 restrictions which of the following clothing categories were/are a priority to purchase (i.e., leisure /casual wear, active wear, seasonal clothing, formal / work wear, underwear, sleep wear, school uniforms)	<u>Q22</u>	<u>Q10</u>	<u>Q11</u>
Objective 2: To identify and describe young females' clothing shopping styles **<u>before, during and after the</u>** COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa.	Shopping styles	Scales adapted from Sproles and Kendall (1986) 5-point Likert-type agreement scale (1= Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly agree) *Please indicate your agreement with the following statements in terms of your shopping style **<u>before, during and after</u>** the COVID-19 restrictions.*			**Q# 2020**	**Q# 2023**	**Q# 2023**
		Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	Consumer search attentively and systematically for the best quality products.	• High quality is very important to me • I try to get the very best or the perfect choice • I try to select the very best quality products • In general, I usually try to buy the best overall quality • My standards and expectations for products I buy is very high	Q27_8 Q27_9 Q27_10 Q27_11 Q27_12	Q13_8 Q13_9 Q13_10 Q13_11 Q13_12	Q17_8 Q17_9 Q17_10 Q17_11 Q17_12
		Brand conscious and price equals quality	Brand loyal and believe that a higher priced item from a well-known brand will equate to good quality	• The most advertised brands are usually good choices • I prefer buying the best-selling brands • The more expensive brands were usually better choices • The higher the price of a product, the better its quality.	Q27_1 Q27_2 Q27_3 Q27_4	Q13_1 Q13_2 Q13_3 Q13_4	Q17_1 Q17_2 Q17_3 Q17_4
		Novelty and fashion-conscious	This consumer gains pleasure from looking for	• To get variety, I shop at different retailers • I shop for trendy products	Q27_31 Q27_32	Q13_31 Q13_32	Q17_31 Q17_32

			the latest items and trends.	• It is important to me to buy fashionable products • It's fun to buy something new and exciting	Q27_33 Q27_35	Q13_33 Q13_35	Q17_33 Q17_35
		Recreational and hedonic conscious	This is the extent to which a consumer enjoys the activity of shopping, either online or at a brick-and-mortar store	• Shopping is a pleasant activity for me • Shopping in-store saves time (reverse) • Going shopping is one of the enjoyable activities of my life • I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it • I made my shopping trips fast (reverse) • Shopping online saved time.	Q27_13 Q27_14 Q27_15 Q27_16 Q27_17 Q27_38	Q13_13 Q13_14 Q13_15 Q13_16 Q13_17 Q13_38	Q17_13 Q17_14 Q17_15 Q17_16 Q17_17 Q17_38
		Price and value for money conscious	Consumer is not particularly brand loyal and will switch between brands to save money	• I buy as much as possible at sale price • I carefully watch how much I spend • I look carefully to find the best value for the money • The lower price products are usually my choice. • I preferred lower price products over stylish expensive ones.	Q27_23 Q27_24 Q27_25 Q27_26 Q27_36	Q13_23 Q13_24 Q13_25 Q13_26 Q13_36	Q17_23 Q17_24 Q17_25 Q17_26 Q17_36
		Impulsive and careless	Consumer tends to spend recklessly without consideration if there is an actual need for the product and the costs related to it	• I make careless purchases I later wish, I had not • I normally shop quickly, buying the first product that seems good enough • I believe a product doesn't have to be exactly what I want to satisfy me • I spend little time deciding on the products I buy. • I should plan my shopping more carefully than I do • I am often impulsive when shopping.	Q27_18 Q27_19 Q27_20 Q27_21 Q27_22 Q27_34	Q13_18 Q13_19 Q13_20 Q13_21 Q13_22 Q13_34	Q17_18 Q17_19 Q17_20 Q17_21 Q17_22 Q17_34
		Confused by over-choice	Consumer is easily confused by too much marketing information and an excess of similar products to choose from	• There are so many brands to choose from, that often I feel confused • Sometimes it is hard to choose a retailer to shop at (online or in-store). • The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best • All the information I get on different products confuses me	Q27_27 Q27_28 Q27_29 Q27_30	Q13_27 Q13_28 Q13_29 Q13_30	Q17_27 Q17_28 Q17_29 Q17_30

		Habitual and brand loyal	Consumer is brand loyal and will repeatedly choose the same brand or store	• Once I found a product or brand I like, I bought it regularly. • I have favourite brands which I buy over and over again. • I am a well-organized, systematic shopper	Q27_5 Q27_6 Q27_7	Q13_5 Q13_6 Q13_7	Q17_5 Q17_6 Q17_7
Objective 3: To explore the changes in young females' shopping styles from before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa market	Changes in shopping styles	Any new styles formed (e.g., hybrid styles) or changed from before, during, and after the COVID-19 restrictions.		Young females' responses will be evaluated by comparing and analysing their responses in Objective 2.			

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The data collection methods implemented for this study aimed to further understand young females' buying behaviours and shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions within the South African context. An electronic, self-administered questionnaire was used through the Qualtrics online platform to collect data from the target population, which was suitable for use within quantitative research (Kumar, 2014), as discussed and justified in Section 3.3. The Qualtrics online platform allowed for the development of the measurement instrument but also the distribution of the questionnaire, using a generated link. Qualtrics allows for the survey distribution with an anonymous link, emails, personal links, social media, an offline app and a QR code. For both studies, this sharable link was distributed using emails and social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn to reach as wide an audience as possible.

For Study 2020, females and males between the ages of 18 and 65 were recruited across Gauteng, South Africa. The primary data were collected through a structured, self-administered online questionnaire distributed from October 2020 until May 2021. The online questionnaire was distributed among women and men over 18. For the purpose of the larger study, the questionnaire contained questions about food and grocery shopping practices as well. However, only the responses of females between 18 and 35 years and items related to clothing practices and shopping styles during the COVID-19 pandemic were selected to be analysed. The questionnaires were disseminated electronically for ease of use and to reduce COVID-19 infection risks. The responses were recorded electronically and saved. For Study 2023, data were collected from females between 18 and 35 years living in Gauteng. Data were again collected via an electronic link. The sample had to mirror the 2020 sample regarding age, population and gender (i.e., young females living in Gauteng). This questionnaire recorded young female's shopping styles before and after the COVID-19 restrictions. The questionnaire was sent out to possible respondents in March 2023, after the South African government had lifted all the lockdown restrictions.

Each questionnaire had an introduction and cover letter to explain the purpose of this study and ensure anonymity to the respondents (Creswell, 2013). This aimed to inform respondents of their rights and decrease the dropout rate. It provided a brief description of the study, its objectives, and the researcher and supervisors' contact details. An estimated completion time was also provided to prepare the respondent. Respondents were also not obligated to fill in the questionnaire and could complete it out of their own free will. Please refer to Addendum C for a full copy of the questionnaire and consent form (cover letter). For Study 2020, 389 respondents participated in the study, with 252 completing the entire survey. Seeing as it was part of a bigger study, including the food sector, only 188 of the 252 completed surveys were relevant to this study. This means that the completion rate for phase one was 65%, and the dropout rate was 35%. Study 2023 aimed to gather at least 300-350 responses with a confidence level of 90-95%, respectively, and a margin of error of 5% (Qualtrics, 2020). For Study 2023, 396 respondents participated, with 218 completing the entire survey. Only 184 of the 218 completed surveys could be used, because some respondents prefer not want to indicate demographic information needed to accurately analyse the data. This means that the completion rate for phase two was 55%, and the dropout rate was 45%.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis can be defined as the statistical techniques used to investigate the variables of and their relationships with each other in the study (Swanepoel, 2015). The data analysis was done in correspondence with a statistician, to ensure the reliability, accuracy and validity of all the data collected. This was done through the systematic process of applying logic to the data that has been captured and utilising statistical methods to evaluate this data (Creswell, 2013). SPSS 29 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to analyse the data successfully.

For Study 2020, the data were captured through Qualtrics and then downloaded into an Excel or CSV file. Thereafter, it was filtered to only 100% complete. After it was ensured that only 100% completed answers were displayed, it was further filtered to only female respondents between the age of 18-35 years and all irrelevant questions not related to clothing and shopping styles were deleted. The data for Study 2023 were also captured through Qualtrics and then downloaded into an Excel or CSV file. Thereafter, it was filtered to only 100% complete. ANOVA (analysis of variance) was used to determine the differences between consumers' shopping styles due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Qualtrics platform was used to code the data, which was collected during the data collection phase of the study, where after it was exported into Microsoft Excel to clean up the data. This means there was certain numerical values assigned to each scale item to be used for analysis after the data collection. The research supervisors at the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences reviewed the data analysis for this study. The study utilised two methods of statistical data analysis, namely, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.The results from the data collected were displayed according to the format and nature of the questions answered as recommended by Ellison (2020). The results of this study will also give brands and businesses a clearer plan to prepare for future pandemics. A frequency table was used to portray the demographic data and tables, bars and graphs was used to illustrate and summarize the data and results. Furthermore, the objectives guided the study and interpretation of the results.

3.6.1 Descriptive statistics

It has been determined that descriptive statistics allow for pattern recognition and statistical inferences to be made of the sample under investigation (Zikmund, 2007). The consumer, product and retailer attributes were analysed using descriptive statistics in the form of measures of central tendency (mean), frequencies, percentages and measures of variability (standard deviation and variance), as recommended by Cooper and Schindler (2014). Descriptive statistics is used to accurately summarise the data for the researcher and the final readers. Descriptive statistical analysis also made way for an investigation into female consumers' buying practices, shopping styles and a description of the sample before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in the Gauteng province. The results of the descriptive analysis were displayed in graphical and tabular format to facilitate the understanding of the reader and conclude the research objectives (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

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). The theoretical constructs were used to determine Cronbach's alpha and not the factors that would usually be used in an EFA (explanatory factor analysis). A Cronbach alpha value of <_0.7 is deemed acceptable and anything lower would need to be reworked (Tabler, 2018). The value of a Cronbach alpha can be low due to various reasons, such as a low number of questions or scale items and a weak inter-relatedness between the scale items and constructs. When a Cronbach alpha value is below the acceptable <_0.7, the researcher can remove scale items that are less than 0.30 and this will ultimately increase the coefficient (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

3.6.2 Inferential statistics

Industry-relevant sociodemographic attributes were investigated and analysed using a t-test (gender) and one-way ANOVA (age, household income and size) to identify significant relationships that might exist between these constructs and young female consumers shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This is because a t-test is suitable to analyse two dimensions and a one-way ANOVA is suitable to analyse three or more dimensions at a time using inferential statistics (Kumar, 2014). For dimensions to be considered statistically significant a level of significance of less than or equal to 0.05 had to be obtained (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

SPSS software, version 29, was utilised to carry out the reliability tests in the forms of an independent t-test and paired t-test. SPSS software is an acronym for Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences and is used to analyse complex statistical data within the social studies (Alchemer, 2021). An independent t-test is used to compare two groups' means from two different samples (Welman *et al.,* 2019). The independent t-test was used to determine and analyse the changes in young females' shopping styles before and during as well as during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Because Study 2020 and Study 2023 consisted of two independent or different samples the independent t-test was suitable. A paired t-test is used to compare two groups' means from the same sample (or dataset). This was used to determine and analyse the changes in young females shopping styles before and after the COVID-19 restrictions.

3.7 QUALITY OF DATA: VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ISSUES

Quality of the data will be essential for this study, because quality reflects the validity and reliability of the research and information pertaining to the study. Research is usually commenced to determine the impact a certain independent variable will have on another dependent variable, depending on what type of research you are conducting (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). This is essentially why the researcher needs to determine the validity of a study.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity can be defined as the end result of how well the research instrument measures what it is supposed to measure within the study (Hofstee, 2013). The validity of this study is confirmed and ensured by using tested and guaranteed methods of research and scales. This study clearly defined the different constructs and concepts pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic and the influence it had on young females' shopping behaviour and shopping styles. This was done through the specific conceptualisation and operations table, by using already existing and reliable scales of measure. The conceptualisation and operationalisation (construct validity) were ensured by using accurate definitions from trusted literature resources and wording and explications problems within the questionnaire was eliminated with a pre-testing process, before it was sent to possible respondents.

Theoretical validity was implemented through the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the key constructs. This research included a conceptual framework that provided structure to the study and allowed for the aligned conclusions to be drawn with the objectives laid out for the study (Kumar, 2014). The research also incorporated reviews of current, peer-reviewed scientific literature sources and business publications to use theory to describe and conclude the results of the study. *Measurement validity* is made up of content, construct, criterion and face validity comprise (Swanepoel, 2015). Content and face validity occur before data collection, whereas criterion and construct validity are established after the data collection.

Content validity is when the research aims to achieve content validity by covering the phenomenon under investigation within the measurement instrument (Kumar, 2014). Therefore, all primary constructs were included in the study within the operationalisation table so that each scale item can be tailored to the relevant research objective (Cohen *et al*., 2018). Content validity is a non-statistical type of measurement validity that focuses on the sampling ability of the measurement instrument. It is for this reason that the existing scales were previously tested for content validity and adapted in the questionnaire. *Construct validity* can be defined as a statistical type of measurement validity that measures the contribution of each construct to the overall phenomenon (Kumar, 2014). The primary constructs of this study were consumers buying practices and consumers shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the changes in their shopping styles after the COVID-19 pandemic. *Criterion validity* was implemented by relating the study's results to the external criterion as results were discussed and conclusions were made (Cohen *et al*., 2018). Criterion validity consists of predictive and concurrent validity (Kumar, 2014).

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability is defined as the re-testability and consistency of a test (Creswell, 2013). Reliability can be affected by the sample size, the response rate, the questionnaire design and the method of data analysis (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). To ensure these errors do not occur the following was be ensured; all the concepts pertaining to this study will be conceptualised and defined accurately. Before the finalisation of the questionnaires, a pre-test was performed ensuring that the wording, constructs and intentions of the measurement instrument were clear; and the information upon it reliable. Adequate instructions were given to the respondents in order to avoid any errors that might occur in completing the questionnaire. A covering letter and instructions within the questionnaires itself were presented.

The questionnaires utilised simple language and excluded leading, loaded, and double-barrelled questions to decrease the survey dropout rate and ensure each item was correctly answered (Kumar, 2014). To determine and ensure internal reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, or more commonly known as coefficient alpha, were used (see **Table 4.6**). This tested multiple Likert scales against each other to ensure the scales are reliable and consistent.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Berndt & Petzer (2011), ethics refers to the standards for conducting a study that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is crucial to maintain an exceptional standard of ethical behaviour when conducting research and gathering information (Cravens & Piercy, 2013). Approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria. The ethics letter can be reviewed in Addendum A, with the ethics reference number NAS244/2020.

The following section will indicate strategies that were taken by the researcher to ensure ethical conduct during the research process. On the introduction page, the following was indicated to the respondents:

- The respondents were invited to participate in the research – to complete a questionnaire that took approximately 15 minutes. It was made clear that their involvement in the research is voluntary and if the respondent chose to withdraw from the research, they could just exit the website page (Mouton, 2001).
- The questionnaires were completed anonymously and respondents were assured that no professional or personal consequences would occur; and the information given cannot be traced back to them (Mouton, 2001).
- The identification of the research coordinators and their contact details were also made available on the introduction page (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2019).
- Respondents were informed on the purpose of the research endeavour, to gain a better understanding of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on young South African females' buying behaviour, and how their shopping styles influenced this change (Welman *et al*., 2019).

It must also be noted that all literature used in the dissertation is appropriately referenced and any form of plagiarism is discouraged and absent from all phases of this research study (Hofstee, 2006).

Table 3.2 summarises the research methodology used for the two studies.

TABLE 3.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODS: STUDY 2020 AND STUDY 2023

	STUDY 2020	**STUDY 2023**
Research design	Survey Quantitative Cross-sectional	Survey Quantitative Cross-sectional
Sample	Males and females between the ages of 18-65 living in Gauteng	Young females between 18-35 years, living in Gauteng
Sample size used for analysis	188	184
Sampling technique	Non-probability Convenience sampling	Non-probability Convenience sampling
Instrument development	Adapted scales from Sproles and Kendall (1986) Questions focused on food and clothing behaviour	Adapted scales from Sproles and Kendall (1986) Questions focused on clothing behaviour
Data collection	Online electronic, self-administered questionnaire	Online electronic, self-administered questionnaire
Data analysis	Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics	Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the research methods involved in conducting this study. Firstly, the research methodology elements, namely research design, approach and purpose were specified. This was followed by sample and sampling procedures, instrument development, data collection and analysis. Furthermore, an operationalisation table was included to lay out the theoretical concepts into measurable variables. Respondents who matched the unit of analysis were targeted across Gauteng, South Africa using an electronic, self-administered questionnaire to collect and analyse data regarding their shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. A high level of quality and ethical standards was also adhered to throughout the study to ensure acceptable research standards and the usability of the results by industry role-players and stakeholders. Finally, validity and reliability were discussed, how the researcher aimed to achieve quality and accurate data, and how ethical considerations were applied to this study. In the next chapter the results of the study will be represented, according to the formulated objectives. Data about young females shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic were obtained from an online questionnaire and the results relating to this data are presented according to the research objectives outlined in Chapter one. More specifically, this chapter is divided into the following sections: an overview of the demographic characteristics of the sample, young females clothing consumption and shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter four presents the results of the research. Data about young females' clothing buying practices and shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic were obtained from an online questionnaire and the results relating to this data are presented according to the research objectives outlined in Chapter one. More specifically, this chapter is divided into the following sections: an overview of the demographic characteristics of the sample, young females' clothing buying practices, and shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions and concludes with a comparison of changes in their shopping styles.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The sample size for the two studies was comparable. For Study 2020 the sample size was 188 and Study 2023 was 184. The samples included only females, between the ages of 18-35 years living in Gauteng, South Africa. Selected demographic characteristics that were considered relevant to the investigation were included in Section A of the questionnaire. The respondents' gender, age, ethnicity, level of education, and monthly household income were collected as background for the results in this section. **Table 4.1** presents the sample characteristics for Study 2020 and Study 2023.

4.1.1 Gender

Gender has been included as a demographic variable of significance as females, especially young females shop more for clothing and fashion compared to men, they are the leading shoppers for clothing in a household (Hoch, 2007; Netzer, 2020), and they represent a large proportion of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2015). For this study, young South African females were selected, as the target population. Young females refer to any female who was born between 1981 and 2005 (Dimock, 2019). Moreover, young females are a main source of income for clothing retailers and therefore this study is very relevant to clothing brands and retailers (Hoch, 2007). According to the Population Equity Act of South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2019), 51% of the nation is female, and 49% is male.

Respondents were asked to indicate their gender in a drop-down and multiple-choice question, if they selected that they were male or other, it would automatically end the questionnaire and take them to the last thank you page.

TABLE 4.1: SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

Variable	Year data were collected	Frequency	Percentage
Gender			
Female	Study 2020	188	100%
	Study 2023	184	100%
Age			
18-35	Study 2020	188	100%
	Study 2023	184	100%
Population group (According to the employment Equity Act of SA)			
Black	Study 2020	34	18.1%
	Study 2023	16	8.7%
Coloured	Study 2020	5	2.7%
	Study 2023	2	1.1%
Indian	Study 2020	14	7.4%
	Study 2023	16	8.7%
White	Study 2020	131	69.7%
	Study 2023	149	81%
Preferred not to say	Study 2020	4	2.1%
	Study 2023	1	0.5%
Highest level of education			
Lower than grade 12	Study 2020	1	0.5%
	Study 2023	1	0.5%
Grade 12	Study 2020	55	29.3%
	Study 2023	48	26.1%
A degree or diploma	Study 2020	85	45.2%
	Study 2023	81	44%
A postgraduate degree	Study 2020	47	25%
	Study 2023	54	29.3%
Average income			
	Study 2020	188	
	Study 2023	184	

Note: Study 2020 (N = 188); Study 2023 (N = 184)

4.1.2 Age

According to the mid-year estimates of Statistics SA, in 2019, the youth (aged 18–34) constitute almost a third of the population (17.84 million) in South Africa, with 9,04 million males and 8.80 million females and almost 30% of youth (5.10 million or 28,6%) reside in Gauteng. Female respondents were asked to indicate their current age on a sliding scale question with a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 35 according to the sampling criteria of the study. This criterion was included because these consumers were of an age where they were likely to be purchasing clothing for themselves or households and are likely to be making regular purchases and consumption decisions.

4.1.3 Level of education

A consumer's level of education acts as one of the influencing factors in clothing purchases and shopping behaviour (Viljoen, 1998). As seen in Table 4.1, most of the sample in Study 2020 was educated with 29.3% (n = 55) of the respondents having completed Grade,12. 45.2% (n = 85) completed a university degree and 25% (n = 47) had completed a postgraduate degree. Most of the sample in Study 2023, was also educated with 26.1% (n = 48) of the respondents having completed Grade 12. 44% (n = 81) had completed a university degree and 29.3% (n = 54) had completed a postgraduate degree. Compared to the general South African population, this sample presented a more formal education and also Gauteng has a national pass rate of 84.2% compared to the national pass rate of 70.7% (Statistics South Africa, 2019).

