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**The influence of product-specific variables and demographics on consumers' intention
to complain following clothing product performance failure**

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Dissertation

M Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management

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**The influence of product-specific variables and demographics on consumers' intention
to complain following clothing product performance failure**

by

Rozanne Grobbelaar

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master's degree in
Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management

in the

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Department of Consumer and Food Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
Supervisor: Prof Suné Donoghue

Declaration

I, Rozanne Grobbelaar, declare that this dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree of Master in Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted at this university or any other university or tertiary institution. I also declare that this is my own work in design and execution and that all reference material included in the dissertation has been duly acknowledged.

Rozanne Grobbelaar

November 2022



Acknowledgements

What a privilege, but at the same time, what a challenge! I decided after 20 years to return to my 'Alma Mater' to enrich myself while still holding my full-time teaching job. I have met wonderful people who helped me achieve this dream.

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- Last, but definitely first....My Lord Jesus. Your mercy was new every day, and when things looked impossible, You made it possible.

Abstract

The influence of product-specific variables and demographics on consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure

By

Rozanne Grobbelaar

Supervisor: Prof Suné Donoghue

Department: Consumer and Food Sciences

Degree: M Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management

Although the clothing retail industry spends valuable resources developing and distributing products, it is becoming increasingly difficult to satisfy consumers. Consumers have high expectations about the functional, expressive and symbolic value associated with clothing. Product dissatisfaction could lead to redress-seeking behaviour and negative repurchase behaviour. Consumers may directly complain to retailers (second parties) or third parties, including newspapers and consumer protection organisations. They may also indirectly or privately express dissatisfaction through traditional negative word-of-mouth or boycotting the retailer. With the advent of the Internet, traditional word-of-mouth has evolved into electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), allowing consumers to interact with retailers anywhere.

Despite existing literature on consumer complaint behaviour in general and particularly complaint behaviour about clothing products, limited research exists about the factors influencing South African consumers' complaint intention due to clothing product failure. This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, i.e., product cost, product durability, product dissatisfaction, and the severity of the product failure; consumer-related variables, i.e., demographics; and consumer complaint intentions following perceptions of clothing product performance failure.

Clothing consumers 19 years or older who reside across South Africa were the unit of analysis. The data was collected with an online questionnaire and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Respondents had to indicate anticipated clothing product failures based on

a product failure scenario. Items adapted from existing scales were used to measure perceptions of clothing performance failures, consumer complaint intentions, and selected product-specific variables, including product dissatisfaction, product failure severity, and price and durability related to specific consumer complaint behavioural intentions. Respondents had to rate the severity of the anticipated failure and their level of dissatisfaction. Respondents indicated the type of complaint actions they would employ.

The results show that most respondents expect structural failures to be more pertinent than aesthetic failures. The EFA resulted in four factors: electronic complaints (Factor 1), complaining to the retailer and consumer protection organisation (Factor 2), switching intention (Factor 3), and negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4). Electronic complaints (negative electronic word-of-mouth) and complaints to the retailer and consumer protection organisation had the lowest mean scores, indicating relatively weak complaint intentions. Switching intention had the highest mean score, followed by negative word-of-mouth, indicating relatively pertinent complaint intentions. Therefore, consumers who purchase much desired expensive clothing items would probably be likely to switch brands or retailers or tell significant others about the product problem when a product failure occurs. However, their intentions to contact the retailer or a consumer protection organisation or to communicate to a broader consumer audience using negative electronic word-of-mouth are relatively weak.

Almost all of the respondents indicated they would be very to extremely dissatisfied with the product failure, and most stated the failure would be very to extremely severe. Product price seemed to play a more prominent role in the intentions to contact family/friends or the retailer than product failure severity.

Separate univariate ANOVAs were done to compare the effect of the different independent variables on the specific dependent variable. Age, population group, and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price significantly affected electronic complaint intention (Factor 1). Age, population group, education, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling friends or family, the higher the product price, and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price affected intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2). Only product failure dissatisfaction and the likelihood of telling friends or family the more durable the product significantly affected switching intention (Factor 3). Age, product failure dissatisfaction, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price, and the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product had a significant effect on negative word-of-mouth intention (Factor 4)

Dissatisfied consumers were more likely to engage in private complaint actions when clothing product failure occurs. Respondents had a relatively strong intention to inform their family or friends about their dissatisfaction by telling them in person (or by phoning them) and WhatsApping them. Respondents were also more likely to switch brands and boycott the retailer. Respondents had relatively weak electronic complaint intentions and intentions to complain to retailers and consumer protection organisations. Electronic word-of-mouth and complaints to retailers or consumer protection organisations are visible to retailers. Therefore, retailers should encourage dissatisfied consumers to complain to them to build sustainable long-term relationships with consumers, which are much more profitable in the long run.