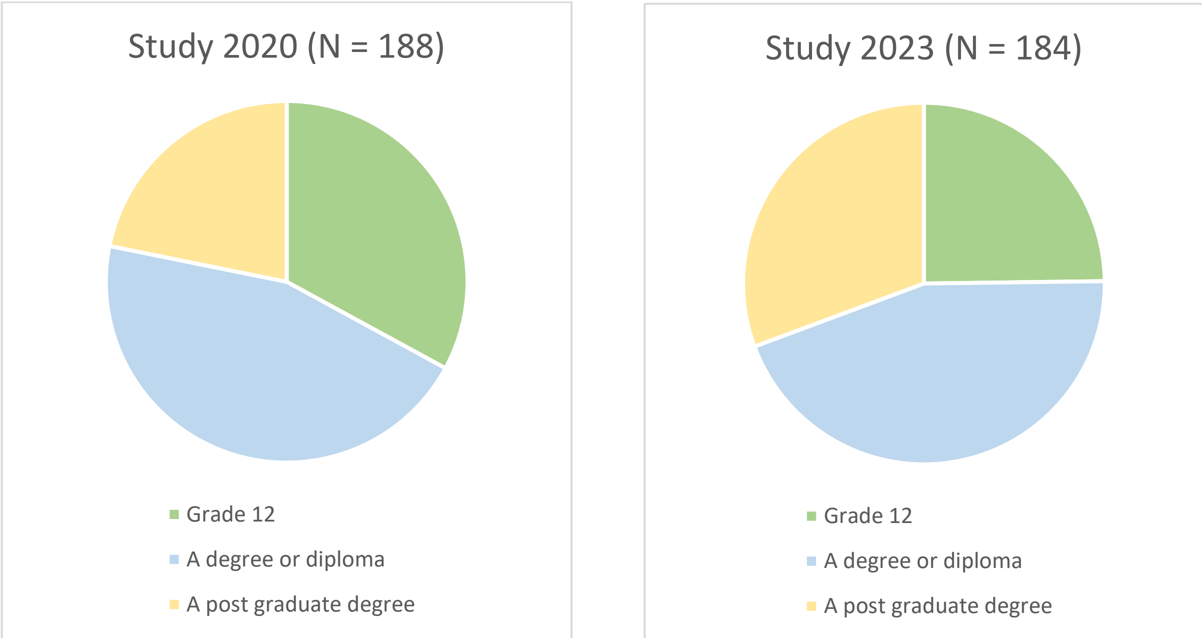


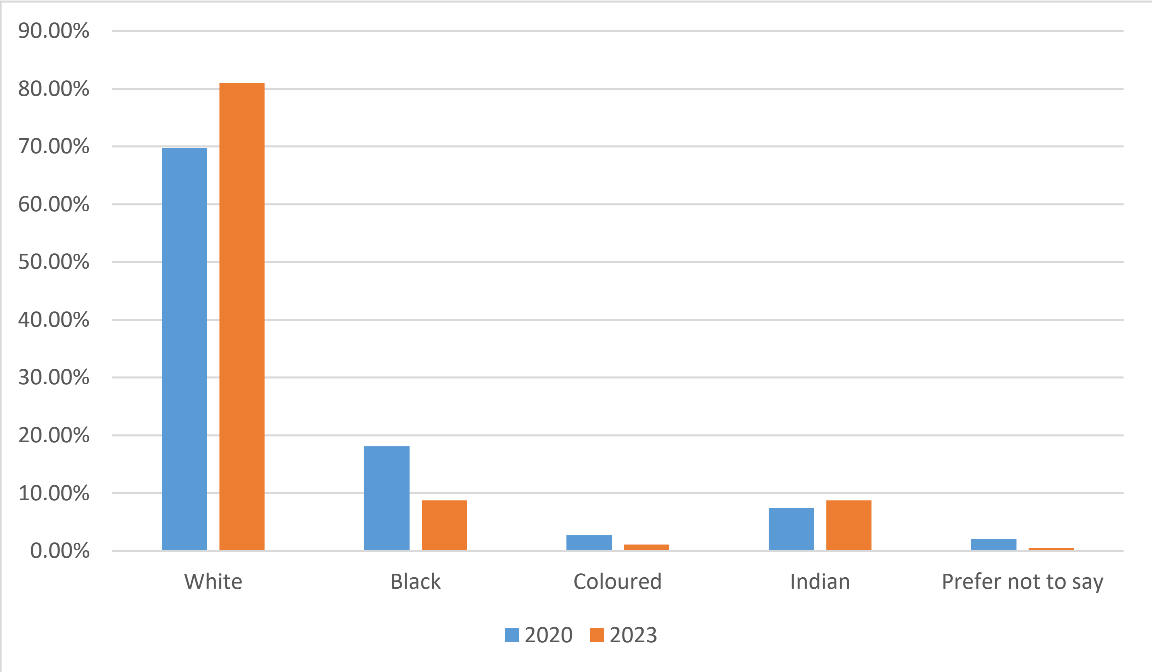
FIGURE 4.1: RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION

4.1.4 Monthly household income

As predetermined, a consumer's monthly household income has an influence on how, where and the frequency of their clothing purchases (Viljoen, 1998). Respondents were asked to specify their monthly household income. This question did not have a forced response as it is a sensitive subject for most consumers, especially South Africans. For Study 2020, the average monthly household income was R42 921.81 and for Study 2023 the average monthly household income was R53 800. This indicates that the average respondent are part of the realised middle and emerging affluent income groups (Statistics SA, 2022). The average monthly income of the sample is also higher than the national average in 2020, which was R22 387 (Trading Economics, 2020) and R24 813 in 2022 (Statistics SA, 2022). The average monthly household income was not included in Table 4.1 as the question in the questionnaire only required an average on a sliding scale from the respondents.

4.1.5 Population group

Viljoen (1998) indicated that the population group a consumer belongs to can affect their shopping preferences and behaviour. Respondents were asked to indicate the population group they belonged to according to the Employment Equity Act No.55 of 1998 in a drop-down multiple-choice question. They were also given the option not to specify their population group due to the sensitive nature of the question. The population group was predominantly White for both Study 2020 (64.29%, n = 162) and Study 2023 (83.26%, n = 199). In Study 2020 the remaining population groups were 21.83% Black, 0.40% Asian, 3.17% Coloured, 8.73% Indian and 1.59% preferred not to say. In Study 2023 the remaining population groups were 7.53% Black, 0.84% Coloured, 7.53% Indian and 0.84% preferred not to say. Although this split is not representative of the South African population, with 80.5% being Africans, 8.3% Caucasians, 8.8 % Coloureds and 2.5% are either Indian or Asian (Statistics SA, 2019; Statistics SA, 2022), Johnson and Lee (2015) note that participation in online research by population group is in line with the sample collected for this study. **Figure 4.2** depicts the population spread for Study 2020 and Study 2023.



Note: Study 2020 (N = 188); Study 2023 (N = 184)

FIGURE 4.2: REPRESENTATION OF THE POPULATION GROUPS

4.1.6 Area of residence

For this study, the questionnaire was only targeted at young female consumers living in Gauteng, South Africa. This was for ease of use and due to financial constraints during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Gauteng is also South Africa's centre of trade with the most spending power of consumers (Statistics SA, 2022). Pretoria, South Africa's administrative capital city is also located in Gauteng making it a suitable location for this study, in terms of clothing consumption. Incidentally Gauteng is also the most populated province in South Africa (ref) and provided access to young female respondents.

4.2 CLOTHING BUYING PRACTICES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Objective 1 aimed to explore and describe clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of buying, channels, and clothing categories) of young females before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa. Understanding how consumers' shopping frequency, channels they used, clothing categories they shopped for and styles changed during an emergency event can assist retailers and brands in accurately preparing for possible future pandemics and emergency events, by adjusting their strategies, how their products and services can be reworked to accommodate their distressed customers, and how they can integrate an omnichannel strategy to assists their customers changing buying decisions with ease of use (Weber, 2021). It is important to note that the data collected in Study 2020 was during the national lockdown in South Africa, where shopping was severely restricted, especially in the clothing sector of the economy. When it is referred to as "Study 2020" it indicates that all data for "during" the COVID-19 restrictions was used, whereas "Study 2023" indicated that all data for "before" and "after" the COVID-19 restrictions was used.

4.2.1 Frequency of shopping for clothing

To have a better understanding of young females' clothing buying practices the frequency of clothing shopping before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions was explored. In Study 2020, respondents were asked to indicate their clothing shopping frequency before and during the COVID-19 pandemic and in Study 2023 respondents had to indicate their frequency of shopping before, during and after the lockdown restrictions was completely lifted in 2022-2023. Respondents were presented with a matrix of 5 statements and asked to indicate how often they shop for clothing.

Table 4.2 indicate the results for Study 2020, where the frequency of clothing shopping before and during the COVID-19 pandemic are presented.

TABLE 4.2 FREQUENCY OF CLOTHING SHOPPING BEFORE AND DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2020

Study 2020 (N = 188)	Before the COVID-19 restrictions		During the COVID-19 restrictions	
Items - Q16	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Daily	27	14.4%	4	2.1%
Weekly	119	63.3%	72	38.3%
2-3 times a month	30	16%	61	32.4%
Once a month	12	6.4%	43	22.9%
Seasonal	0	0%	4	2.1%

As seen in **Table 4.2** most of the respondents (63.3%, n = 119) purchased clothing weekly before the COVID-19 pandemic and a few shopped daily (14.4%, n = 27) or 2-3 times a month (16%, n = 30). During the COVID-19 restrictions respondents' clothing shopping frequencies were more evenly distributed across weekly (38.3%, n = 81) and 2-3 times a month (32.4%, n = 61). About a quarter of the respondents (22.9%, n = 58) shopped monthly for clothing.

Table 4.3 indicate the results for Study 2023, where the frequency of clothing shopping before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic are presented.

TABLE 4.3: FREQUENCY OF CLOTHING SHOPPING BEFORE AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2023

Study 2023 (N = 184)	Before the COVID-19 restrictions		After the COVID-19 restrictions	
Items - Q6	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Daily	0	0%	1	0.5%
Weekly	41	22.3%	12	6.5%
2-3 times a month	45	24.5%	30	16.3%
Once a month	62	33.7%	85	46.2%
Seasonal	36	19.6%	56	30.4%

Respondents indicated a different viewpoint of their clothing shopping after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the respondents indicated that their clothing shopping was done once a month (46.2%, n = 85) or seasonal (30.4%, n = 56) after the COVID-19 restrictions.

Figure 4.3 showcases the estimated frequency of how young female consumers shopped for clothing before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. As seen below in **Figure 4.3** respondents shopping frequency did change during the COVID-19 restrictions. Consumers were less likely to continue with daily and even weekly shopping trips. Seasonal shopping increased from before the COVID-19 to after the COVID-19 restrictions. Many of the respondents now shop monthly for clothing after the COVID-19 restrictions.

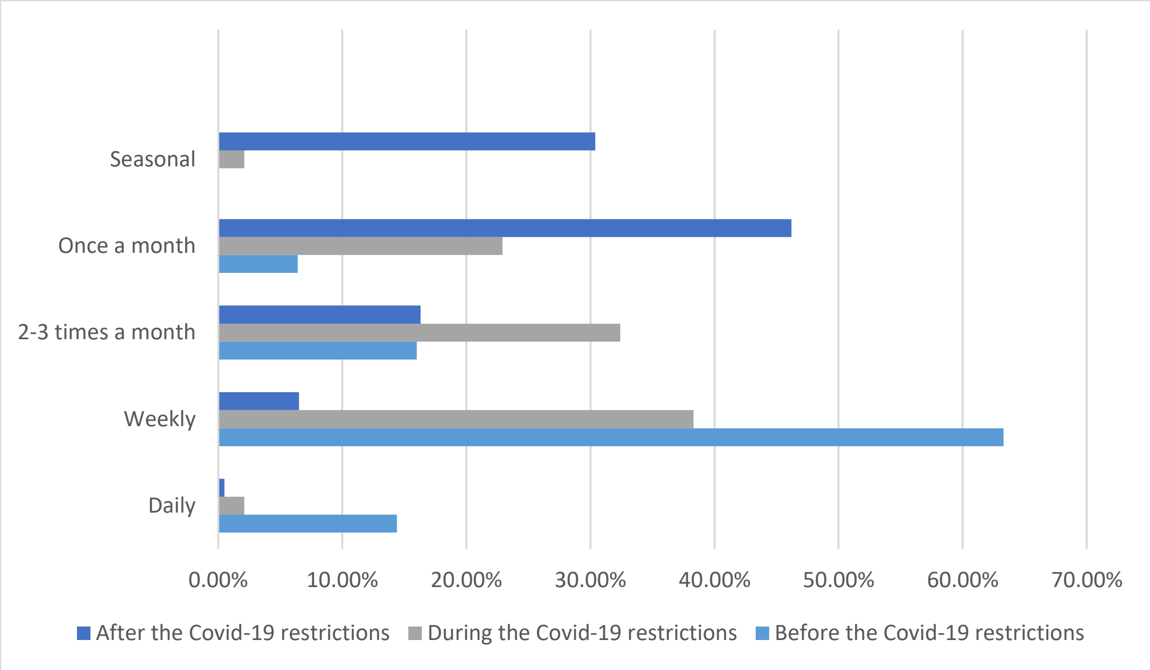


FIGURE 4.3: RESPONDENTS' CLOTHING BUYING FREQUENCY

4.2.2 Shopping channels used for clothing shopping

Objective 1 further explored and described the shopping channels used by young females before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng, South Africa. To investigate the buying channels young females in Gauteng preferred before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, respondents were presented with four statements in the questionnaire namely, in-store (e.g., Woolworths or PnP Clothing), online (e.g., Shein or Superbalist), both (in-store and online) and informal retailing (e.g., Flea market). Respondents were asked to indicate where they shop for clothing. The data analysis included the calculation of the frequencies and percentages.

Table 4.4 depicts the results from Study 2020. It summarises young females' use of shopping channels before and during the COVID-19 restrictions.

TABLE 4.4: THE USE OF SHOPPING CHANNELS BEFORE AND DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2020

Study 2020 (N = 188)		Never		Sometimes		About half of the time		Most of the time		Always	
Items -Q19		***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**
In-store (e.g., Woolworths or PnP Clothing)	During COVID-19	6	3.2%	33	17.6%	23	12.2%	78	41.5%	48	25.5%
Online (e.g., Shein or Superbalist)	During COVID-19	6	3.2%	33	17.6%	23	12.2%	78	41.5%	48	25.5%
Both (In-store and online)	During COVID-19	37	19.7%	67	35.6%	37	19.7%	31	16.5%	11	5.9%
Informal retailing (e.g., Flea market)	During COVID-19	124	66%	41	21.8%	10	5.3%	8	4.3%	3	1.6%

Note: Frequency = *ƒ*; Percentage = %

As seen in **Table 4.4** the majority (41.5%, n = 78) of respondents indicated that they still shopped in-store during the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020. An equal amount (41.5%, n = 78) of respondents indicated that they shopped online most of the time during the COVID-19 restrictions. Two thirds of the respondents (66%, n = 124) indicated that they never shopped at informal retailing like flea markets and pop-up shops during the restrictions. This could have been due to these events being cancelled and closed down or the respondents fear of spreading or catching the virus in crowded places.

Table 4.5 depicts young females' use of shopping channels before, during and after the COVID-19 restriction. The results are from Study 2023.

TABLE 4.5: THE USE OF SHOPPING CHANNELS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – STUDY 2023

Study 2023 (N = 184)		Never		Sometimes		About half of the time		Most of the time		Always	
Items -Q7-Q9		***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**
In-store (e.g., Woolworths or PnP Clothing)	Before COVID-19	2	1.1%	32	17.4%	39	21.2%	70	38%	41	22.3%
	During COVID-19	48	26.1%	74	40.2%	28	15.2%	26	14.1%	8	4.3%
	After COVID-19	2	1.1%	50	27.2%	57	31%	62	33.7%	13	7.1%
Online (e.g., Shein or Superbalist)	Before COVID-19	52	28.3%	71	38.6%	38	20.7%	23	12.5	0	0%
	During COVID-19	29	15.8%	58	31.5%	35	19.0%	51	27.7%	11	6.0%
	After COVID-19	16	8.7%	62	33.7%	52	28.3%	47	25.5%	7	3.8%
Both (In-store and online)	Before COVID-19	30	16.3%	67	36.4%	42	22.8%	37	20.1%	8	4.3%
	During COVID-19	31	16.8%	85	46.2%	43	23.4%	17	9.2%	8	4.3%
	After COVID-19	9	4.9%	56	30.4%	69	37.5%	45	24.5%	5	2.7%
Informal retailing (e.g., Flea market)	Before COVID-19	63	34.2%	92	50%	20	10.9%	9	4.9%	0	0%
	During COVID-19	143	77.7%	27	14.7%	8	4.3%	6	3.3%	0	0%
	After COVID-19	70	38%	92	50%	17	9.2%	4	2.2%	1	0.5%

Note: Frequency = *f*; Percentage = %

More than a third of the respondents (38%, n = 70) indicated that they mostly shopped in-store before the COVID-19 restrictions and then it decreased to 14.1% (n = 26) during the COVID-19 restrictions and increased again to 33.7% (n = 62) after the COVID-19 restrictions. This indicates that young female consumers completely changed their preferred channel of shopping (in-store) due to COVID-19. Before the COVID-19 restrictions only 12.5% (n = 23) of respondents shopped purely online for clothing items. During the COVID-19 restrictions this increased to 27.7% (n = 51) and after the restrictions were lifted it slightly decreased to 25.5% (n = 47). Although the majority of respondents went back to shopping in-store (33.7%, n = 62), the rest of the respondents indicated they now prefer a mix of both in-store and online (24.5%, n = 45) or purely online (25.5%, n = 47) after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4.4 shows the shopping channels young South African female consumers made use of before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. As seen below in **Figure 4.4** most of the respondents preferred shopping in-store before the COVID-19 restrictions), during the restrictions they preferred to shop online and in-store. After the COVID-19 restrictions, they went back to their preferred channel, which is instore, but also prefer to shop both in-store and online. **Figure 4.4**

illustrates respondents use of shopping channels before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions.

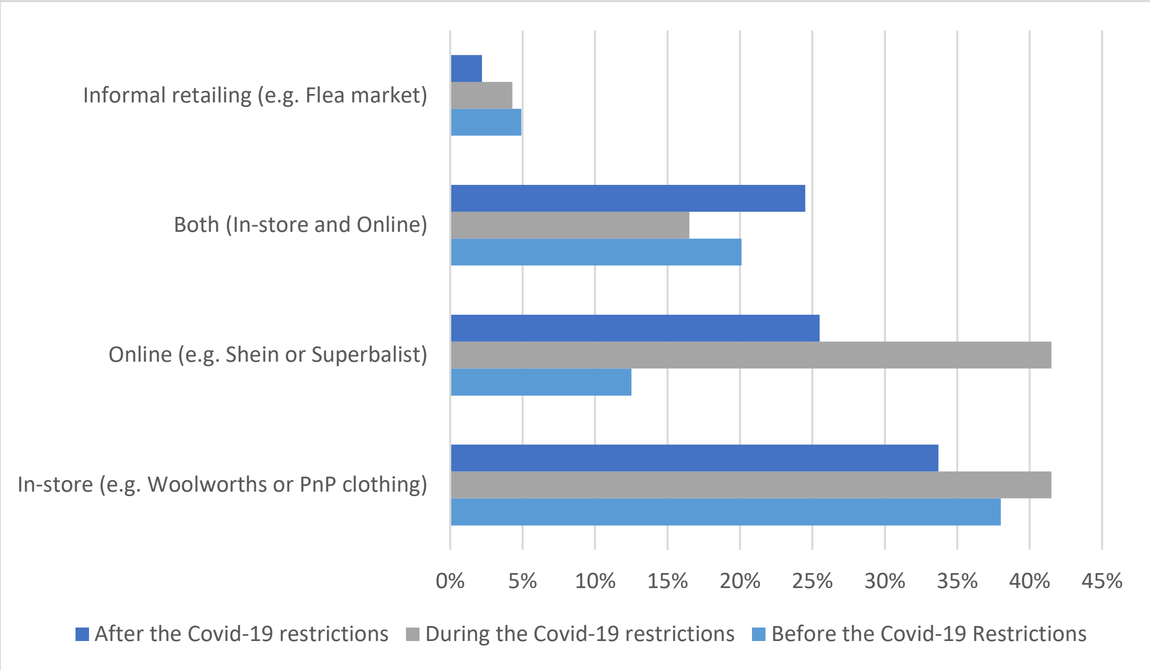


FIGURE 4.4: REPRESENTATION OF THE SHOPPING CHANNELS

1.2.3 Clothing categories

The last part of Objective 1 explored and described clothing categories young females bought before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa. According to (Achala, 2021) there was a global increase in casualwear as most consumers started working from home or on a hybrid working model. There was also an increase in the purchasing of activewear as consumers switched their workout routines to yoga and meditation to elevate the stress from the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions (Achala, 2021).

To investigate the clothing categories young females shopped before during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, respondents were presented with nine statements. In Study 2020's questionnaire (which evaluated the clothing categories shopped during the COVID-19 restrictions) respondents were asked to rate each statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale based on importance (1 = not important at all and 5 = extremely important). Data analysis included the calculation of the frequencies and the percentages. In Study 2023's questionnaire two extra clothing categories were added, namely, children's clothing and occasion wear, it is for that reason that there is no data in for these two categories in **Table 4.6.** These two categories were added, because young female consumers who completed the questionnaire in 2020, have matured and entered different life stages, where they might have children and would therefore need to purchase children's clothing. Occasion wear was added due to the fact that there were studies released stating that consumers experienced "fleece fatigue" during and after the COVID-19 restrictions and therefore made more use of occasion wear (Bottomley, 2021).

TABLE 4.6: CLOTHING CATEGORIES SHOPPED FOR DURING THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Study 2020 (N= 188)	Not at all important 1		Slightly important		Moderately important 3		Very important		Extremely important 5		Total % of impor-tance
Items – Q22	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	
Leisure/casual wear	83	44.1%	31	16.5%	39	20.7%	26	13.8%	9	4.8%	18.6%
Activewear	85	45.2%	38	20.2%	37	19.7%	22	11.7%	6	3.2%	14.9%
Seasonal clothing (e.g., swimwear and jackets)	88	46.8%	42	22.3%	32	17%	22	11.7%	4	2.1%	13.8%
Formal/work wear	150	79.8%	20	10.6%	13	6.9%	3	1.6%	2	1.1%	2.7%
Underwear	56	29.8%	51	27.1%	42	22.3%	35	18.6%	3	1.6%	20.2%
Sleepwear	88	46.8%	46	24.5%	25	13.3%	18	9.6%	10	5.3%	14.9%
School uniforms	169	89.9%	12	6.4%	2	1.1%	3	1.6%	0	0%	1.6%

Note: Frequency = *f*; Percentage = %

For Study 2020, 89.9% (n = 169) of the respondents indicated that buying school uniforms was not important at all. In line with this, they also thought the other categories leisure and casual wear (44.1%, n = 83), active wear (45.2%, n = 85), seasonal clothing (46.8%, n = 88), formal and workwear (79.8%, n = 150), underwear (29.8%, n = 56) and sleepwear (46.8%, n = 88) was also not important at all. This is an indication that they possibly did not find shopping for clothing a priority at all. In the 2023 questionnaire (which evaluated the before and after COVID-19 clothing categories) respondents were asked to 'drag and drop' (rank) the clothing category in order of importance with the resulting data comprising of a set of numbers ranging from 1 to 9 where "1" represents the most important clothing category, "2" the second most important category and "9" the least important clothing category. This was done as respondents indicated that the question is too long and fatigues them during the testing phase of the questionnaire.

Table 4.7 shows the ranking of clothing categories purchased before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic from Study 2023.

TABLE 4.7: CLOTHING CATEGORIES SHOPPED FOR BEFORE AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Study 2023 (N = 184)	Before COVID-19 restrictions		After COVID-19 restrictions	
Items – Q10	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**
Leisure/casual wear	70	38.0%	71	38.6%
Active/sport wear	37	20.1%	41	22.3%
Seasonal clothing	45	24.5%	48	26.1%
Formal/work wear	42	22.8%	55	29.9%
Underwear	46	25.0%	53	28.8%
Sleepwear	55	29.9%	55	29.9%
Children's clothing	90	48.9%	93	50.5%
Speciality clothing	67	36.4%	101	54.9%
School uniforms	45	24.5%	61	33.2%

Note: Frequency = *f*; Percentage = %

From **Table 4.7**, the number of respondents who ranked the purchase of children's clothing before COVID-19 as most important (48.9%, n = 90); the second most important category was leisure and casual wear (38%, n = 70), and speciality clothing was ranked third most important (36.4%, n = 67). Contrary to the global decrease in speciality wear purchases after the COVID-19 restrictions, respondents indicated that speciality clothing was the most important (54.9%, n = 101) to purchase after the COVID-19 restrictions. According to Tom Bottomley, this could be due to "fleece fatigue" where consumers missed special events and dressing up (Bottomley, 2021). The second most important category was children's clothing (50.5%, n = 93), and third was leisure and casual wear (38.6%, n = 71). This is an indication that consumers might have gone through different life stages, where they started families since the first COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 and it's evident that the work from home and hybrid working models became more popular in 2022-2023, or their priorities could have changed.

As seen below in **Figure 4.5** the clothing category that was purchased regularly was children's clothing before (M = 3.62), during (M = 3.56) and after (M = 3.47) the COVID-19 restrictions. Sleepwear also had an increase in purchases as before the COVID-19 restrictions the mean was 2.94 and after it was 3.09. Most surprisingly of all the categories is occasion wear that had an increase in purchases (M = 3.49) compared to before the COVID-19 restrictions (M = 3.1). Formal and workwear had a decrease in purchases from before (M = 2.49) to after (M = 2.21) the COVID-19 restrictions.

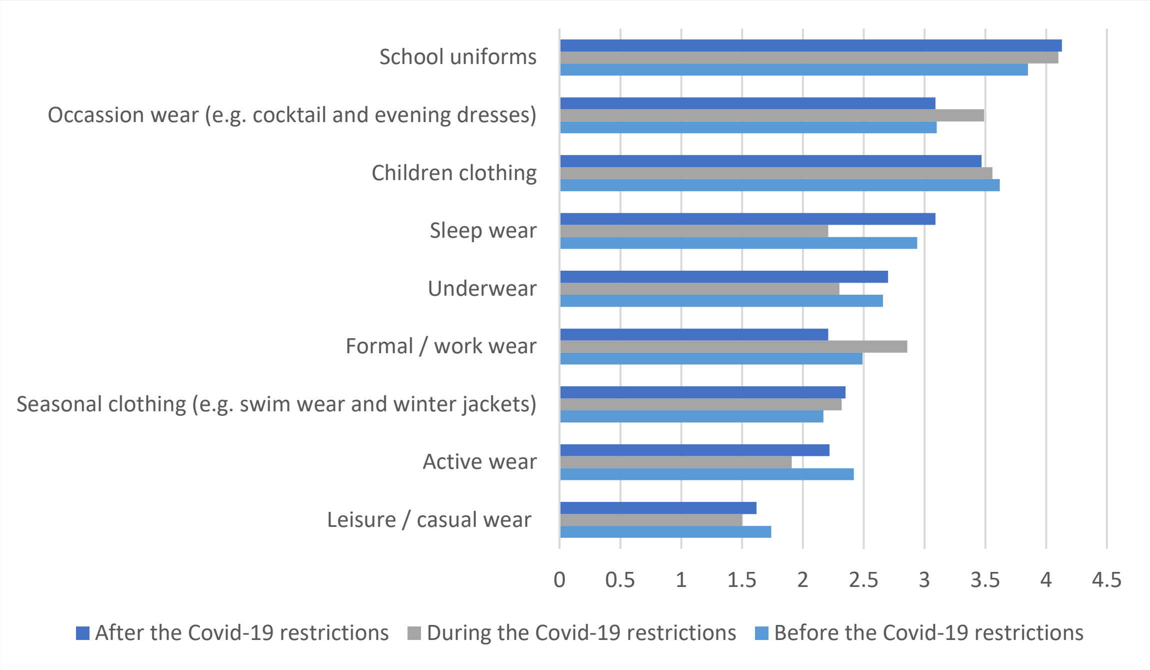


FIGURE 4.5: CLOTHING CATEGORIES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

1.3 CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES

Objective 2 aimed to identify and describe young females' predominant clothing shopping styles before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa. To investigate the predominant clothing shopping styles of young females in South Africa before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, respondents were presented with a matrix of 38 statements. Respondents were asked to rate each statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Data analysis included the calculation of means, standard deviation and variance explained.

Table 4.8 showcases the descriptive statistics of the shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions by showing the mean, standard deviation, variance and the Cronbach alpha of each to ensure reliability.

TABLE 4.8: CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Dimensions	Indicators	Year	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Overall Mean	Cronbach alpha
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	High quality is very important to me	Before COVID-19	3.72	1.18	1.38	Before: 3.58	Before: 0.79
		During COVID-19	4.03	0.96	0.92		
		After COVID-19	3.73	1.10	1.21		
	I try to get the very best or the perfect choice	Before COVID-19	3.59	1.09	1.19	During: 3.93	During: 0.78
		During COVID-19	3.69	1.08	1.18		
		After COVID-19	3.64	1.15	1.32		
	I try to select the very best quality products	Before COVID-19	3.58	1.11	1.23	After: 3.72	After: 0.81
		During COVID-19	4.02	0.88	0.78		
		After COVID-19	3.73	1.16	1.33		
	In general, I usually try to buy the best overall quality	Before COVID-19	3.77	1.01	1.02		
		During COVID-19	4.16	0.84	0.70		
		After COVID-19	3.70	1.13	1.28		
	My standards and expectations for products I buy is very high	Before COVID-19	3.84	1.12	1.24		
		During COVID-19	3.72	1.09	1.17		
		After COVID-19	3.55	1.12	1.25		
Brand conscious and price equals quality	The most advertised brands are usually good choices	Before COVID-19	3.03	1.09	1.18	Before: 2.87	Before: 0.43
		During COVID-19	2.50	1.03	1.06		
		After COVID-19	2.77	1.09	1.19		
	I prefer buying the best-selling brands	Before COVID-19	3.00	1.17	1.37	During: 2.52	During: 0.68
		During COVID-19	2.71	1.07	1.15		
		After COVID-19	2.84	1.10	1.20		
	The higher the price of a product, the better its quality	Before COVID-19	2.90	1.23	1.51	After: 2.79	After: 0.52
		During COVID-19	2.53	1.18	1.41		
		After COVID-19	2.83	1.20	1.44		
	The more expensive brands were usually better choices	Before COVID-19	2.65	1.25	1.55		
		During COVID-19	2.31	1.08	1.16		
		After COVID-19	2.55	1.17	1.35		
Novelty and fashion conscious	I shop for trendy products	Before COVID-19	3.29	1.14	1.30	Before: 3.27	Before: 0.62
		During COVID-19	2.65	1.20	1.45		
		After COVID-19	3.06	1.21	1.47		
	It is important to me to buy fashionable products	Before COVID-19	3.24	1.20	1.45	During: 2.62	During: 0.70
		During COVID-19	2.65	1.19	1.42		
		After COVID-19	3.14	1.19	1.41		
	To get variety, I shop at different retailers	Before COVID-19	3.82	1.02	1.04	After: 3.48	After: 0.57
		During COVID-19	3.64	1.24	1.54		
		After COVID-19	3.57	1.15	1.33		
	It is fun to buy something new and exciting	Before COVID-19	3.96	1.09	1.19		
		During COVID-19	4.10	0.95	0.90		
		After COVID-19	4.02	1.00	0.99		
Recreational and hedonic conscious	Going shopping is one of the enjoyable activities of my life	Before COVID-19	3.66	1.27	1.62	Before: 3.73	Before: 0.77
		During COVID-19	3.39	1.29	1.68		
		After COVID-19	3.40	1.28	1.64		
	I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it	Before COVID-19	3.59	1.29	1.65	During: 3.40	During: 0.89
		During COVID-19	3.19	1.38	1.92		
		After COVID-19	3.41	1.31	1.70		
	Shopping is a pleasant activity to me	Before COVID-19	3.89	1.08	1.16	After: 3.53	After: 0.84
		During COVID-19	3.60	1.22	1.49		
		After COVID-19	3.54	1.20	1.45		
	Shopping online saved time	Before COVID-19	3.19	1.28	1.63		
		During COVID-19	3.33	1.29	1.68		
		After COVID-19	3.65	1.12	1.26		
Price and value for money conscious	I buy as much as possible at sale price	Before COVID-19	3.62	1.13	1.27	Before: 3.50	Before: 0.52
		During COVID-19	3.51	1.23	1.52		
		After COVID-19	3.70	1.10	1.21		
		Before COVID-19	3.52	1.21	1.45	During:	During:

	I carefully watch how much I spend	During COVID-19	3.84	1.05	1.11	3.69 After: 3.48	0.58 After: 0.58
		After COVID-19	3.86	1.10	1.20		
	I look carefully to find the best value for the money	Before COVID-19	3.85	1.06	1.13		
		During COVID-19	4.21	0.91	0.82		
		After COVID-19	3.96	1.04	1.07		
	The lower price products are usually my choice	Before COVID-19	3.36	1.13	1.27		
		During COVID-19	3.62	1.17	1.38		
		After COVID-19	3.15	1.15	1.31		
	I prefer lower price products over stylish expensive ones	Before COVID-19	3.09	1.12	1.24		
		During COVID-19	3.33	1.12	1.27		
		After COVID-19	3.23	1.21	1.45		
Impulsive and careless	I make careless purchases I later wish, I had not	Before COVID-19	3.05	1.32	1.74	Before: 2.92 During: 3.05 After: 2.80	Before: 0.60 During: 0.68 After: 0.63
		During COVID-19	2.65	1.32	1.76		
		After COVID-19	2.78	1.30	1.69		
	I normally shop quickly, buying the first product that seems good enough	Before COVID-19	2.56	1.22	1.47		
		During COVID-19	2.57	1.17	1.38		
		After COVID-19	2.58	1.23	1.50		
	I believe a product does not have to be exactly what I want to satisfy me	Before COVID-19	2.66	1.16	1.34		
		During COVID-19	2.75	1.10	1.21		
		After COVID-19	3.67	1.12	1.25		
	I spend little time deciding on the products I buy	Before COVID-19	2.82	1.20	1.43		
		During COVID-19	2.76	1.21	1.48		
		After COVID-19	2.74	1.23	1.51		
	I should plan my shopping more carefully than I do	Before COVID-19	3.16	1.15	1.32		
		During COVID-19	3.31	1.34	1.77		
		After COVID-19	3.06	1.30	1.69		
	I am often impulsive when shopping	Before COVID-19	3.23	1.26	1.58		
		During COVID-19	3.15	1.30	1.71		
		After COVID-19	2.93	1.29	1.65		
Confused by over-choice	There are so many brands to choose from, that often I feel confused	Before COVID-19	2.94	1.28	1.63	Before: 2.95 During: 2.79 After: 2.88	Before: 0.67 During: 0.67 After: 0.76
		During COVID-19	2.66	1.22	1.49		
		After COVID-19	2.82	1.25	1.56		
	Sometimes it is hard to choose a retailer to shop at (online or in-store)	Before COVID-19	3.00	1.17	1.36		
		During COVID-19	2.99	1.28	1.65		
		After COVID-19	2.96	1.16	1.33		
	The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best	Before COVID-19	2.99	1.14	1.30		
		During COVID-19	2.97	1.20	1.44		
		After COVID-19	2.98	1.13	1.27		
	All the information I get on different products confuses me	Before COVID-19	2.63	1.10	1.20		
		During COVID-19	2.49	1.13	1.27		
		After COVID-19	2.75	1.19	1.42		
Habitual and brand loyal	Once I find a product or brand I like, I buy it regularly	Before COVID-19	3.97	1.00	0.99	Before: 3.89 During: 4.14 After: 3.80	Before: 0.72 During: 0.71 After: 0.68
		During COVID-19	4.16	0.83	0.70		
		After COVID-19	3.82	1.01	1.01		
	I have favourite brands which I buy over and over again	Before COVID-19	3.88	1.07	1.15		
		During COVID-19	4.12	0.98	0.97		
		After COVID-19	3.79	1.09	1.19		
	I am a well-organized, systematic shopper	Before COVID-19	3.28	1.22	1.49		
		During COVID-19	3.62	1.15	1.34		
		After COVID-19	3.52	1.14	1.31		

Note: During COVID-19 from Study 2020 (N = 188); Before- and After COVID-19 from Study 2023 (N= 184)

Figure 4.6 presents the overall mean for each shopping style before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. The means were as follows before the COVID-19 restrictions: perfectionist and high-quality conscious (M = 3.58), brand conscious and price equals quality (M = 2.87), novelty and fashion conscious (M = 3.27), recreational and hedonic conscious (M = 3.73), price or value for money conscious (M = 3.50), impulsive and careless (M = 2.92), confused by over-choice (M = 2.95), and habitual and brand loyal (M = 3.89). As seen below in **Figure 4.6** the most prevailing shopping style before the COVID-19 restrictions was habitual and brand loyal (M = 3.89) and the least prevailing one was brand conscious and price equals quality (M = 2.58).

During the COVID-19 restrictions, the shopping style means were: perfectionist and high-quality conscious (M = 3.93), brand conscious and price equals quality (M = 2.52), novelty and fashion conscious (M = 2.62), recreational and hedonic conscious (M = 3.40), price and value for money conscious (M = 3.69), impulsive and careless (M = 3.05), confused by over-choice (M = 2.79), and habitual and brand loyal (M = 4.14). As seen below in **Figure 4.6** the most prevailing shopping style during the COVID-19 restrictions was habitual and brand loyal (M = 4.14) and the brand conscious and price equals quality (M = 2.52) shopping style was the minority.

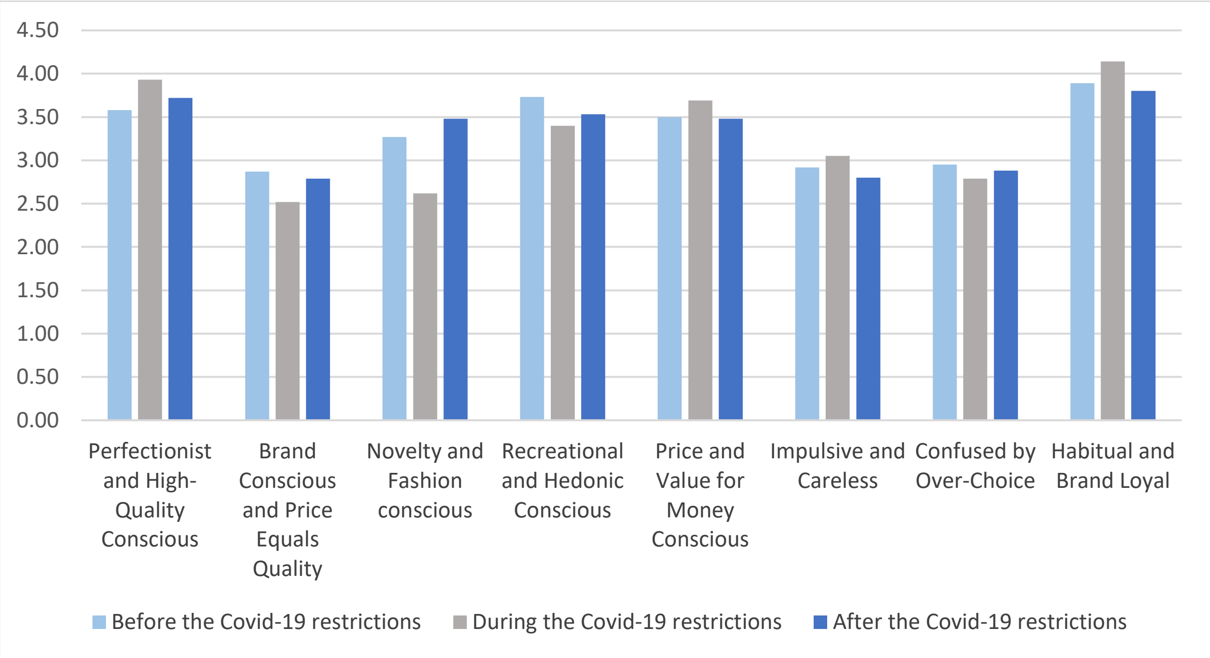


FIGURE 4.6: YOUNG FEMALES CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS IN GAUTENG, SOUTH AFRICA

After the COVID-19 restrictions, the means were as follows: perfectionist and high-quality conscious (M = 3.72), brand conscious and price equals quality (M = 2.79), novelty and fashion conscious (M = 3.48), recreational and hedonic conscious (M = 3.53), price or value for money conscious (M = 3.48), impulsive and careless (M = 2.80), confused by over-choice (M = 2.88), and habitual and brand loyal (M = 3.80). As seen below in **Figure 4.6** the highest and lowest means after the COVID-19 restrictions were perfectionist and high-quality conscious (M = 3.72) and the brand conscious and price equals quality (M = 2.79) was the least prevailing.

4.4 CHANGES IN YOUNG FEMALES' SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Objective 3 aimed to explore and describe changes in young females' clothing shopping styles as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. Objective 2 explored the predominant clothing shopping styles of young females in South Africa before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, with 38 statements in Study 2020 and Study 2023's questionnaires respectively. Respondents rated each statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale based (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Data analysis included the calculation of means, standard deviation and variance explained for the combined group of dimensions. As indicated above in **Figure 4.6** there was a change in young female consumers shopping styles during the COVID-19 restrictions, but they mostly stabilised and returned to their shopping styles they had before the COVID-19 restrictions. After analysing the means for the shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions, more data analysis was needed to accurately determine if there was a change in their shopping styles. Therefore, a t-test was done to compare the before and during data as well as the during and after data. A *t*-test is used to compare the means of two groups, the type of t-test depends on the data you have and what you aim to achieve specifically (Alchemer, 2021).

SPSS software, version 29, was utilised to carry out the reliability tests in the forms of an independent *t*-test and paired *t*-test. SPSS software is an acronym for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences and is used to analyse complex statistical data within social studies (Alchemer, 2021). An independent *t*-test is used to compare two groups' means from two different samples (Welman *et al.,* 2019). The independent *t*-test was used to determine and analyse the changes in young females' shopping styles before and during as well as during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Because Study 2020 and Study 2023 consisted of two independent or different samples the independent *t*-test was suitable for doing these comparisons. A paired *t*-test compare the means of two groups within the same sample (or dataset) (Field & Miles, 2010). The paired *t*-test was used to determine the changes in young females' shopping styles before and after the COVID-19 restrictions as the groups were from Study 2023.

One of the assumptions for the independent *t*-test is that the variances of the two samples should be equal. Levene's test for equality or homogeneity of variances tests this assumption (Field & Miles, 2010). This means that the variability for two or more groups must be the same. A one-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) is conducted on the deviation scores to ensure that the variances in different groups are equal. Levene's test is significant at $p \leq 0.05$ (Field & Miles, 2010). If the *p*-value is smaller than 0.05, the variances are not equal and if the *p*-value is larger than 0.05, the variances are indeed equal and the *p*-value will be interpreted for the *t*-test given in the line of "equal variances assumed". The standard deviations for the groups differed in most cases and therefore the "equal variances assumed" test was used (see **Tables 4.9 and 4.11**).

The **before and during** results are presented in **Table 4.9,** indicating that there were changes in young females' shopping styles from before to during the COVID-19 restrictions. In **Table 4.9** below, the different shopping styles' means, standard deviation and standard error of the mean are shown, as well as the year of the research and how number of respondents.