This study has practical implications for retailers and manufacturers in providing products that best meet consumers' expectations and establishing effective return policies and customer complaint-handling programmes.

Keywords: Consumer complaint behaviour; complaint intentions, clothing product failure

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CHAPTER 1 - STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter presents the general introduction and background to the study, research problem and justification. The research aim and objectives, methodology, data analysis, quality of the data, and ethical aspects are also presented. The structure of the dissertation is briefly explained.

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Top South African clothing retailers meet the needs of diverse consumers by replicating international trends and sourcing almost a third of their merchandise from local manufacturers (Spinks, 2014). However, tapping into the South African clothing retail sector, major international brands, including Zara, Forever New, H&M, and Cotton On, have become an increased threat to local retailers (Price Waterhouse Cooper, 2012). These brands offer fashionable clothing at a feasible price point, targeted at the economically and culturally segmented South African market (Spinks, 2014). Fast-fashion retailers manufacture affordable knockoff-merchandise based on the latest high-end fashion brands and present them to consumers almost weekly rather than during fashion seasons (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010; Bianchi & Birtwistle, 2010; Byun & Sternquist, 2011).

To encourage healthy competition between clothing retailers, retailers must know their customers, continually develop and improve products, and ensure that consumers are satisfied with the merchandise they purchase. Therefore, consumer researchers have studied the influential role of cognition and emotions in consumer behaviour. Studies have shown that consumers' appraisals of product performance, subsequent satisfaction judgments and emotions influence post-purchase consumption behaviour (Hoyer, 2012). Customer complaints are extremely helpful to retailers, serving as an initial warning to anticipate failures during the post-purchase consumption stage (Loo, Boo & Khoo-Lattimore, 2013).

When customers are dissatisfied with the services or products they receive, they generally spread rumours about the business and change their buying habits (Cho & Workman, 2011). Dissatisfaction results when expectations are not met. (Halloway & Beatty, 2003). The expectancy disconfirmation paradigm proposes that consumers' satisfaction judgment involves a post-consumption assessment in which they compare their expectations of product performance

with perceived performance. (Arnould, Press, Salminen & Tillotson 2019; Esbjerg, Jensen, Bech-Larsen, de Barcellos, Boztug & Grunert 2012:445). Customers are inclined to tend to feel satisfied when their expectations are fulfilled, i.e., when the perceived performance corresponds to their expectations (Bloemer & Odekerken-Shröder, 2002:69-70).

Consumers use specific extrinsic and intrinsic cues as indicators of product quality. Intrinsic cues refer to product qualities that cannot be modified without changing the product's physical properties. Extrinsic cues are product features related to the product, but external to it, including brand, price, reputation, and place of origin (Bubonia, 2014; Niinimäki, 2020). Many store characteristics influence customer satisfaction, but studies suggest that price, product variety, product quality perceptions, and employee service are more critical factors in consumers satisfaction (Clotey, Collier & Stodnick, 2008:35; Martinez-Ruiz, Jimenez-Zarco, & Izquierdo-Yusta, 2010:278; Matzler, Würtele & Renzl, 2006:216). Customers use price as an extrinsic cue to form pre-purchase product or service expectations because it is easy to recognise and interpret (Bolton & Lemon, 1999:171). Price can therefore be considered an indicator of the quality level that clients might anticipate from a product or service (Martinez-Ruiz *et al.*, 2010:279). Price is critical in shaping customer satisfaction with sellers (Matzler *et al.*, 2006:218).

Although the clothing retail industry spends valuable resources developing and distributing products, it is becoming increasingly difficult to satisfy consumers. Consumers are becoming increasingly value-driven and often want more than they are willing to pay (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008). Consumers have high expectations about the functional, expressive and symbolic value associated with clothing. Previous studies have shown that clothing consumers complain about clothing product failures related to wearability and appearance. Product failures, including shrinkage, holes and twisting, cause garments to be unwearable. A recent study of clothing complaints and returns indicates that physical product failure (quality failure) remains a primary reason for consumer dissatisfaction (Castelo & Cabral, 2018).