TABLE 4.9: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19

Shopping style	Year	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	Before	184	3.58	0.84	0.07
	During	188	3.93	0.72	0.05
Brand conscious and price equals quality	Before	184	2.87	0.71	0.05
	During	188	2.52	0.78	0.06
Novelty and fashion-conscious	Before	184	3.27	1.02	0.08
	During	188	2.62	1.06	0.08
Recreational and hedonic conscious	Before	184	3.73	1.03	0.08
	During	188	3.40	1.18	0.09
Price and value for money conscious	Before	184	3.50	0.72	0.05
	During	188	3.69	0.73	0.05
Impulsive and careless	Before	184	2.92	0.71	0.05
	During	188	3.05	1.03	0.08
Confused by over-choice	Before	184	2.95	0.95	0.07
	During	188	2.79	0.86	0.06
Habitual and brand loyal	Before	184	3.89	0.93	0.07
	During	188	4.14	0.80	0.06

An independent *t*-test was performed to compare any changes in the means of shopping styles from the before and during groups. The independent *t*-test was conducted because the two groups' means belong to two independent samples. Below in **Table 4.10,** the comparison of the shopping styles for before and during the COVID-19 restrictions is displayed through a *t*-test for equality of means of each shopping style and Levene's test for equality of variances. The means, standard deviations and level of significance were reported for each shopping style to determine whether the means between the before and during groups varied significantly and changes occurred in their shopping styles.

TABLE 4.10: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS)

			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of Difference	
							Significance					
Shopping style		**Year**	**F**	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**One-sided p**	**Two-sided p**	**Mean difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**Lower**	**Upper**
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	Equal variances assumed	Before	7.70	0.01	-4.40	367	<.001	<.001	-0.35	0.08	-0.51	-0.19
	Equal variances not assumed	During			-4.39	358.26	<.001	<.001	-0.35	0.08	-0.51	-0.19
Brand conscious and price equals quality	Equal variances assumed	Before	2.38	0.12	4.54	367	<.001	<.001	0.35	0.08	0.20	0.50
	Equal variances not assumed	During			4.54	364.01	<.001	<.001	0.35	0.08	0.20	0.50
Novelty and fashion-conscious	Equal variances assumed	Before	0.36	0.55	5.93	367	<.001	<.001	0.64	0.11	0.42	0.85
	Equal variances not assumed	During			5.93	366.68	<.001	<.001	0.64	0.11	0.42	0.85
Recreational and hedonic conscious	Equal variances assumed	Before	4.48	0.04	2.81	367	0.003	0.005	0.32	0.11	0.09	0.55
	Equal variances not assumed	During			2.81	360.13	0.003	0.005	0.32	0.11	0.09	0.55
Price and value for money conscious	Equal variances assumed	Before	0.050	0.82	-2.58	367	0.005	0.010	-0.19	0.07	-0.34	-0.04
	Equal variances not assumed	During			-2.58	366.92	0.005	0.010	-0.19	0.07	-0.34	-0.04
Impulsive and careless	Equal variances assumed	Before	26.80	<.001	-1.37	367	0.086	0.171	-0.12	0.09	-0.30	0.05
	Equal variances not assumed	During			-1.37	327.29	0.085	0.171	-0.12	0.09	-0.31	0.05
Confused by over-choice	Equal variances assumed	Before	1.70	0.19	1.72	367	0.043	0.086	0.16	0.09	-0.02	0.34
	Equal variances not assumed	During			1.72	363.07	0.043	0.086	0.16	0.09	-0.02	0.34
Habitual and brand loyal	Equal variances assumed	Before	3.35	0.07	-2.67	367	0.004	0.008	-0.24	0.09	-0.42	-0.06
	Equal variances not assumed	During			-2.67	358.68	0.004	0.008	-0.24	0.09	-0.42	-0.06

The mean scores of the perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style before the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 3.58; SD = 0.84) and during the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 188; M = 3.93; SD = 0.72) differed significantly (t = -4.40, p = 0.001). The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean score of the shopping styles before and during the COVID-19 restrictions (t = -4.40; p = 0.001) as the mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.58) was significantly lower than the mean (3.93) during the COVID-19 restrictions. The mean scores of the brand conscious and price equals quality shopping style before (N = 184; M = 2.87; SD = 0.71) and during (N = 188; M = 2.52; SD = 0.78) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = 4.54; p = 0.001). There was a statistically significant difference between the means of this shopping style for before and during the COVID-19 restrictions (t = 4.54; p = 0.001). The brand conscious and price equals quality shopping style's mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (2.87) was significantly higher than during (2.52) the COVID-19 restrictions. This means young females were more perfectionist and high-quality conscious during the COVID-19 restrictions and less brand conscious and price equals quality.

The means of the novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style before (N = 184; M = 3.27; SD = 1.02) and during (N = 188; M = 2.62; SD = 1.06) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = 5.93; p = 0.001). The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean score of this shopping styles before and during the COVID-19 restrictions (t = 5.93, p = 0.001). The novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style's mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.27) was statistically higher than the novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style mean during (2.62) the COVID-19 restrictions. The mean scores of the recreational and hedonic conscious shopping style before (N = 184; M = 3.73; SD = 1.03) and during (N = 188; M = 3.40; SD = 1.18) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = 2.81; p = 0.005) as the mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.73) was significantly higher than the mean during the COVID-19 restrictions (3.40). This shows that young females were more novelty and fashion conscious as well as recreational and hedonic conscious before the COVID-19 restrictions.

The independent sample t-test showed that the mean scores of the price and value for money conscious shopping style before (N = 184; M = 3.50; SD = 0.72) and during (N = 188; M = 3.69; SD = 0.73) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = -2.58; p = 0.010). The mean for the price and value for money conscious shopping style before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.50) was significantly lower than the mean during (3.69) the COVID-19 restrictions. For habitual and brand loyal shopping style, the mean before (N = 184; M = 3.89; SD = 0.93) and during (N = 188; M = 4.14; SD = 0.80) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = -2.67; p = 0.008), showing a significantly lower mean before (3.89) than for during (4.14) the COVID-19 restrictions. Young female consumers were less price and value for money conscious and habitual and brand loyal before the COVID-19 restrictions and became more price and value for money conscious as well as habitual and brand loyal during the COVID-19 pandemic. These results indicated that there was a change in shopping styles for young female consumers from before to during the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the impulsive and careless and confused by over-choice shopping styles.

The **during** and **after** results are presented in **Table 4.11,** indicating that young females' shopping styles changed from during to after the COVID-19 restrictions. In **Table 4.11** below, the different shopping styles' means, standard deviation and standard error of the mean are shown as well as the year of the research and how number of respondents.

TABLE 4.11: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES DURING AND AFTER COVID-19

Shopping style	Year	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	During	188	3.93	0.71	0.05
	After	184	3.72	0.85	0.06
Brand conscious and price equals quality	During	188	2.52	0.78	0.05
	After	184	2.79	0.74	0.05
Novelty and fashion conscious	During	188	2.62	1.05	0.07
	After	184	3.48	0.87	0.06
Recreational and hedonic conscious	During	188	3.40	1.18	0.08
	After	184	3.53	1.11	0.08
Price and value for money conscious	During	188	3.69	0.73	0.05
	After	184	3.48	0.78	0.05
Impulsive and careless	During	188	3.04	1.03	0.07
	After	184	2.80	0.76	0.05
Confused by over-choice	During	188	2.78	0.86	0.06
	After	184	2.88	0.92	0.06
Habitual and brand loyal	During	188	4.14	0.80	0.05
	After	184	3.80	0.91	0.06

An independent *t*-test was performed on the during and after groups to compare any changes in shopping styles. Below in **Table 4.11** the results of the independent *t*-test for during and after the COVID-19 restrictions are displayed for each shopping style. As mentioned before, one of the assumptions for an independent *t*-test is that the variances of the two samples should be equal. Levene's test for equality of variances tests this assumption. If the "Sig" or *p*-value <0.05, the variances are not equal the p-value will have to be interpreted for the *t*-test given in the line of "Equal variances not assumed."

The independent *t*-test showed that the means of the brand conscious and price equals quality shopping style during (N = 188; M = 2.52; SD = 0.78) and after (N = 184; M = 2.79; SD = 0.74) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = -3.48; p = 0.001). The results indicated that the mean score of this shopping style was statistically significantly lower during the COVID-19 restrictions (2.52) than the mean after (2.79) the COVID-19 restrictions.

TABLE 4.12: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS)

			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of Difference	
							Significance					
Shopping style		**Year**	**F**	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**One-sided p**	**Two-sided p**	**Mean difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**Lower**	**Upper**
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	Equal variances assumed	During	9.38	0.0	2.49	367	0.006	0.013	0.20	0.08	0.04	0.36
	Equal variances not assumed	After			2.49	356.09	0.007	0.013	0.20	0.08	0.04	0.36
Brand conscious and price equals quality	Equal variances assumed	During	0.42	0.51	-3.48	367	<,001	<.001	-0.27	0.07	-0.43	-0.12
	Equal variances not assumed	After			-3.48	366.41	<,001	<.001	-0.27	0.07	-0.43	-0.12
Novelty and fashion-conscious	Equal variances assumed	During	6.71	0.01	-8.46	367	<,001	<.001	-0.85	0.10	-1.05	-0.65
	Equal variances not assumed	After			-8.46	355.98	<,001	<.001	-0.85	0.10	-1.05	-0.65
Recreational and hedonic conscious	Equal variances assumed	During	0.25	0.61	-1.046	367	0.148	0.296	-0.12	0.11	-0.36	0.11
	Equal variances not assumed	After			-1.046	365.88	0.148	0.296	-0.12	0.11	-0.36	0.11
Price and value for money conscious	Equal variances assumed	During	1.16	0.28	2.69	367	0.004	0.007	0.21	0.07	0.05	0.36
	Equal variances not assumed	After			2.69	365.08	0.004	0.007	0.21	0.07	0.05	0.36
Impulsive and careless	Equal variances assumed	During	19.61	<.001	2.56	367	0.005	0.011	0.24	0.09	0.05	0.42
	Equal variances not assumed	After			2.56	339.93	0.005	0.011	0.24	0.09	0.05	0.42
Confused by over-choice	Equal variances assumed	During	0.90	0.34	-1.03	367	0.150	0.301	-0.09	0.09	-0.28	0.08
	Equal variances not assumed	After			-1.03	364.82	0.151	0.301	-0.09	0.09	-0.28	0.08
Habitual and brand loyal	Equal variances assumed	During	3.21	0.07	3.80	367	<,001	<.001	0.34	0.08	0.16	0.51
	Equal variances not assumed	After			3.80	360.97	<,001	<.001	0.34	0.08	0.16	0.51

The means of the novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style during (N = 188; M = 2.62; SD = 1.05) and after (N = 184; M = 3.48; SD = 0.87) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = -8.46; p = 0.001). The novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style's mean during (2.62) was statistically lower than mean for after during (3.48) the COVID-19 restrictions. This indicates that young females became more brand conscious and price equals quality as well as novelty and fashion conscious after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

The price and value for money conscious shopping style's means during the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 188; M = 3.69; SD = 0.73) and after the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 3.48; SD = 0.78) differed significantly (t = 2.69; p = 0.007). For the price and value for money conscious shopping style, the mean during (3.69) was statistically significantly higher than the mean after (3.48) the COVID-19 restrictions. The mean for impulsive and careless shopping style during (N = 188; M = 3.04; SD = 1.03) and after (N = 184; M = 2.80; SD = 0.76) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = 2.56; p = 0.011). The results indicated that for the impulsive and careless shopping style the mean during the COVID-19 restrictions (3.04) was significantly higher than the mean after (2.80) the COVID-19 restrictions. This shows young females were more price and value for money conscious but also more impulsive and careless shoppers during the COVID-19 restrictions.

The mean scores of the habitual and brand loyal shopping style during (N = 188; M = 4.14; SD = 0.80) and after (N = 184; M = 3.80; SD = 0.91) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (t = 3.80; p = 0.001). The habitual and brand loyal shopping style's mean during the COVID-19 restrictions (4.14) was statistically significantly higher than the mean after (3.80) the COVID-19 restrictions. Young female consumers were much more habitual and brand loyal during the COVID-19 restrictions than after.

Ultimately, this indicates that there was a change in shopping styles for brand conscious and price equals quality, novelty and fashion-conscious, price and value for money conscious, impulsive and careless and habitual and brand loyal shopping styles during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. The perfectionist and high-quality conscious, recreational and shopping conscious and confused by over-choice shopping styles did not change during and after the COVID-19 restrictions.

The **before** and **after** results are presented in **Table 4.13,** indicating the means for young females' shopping styles before and after the COVID-19 restrictions. In **Table 4.13** below, the different shopping styles' means, standard deviation and standard error of the mean are shown as well as the year of the research and how number of respondents.

TABLE 4.13: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND AFTER COVID-19 (T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS)

Shopping style	Year	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	Before	184	3.58	0.83	0.06
	After	184	3.72	0.85	0.06
Brand conscious and price equals quality	Before	184	2.87	0.71	0.05
	After	184	2.79	0.74	0.05
Novelty and fashion conscious	Before	184	3.27	1.02	0.07
	After	184	3.48	0.87	0.06
Recreational and hedonic conscious	Before	184	3.73	1.02	0.07
	After	184	3.53	1.11	0.08
Price and value for money conscious	Before	184	3.50	0.71	0.05
	After	184	3.48	0.78	0.05
Impulsive and careless	Before	184	2.92	0.71	0.05
	After	184	2.80	0.76	0.05
Confused by over-choice	Before	184	2.95	0.95	0.07
	After	184	2.88	0.92	0.06
Habitual and brand loyal	Before	184	3.89	0.93	0.06
	After	184	3.80	0.91	0.06

In **Table 4.13** above it is indicated that there were very few differences between shopping styles before and after the COVID-19 restrictions. Indicating that COVID-19 might have changed young female consumers shopping styles momentarily, but after the restrictions were lifted, the shopping styles generally returned back to how they were before the COVID-19 restrictions started. Below in **Table 4.14** the paired *t*-test for the equality of the means is shown for each shopping style before and after the COVID-19 restrictions as the before and after COVID-19 data was extracted from the same respondent group.

For each one of the 184 participants the difference between the before and after COVID-19 shopping style measurements were computed. The mean showed in **Table 4.14** is the mean of the differences per shopping style. The paired *t*-test is performed at a 5% level of significance. This means that the p-values are compared and given in the means column to 0.05. If the *p*-value is lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected that indicates that the before and after means are equal. For example, for the perfectionist shopping style the *p*-value 0.006 <0.05, hence there is a significant difference between the before and after COVID-19 measurement for the perfectionist shopping style. When referring to the means in **Table 4.14** of descriptive stats above, it shows that after COVID-19 the perfectionist shopping style mean was higher than the before mean. For the brand conscious and price equals quality shopping style, the *p*-value is larger than 0.05 (0.122 > 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis, that the before and after COVID means were equal cannot be rejected.

TABLE 4.14: COMPARISON OF SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE AND AFTER COVID-19 (PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS)

	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	df	One-sided p	Two-sided p
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	-0.15	0.74	0.05	-0.26	-0.04	-2.76	183	0.00	0.00
Brand conscious and price equals quality	0.07	0.66	0.04	-0.02	0.17	1.55	183	0.06	0.12
Novelty and fashion-conscious	-0.21	0.85	0.06	-0.33	-0.09	-3.40	183	<0.001	<0.001
Recreational and shopping conscious	0.19	0.78	0.05	0.08	0.31	3.43	183	<0.001	<0.001
Price and value for money conscious	0.01	0.70	0.05	-0.08	0.12	0.33	183	0.36	0.73
Impulsive and careless	0.11	0.76	0.05	0.00	0.22	2.05	183	0.02	0.04
Confused by over-choice	0.06	0.85	0.06	-0.05	0.19	1.06	183	0.14	0.29
Habitual and brand loyal	0.09	0.92	0.06	-0.03	0.23	1.43	183	0.07	0.15

The paired *t*-test showed that the scores of the perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style before (N = 184; M = 3.58; SD = 0.83) and after (N = 184; M = 3.72; SD = 0.85) the COVID-19 restrictions differed significantly (*t* = -2.76; *p* = 0.00). The perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.58) was significantly lower than after (3.72) the COVID-19 restrictions. For the novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style, the before the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 3.27; SD = 1.02) and after the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 3.48; SD = 0.87) means differed significantly (*t* = -3.40; *p* = 0.001). There was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores for this shopping style. The novelty and fashion-conscious shopping style mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.27) was significantly lower than the after the COVID-19 restrictions mean (3.48). This shows that young females changed to more perfectionist and high-quality conscious and novelty and fashion-conscious consumers after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

The mean scores of the recreational and hedonic shopping style before the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 3.73; SD = 1.02) and after the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 3.53; SD = 1.11) differed significantly (*t* = 3.43; *p* = 0.001). The recreational and shopping conscious shopping style mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (3.73) was significantly higher than the mean (3.53) after the COVID-19 restrictions. For the impulsive and careless shopping style, the before the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 2.92; SD = 0.71) and after the COVID-19 restrictions (N = 184; M = 2.80; SD = 0.76) means differed significantly (*t* = 2.05; *p* = 0.04). In other words, the impulsive and careless shopping style mean before the COVID-19 restrictions (2.92) was significantly higher than the impulsive and careless shopping style mean after the COVID-19 restrictions (2.80). The results implicate that young females were more recreational and hedonic conscious and impulsive and careless before the COVID-19 pandemic. Ultimately, this indicates that only four of the eight predetermined shopping styles, namely perfectionist and high-quality conscious, novelty and fashion conscious, recreational and hedonic conscious and impulsive and careless changed from before to after the COVID-19 restrictions.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The findings of the study were confirmed in line with each specified objective for the research. In terms of shopping frequency, the majority of young females changed their shopping habits and frequency to only shopping seasonally for clothing during the COVID-19 restrictions. Seasonal shopping had increased from before COVID-19 during and decreased after the COVID-19 restrictions. Before the COVID-19 restrictions, respondents shopped for clothing 2-3 times a month and after the COVID-19 restrictions it decreased. The majority of respondents preferred shopping in-store before the COVID-19 restrictions, during the restrictions they preferred to shop online and after the COVID-19 restrictions they went back to their preferred channel, which is in-store. Most respondents shopped for school wear before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. The clothing category that was purchased frequently as well, before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions was children's clothing. Sleepwear also had an increase in purchases as before the COVID-19 restrictions. Most surprisingly of all the categories is occasion wear which had an increase in purchases ($M = 3.49$) compared to before the COVID-19 restrictions ($M = 3.1$). Formal and workwear had a decrease in purchases from before ($M = 2.49$) to after ($M = 2.21$) the COVID-19 restrictions.

The majority of respondents were recreational and hedonic conscious consumers before the COVID-19 restrictions and during the restrictions in 2020 the majority indicated that they now shop as habitual and brand loyal consumers. After the COVID-19 restrictions, the majority of respondents were habitual and brand loyal consumers ($M = 3.80$). The conclusion and possible reasoning for the results will be discussed in Chapter 5 as well as recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a brief reflection of the study, followed by a discussion and interpretation of the findings according to the research objectives. Final conclusions regarding each objective are presented along with the implications and recommendations for retailers and marketers. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a change in consumers' wants and needs which translated into buying behavioural changes (Anakpo & Mishi, 2021). In the early stages of the pandemic consumers avoided crowded spaces and in-store shopping where they could contract the virus which indirectly pushed them towards online shopping, the South African government also imposed laws in line with the disaster management act (Kapetanios *et al*., 2022). Consumers fluctuating buying behaviour, driven by unyielding decisions by the government and the uncertainty of the future, made it almost impossible for retailers to accurately forecast sales that impacted under- and overstocking of certain products and items (Weber, 2021). Even though retailers have put measures in place to combat the impact of the pandemic on their sales and profit, they struggled to understand consumers' behaviour within the unpredictable and unprecedented situation (Anakpo & Mishi, 2021).

Because COVID-19 happened unexpectedly, the change in young females' shopping styles was equally swift and evolved as the pandemic continued. Shopping, in general, moved towards online shopping, due to in-store restrictions and consumers' fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Though most of the world went through similar emotional, physical and financial stress, a global study can't be applied specifically to South African consumers and young females who operate in an emerging market. Therefore, further research is needed to determine the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on young females, their buying behaviour and shopping styles. Therefore, this study is aimed to explore and describe the evolution of young females' clothing shopping styles during COVID-19.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF THE SAMPLE

The sample included young female respondents from all population groups living in Gauteng, South Africa. An effort was made to make the sample as representative as possible of young females within the South African context, consisting of all population groups, above the age of 18, 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 the larger population of South Africa. For this research, a total of 188 respondents that fitted the sampling criteria were filtered from the 2020 data set and for the 2023 study 184 successfully completed questionnaires.

5.2.1 Gender

Gender has been included as a demographic variable of significance as females, especially young females shop more for clothing and fashion in compared to men, they are the leading shoppers for clothing in a household (Hoch, 2007; (Netzer, 2020).), and they represent a large proportion of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2015). Respondents were asked to indicate their gender in a drop down and multiple-choice question, if they selected that they are a man or other, it would automatically end the questionnaire and take them to the last thank you page.

5.2.2 Age

Female respondents were asked to indicate their current age on a sliding scale question with a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 35 according to the sampling criteria of the study. This criterion was included because these consumers were of an age where they were likely to be purchasing clothing for themselves or households and are likely to be making regular purchases and consumption decisions. Convenience sampling was used to collect data; therefore, the researcher and fieldworkers, who are young females, collecting the data distributed the survey among their parents, friends and peers, explaining why it was easy to obtain successfully completed questionnaires from the target sample.

5.2.3 Level of education

A consumer's level of education acts as one of the influencing factors in clothing purchases and shopping behaviour (Viljoen, 1998). Respondents in this study were asked to provide their highest level of education in a drop-down multiple-choice question. As seen in Table 4.1, most of the sample in Study 2020 was educated with 29.3% (n = 55) of the respondents having completed Grade,12. 45.2% (n = 85) completed a university degree and 25% (n = 47) had completed a postgraduate degree. Most of the sample in Study 2023, was also educated with 26.1% (n = 48) of the respondents having completed Grade 12. 44% (n = 81) had completed a university degree and 29.3% (n = 54) had completed a postgraduate degree. Compared to the general South African population, this sample presented a more formal education (Statistics South Africa, 2019). 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).

5.2.4 Monthly household income

As predetermined, a consumer's monthly household has an influence on how, where and the frequency of their clothing purchases (Viljoen, 1998). Respondents were asked to specify their monthly household income. This question did not have a forced response as it is a sensitive subject for most consumers, especially South Africans. For Study 2020, the average monthly household income was R42 921.81 and for Study 2023 the average monthly household income was R53 800. This indicates that the average respondent are part of the realised middle and emerging affluent income groups. The average monthly income of the sample is also higher than the national average in 2020, which was R22 387 (Trading Economics, 2020) and R24 813 in 2022 (Statistics SA, 2022). A recent study conducted after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, indicated that a consumers monthly household income has a significant effect on their shopping styles and they found different shopping styles within different income groups (Suvadarshini & Mishra, 2021).

5.2.5 Population group

The population group was predominantly White for both Study 2020 (64.29%, n = 162) and Study 2023 (83.26%, n = 199). In Study 2020 the remaining population groups were 21.83% Black, 0.40% Asian, 3.17% Coloured, 8.73% Indian and 1.59% preferred not to say. In Study 2023 the remaining population groups were 7.53% Black, 0.84% Coloured, 7.53% Indian and 0.84% preferred not to say. Although this split is not representative of the South African population, with 80.5% being Africans, 8.3% Caucasians, 8.8 % Coloureds and 2.5% are either Indian or Asian (Statistics SA, 2019; Statistics SA, 2022), Johnson and Lee (2015) note that participation in online research by ethnic group is in line with the sample collected for this study. The sample for both Study 2020 and Study 2023 is not representative of the South African population, as the majority (80.3%) is black (Statistics SA, 2022). Although a quota sampling strategy was followed, the skewed representation of the population might be since the majority of fieldworkers were white. Consequently, the fieldworkers distributed the surveys to family and friends.

5.2.6 Area of residence

For this study, the questionnaire was only targeted at young female consumers living in Gauteng, South Africa. This was for ease of use and due to financial constraints during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Gauteng is also South Africa's centre of trade with the most spending power of consumers (Statistics SA, 2022). Pretoria, South Africa's administrative capital city is also located in Gauteng making it a suitable location for this study, in terms of clothing consumption. Incidentally Gauteng is also the most populated province in South Africa (Statistics SA, 2022) and provided access to young female respondents. Gauteng is the economic hub of South Africa and therefore the behaviour of young female consumers in Gauteng can be emulated across South Africa.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS PER OBJECTIVE

The findings of this study are discussed in relation to the three objectives which details young females clothing buying practices, with emphasis of the frequency they shopped, the shopping channels they used and the categories they shopped for, before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. It also details young females predominant clothing shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions and the changes in their shopping styles during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa.

5.3.1 Young females’ clothing buying practices

Objective 1 explored and described clothing buying practices (i.e., frequency of buying, channels and clothing categories) of young females before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa. For these objective descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were employed to compare the frequency of buying, the channels used for shopping and the clothing categories mostly purchased between Study 2020 and Study 2023. Although some customers still preferred going into a brick-and-mortar store, there was a noticeable shift towards multi-channel buying, whether it be purely online shopping, “click and collect,” or contactless in-store interactions (Dludla, 2020).

It has been predetermined before the COVID-19 pandemic that young female consumers that is brand conscious, fashion conscious, impulsive and recreational when shopping has a higher tendency to shop online for clothing with their smartphones (Eriksson *et al*., 2017). That is why clothing retailers needed to adapt quickly to how they sell to their customers during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, to retain brand loyalty and avoid becoming irrelevant in a short amount of time, as consumers could not exit their homes to do their clothing shopping, which in turn made them explore other channels of buying (Mathe & Smith, 2021). An overwhelming reality of the COVID-19 pandemic was that businesses had to actively prepare for changes in consumers buying behaviour (Uribepriya *et al*., 2021).

- **Clothing shopping frequency**

Young female consumers indicated that they mostly shopped seasonally for clothing during the COVID-19 restrictions, which is in contrast to the majority of them indicating that they shopped 2-3 times a month for clothing before the COVID-19 restrictions. This result could be due to multiple reasons including, the COVID-19 restrictions, which physically impaired them from shopping for clothing the first few weeks of lockdown and thereafter disabled them to shop comfortably for clothing for multiple months. The COVID-19 restrictions also brought forth economic stress with salaries being reduced, workers being laid off and working hours cut short due to the restrictions of interaction. The result of this was added emotional stress which could've cause some consumers to save money for uncertain times (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

After COVID-19 restrictions they mostly shopped once a month and seasonal. After COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, young females did not return to a weekly practice of clothing shopping, but rather reduced their frequency of shopping. This means they do not visit stores (physical or online) as often as they used to. There may be different reasons for this such as a quicker pace of life, lack of attention to detail, crowd avoidance, less browsing times (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022).

- **Clothing shopping channel**

In line with international studies and other relevant studies in South Africa, young female consumers indicated that their preferred shopping channel before the COVID-19 restrictions, was in-store shopping. However, during the COVID-19 restrictions, they switched their preferred method to online shopping. The biggest factor that ultimately urged consumers towards online shopping, was the fact that governments across the globe and in South Africa closed retail outlets to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 disease (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020). Many retailers closed their stores temporarily to switch to online shopping, began fundraising campaigns for local and international charities and also to support their employees (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020). When consumers saw these actions from brands and retailers it also instilled a sense of brand loyalty towards these brands, which aided sales when the stores were open again for shopping (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020). This could also be due to consumers having shopping anxiety when entering public spaces where the virus could be spread (Koch *et al*., 2020). The South African government in the first few months of lockdown, restricted certain clothing items from being sold in-store if it was not classified as essential (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). The government then allowed retailers to trade these items exclusively online for a period. After the COVID-19 restrictions was lifted they indicated that they prefer to shop in-store again.

It has been predetermined before the COVID-19 pandemic that young female consumers that is brand conscious, fashion conscious, impulsive and recreational when shopping has a higher tendency to shop online for clothing with their smartphones (Eriksson *et al*., 2017). That is why clothing retailers needed to adapt quickly to how they sell to their customers during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, to retain brand loyalty and avoid becoming irrelevant in a short amount of time, as consumers could not exit their homes to do their clothing shopping, which in turn made them explore other channels of buying (Mathe & Smith, 2021). An overwhelming reality of the COVID-19 pandemic was that businesses had to actively prepare for changes in consumers buying behaviour (Uribepriya *et al*., 2021). A study done by (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022) also found that consumers in general switched to online shopping when they shopped for clothing during the COVID-19 restrictions and this altered shopping approach remained a preferred channel by consumers after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. Consumers did tend to use a "scout-and-check" approach for their online shopping after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, where they would first look for and compare different items online before making the purchase in-store (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022)

- **Clothing categories**

In terms of the clothing categories young female consumers shopped for in Gauteng, South Africa, before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, school uniform was the category most shopped for during all three of these phases. This is due to the fact that schools in South Africa were only closed momentarily due to the COVID-19 restrictions during alert level 5, from 26 March 2021 to 18 May 2021, when the South African government decided to let children return to school in phases, starting with Grade 12 (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). The decision to let schools reopen, even on a high alert level, obligated parents to still purchase school uniforms throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. Children's clothing was the second most shopped for category in all three phases. This is an indication that young females in the study were mostly in a more mature phase of their personal lives, where they already have children and their priorities changed in terms of clothing and fashion shopping. Sleepwear had an obvious increase in sales during the COVID-19 restrictions and this could be due to the fact that consumers were spending more time at home and comfy sleepwear gives a sense of comfort (Mbude, 2021).

The most surprising result of the study, was that young female consumers indicated that they had a bigger interest in shopping for occasion wear during the COVID-19 restrictions, than before, while workwear had a decrease. This is contrary to the global trend where leisure and casual wear has an increase in purchases during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Achala, 2021). According to Tom Bottomley, this could be due to "fleece fatigue" where consumers missed special events and dressing up (Bottomley, 2021). This is an indication that consumers went through different life stages, where they started families since the first COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 and it is evident that the work from home and hybrid working models became more popular in 2022-2023.

5.3.2 Young females' predominant clothing shopping styles

Objective 2 identified and described young females' predominant clothing shopping styles before, during and after COVID-19 restrictions in South Africa. Consumers needs and wants are closely related to their shopping styles. Research has existed for many years, documenting how and why consumers shop the way they do and what ultimately impacts those decisions (Eastman & Liu, 2012). Different typologies have also been developed, with different context and research approaches, but the most relevant typology to this study is the shopping styles set out by Sproles and Kendall (1986). According to Kendall and Sproles (1986), consumers have different approaches to purchasing products, influencing their cognitive and affective orientations when making a buying decision. A shopping orientation or style can be described as how, where, and what the consumer wants to shop and each person's shopping orientation can differ (Luomala, 2003). Consumers' shopping styles were transformed during the COVID-19 pandemic (Dulam *et al*., 2021). The findings aligned with Dulam *et al*. (2021)'s study that before COVID-19 young females' shopping styles were mainly habitual and brand loyal as well as perfectionist and high-quality conscious and they were least likely to be brand conscious and price equals money.

During the COVID-19 restrictions, young females' shopping styles were recreational and shopping conscious which could be an indication to the fact that they had to restrict their socialisation more and deemed shopping as recreational seeing that events and public gatherings were restricted. It is also proven that females shopped more for recreational purposes during the COVID-19 restrictions, because they assumed there would be more sales and marked down items, as retailers used this strategy to keep their target markets interested (Kempen & Tobias-Mamina, 2022). Consumers also had more time to do clothing shopping due to social events being restricted or cancelled. With the emotional pressures and destress of an unknown future, many consumers turned towards online shopping as an emotional and stress outlet. They shopped for fun and enjoyment as well as a form of stress relief (Chauhan *et al*., 2021). Young females are often found as part of this consumer group, with their need to socialize frequently, outweighing their budgetary constrictions. They often tend to shop for the latest trends and clothing items instead of household items (Klein & Sharma, 2021).

The minority were confused by over-choice consumers. This consumer is easily confused by too much marketing information and an excess of similar products to choose from (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). This consumer can either be consciously or unconsciously confused by marketers by either a stimulus overload or stimulus similarities in their environment (Mitchell & Papavassiliou, 1999). During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, brands, retailers and businesses didn't have time to prepare their marketing strategies and later on in the pandemic many of them cut their budgets for marketing. This could have given this consumer time to evaluate certain options without being overly stimulated. This could also be due to government restrictions on public spaces, causing them to not be overwhelmed by in-store promotions and seeing similar items for sale.

In complete contrast to the results of young females shopping style during the COVID-19 restrictions, they indicated that after the pandemic they were perfectionist and high-quality consumers. A perfectionist and high-quality conscious shopping style reflects an orientation that is focused on best quality products and consistently looks for these qualities (Nayeem & Marie-IpSooching, 2022). This characteristic of a consumer measures the degree to which they will search attentively and systematically for the best quality products (Sproles & Kendall, 1990). The perfectionist and high-quality consumer will not settle for a mediocre product or item and will most probably do extensive research and read reviews before making a purchase (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020). Consumers globally realised the value of their money and the fact that higher quality items, will last longer than cheaper items (Das, Sarkar & Debroy, 2022). A recent study found that after the COVID-19 restrictions females are more likely to purchase quality clothing because they socialized less in public and had more disposable money to purchase quality clothing instead of going discount shopping (Vladimirova *et al*., 2022).

The minority indicated that they were brand conscious and price equals quality consumers. A brand conscious and price equals quality consumer is very brand loyal and believe that a higher priced item from a well-known brand will equate to good quality (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020). These consumers will more frequently decide to buy more expensive items with a popular name, than items with the same function, but a less well-known brand name (Dlodlo & Mahao, 2020). Consumers who are generally brand conscious, are heavily influenced by quality, which could either have a negative or positive effect on them (Hsin *et al*., 2009). This result could be due to the fact that during the COVID-19 restrictions, many consumers had to switch brands due to logistical issues and supply restrictions and therefore they have become less brand loyal.

5.3.3 Changes in young females' shopping styles

Objective 3 explored and described the changes in young females' shopping styles as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the South African market. During the COVID-19 pandemic, retailers had to adjust their retail strategies to reduce the impact of the economic pressure at the time, but also to adjust to their target markets changing wants and needs (Sayyida *et al*., 2021). This indicated that most clothing retailers had to adjust their product offering to what was permitted to be sold by the government and to also diversify their selling channels (Sayyida *et al*., 2021). As mentioned above in 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 during the COVID-19 restrictions young female consumers in South Africa indicated that the majority of them were recreational and shopping conscious consumers and after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted they were perfectionist and high-quality consumers. It is essential to the study to also mention the results of their shopping styles before the COVID-19 pandemic.

As indicated in Chapter 4, there was a change in shopping styles for young female consumers in South Africa from before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the impulsive and careless and confused by over choice shopping style. The findings shows that young females were more perfectionist and high-quality conscious during the COVID-19 restrictions and less brand conscious and price equals quality, whereas they were more novelty and fashion conscious as well as recreational and hedonic conscious before the COVID-19 restrictions. Young female consumers were less price and value for money conscious and habitual and brand loyal before the COVID-19 restrictions and became more price and value for money conscious as well as habitual and brand loyal during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was also a change in shopping styles for brand conscious and price equals quality, novelty and fashion conscious, price and value for money conscious, impulsive and careless and habitual and brand loyal shopping styles during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. The perfectionist and high-quality conscious, recreational and shopping conscious and confused by over-choice shopping styles did not experience any change during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. Young females became more brand conscious and price equals quality as well as novelty and fashion conscious after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. They were also more price and value for money conscious, but also more impulsive and careless shoppers during the COVID-19 restrictions. Young female consumers were much more habitual and brand loyal during the COVID-19 restrictions than after.

Lastly, only four of the eight predetermined shopping styles, namely perfectionist and high-quality conscious, novelty and fashion conscious, recreational and shopping conscious and impulsive and careless shopping style changed from before the COVID-19 restrictions to after the COVID-19 restrictions. Young females changed to more perfectionist and high-quality conscious and novelty and fashion-conscious consumers after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. The results implicate that young females were more recreational and hedonic conscious and impulsive and careless before the COVID-19 pandemic.

This indicates that they changed their shopping style briefly during the restrictions, due to different stressors and when their environment returned to a "normal" state, their shopping behaviour and style also adjusted back to how it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. This result aids retailers to understand their target markets better and how they react in emergency events. This indicates that retailers and brands need to have an emergency plan in place for black swan events, but should not change their whole business plan and structure, as consumers will most likely return to their normal shopping behaviour.

5.4 THE STUDY IN RETROSPECT

In the South African context, specifically the Gauteng province, a limited body of research has addressed how COVID-19 affected young females' shopping behaviour and styles. This study expands our understanding of consumer shopping styles by analysing their behaviour during an emergency event. Consumers' shopping styles are transformed during emergency events like the COVID-19 pandemic or uncertain economic times and what items they shop for are often unclear to retailers (Dulam *et al*., 2021). Changes in shopping behaviour were evident in South Africa as a colossal increase in online shopping occurred (Meyer, 2020). Although some customers still preferred going into a brick-and-mortar store, there was a noticeable shift towards multi-channel buying, whether it be purely online shopping, "click and collect," or contactless in-store interactions (Dludla, 2020). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, that young female consumers were brand conscious, fashion conscious, impulsive and recreational when shopping has a higher tendency to shop online for clothing with their smartphones (Eriksson *et al*., 2017).

Shopping styles are used by retailers and marketers as predictors and indicators to understand consumers' orientation towards brands, price, quality, experiences, and segments and to serve target markets to maximise profits (Sarabia-Sanchez *et al*., 2012). This study is important because a standard or universal measure and response cannot be applied to all young female consumers' clothing shopping styles. Insight into how shopping styles changed is needed to determine effective measures for future retail strategies that can address similar emergency events in Gauteng, South Africa. By expanding on current literature and studies with the findings of this study, brands, small businesses and retailers, relating to clothing, can be assisted in understanding how young females are impacted by a black swan event like COVID-19 and how it impacts their future shopping styles. This can ultimately assist with avoiding liquidation, unattainable debt and unnecessary expenditure on business responses that are not tailored to their specific consumers and target markets (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Moreover, retailers need in-depth insight into their target markets' shopping styles and buying behaviour to identify future opportunities and hurdles when another crisis, similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, arises. Retailers must understand their consumers better now, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to serve them better and retain them (Subramanian, 2019).

Once a research study has been concluded, it is important for the researcher to evaluate the objectivity of the study to ensure all the objectives laid out for the research have been met. Objectives 1-3 were analysed in Section 5.1. Due to COVID-19 happening unexpectedly, the change in young females' shopping styles was equally swift and evolved as the pandemic continued. Shopping, in general, moved towards online shopping, due to in-store restrictions and consumers' fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Further research was needed to determine the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on young females, their buying behaviour and shopping styles.

With this research problem highlighted, the relevant objectives, conceptual framework and operationalisation for the investigation were developed. In terms of the research design and methodology, steps were taken to ensure the production of reliable and valid results. The study followed a quantitative, empirical research design and collected primary data in 2020 and 2023 using a structured, electronic, self-administered questionnaire. The link to the questionnaires was distributed using fieldworkers who shared it on social media platforms (i.e., LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram) as well via WhatsApp with their family, friends and acquaintances. The questionnaire included a cover letter that followed the requirements for ethical research conducted on human participants, therefore, increasing the reliability of the study. Convenience, non-probability sampling was utilised due to the time and monetary constraints of the study.

5.4.1 Achievement of the objectives set out for this study

The objectives of this study were concluded and addressed satisfactorily. The conclusions that were drawn were relevant and reflected in terms of the four main objectives laid out for the study. There were no unexpected issues identified regarding the composition of the questionnaire, data collection or the study in general.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a "real-life" problem and required further investigation as there was limited research available, especially within the South African context and relating to young females. Therefore, a research gap was addressed and it is believed that the results presented in this study add benefit to current literature about consumer shopping behaviour and styles.

5.4.2 Significance of the research findings

This study seeks to help businesses, retailers, manufacturers, suppliers and brands to improve their response to emergency events like the COVID-19 pandemic based on the understanding of how young females react and change their shopping behaviour when an occurrence like this takes place. This will result in benefits for industry role-players and consumers.

Shopping styles are used by retailers and marketers as predictors and indicators to understand consumers' orientation towards brands, price, quality, experiences, and segments and to serve target markets in order to maximise profits (Sarabia-Sanchez *et al*., 2012). This study is important because a standard or universal measure and response cannot be applied to all young female consumers' clothing shopping styles. Insight into how shopping styles changed is needed to determine effective measures for future retail strategies that can address similar emergency events in Gauteng, South Africa. By expanding on current literature and studies with the findings of this study, brands, small businesses and retailers, relating to clothing, can be assisted in understanding how young females are impacted by a black swan event like COVID-19 and how it impacts their future shopping styles. This can ultimately assist with avoiding liquidation, unattainable debt and unnecessary expenditure on business responses that are not tailored to their specific consumers and target markets (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Moreover, retailers need in-depth insight into their target markets' shopping styles and buying behaviour to identify future opportunities and hurdles when another crisis, similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, arises. Retailers must understand their consumers better now, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to serve them better and retain them (Subramanian, 2019).

This research has benefits for industry role-players as it highlights the need for industry role-players to have an emergency response ready for black swan events like the COVID-19 pandemic. The conclusions obtained from this study have provided in-depth information regarding how young females in Gauteng, South Africa shop before, during and after an emergency event. Therefore, the knowledge gained from this study could provide industry role-players with a competitive advantage. By implementing their emergency response effectively in similar situations in the future, industry role-players will see results such as increased turnover, profitability, stock movement and market share.

Equally, this research will benefit consumers. Based on the findings of this study young females in Gauteng, South Africa have different priorities when shopping during an emergency event, compared to international consumers. Therefore, manufacturers, suppliers and retailers should not target them using a mass-market, global approach to satisfying their needs. The findings of this study will assist retailers with first understanding their target market and the methods to identify the consumer segments that comprise it. They will be able to utilise the information regarding their shopping behaviour during an emergency event and adapt their approach in time to not lose any loyalty from the desired target market. This results in an enhanced customer shopping experience, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Jiang & Tuzhilin, 2009; Tripathi *et al*., 2018).

5.4.3 Limitations of the study

Punctilious attention was paid to ensure that the data collection and processing was completed in a valid, reliable and ethical manner. It was, therefore, important to follow plausible research methods to ensure the study was conducted ethically to obtain accurate, reliable data. However, the study was still restricted by some unavoidable limitations. The following limitations specified could serve as guidance for future research studies:

- Due to time restrictions, the resultant sample was smaller than was ideal. This was acceptable and allowed for useful conclusions to be drawn but a larger sample would have been more representative of the South African population in Gauteng.
- For future studies, male consumers could also be included in the sample, as it could be that they also shopped for clothing before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions and insight into their shopping behaviour could be beneficial to the social studies, literature and retailers.
- The sampling method used was non-purposive convenience sampling. This meant that conclusions of the larger South African population could not be drawn. Larger groups of individuals from different provinces, ethnic groups, income groups etc. could have been collected to ensure that the sample was representative of the South African population.
- Future studies could include a wider age range than 18-35. In retrospect, the study could have increased the age limit to at least 80 as, although the retirement age in South Africa is 65, female consumers older than 35 still purchase clothing for themselves and their families
- Qualtrics provides an IQ score that flags areas for improvement on the questionnaire. According to this information, the following areas could have been improved:
    - Decrease the number of matrix questions, as Qualtrics noted that respondents do not enjoy completing this type of survey resulting in decreased response quality and completion rate. This could be improved by changing the 5-point Likert scales to 3-point Likert scales which Qualtrics notes will alliviate this challenge.
    - Optimise the questions for mobile phone use and preview the survey on a mobile phone. Qualtrics notes that making the questions mobile-friendly such as choosing simple scales and drop-down menus rather than complex sliding scales and 5-point matrixes will increase the completion rates and representativeness of the data.
    - Ensure that all questions are WCAG AA/508 accessible[4]. Qualtrics noted that the questions BEFORE in green and AFTER in red, were not accessible to people with disabilities. These standards aim to make electronic and information technology accessible to people with colourblindness, vision disabilities or hearing disabilities.