Product dissatisfaction could lead to redress-seeking behaviour and negative repurchase behaviour. Dissatisfaction triggers complaint behavioural intentions or responses. Whereas complaint intentions refer to consumers' willingness or likelihood to complain when dissatisfied with a product or consumption experience, complaint behaviour refers to the actual actions consumers take when complaining (Wetzer, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2007 & Richins, 1983). Consumers may directly or formally complain to retailers (second parties) or third parties, including newspapers and consumer protection organisations. They may also indirectly or privately express their dissatisfaction through negative word-of-mouth or boycotting the retailer. With the advent of the Internet, traditional word-of-mouth has evolved into electronic word-of-

mouth (eWOM), allowing consumers to interact with retailers anywhere. Consumers may also influence global audiences with their comments and likes or dislikes of a specific product, brand or retailer (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004; Filieri, 2015; Strategy Business, 2019). "Doing nothing" about dissatisfaction should be considered a valid form of complaint behaviour (Phau & Sari, 2004). Consumers may, for example, decide to tolerate, justify, or forget the problem. Previous research has shown that researchers should study consumers' "behavioural and non-behavioural responses" to comprehend the consumer complaint behaviour construct in its totality (Singh, 1988; Cri , 2003).

Previous research has shown that product type, product expectations, product cost, product durability, product dissatisfaction, and the severity of the product failure influence dissatisfied consumers' redress-seeking and repurchase behaviour (Kincade, Giddings & Chenyu, 1998). For example, consumers with high product performance expectations are more prone to contact retailers to complain once product failures occur (Hoyer, 2012). Consumers are also more prone to seek redress for goods supposed to be durable than for non-durable goods (Broadbridge & Marshall, 1995; Kincade *et al.*, 1998). "Redress for a durable product may be considered worth it in contrast to a return trip to complain about a product with a short life expectancy" (Kincade *et al.*, 1998). Gr nhaug & Zaltman (1980) indicated significant variation in complaint propensity across various durables, including textiles and vehicles, and non-durables, including groceries, with products with the most perceived risk being complained about the most. Kincade *et al.* (1998) confirmed that consumers were likelier to seek redress the higher clothing prices.

Several studies show that consumer complaints could be linked to demographic variables, including gender, age, education, income, and population group (Souiden, Ladhari, & Nataraajan, 2019). Gender is related to consumers' views, attitudes, preferences and purchase decisions (Fischer & Arnold, 2004; Mitchell & Walsh, 2004; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2006). Some studies for example suggested that female customers are more likely to express their dissatisfaction with retailers than males (Heung & Lam, 2003). Hou & Lin (2004) argue that, while female buying habits are more informal and susceptible to eWOM during the purchasing process, male shopping habits are mostly demand-driven and highly focused.

To comprehend customers' behaviours, marketing researchers study generational differences (Ngai, Heung, Wong & Chan, 2007; Yuksel, A., Kilinc & Yuksel, F., 2006; Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Michels, Kabadayi, Gruber, Loureiro & Solnet, 2013), as generational cohorts generally have comparable behavioural characteristics, reflecting their formative experiences, use of information and communication technology, and adjustment to cultural and environmental

modifications. Thus, they often share similar core values and beliefs, fundamentally shaping their attitudes and behaviours (Brosdahl & Carpenter, 2011). Generational differences affect people's tendency to complain (Homburg & Giering, 2001). According to Roschk, Müller & Gelbrich (2013), the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers are less likely to complain, because they accept service inconsistencies more readily. In contrast, Generation Y consumers appear more willing to switch between retailers when dissatisfied, indicating that they are less loyal to firms than other generations (Patterson, Cowley & Prasongsukarn, 2006). Generation Y customers tend to be very community-minded (Kueh & Voon, 2007), such that they strongly value friends and relatives, the primary members of their resource networks. These friends and relatives act as primary information sources in decision-making (Chan, Ha, Lee, Yung & Wong, 2016).

Research shows complainers have higher income and education levels than non-complainers (Phau & Sari, 2004; Kumar & Kaur, 2022). Donoghue, Strydom, De Klerk, Andrews and Pentecost (2016) studied the differences between Black and White South African consumers' appliance failure attributions, anger and complaint behaviour. The findings showed that Black consumers complained more actively to retailers and engaged more in private complaint action than White consumers. However, the expression of emotions in public based on consumer dissatisfaction differs between cultures. (Laufer, 2002) For example, Western consumers are more likely to employ aggressive behaviours after an adverse event, including service failures, while Asian consumers are less likely to do so due to face-saving (Tombs, Russell-Bennett & Ashkanasy, 2014).