[4] The goal of WCAG AA/508 is to ensure that electronic and information technology is available to people with disabilities such as colour blindness, vision and hearing disabilities so that their experience is comparable to others (Pan, 2017).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

To date there have been limited studies specifically focusing on how external factors influence young female consumers' shopping styles in South Africa, therefore the above-mentioned studies can only be used as a guideline for future studies on the topic within the South African context, but further and more extensive research is needed to make an accurate conclusion.

Insight into how shopping styles changes in emergency events is needed to determine effective measures for future retail strategies that can address similar disasters or emergency events specifically to the South African context. By combining previous data from international studies with the findings of this study, brands, small businesses and retailers, relating to clothing, can be assisted in understanding how young females are impacted by a black swan event like COVID-19 and how it impacts their shopping styles. This can ultimately assist with avoiding liquidation, unattainable debt and unnecessary expenditure on business responses which are not tailored to their specific consumers and target markets (Heyns & Kilbourn, 2022). Moreover, retailers need in-depth insight into their target markets' shopping styles and buying behaviour to identify future opportunities and hurdles when another crisis, similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, arises. Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations for future studies have been made.

Due to some of the results from phase two of the data collection not matching the data from phase one in 2020, it could be beneficial to utilise actual store-level data to determine the categories consumers shopped for before, during and after the COVID-19 restrictions. For more accurate results and findings, it would be ideal if data from every major clothing retailer, in every format (online or brick-and-mortar) in South Africa could be investigated. The results of this study can be compared to the relevant consumers' shopper basket data and more precise data can be concluded.

For future research, qualitative research can be done in the form of focus groups and interviews to delve deeper into consumers' reasons behind their changed clothing shopping behaviour due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Future studies could perform exploratory factor analysis on the data sets to determine underlying factors and if the theoretical shopping styles could be form or if new shopping styles form. Determining and analysing the exploratory factor analysis could provide new insights into how the scales of Sproles and Kendall could be applied to an emerging context.

5.5 FINAL CONCLUSION

Each of the objectives laid out for the study is investigated and detailed based on the findings of the research. It is evident that young female consumers in South Africa were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as their shopping behaviours changed during the restrictions, but mostly stabilised again after the restrictions were lifted. It is also clear that international trends and studies can be used as a base line for South Africa, but cannot be applied, due to uncertain economic infrastructure and different consumer needs compared to other international consumers. This gives industry role players in South Africa knowledge on how to prepare for future unprecedented events.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Abe, I. (2023). *Changes in Retail Consumer Behaviour in South Africa during COVID-19: Permanent or Temporary*. Unpublished thesis. KwaZulu-Natal: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Achala, J. (2021). *Fashion trends during and post COVID-19 scenario*. [online] www.fibre2fashion.com. Available at: https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/9241/fashion-trends-during-and-post-COVID-19-scenario.

Alchemer (2021). *What is SPSS and How Does it Benefit Survey Data Analysis?* [online] Alchemer. Available at: https://www.alchemer.com/resources/blog/what-is-spss/.

Anakpo, G. and Mishi, S. (2021). Business response to COVID-19 impact: Effectiveness analysis in South Africa. *The Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management*, 13(1).

Aithal, A. & Aithal, P. 2020. Development and validation of survey questionnaire & experimental data–a systematical review-based statistical approach. International *Journal of Management*, Technology, and Social Sciences (IJMTS), 5(2):233-251.

Arafat, S.M.Y., Kar, S.K., Marthoenis, M., Sharma, P., Hoque Apu, E. and Kabir, R. (2020). Psychological underpinning of panic buying during pandemic (COVID-19). *Psychiatry Research*, [online] 289, p.113061. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113061.

Attreya, B. (2018). Consumer Buying Behaviour. *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education,* 15(9), pp.1–4. doi:10.29070/15/57885.

Bakewell, C. and Mitchell, V. (2003). Generation Y female consumer decision-making styles. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 31(2), 95–106. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/09590550310461994.

Bauer, H.S., Sauer, N.E. and Becker, C. (2006). Investigating the relationship between product involvement and consumer decision making styles. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 5(4), 342-354.

Blandi, L., Sabbatucci, M., Dallagiacoma, G., Alberti, F., Bertuccio, P. and Odone, A. (2022). Digital Information Approach through social media among Gen Z and Millennials: The Global Scenario during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Vaccines*, 10(11), 1822-1823. doi:https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines10111822.

Botha, E., Erasmus, A. and Mpinganjira, M. (2019). Consumer behaviour: South African psychology and marketing applications. 2nd edition. Goodwood, Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa (Pty)Ltd. 231-236

Bottomley, T. (2021). *The Future of Formalwear: now that 'fleece fatigue' has set in, will it* *bounce back?* [online] TheIndustry.fashion. Available at: https://www.theindustry.fashion/the-future-of-formalwear-now-that-fleece-fatigue-has-set-in-will-it-bounce-back/.

Brennan, B. (2023). *The Real Reason Women Shop More Than Men*. [online] Forbes. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/bridgetbrennan/2013/03/06/the-real-reason-women-shop-more-than-men/?sh=2b62c33c74b9 [Accessed 4 Oct. 2023].

Brennan, B. (2011). *Why she buys: the new strategy for reaching the world's most powerful consumers*. New York: Crown Business.

Burns, D.J. and Neisner, L. (2006). Customer Satisfaction in a Retail setting: the Contribution of Emotion. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 1(0959-0552). Cambridge Dictionary (2019). *SUBCULTURE | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary*. [online] Cambridge.org. Available at: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/subculture.

Cambridge Dictionary (2019a). *PROCESS | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary*. [online] Cambridge.org. Available at: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/process.

Chauhan, S., Banerjee, R. and Dagar, V. (2021). Analysis of impulse buying behaviour of consumer during COVID-19: An Empirical Study. *Millennial Asia*

Clootrack (2020). What are the 4 types of customer buying behavior? [online] Clootrack. Available at: https://clootrack.com/knowledge_base/types-of-consumer-behavior/.

Chaney, D., Touzani, M. and Ben Slimane, K. (2017). Marketing to the (new) generations: summary and perspectives. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, [online] 25(3), 179–189. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254x.2017.1291173.

Chou, S., Chen, C.-W. and Lin, J.-Y. (2015). Female online shoppers. *Internet Research*, 25(4), 542–561. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/intr-01-2014-0006.

Cooper, M.A. and Gordon, J.L. (2021). Understanding Panic Buying Through an Integrated Psychodynamic Lens. Frontiers in Public Health, 9. doi:10.3389/fpubh.2021.666715.

Creswell, J. W. 2014. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. V. Knight, eds. 4th ed. California: Sage Publications.

Daniel, L. (2020). Millions in SA should start shopping online soon - if data costs, deliveries are sorted out. [online] BusinessInsider. Available at: https://www.businessinsider.co.za/half-ofsa-could-be-shopping-online-by-2024-if-data-costs-and-deliveries-improve-2020-11.

Daniel, L., 2021, SA's online retail has more than doubled in two years – But the best is probably over, Business Insider SA, viewed 25 March 2022, from https://www.BusinessInsider.co.za.

Das, D., Sarkar, A. and Debroy, A. (2022). Impact of COVID-19 on Changing Consumer Behaviour: Lessons from an Emerging Economy. *International Journal of Consumer*

Studies, [online] 46(3). doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12786.

Desai, Dr.N. and Kankonkar, Dr.S. (2020). *GEN-Z'S Online Buying Involvement And Decision Style In Buying Fashion Apparels*.

Di Crosta, A., Ceccato, I., Marchetti, D., La Malva, P., Maiella, R., Cannito, L., Cipi, M., Mammarella, N., Palumbo, R., Verrocchio, M.C., Palumbo, R. and Di Domenico, A. (2021). Psychological factors and consumer behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. PLOS ONE,[online] 16(8), p.e0256095. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0256095.

Dimock, M. (2019). Defining generations: Where Millennials End and Generation Z Begins. [online] Pew Research Center. Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/.

Dlodlo, N. and Mahao, B. (2020). The influence of demographics on the online purchase decision-making styles of undergraduate students. *International Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 12(ISSN: 1309-8047).

Dludla, N. (2020). South African e-commerce is a COVID-fired market of risk and reward. Reuters. [online] 15 Jul. Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/ushealthcoronavirussafricaecommerceidUSKCN24G16

Du Plessis, J. and Rousseau, D. (2005). Buyer behaviour: a multi-cultural approach. Oxford: Oxford I am running a few minutes late; my previous meeting is running over. University Press.

Dulam, R., Furuta, K. and Kanno, T. (2021). Quantitative Decision-making Model to Analyze the Post-Disaster Consumer Behavior. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 61((2021) 102329)

Duh, H.I. and Iyiola, O. (2020). Explaining clothing decision-making styles among South-African and Nigerian young adults using two life-course theories. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 24(2), 303–321. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/jfmm-08-2019-0171.

Eastman, J.K. and Liu, J. (2012). The impact of generational cohorts on status consumption: an exploratory look at generational cohort and demographics on status consumption. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 29(2), 93–102. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/07363761211206348.

Eger, L., Komárková, L., Egerová, D. and Mičík, M. (2021). The effect of COVID-19 on consumer shopping behaviour: Generational cohort perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, [online] 61(61), 102542. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102542.

Ellison, A.M. 2020. Exoloratory Data Analysis and Graphic Display. Design and analysis of ecological experiments: Chapman and Hall/CRC

Eriksson, N., Rosenbröijer, C.J. and Fagerstrøm, A. (2017). The relationship between young consumers' decision-making styles and propensity to shop clothing online with a smartphone. *Procedia Computer Science*, 121, 519–524.

Friesner, T. (2014). *Internal Influences - Memory* -. [online] Marketingteacher.com. Available at: https://www.marketingteacher.com/internal-influences-memory/.

Fowler, F.J. 2009. Survey research methods. 4th ed. Los Angeles (i.e. Thousand Oaks, Calif.): SAGE Publications.

FWO (2023). *Gen Z Fashion Trends: A Guide for Millennials*. [online] Fashion Week Online®. Available at: https://fashionweekonline.com/gen-z-fashion-trends-a-guide-for-millennials#:~:text=Emphasis%20on%20comfort%20and%20functionality.

Gallimore, D. (2023). *The top seven areas of customer service you need to dominate*. [online] Outsource Accelerator. Available at: https://www.outsourceaccelerator.com/articles/areas-of-customer-service/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThere%20exists%20three%20ways%20to [Accessed 2 Oct. 2023].

Gawior, B., Polasik, M. and del Olmo, J.L. (2022). Credit Card Use, Hedonic Motivations, and Impulse Buying Behavior in Fast Fashion Physical Stores during COVID-19: The Sustainability Paradox. *Sustainability*, [online] 14(7), 4133-4134. doi:https://doi.org/10.3390/su14074133.

Government Gazette. GOVERNMENT NOTICE COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE. 17 Dec. 2020.

Grimmer, L. (2022). Lessons from the COVID19 pandemic: the Case of Retail and Consumer Service Firms. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 68(16),103012. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.103012.

Hantula, D.A. and Wells, V.K. (2014). *Consumer Behavior Analysis*. Routledge.

Hamlin, R.P. and McNeill, L.S. (2023). Marketing Tactics for Sustainable Fashion and the Circular Economy: The Impact of Ethical Labels on Fast Fashion Choice. *Fashion Marketing amid the Wicked Problem of Sustainability*, 15(13), 10331–10331. doi:https://doi.org/10.3390/su151310331.

Hassen B, T., El Bilali, H., Allahyari, M.S., Al Samman, H. and Marzban, S. (2022). Observations on food consumption behaviors during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Oman. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9(9). doi:10.3389/fpubh.2021.779654.

Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J. and Coney, K.A. (2001). Consumer Behavior: Building Marketing Strategy. [online] Google Books. Irwin/McGraw Hill. Available at: https://books.google.co.za/books/about/Consumer_Behavior.html?id=1lOzQgAACAAJ&redir_esc=y [Accessed 30 Nov. 2023].

Henderson, A. (2023). *9 Millennial Characteristics To Know For 2023*. [online] GWI. Available at: https://blog.gwi.com/marketing/millennial-characteristics/.

Henderson, A. (2023). *7 characteristics of Gen Z in 2023*. [online] GWI. Available at:

https://blog.gwi.com/marketing/generation-z-characteristics/.

Helisz, P., Gwioździk, W., Kaczmarczyk, N. and Całyniuk, B. (2021). Consumer behaviour During COVID-19 pandemic. Roczniki Państwowego Zakładu Higieny, 72(4), 403–408.

Herzog, A., Mitchell, J. and Soccio, L. (1999). *Interrogating Subcultures*. University of Rochester.

Heyns, G.J. and Kilbourn, P.J. (2022). Online shopping behaviour and service quality perceptions of young people in South Africa: A COVID-19 perspective. *Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management*, 16(16). doi:https://doi.org/10.4102/jtscm.v16i0.777.

Hoch, S.J. (2007). 'Men Buy, Women Shop': The Sexes Have Different Priorities When Walking Down the Aisles. [online] Knowledge@Wharton. Available at: https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/men-buy-women-shop-the-sexes-have-different-priorities-when-walking-down-the-aisles/.

Heba, A.W, Naglaa M.D and Sahar A.N (2023). Demographic characteristics and consumer decision-making styles: Do they impact fashion product involvement? *Cogent Business and Management*, 10(2). doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2023.2208430.

Hofstee, E. (2006). Constructing a good dissertation: a practical guide to finishing a Master's, MBA or PhD on schedule. Sandton, South Africa: Epe.

Howard, J.A. and Sheth, J.N. (1969). The theory of buyer behavior. New York Wiley.

Hsin, K., Chi, Huery, R., Yeh and Yang, Y. (2009). The Impact of Brand Awareness on Consumer Purchase Intention: The Mediating Effect of Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty. *The Journal of International Management Studies*, [online] 4(1). Available at: http://nhuir.nhu.edu.tw/bitstream/987654321/27159/1/The+Impact+of+Brand.pdf.

Jacoby, J., Johar, G.V. and Morrin, M. (1998). Consumer Behavior: A Quadrennium. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49(1), 319–344. doi:https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.319.

Jiang, T. and Tuzhilin, A. 2009. Improving Personalization Solutions through Optimal Segmentation of Customer Bases. IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering, 213, 305–320.

Joubert, Y.H. and van Huysteen, N. (2017). Searching, browsing and buying: exploring the devices preferred by South African consumers for online shopping. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 14(1), 362–384.

Kathleen Rathje Zumpfe and Schiffman, L.G. (2007). Instructor's manual, Consumer behavior, ninth edition, Leon G. Schiffman, Leslie Lazar Kanuk. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Kapetanios, G., Neuteboom, N., Ritsema, F. and Ventouri, A. (2022). How did consumers react to the COVID-19 pandemic over time? *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 84(5), 961–993. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/obes.12507.

Khalil, S.H. and Raza, A. (2021). The Influence of External Stimuli on Impulsive Buying Behaviour. *Journal of Business and Tourism*, 4(1), 97–116. doi:https://doi.org/10.34260/jbt.v4i1.93.

Kempen, E. and Tobias Mamina, R.J. (2022). Applying behavioral reasoning theory to South African female consumers' emerging apparel-shopping behavior during COVID-19. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 1, 1–17. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2022.2033632.

Khayru, R.K. (2021). Opinions about Consumer Behavior during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Social Science Studies*, 1(1), 31–36.

Koch, J., Frommeyer, B. and Schewe, G. (2020). Online Shopping Motives during the COVID-19 Pandemic—Lessons from the Crisis. *Sustainability*, [online] 12(24), 10247-10248. doi:https://doi.org/10.3390/su122410247.

Klein, A. and Sharma, V.M. (2021). Cultural Perspectives of Millennials' Decision-Making Styles in Online Group Buying. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 1, 1–23. doi:10.1080/08961530.2021.1982808.

Kollamparambil, U. and Oyenubi, A. (2021). Behavioural response to the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. PLOS ONE, [online] 16(4), p.e0250269. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0250269.

Kotler, P. and Kevin Lane Keller (2005). Marketing management: analysis, planning, implementation and control. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. ; London: Prentice Hall.

Kraljević, R. and Filipović, Z. (2017). Gender Differences and Consumer Behavior of Millennials. *Acta Economica Et Turistica*, [online] 3(1), 5–13. doi:https://doi.org/10.1515/aet-2017-0002.

Ladhari, R., Gonthier, J. and Lajante, M. (2019). Generation Y and online fashion shopping: Orientations and profiles. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 48(48), 113–121. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.02.003.

Lakshmi, V., Niharika, A. and Lahari, G. (2017). Impact of Gender on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour. *Impact of Gender on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour*, [online] 19(8), 33–36. doi:https://doi.org/10.9790/487X-1908053336.

Loh, D., Schapper, J., Wrathall, J. and Monash University. Department Of Management (2000). The Maslow revival: Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a motivational theory. Caulfield, Vic.: Monash University, Faculty Of Business And Economics, Department Of Management.

Lucid (2017). Definition and Examples of the Consumer Decision-Making Process. [online] www.lucidchart.com. Available at: https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/consumer-decision-making-process#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20consumer%20decision.

Luo, Q., Forscher, T., Shaheen, S., Deakin, E. and Walker, J.L. (2023). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and generational heterogeneity on ecommerce shopping styles – A case study of Sacramento, California. *Communications in Transportation Research*, 3(1), 100091. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.commtr.2023.100091.

Luomala, H.T. (2003). Understanding how retail environments are perceived: a conceptualization and a pilot study. The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research, 13(3), 279–300. doi:10.1080/0959396032000101381.

Lynch, S. and Barnes, L. (2020). Omnichannel fashion retailing: examining the customer decision-making journey. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 24(3). doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/jfmm-09-2019-0192.

Lysonski, S. and Durvasula, S. (2013). Consumer decision-making styles in retailing: evolution of mindsets and psychological impacts. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 30(1), 75–87.

Marsden, D. (2001). Deconstructing consumer behaviour: theory and practice. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 1(1), 9–21.

Maluleke, R. (2018). *Education and Labour Market Outcomes in South Africa, 2018*. [online] Available at: http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/920106/education_presentation_2018.pdf.

Mandhlazi, L., Dhurup, M. and Mafini, C. (2013). Generation Y Consumer Shopping Styles: Evidence from South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(14). doi:10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n14p153.

Mbude, P. (2021). *Pyjama sales have doubled since the pandemic started; Harvard Business School research finds*. [online] Life. Available at: https://www.news24.com/life/archive/pyjama-sales-have-doubled-since-pandemic-started-harvard-business-school-research-finds-20210409 [Accessed 26 Aug. 2023].

McMaster, M., Nettleton, C., Tom, C., Xu, B., Cao, C. and Qiao, P. (2020a). Risk Management: Rethinking Fashion Supply Chain Management for Multinational Corporations in Light of the COVID-19 Outbreak. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, [online] 13(8), 173. doi:https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm13080173.

Mehta, R. and Dixit, G. (2016). Consumer decision making styles in developed and developing markets: A cross-country comparison. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 33, 202–208. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2016.09.002.

Mehta, R. (2020). Gender-based differences in consumer decision-making styles: implications for marketers. *DECISION*. doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/s40622-020-00252-8.

Mehta, S., Saxena, T. and Purohit, N. (2020). The New Consumer Behaviour Paradigm amid COVID-19: Permanent or Transient? *Journal of Health Management*, [online] 22(2), 291–301. doi:10.1177/0972063420940834.

Meyer, S. (2020). Understanding the COVID-19 Effect on Online Shopping Behavior. [online] The BigCommerce Blog. Available at: https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/COVID-19-ecommerce/.

Meyer, B.H., Prescott, B. and Sheng, X.S. (2020). The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Business Expectations. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 38(2). doi:https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3690489.

Mgiba, F. And Nyamande, N. (2020). Persuasive Influencers and the Millennials: How their relationships affect brand, value, and relationship equities, and customers' intention to purchase. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 17(2), 492–522.

Mihaela, O.O.E. (2015). The Influence of the Integrated Marketing Communication on the Consumer Buying Behaviour. Procedia Economics and Finance, [online] 23(1), 1446–1450. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671(15)00446-3.

Millwood, A. (2020). *Understanding the Consumer Decision Making Process*. [online] Yotpo. Available at:https://www.yotpo.com/resources/consumer-decision-making-process-ugc/#:~:text=The%20consumer%20decision%20making%20process%20is%20the%20process%20by%20which.

Mitchell, V. and Papavassiliou, V. (1999). Marketing causes and implications of consumer confusion. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 8(4), 319–342.

Morschett, D., Swoboda, B., Schramm-Klein, H., Ekstrom, K., Brembeck, H. and Goteborg (2005). Shopping Orientations As Determinants of Attitude Towards Food Retailers and Perception of Store Attributes. [online] 7(MN 55802). Available at: https://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/eacr/vol7/europeanvolume7_3.pdf.

Mouton, J. (2001). How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: a South African guide and resource book. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Nakano, S., Akamatsu, N. and Mizuno, M. (2021). Consumer Panic Buying: Understanding its Behavioral and Psychological Aspects. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 5(2). doi:https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3796825.

Nayeem, T. and Casidy, R. (2013). The role of external influences in high involvement purchase behaviour. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 31(7), 732–745. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/mip-02-2013-0030.

Nayeem, T. and Marie-IpSooching, J.M. (2022). Revisiting Sproles and Kendall's Consumer Styles Inventory (CSI) in the 21st Century: A Case of Australian Consumers Decision-Making Styles in the Context of High and Low-Involvement Purchases. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 7(2). doi:https://doi.org/10.18775/jibrm.1849-8558.2015.72.3001.

Netzer, J. (2020). Millennial buying stats all marketers need to know | Khoros. [online] Khoros | Digital care, communities, and social media software. Available at: https://khoros.com/blog/millennial-buying-habits.

NielsenIQ Retail Measurement Services (2021). *SA data reveals a dramatic decline in shopping trip frequency*. [online] Bizcommunity. Available at: https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/168/222265.html [Accessed 31 Oct. 2023].

Nuradina, K. (2022). Psychological factors affects online buying behaviour. *Journal of Business and Management INABA (JBMI)*, 1(02), 112–123. doi:https://doi.org/10.56956/jbmi.v1i02.120.

Olyott, Shayna Lee. “Differences in Consumers’ Decision-Making Styles across Product Categories with Varying Complexity.” Repository.up.ac.za, vol. 1, no. 1, 2018, repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/67862. Accessed 30 Jan. 2024.

Omarjee, L. (2020). *SA’s clothing industry confronts COVID-19: Closures, adaptation and hope for a revival*. [online] Business. Available at: https://www.news24.com/fin24/sas-clothing-industry-confronts-COVID-19-closures-adaptation-and-hope-for-a-revival-20200419-2 [Accessed 31 Oct. 2023].

Pantano, E. (2011). Cultural factors affecting consumer behaviour: a new perception model. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, 6(1),117–136 doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/14502191111130343.

Payne, J.W., Johnson, E.J. and Bettman, J.R. (2009). *The adaptive decision maker*. New York, Ny: Cambridge Univ. Press.

iPeshek, C. (2023). *10 Millennial Fashion Tips To Look On Trend*. [online] Poor Little It Girl. Available at: https://www.poorlittleitgirl.com/millennial-fashion-tips/#:~:text=If%20there [Accessed 4 Oct. 2023].

Puttaiah, M. (2020). All change: how COVID-19 is transforming consumer behaviour | Swiss Re [online] www.swissre.com. Available at: https://www.swissre.com/institute/research/topics-a and-risk-dialogues/health-and-longevity/COVID-19-and-consumer-behaviour.html.

Radder, L., Li, Y. and Pietersen, J. (2010). Decision-Making Styles of Young Chinese, Motswana and Caucasian Consumers in South Africa: An Exploratory Study. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences /Tydskrif vir Gesinsekologie en Verbruikerswetenskappe*, 34(1). doi:https://doi.org/10.4314/jfecs.v34i1.52902.

Raikar, S.P. (2023). *Black swan event | Definition, History, Examples, and Facts | Britannica*. [online] www.britannica.com. Available at: https://www.britannica.com/topic/blackswan-event.

Rani, P. (2014). Factors influencing consumer behaviour. [online] Available at: http://www.ijcrar.com/vol-2-9/Pinki%20Rani.pdf.

Reiter, A. 2012. Young, educated and shopping. Clothing, consumption and difference among the educated young in Krasnodar, Russian Federation. *emecon Employment and economy in Central and Eastern Europe,* 3(2):1-14.

Ritch, E.L. and Schröder, M.J. (2012). Accessing and affording sustainability: the experience of fashion consumption within young families. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 36(2), 203–210. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1470-6431.2011.01088.x.

Robinson, J. (2022). What Are Epidemics, Pandemics, and Outbreaks? [online] WebMD. Available at: https://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/what-are-epidemics-pandemics-outbreaks.

Rukuni, T.F. and Maziriri, E.T. (2020). Data on corona-virus readiness strategies influencing customer satisfaction and customer behavioural intentions in South African retail stores. *Data in Brief*, 31(31),105818. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2020.105818.

Samuels, P. (2017). Advice on exploratory factor analysis. *Birmingham City University*, 90.

Sarabia-Sanchez, F.J., De Juan Vigaray, M.D. and Hota, M. (2012). Using values and shopping styles to identify fashion apparel segments. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 40(3),180–199. doi:https://doi.org/10.1108/09590551211207157.

Sayyida, S., Hartini, S., Gunawan, S. and Husin, S.N. (2021). The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Retail Consumer Behavior. *Aptisi Transactions on Management (ATM),* [online] 5(1), 79–88. doi:https://doi.org/10.33050/atm.v5i1.1497.

Schulze, J. (2021). (PDF) Online and Offline Shopping in the UK: The Impact of COVID-19 on Consumer Buying Behaviour and the Digitalization Process. [online] ResearchGate. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355717269_Online_and_Offline_Shopping_in_theUKThe_Impact_of_COVID19_on_Consumer_Buying_Behaviour_and_the_Digitalization.

Seth, J. (2021). Future of brick-and-mortar retailing: how will it survive and thrive? *ResearchGate*, [online] 7(29). Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353477065_Future_of_brick_and_mortar_retailing_how_will_it_survive_and_thrive.

Shih, W.C. (2020). Global Supply Chains in a Post-Pandemic World. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: https://hbr.org/2020/09/global-supply-chains-in-a-post-pandemic-world.

Shim, S. and Kotsiopulos, A. (1993). A Typology of Apparel Shopping Orientation Segments Among Female Consumers. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 12(1), 73–85. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302x9301200110.

Sproles, E.K. and Sproles, G.B. (1990). Consumer Decision-Making Styles as a Function of Individual Learning Styles. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 24(1), 134–147.

Sproles, G.B. and Kendall, E.L. (1986). A Methodology for Profiling Consumers' Decision Making Styles. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 20(2), 267–279. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6606.1986.tb00382.x.

Solomon, M.R. (2002). *Consumer Behavior*. Pearson College Division.

Solomon, M.R., Russell-Bennett, R. and Previte, J. (2020). *Consumer behaviour: buying, having, being.* Melbourne Pearson Australia.

South African Government (2022). Small Business Development and United Nations Development Programme launch study on impact of COVID-19 on Micro and Informal Businesses in South Africa, 28 Sept | South African Government. [online] Available at: https://www.gov.za/speeches/small-business-development-and-united-nations-development-programme-launch-study-impact

Statistics Research Department (2022). Topic: Social media use during coronavirus (COVID-19) worldwide. [online] Statista. Available at: https://www.statista.com/topics/7863/social-media-use-during-coronavirus-covid-19-worldwide/#topicHeader__wrapper.

Statistics South Africa (2015). Statistics South Africa | The South Africa I Know; The Home I Understand. [online] Statssa.gov.za. Available at: http://www.statssa.gov.za/.

Stein, J. and Sanburn, J. (2013). Why millennials will save us all. *Time International*, 181(19), 26.

Stein, J. (2013). *Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation*. *TIME*. Available at: https://time.com/247/millennials-the-me-me-me-generation/.

Sutinen, U., Saarijärvi, H. and Yrjölä, M. (2021). Shop at your own risk? Consumer activities in fashion e-commerce. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 46(4). doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12759.

Suvadarshini, A. and Mishra, B.B. (2021). A Study on Income as a Determinant of Buying Decision-making Styles. *Journal of Business Administration Research*, 4(3). doi:https://doi.org/10.30564/jbar.v4i3.3193.

Swanepoel, L.F. 2015. Consumers' Perception of Artisan Bottled Preserved Food Products. Dissertation. 1–151.

Subramanian, K (2019). The connection between your employees and customers. *Journal of Advance Research in Business Management and Accounting*

Taber, K.S. 2018. The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in Science Education,* 48(6):1273-1296.

Tai, S.H.C. (2005). Shopping styles of working Chinese females. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 12(3), 191–203. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2004.06.003.

Tavakol, M. and Dennick, R. 2011. Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal Of Medical Education,* 2:53-55.

Thenga, A., 2020, E-commerce to be worth R225bn in SA in 5 years as expectations change, FNB, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Tymkiw, C. (2022). *How COVID-19 Changed Consumer Shopping Habits*. [online] Investopedia. Available at: https://www.investopedia.com/how-shopping-habits-changed-due-to-covid-5186278.

Viljoen, L. (1998). Factors that influence household and individual clothing expenditure: A review of research and related literature Factors that influence household and individual clothing expenditure. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, [online] 26. Available at: https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jfecs/article/view/52743/41348.

Vladimirova, K., Henninger, C.E., Joyner-Martinez, C., Iran, S., Diddi, S., Durrani, M., Iyer, K., Jestratijevic, I., McCormick, H., Niinimäki, K., Thangavelu, P., Sauerwein, M., Singh, R., Simek, P. and Wallaschkowski, S. (2022). Fashion consumption during COVID-19: Comparative analysis of changing acquisition practices across nine countries and implications for sustainability. *Cleaner and Responsible Consumption*, [online] 5(1), 100056. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clrc.2022.100056.

Ward, J.C. and Barnes, J.W. (2001). Control and affect: the influence of feeling in control of the retail environment on affect, involvement, attitude, and behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(2), 139–144. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/s0148-2963(99)00083-1.

Weber, A.N. (2021). Responding to supply chain disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic: A Black Swan event for omnichannel retailers. *Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management*, 15(15).

Welman, J., Kruger, F. and Mitchell, B. (2019). Research methodology. Cape Town ; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Willimon, B., Birchfield, S. and Walker, I.D. (2011). Classification of clothing using interactive perception. *CiteSeer X (The Pennsylvania State University)*, 2. doi:https://doi.org/10.1109/icra.2011.5980336.

Yilmaz, K.G., Gungordu, A. and Yumusak, T. (2016). The Relationship between the List of Values and Consumer Decision Making Styles in the Context of Clothing Products. *Business Management Dynamics*, 5(9), 01-14.

Yohn, D.L. (2020). The Pandemic Is Rewriting the Rules of Retail. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: https://hbr.org/2020/07/the-pandemic-is-rewriting-the-rules-of-retail.

Zentes, J., Morschett, D. and Schramm-Klein, H. (2011). Retail Branding and Positioning. *Strategic Retail Management*, 179–200. doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-8349-6740-4_10.

Zikmund, W.G. and Babin, B.J. 2007. Essentials of marketing research. 3rd ed. Boston, Ma: Cengage.

Zikmund, W.G. and D'amico, M. 2002. Effective marketing: creating and keeping customers in an e-commerce world. 2nd ed. Mason Ohio: South-Western, Cop

ADDENDUM A: ETHICS SUBMISSION: APPROVAL LETTER

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Ethics Committee

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

22 August 2020

ETHICS SUBMISSION: LETTER OF APPROVAL

Dr JMM Marx-Pienaar
Department of Consumer and Food Sciences
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science
University of Pretoria

Reference number: NAS244/2020
Project title: COVID-19 and the impact on South African consumers' shopping, dining, culinary and nutritional behavior

Dear Dr JMM Marx-Pienaar,

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 (NAS244/2020) 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.
- **Applications using Animals:** NAS ethics recommendation does not imply that AEC approval is granted. The application has been pre-screened and recommended for review by the AEC. Research may not proceed until AEC approval is granted.

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

ADDENDUM B: 2020 QUESTIONNAIRE

For the first questionnaire in 2020, females and males between the ages of 18-65 were recruited across Gauteng in South Africa. This questionnaire was part of a bigger study researching both clothing and grocery shopping behaviours and styles during the COVID-19 restrictions. Thereafter, only the targeted young females between 18-35 years' responses were selected for this study and all irrelevant questions not related to clothing and shopping styles were deleted.

COVID-19 and the impact on South African consumers' shopping behaviour

Start of Block: CONSENT FORM

Q1 **COVID-19 and the impact on South African consumers' shopping behaviour. Informed Consent Form**
Dear respondent This study plans to investigate South African consumers' shopping behaviour amidst the ongoing COVID-19 lock-down. The overarching aim is set at gaining insight in terms of consumers' dynamic shopping behaviour. The results from this study will assist retailers in developing realistic merchandising strategies for the future. Respondents in this study will be asked to answer several questions about their shopping behaviour during COVID-19. Please note that all answers will be recorded for further use by the investigators only. Respondents are welcome to refrain from answering any questions that they view to be the cause of any discomfort or infringement of their privacy. Refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent, or discontinued participation in the study will not result in any penalty. Please note that your participation in the study is voluntary and does in no way release the researchers or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. All information will be treated as highly confidential and the identity of respondents need not be disclosed and will remain anonymous. The results of this study will be presented in an aggregated format.

Your decision to respond to the questions posed will be interpreted as confirmation that you have agreed to participate. Should you need any further information please feel free to contact For clothing related inquiries Dr B Jacobs bertha.jacobs@up.ac.za For food related inquiries Dr N Marx-Pienaar nadene.marx@up.ac.za Prof G du Rand gerrie.durand@up.ac.za

Q2 Please tick one of the following boxes as an agreement of your participation

- ◯ Yes (1)
- ◯ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Q2 = No

Q3 Do you live in Gauteng?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Q3 = No

Q4 Are you older than 18?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

iStart of Block: DEMOGRAPHICS

Q6 What is your **gender**?

▼ Male (1) ... Prefer not to say (4)

Q7 What was your **age** at your most recent birthday?

Age ()

Q8 What is your **highest level of education**?

▼ Lower than grade 12 (1) ... Post graduate degree (4)

Q9 Please indicate your area of **residence within Gauteng** (please be specific regarding the **City and suburb** e.g. Pretoria, Garsfontein)

____

Q12 In terms of the employment Equity Act of SA, to which **population group** do **you** (as person / not household per se) belong to?

▼ Black (1) ... Prefer not to say (6)

Q13 What is your approximate total **monthly household income** rounded up to the nearest R1000?

0 10000200003000040000500006000070000800009000100000

Monthly household income ()

End of Block: DEMOGRAPHICS

Q16 Please indicate your general **shopping frequency before** and **during** the COVID-19 pandemic

	Daily (1)	Weekly (2)	2 - 3 times a month (3)	Once a month (4)	Never (5)
Before COVID-19 pandemic (1)	○	○	○	○	○
During COVID-19 pandemic (2)	○	○	○	○	○

Q19 **During the COVID-19 pandemic** how frequently did you shop through the following channels?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
Formal retail stores (Woolworths or PnP) (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Online (Take a Lot, Superbalist) (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Both (In-store and Online) (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Informal retailing (Farmers market or Spaza shop) (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Q22 **During COVID-19 pandemic** which of the following clothing categories were a priority to purchase

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Leisure / casual wear (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Active wear (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Seasonal clothing (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Formal / work wear (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Underwear (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Sleep wear (6)	○	○	○	○	○
School uniforms (7)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: General shopping behaviour, styles and motivations

Start of Block: Shoppingstyles

Q27 Please indicate your agreement with the following statements in terms of your shopping style <u>during the COVID-19 pandemic</u>.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
The most advertised brands are usually very good choices. (1)	o	o	o	o	o
I prefer buying the best-selling brands. (2)	o	o	o	o	o
The more expensive brands are usually my choices. (3)	o	o	o	o	o
The higher the price of a product, the better its quality. (4)	o	o	o	o	o
Once I find a product or brand I like, I buy it regularly. (5)	o	o	o	o	o
I have favorite brands which I buy over and over again. (6)	o	o	o	o	o
I often change between brands I buy. (7)	o	o	o	o	o
High quality is very important to me. (8)	o	o	o	o	o
I try to get the very best or the perfect choice. (9)	o	o	o	o	o
I try to select the very best quality products. (10)	o	o	o	o	o
In general, I usually try to buy the best overall quality. (11)	o	o	o	o	o

My standards and expectations for products I buy is very high. (12)	○	○	○	○	○
Shopping is a pleasant activity to me. (13)	○	○	○	○	○
Shopping in store saves time. (14)	○	○	○	○	○
Going shopping is one of the enjoyable activities of my life. (15)	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it. (16)	○	○	○	○	○
I make my shopping trips fast. (17)	○	○	○	○	○
I make careless purchases I later wish, I had not. (18)	○	○	○	○	○
I normally shop quickly, buying the first product that seems good enough. (19)	○	○	○	○	○
I believe a product doesn't have to be exactly what I want to satisfy me. (20)	○	○	○	○	○
I spend little time deciding on the products I buy. (21)	○	○	○	○	○
I should plan my shopping more carefully than I do. (22)	○	○	○	○	○
I buy as much as possible at sale price. (23)	○	○	○	○	○
I carefully watch how much I spend. (24)	○	○	○	○	○
I look carefully to find the best value for the money. (25)	○	○	○	○	○
The lower price products are usually my choice. (26)	○	○	○	○	○

There are so many brands to choose from, that often I feel confused. (27)	○	○	○	○	○
Sometimes it is hard to choose a retailer to shop at (online or in-store). (28)	○	○	○	○	○
The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best. (29)	○	○	○	○	○
All the information I get on different products confuses me. (30)	○	○	○	○	○
To get variety, I shop at different retailers. (31)	○	○	○	○	○
I shop for trendy products. (32)	○	○	○	○	○
It is important to me to buy fashionable products. (33)	○	○	○	○	○
I am often impulsive when shopping. (34)	○	○	○	○	○
It's fun to buy something new and exciting. (35)	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer lower price products over stylish expensive ones. (36)	○	○	○	○	○
I am a well organized, systematic shopper. (37)	○	○	○	○	○
Shopping online saves time. (38)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Shoppingstyles

ADDENDUM C : 2023 QUESTIONNAIRE

COVID-19 and the impact on South African consumers' shopping behaviour

Start of Block: CONSENT FORM

Q1 **Changes in consumers' shopping styles during COVID-19 restrictions.** Dear Participant, this research project forms part of a Master's in Consumer Science Clothing Retail. The purpose of the research is to investigate female consumers' shopping styles prior, during and post COVID-19 restrictions in Gauteng. The results from this study will assist retailers in developing realistic merchandising strategies for the future.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE As a voluntary participant in the research, you will complete an online questionnaire, answering all questions as honestly and accurately as possible. No preparation is required to complete the questionnaire. The completion of the questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes. The procedure is completed with a word of appreciation for your time and effort. The risks associated with this research project are very low to none.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY Please note that all answers will be recorded for further use by the investigators only. Participants are welcome to refrain from answering any questions that they view to be the cause of any discomfort or infringement of their privacy. All information will be treated as highly confidential. You are also not required to disclose any identifiable personal information, like your name and surname. The results of this study will be presented in an aggregated format. The privacy and anonymity of your participation are therefore ensured.

WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE AND RIGHTS OF ACCESS TO DATA Refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent, or discontinued participation in the study will not result in any penalty. Participation in the research is voluntary, with no penalty if you decide not to participate. You 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 to access your data.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Should you need any further information please feel free to contact Angeliz Venter (Masters candidate, u15052053@tuks.co.za), Dr Bertha Jacobs (supervisor, bertha.jacobs@up.ac.za), or Dr Nadene Marx-Pienaar (co-supervisor, nadene.marx@up.ac.za).

Q1 Please tick one of the following boxes as an agreement of your participation

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Q1 = No

Page Break

Q2 Do you live in Gauteng?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Q2 = No

Q3 Are you between the ages of 18 - 35?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

End of Block: CONSENT FORM

Start of Block: DEMOGRAPHICS

Q4 Do you identify as female?

▼ Yes (1) ... No (2)

Q5 What was your **age** at your most recent birthday?

____

End of Block: DEMOGRAPHICS

Start of Block: General shopping behaviour, styles and motivations

Q6 Please indicate your general **clothing shopping before, during and post** COVID-19 restrictions

	Daily (1)	Weekly (2)	2 - 3 times a month (3)	Once a month (4)	Seasonal (5)
Before COVID-19 restrictions (1)	○	○	○	○	○
During COVID-19 restrictions (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Post COVID-19 restrictions (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Q7 **Before the COVID-19 restrictions,** how frequently did you shop through the following channels?

	Never (11)	Sometimes (12)	About half the time (13)	Most of the time (14)	Always (15)
In-store (e.g. Woolworths or PnP clothing) (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Online (e.g. Shein or Superbalist) (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Both (In-store and Online) (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Informal retailing (e.g. Flea market) (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Q8 **During the COVID-19 restrictions,** how frequently did you shop through the following channels?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
In-store (e.g. Woolworths or PnP clothing) (1)	o	o	o	o	o
Online (e.g. Shein or Superbalist) (2)	o	o	o	o	o
Both (In-store and Online) (3)	o	o	o	o	o
Informal retailing (e.g. Flea market) (4)	o	o	o	o	o

Q9 **After the COVID-19 restrictions,** how frequently did you shop through the following channels?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
In-store (e.g. Woolworths or PnP clothing) (1)	o	o	o	o	o
Online (e.g. Shein or Superbalist) (2)	o	o	o	o	o
Both (In-store and Online) (3)	o	o	o	o	o
Informal retailing (e.g. Flea market) (4)	o	o	o	o	o

Q10 **Before COVID-19 restrictions,** which of the following clothing categories were a priority to purchase (drag and drop each item in the order of importance)

______ Leisure or casual wear (1)
______ Active or sports wear (2)
______ Seasonal clothing (e.g. swim wear or winter jackets) (3)
______ Formal or work wear (4)
______ Underwear (5)
______ Sleepwear (16)
______ Children's clothing (17)
______ Speciality clothing (e.g. cocktail and evening dresses) (18)
______ School uniforms (19)

Q11 **During COVID-19 restrictions,** which of the following clothing categories were a priority to purchase (drag and drop each item in the order of importance)

______ Leisure or casual wear (1)
______ Active or sports wear (2)
______ Seasonal clothing (e.g. swim wear or winter jackets) (3)
______ Formal or work wear (4)
______ Underwear (5)
______ Sleepwear (16)
______ Children's clothing (17)
______ Speciality clothing (e.g. cocktail and evening dresses) (18)
______ School uniforms (19)

Q12 **After COVID-19 restrictions,** which of the following clothing categories were a priority to purchase (drag and drop each item in the order of importance)

______ Leisure or casual wear (1)
______ Active or sports wear (2)
______ Seasonal clothing (e.g. swim wear or winter jackets) (3)
______ Formal or work wear (4)
______ Underwear (5)
______ Sleepwear (16)
______ Children's clothing (17)
______ Speciality clothing (e.g. cocktail and evening dresses) (18)
______ School uniforms (19)

End of Block: General shopping behaviour, styles and motivations

Start of Block: Shoppingstyles

Q13 Please indicate your agreement with the following statements in terms of your shopping style **before the COVID-19 restrictions**?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
The most advertised brands were usually very good choices. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I preferred buying the best-selling brands. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
The more expensive brands were usually my choices. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
The higher the price of a product, the better its quality. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Once I found a product or brand I like, I bought it regularly. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I had favorite brands which I bought over and over again. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
I often changed between brands I bought. (7)	○	○	○	○	○
High quality was very important to me. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I tried to get the very best or the perfect choice. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I tried to select the very best quality products. (10)	○	○	○	○	○

In general, I usually tried to buy the best overall quality. (11)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
My standards and expectations for products I bought was very high. (12)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Shopping was a pleasant activity to me. (13)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Shopping in store saved time. (14)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Going shopping was one of the enjoyable activities of my life. (15)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I enjoyed shopping just for the fun of it. (16)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I made my shopping trips fast. (17)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I made careless purchases I later wish, I had not. (18)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I normally shopped quickly, buying the first product that seemed good enough. (19)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I believed a product didn't have to be exactly what I wanted to satisfy me. (20)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I spent little time deciding on the products I buy. (21)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I should've planned my shopping more carefully than I did. (22)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

I bought as much as possible at sale price. (23)	○	○	○	○	○
I carefully watched how much I spent. (24)	○	○	○	○	○
I looked carefully to find the best value for my money. (25)	○	○	○	○	○
The lower priced products were usually my choice. (26)	○	○	○	○	○
There were so many brands to choose from, that often I felt confused. (27)	○	○	○	○	○
Sometimes it was hard to choose a retailer to shop at (online or in-store). (28)	○	○	○	○	○
The more I learnt about products, the harder it seemed to choose the best. (29)	○	○	○	○	○
All the information I got on different products confused me. (30)	○	○	○	○	○
To get variety, I shopped at different retailers. (31)	○	○	○	○	○
I shopped for trendy products. (32)	○	○	○	○	○
It was important to me to buy fashionable products. (33)	○	○	○	○	○
I was often impulsive when shopping. (34)	○	○	○	○	○

It was fun to buy something new and exciting. (35)	○	○	○	○	○
I preferred lower price products over stylish expensive ones. (36)	○	○	○	○	○
I was a well organized, systematic shopper. (37)	○	○	○	○	○
Shopping online saved time. (38)	○	○	○	○	○

Q14 In terms of the employment Equity Act of SA, to which **population group** do **you** (as person / not household per se) belong to?

▼ Black (1) ... Prefer not to say (6)

Q15 What is your **highest level of education**?

▼ Lower than grade 12 (1) ... Post graduate degree (4)

Q16 What is your approximate total **monthly household income**?

○ Less than R10 000 (1)

○ Between R10 001 - R25 000 (2)

○ Between R25 001 - R45 000 (3)

○ Between R45 001 - R65 000 (4)

○ Between R65 001 - R85 000 (5)

○ More than R85 000 (6)

Q17 Please indicate your agreement with the following statements in terms of your shopping style **after the COVID-19 restrictions**?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
The most advertised brands are usually very good choices. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I prefer buying the best-selling brands. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
The more expensive brands are usually my choices. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
The higher the price of a product, the better its quality. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Once I find a product or brand I like, I buy it regularly. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I have favorite brands which I buy over and over again. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
I often change between brands I buy. (7)	○	○	○	○	○
High quality is very important to me. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I try to get the very best or the perfect choice. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I try to select the very best quality products. (10)	○	○	○	○	○
In general, I usually try to buy the best overall quality. (11)	○	○	○	○	○
My standards and expectations for products I buy is very high. (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Shopping is a pleasant activity to me. (13)					
Shopping in store saves time. (14)					
Going shopping is one of the enjoyable activities of my life. (15)					
I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it. (16)					
I make my shopping trips fast. (17)					
I make careless purchases I later wish, I had not. (18)					
I normally shop quickly, buying the first product that seems good enough. (19)					
I believe a product doesn't have to be exactly what I want to satisfy me. (20)					
I spend little time deciding on the products I buy. (21)					
I should plan my shopping more carefully than I do. (22)					
I buy as much as possible at sale price. (23)					
I carefully watch how much I spend. (24)					
I look carefully to find the best value for the money. (25)					
The lower price products are usually my choice. (26)					

There are so many brands to choose from, that often I feel confused. (27)	o	o	o	o	o
Sometimes it is hard to choose a retailer to shop at (online or in-store). (28)	o	o	o	o	o
The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best. (29)	o	o	o	o	o
All the information I get on different products confuses me. (30)	o	o	o	o	o
To get variety, I shop at different retailers. (31)	o	o	o	o	o
I shop for trendy products. (32)	o	o	o	o	o
It is important to me to buy fashionable products. (33)	o	o	o	o	o
I am often impulsive when shopping. (34)	o	o	o	o	o
It's fun to buy something new and exciting. (35)	o	o	o	o	o
I prefer lower price products over stylish expensive ones. (36)	o	o	o	o	o
I am a well organized, systematic shopper. (37)	o	o	o	o	o
Shopping online saves time. (38)	o	o	o	o	o

End of Block: Shoppingstyles

ADDENDUM D: CLOTHING SHOPPING STYLES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Descriptive statistics of young female's clothing shopping styles before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements regarding your shopping style			**Before (Q13)**		**During (Q27)**		**After (Q17)**	
Construct	**Item**	**Agreement scale**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Perfectionist and high-quality conscious	High quality is very important to me	Strongly disagree	10	5.4	6	3.2	6	3.3
		Somewhat disagree	25	13.6	8	4.3	22	12.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	30	16.3	22	11.7	28	15.2
		Somewhat agree	66	35.9	87	46.3	76	41.3
		Strongly agree	53	28.8	62	33.0	52	28.3
	I try to get the very best or the perfect choice	Strongly disagree	11	6.0	8	4.3	12	6.5
		Somewhat disagree	28	15.2	23	12.2	20	10.9
		Neither agree nor disagree	32	17.4	28	14.9	25	13.6
		Somewhat agree	77	41.8	84	44.7	79	42.9
		Strongly agree	36	19.6	42	22.3	48	26.1
	I try to select the very best quality products	Strongly disagree	11	6.0	3	1.6	10	5.4
		Somewhat disagree	26	14.1	8	4.3	19	10.3
		Neither agree nor disagree	37	20.1	28	14.9	31	16.8
		Somewhat agree	75	40.8	89	47.3	68	37.0
		Strongly agree	35	19.0	56	29.8	56	30.4
	In general, I usually try to buy the best overall quality	Strongly disagree	6	3.3	2	1.1	8	4.3
		Somewhat disagree	24	13.0	7	3.7	25	13.6
		Neither agree nor disagree	28	15.2	20	10.6	29	15.8
		Somewhat agree	85	46.2	87	46.3	68	37.0
		Strongly agree	41	22.3	71	37.8	54	29.3
	My standards and expectations for products I buy is very high	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	8	4.3	9	4.9
		Somewhat disagree	33	17.9	18	9.6	24	13.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	38	20.7	40	21.3	34	18.5
		Somewhat agree	70	38.0	72	38.3	76	41.3
		Strongly agree	31	16.8	49	26.1	41	22.3
		Strongly disagree	16	8.7	11	5.9	12	6.5
		Somewhat disagree	37	20.1	23	12.2	29	15.8

	I am a well-organized, systematic shopper	Neither agree nor disagree	38	20.7	36	19.1	42	22.8
		Somewhat agree	62	33.7	69	36.7	61	33.2
		Strongly agree	31	16.8	46	24.5	40	21.7
Brand conscious and price equals quality	The most advertised brands are usually good choices	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	34	18.1	21	11.4
		Somewhat disagree	57	31.0	63	33.5	64	34.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	51	27.7	54	28.7	51	27.7
		Somewhat agree	47	25.5	33	17.6	36	19.6
		Strongly agree	17	9.2	3	1.6	12	6.5
	I prefer buying the best-selling brands	Strongly disagree	24	13.0	22	11.7	24	13.0
		Somewhat disagree	44	23.9	63	33.5	45	24.5
		Neither agree nor disagree	48	26.1	56	29.8	56	30.4
		Somewhat agree	53	28.8	33	17.6	48	26.1
		Strongly agree	15	8.2	11	5.9	11	6.0
	The higher the price of a product, the better its quality	Strongly disagree	29	15.8	41	21.8	26	14.1
		Somewhat disagree	48	26.1	64	34.0	46	25.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	43	23.4	31	16.5	50	27.2
		Somewhat agree	52	28.3	43	22.9	43	23.4
		Strongly agree	12	6.5	8	4.3	19	10.3
Novelty and fashion-conscious	I shop for trendy products	Strongly disagree	16	8.7	38	20.2	22	12.0
		Somewhat disagree	34	18.5	52	27.7	40	21.7
		Neither agree nor disagree	44	23.9	44	23.4	39	21.2
		Somewhat agree	63	34.2	40	21.3	53	28.8
		Strongly agree	27	14.7	12	6.4	30	16.3
	It is important to me to buy fashionable products	Strongly disagree	18	9.8	37	19.7	18	9.8
		Somewhat disagree	32	17.4	59	31.4	42	22.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	49	26.6	43	22.9	29	15.8
		Somewhat agree	54	29.3	34	18.1	66	35.9
		Strongly agree	31	16.8	13	6.9	29	15.8
	To get variety, I shop at different retailers	Strongly disagree	5	2.7	20	10.6	9	4.9
		Somewhat disagree	22	12.0	17	9.0	30	16.3
		Neither agree nor disagree	30	16.3	16	8.5	28	15.2
		Somewhat agree	74	40.2	88	46.8	73	39.7
		Strongly agree	53	28.8	44	23.4	44	23.9
	It is fun to buy something new and exciting	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	5	2.7	5	2.7
		Somewhat disagree	14	7.6	9	4.8	16	8.7
		Neither agree nor disagree	17	9.2	19	10.1	20	10.9
		Somewhat agree	67	36.4	83	44.1	68	37.0
		Strongly agree	74	40.2	71	37.8	75	40.8

	I have favourite brands which I buy over and over again	Strongly disagree	6	3.3	6	3.2	7	3.8
		Somewhat disagree	14	7.6	11	5.9	22	12.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	23	12.5	11	5.9	23	12.5
		Somewhat agree	85	46.2	84	44.7	80	43.5
		Strongly agree	56	30.4	74	39.4	52	28.3
	I make my shopping trips fast	Strongly disagree	25	13.6	6	3.2	18	9.8
		Somewhat disagree	45	24.5	40	21.3	33	17.9
		Neither agree nor disagree	35	19.0	37	19.7	32	17.4
		Somewhat agree	50	27.2	67	35.6	65	35.3
		Strongly agree	29	15.8	35	18.6	36	19.6
	I am a well-organized, systematic shopper	Strongly disagree	16	8.7	11	5.9	12	6.5
		Somewhat disagree	37	20.1	23	12.2	29	15.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	38	20.7	36	19.1	42	22.8
		Somewhat agree	62	33.7	69	36.7	61	33.2
		Strongly agree	31	16.8	46	24.5	40	21.7
	Shopping online saves time	Strongly disagree	23	12.5	24	12.8	6	3.3
		Somewhat disagree	32	17.4	22	11.7	26	14.1
		Neither agree nor disagree	41	22.3	49	26.1	49	26.6
		Somewhat agree	54	29.3	50	26.6	52	28.3
		Strongly agree	34	18.5	41	21.8	51	27.7
Recreational and shopping conscious	Going shopping is one of the enjoyable activities of my life	Strongly disagree	19	10.3	24	12.8	16	8.7
		Somewhat disagree	24	13.0	20	10.6	37	20.1
		Neither agree nor disagree	22	12.0	39	20.7	20	10.9
		Somewhat agree	58	31.5	61	32.4	61	33.2
		Strongly agree	61	33.2	40	21.3	50	27.2
	I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it	Strongly disagree	16	8.7	32	17.0	15	8.2
		Somewhat disagree	27	14.7	31	16.5	35	19.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	25	13.6	29	15.4	31	16.8
		Somewhat agree	59	32.1	57	30.3	52	28.3
		Strongly agree	57	31.0	37	19.7	51	27.7
	Shopping is a pleasant activity to me	Strongly disagree	4	2.2	14	7.4	11	6.0
		Somewhat disagree	18	9.8	24	12.8	31	16.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	31	16.8	32	17.0	30	16.3
		Somewhat agree	65	35.3	66	35.1	59	32.1
		Strongly agree	66	35.9	49	26.1	53	28.8
Price and value for money conscious	I buy as much as possible at sale price	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	16	8.5	9	4.9
		Somewhat disagree	24	13.0	26	13.8	21	11.4
		Neither agree nor disagree	41	22.3	35	18.6	37	20.1

		Somewhat agree	59	32.1	65	34.6	65	35.3
		Strongly agree	48	26.1	44	23.4	52	28.3
	I carefully watch how much I spend	Strongly disagree	10	5.4	3	1.6	8	4.3
		Somewhat disagree	38	20.7	27	14.4	21	11.4
		Neither agree nor disagree	30	16.3	20	10.6	21	11.4
		Somewhat agree	58	31.5	81	43.1	71	38.6
		Strongly agree	48	26.1	55	29.3	63	34.2
	I look carefully to find the best value for the money	Strongly disagree	8	4.3	3	1.6	5	2.7
		Somewhat disagree	16	8.7	9	4.8	26	14.1
		Neither agree nor disagree	32	17.4	16	8.5	15	8.2
		Somewhat agree	69	37.5	75	39.9	69	37.5
		Strongly agree	59	32.1	83	44.1	69	37.5
	The lower price products are usually my choice.	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	13	6.9	13	7.1
		Somewhat disagree	34	18.5	35	18.6	53	28.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	36	19.6	41	21.8	39	21.2
		Somewhat agree	69	37.5	64	34.0	56	30.4
		Strongly agree	33	17.9	32	17.0	23	12.5
	I prefer lower price products over stylish expensive ones	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	9	4.8	18	9.8
		Somewhat disagree	51	27.7	37	19.7	39	21.2
		Neither agree nor disagree	49	26.6	53	28.2	47	25.5
		Somewhat agree	44	23.9	53	28.2	43	23.4
		Strongly agree	28	15.2	32	17.0	37	20.1
Impulsive and careless	I make careless purchases I later wish, I had not	Strongly disagree	29	15.8	48	25.5	34	18.5
		Somewhat disagree	44	23.9	45	23.9	55	29.9
		Neither agree nor disagree	37	20.1	31	16.5	34	18.5
		Somewhat agree	45	24.5	45	23.9	36	19.6
		Strongly agree	29	15.8	16	8.5	25	13.6
	I normally shop quickly, buying the first product that seems good enough	Strongly disagree	41	22.3	35	18.6	41	22.3
		Somewhat disagree	61	33.2	68	36.2	59	32.1
		Neither agree nor disagree	34	18.5	32	17.0	36	19.6
		Somewhat agree	36	19.6	40	21.3	34	18.5
		Strongly agree	12	6.5	10	5.3	14	7.6
	I believe a product does not have to be exactly what I want to satisfy me	Strongly disagree	31	16.8	23	12.2	27	14.7
		Somewhat disagree	61	33.2	62	33.0	63	34.2
		Neither agree nor disagree	37	20.1	46	24.5	42	22.8
		Somewhat agree	40	21.7	45	23.9	42	22.8
		Strongly agree	15	8.2	9	4.8	10	5.4
		Strongly disagree	26	14.1	30	16.0	28	15.2

	I spend little time deciding on the products I buy	Somewhat disagree	58	31.5	57	30.3	64	34.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	39	21.2	40	21.3	32	17.4
		Somewhat agree	44	23.9	42	22.3	42	22.8
		Strongly agree	17	9.2	16	8.5	18	9.8
	I should plan my shopping more carefully than I do	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	22	11.7	28	15.2
		Somewhat disagree	42	22.8	35	18.6	40	21.7
		Neither agree nor disagree	58	31.5	32	17.0	38	20.7
		Somewhat agree	45	24.5	53	28.2	50	27.2
		Strongly agree	27	14.7	42	22.3	28	15.2
	I am often impulsive when shopping	Strongly disagree	20	10.9	25	13.3	27	14.7
		Somewhat disagree	43	23.4	39	20.7	53	28.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	21	11.4	36	19.1	35	19.0
		Somewhat agree	71	38.6	54	28.7	44	23.9
		Strongly agree	29	15.8	32	17.0	25	13.6
Confused by over-choice	There are so many brands to choose from, that often I feel confused	Strongly disagree	35	19.0	36	19.1	34	18.5
		Somewhat disagree	46	25.0	58	30.9	53	28.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	38	20.7	39	20.7	35	19.0
		Somewhat agree	43	23.4	40	21.3	44	23.9
		Strongly agree	22	12.0	14	7.4	18	9.8
	Sometimes it is hard to choose a retailer to shop at (online or in-store)	Strongly disagree	22	12.0	30	16.0	20	10.9
		Somewhat disagree	50	27.2	44	23.4	44	23.9
		Neither agree nor disagree	39	21.2	29	15.4	55	29.9
		Somewhat agree	55	29.9	63	33.5	43	23.4
		Strongly agree	18	9.8	20	10.6	22	12.0
	The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best	Strongly disagree	17	9.2	23	12.2	19	10.3
		Somewhat disagree	50	27.2	47	25.0	50	27.2
		Neither agree nor disagree	50	27.2	48	25.5	43	23.4
		Somewhat agree	45	24.5	48	25.5	55	29.9
		Strongly agree	22	12.0	20	10.6	17	9.2
	All the information I get on different products confuses me	Strongly disagree	34	18.5	41	21.8	33	17.9
		Somewhat disagree	50	27.2	61	32.4	51	27.7
		Neither agree nor disagree	56	30.4	40	21.3	46	25.0
		Somewhat agree	35	19.0	39	20.7	39	21.2
		Strongly agree	9	4.9	5	2.7	15	8.2
Habitual and brand loyal	The most advertised brands are usually good choices	Strongly disagree	12	6.5	34	18.1	21	11.4
		Somewhat disagree	57	31.0	63	33.5	64	34.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	51	27.7	54	28.7	51	27.7
		Somewhat agree	47	25.5	33	17.6	36	19.6

		Strongly agree	17	9.2	3	1.6	12	6.5
	I prefer buying the best-selling brands	Strongly disagree	24	13.0	22	11.7	24	13.0
		Somewhat disagree	44	23.9	63	33.5	45	24.5
		Neither agree nor disagree	48	26.1	56	29.8	56	30.4
		Somewhat agree	53	28.8	33	17.6	48	26.1
		Strongly agree	15	8.2	11	5.9	11	6.0
	The more expensive brands are usually my choices	Strongly disagree	38	20.7	48	25.5	34	18.5
		Somewhat disagree	48	26.1	66	35.1	57	31.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	41	22.3	42	22.3	41	22.3
		Somewhat agree	46	25.0	25	13.3	44	23.9
		Strongly agree	11	6.0	5	2.7	8	4.3
	The higher the price of a product, the better its quality	Strongly disagree	29	15.8	41	21.8	26	14.1
		Somewhat disagree	48	26.1	64	34.0	46	25.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	43	23.4	31	16.5	50	27.2
		Somewhat agree	52	28.3	43	22.9	43	23.4
		Strongly agree	12	6.5	8	4.3	19	10.3
	Once I find a product or brand I like, I buy it regularly	Strongly disagree	6	3.3	1	.5	5	2.7
		Somewhat disagree	14	7.6	8	4.3	20	10.9
		Neither agree nor disagree	23	12.5	22	11.7	24	13.0
		Somewhat agree	85	46.2	83	44.1	93	50.5
		Strongly agree	56	30.4	71	37.8	42	22.8
	I have favourite brands which I buy over and over again	Strongly disagree	7	3.8	6	3.2	7	3.8
		Somewhat disagree	21	11.4	11	5.9	22	12.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	19	10.3	11	5.9	23	12.5
		Somewhat agree	79	42.9	84	44.7	80	43.5
		Strongly agree	58	31.5	74	39.4	52	28.3
	I make my shopping trips fast	Strongly disagree	25	13.6	6	3.2	18	9.8
		Somewhat disagree	45	24.5	40	21.3	33	17.9
		Neither agree nor disagree	35	19.0	37	19.7	32	17.4
		Somewhat agree	50	27.2	67	35.6	65	35.3
		Strongly agree	29	15.8	35	18.6	36	19.6
	I am a well-organized, systematic shopper	Strongly disagree	16	8.7	11	5.9	12	6.5
		Somewhat disagree	37	20.1	23	12.2	29	15.8
		Neither agree nor disagree	38	20.7	36	19.1	42	22.8
		Somewhat agree	62	33.7	69	36.7	61	33.2
		Strongly agree	31	16.8	46	24.5	40	21.7
	Shopping online saves time	Strongly disagree	23	12.5	24	12.8	6	3.3
		Somewhat disagree	32	17.4	22	11.7	26	14.1

		Neither agree nor disagree	41	22.3	49	26.1	49	26.6
		Somewhat agree	54	29.3	50	26.6	52	28.3
		Strongly agree	34	18.5	41	21.8	51	27.7

ADDENDUM E: TURNITIN REPORT

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

TURNITIN DECLARATION

Full names of student	Angeliz Venter
Student number	u15052053
Degree	M Consumer Science
Department	Department of Consumer Science and Food Sciences

Declaration by student:

I declare that I have used Turnitin according to University's policy in this regard.

SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATE: ____________

I declare that I have seen and am satisfied with the Turnitin reports.

The student had a similarity report of 23% which is acceptable.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Dr Bertha Jacobs

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR: ____________

Date: 11 December 2023