Formal complaints to clothing retailers are beneficial, as they get the opportunity to resolve product problems. However, private complaint behaviours, including negative word-of-mouth, switching between retailers, and public negative eWOM via the Internet, damage retailers' reputations and business (Chan, Ha, Lee, Yung & Ling, 2016; Sundaram & Yilmaz, 2016). When consumers remain passive, retailers remain unaware of product shortcomings (Heung & Lam, 2003). The Internet is an interactive medium providing consumers with a quick and easy access to post their emotions, cognitions and perspectives about products and services on social media platforms. Complaints on social media are very detrimental as complaints can rapidly distribute negative information (Mei, Bagaas & Relling, 2020). Although retailers cannot control consumers' private complaint behaviour and negative public electronic word-of-mouth behaviour, they should not underestimate its negative impact. Retailers should consider consumer complaints a valuable source of information to increase consumer satisfaction (Mei, Bagaas & Relling, 2019; Setiawan & Setyhadi, 2018). Consumers have the right to receive quality products, and retailers have a social responsibility to manage consumers' complaints. Retailers should therefore see formal complaints positively and encourage consumers to complain to them directly.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction and complaining behaviour are among the most studied issues in consumer behaviour, with ample research about product/service dissatisfaction, the different complaint actions and influencing factors (Sharma, Marshall, Alan, Reday & Na, 2010). These factors include product-related variables, such as the type of product failure, product failure severity, and the meaning of the product to the consumer; consumer-related variables, including demographics; and redress environment-related variables (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2009, Souiden *et al.*, 2019, Arora & Chakraborty, 2020). Lawan & Zanna (2013) have shown that cultural, economic, and personal factors significantly affect clothing consumers' buying behaviour. They also recommended that marketing managers should realise that socio-cultural factors are fundamental determinants of a consumer's wants and behaviour and should be carefully considered when designing clothes for specific markets. Age, income level and educational attainment also determine customer loyalty in retail settings (Ndubisi, 2006; Cooil, Keiningham, Aksoy & Hsu, 2007; Kuruvilla & Joshi, 2010).

Previous clothing research supports the multidimensional nature of consumers' perception of clothing quality (Swinker & Hines, 2006; De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008; Brown & Rice, 2014; Castelo & Cabral, 2018). As clothing product failure is inevitable, consumers will likely experience clothing product dissatisfaction resulting in specific complaint intentions and behaviours. Kincade *et al.* (1998) have shown that clothing consumers mainly complain about product failures that may render the garment unwearable, including shrinkage, holes and twisting, and failures that may alter garment appearance without influencing wearability, such as colour fading. Castelo & Cabral (2018) emphasised that product failure (quality failure) is considered a primary reason for clothing dissatisfaction. In the South African context, research has been done on consumers' quality perception of clothing and female customers' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the quality of custom-made clothes and their subsequent complaint behaviour (Lubbe & De Klerk, 2004; De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008; Du Preez, Dreyer, Botha, Van der Colff, Coelho & Pretorius 2018). However, no known research exists about the role of product-specific variables, including product cost, product durability, product dissatisfaction, product failure severity, and consumer-related variables, such as demographics in consumers' complaint intentions following performance failure of clothing purchased at retailers.

Therefore, the problem statement is: Product-specific variables and demographics influence consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Despite ample existing literature on consumer complaint behaviour in general and particularly complaint behaviour about clothing products (Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Chan *et al.*, 2016, Frasquet, & Miquel-Romero, 2021), limited research exists about the factors influencing South African consumers' complaint intention due to clothing product failure (Makopo, De Klerk & Donoghue, 2016). The study could therefore make a theoretical contribution to the current South African and international body of literature on perceived clothing product failure, specifically the role of product-specific variables and demographics in consumer complaint intention due to product failure.

According to Brokstad (2019), consumers have more power over the clothing industry than they realise. Therefore, by consciously demanding and purchasing better quality clothing, consumers can drive retailers' realisation that making durable clothing can pay off. Clothing manufacturers, retailers and marketers can differentiate themselves from their competition by, among other things, focusing on product quality (Swinker & Hines, 2006; Kadolph, 2007). However, unfortunately, clothing products are not exempt from product failure, leading to product returns, consumer complaints, and consumer rebellion. It is, therefore, essential to understand how perceived clothing product failure could affect post-purchase consumer decision-making. Knowledge of perceived clothing product failure, demographics and complaint behavioural intentions could have practical implications for retailers and manufacturers in providing products that best meet consumers' expectations and establishing effective return policies and customer complaint handling programmes. The results of this study could be valuable to consumers, retailers, and manufacturers.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Aim

This study aims to describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumer complaint intentions following perceptions of clothing product performance to profile specific types of complainers.

1.4.2 Objectives

- 1 To explore and describe consumers' perception of clothing product performance failures.
- 2 To explore and describe consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure.
- 3 To describe the product-specific variables associated with consumers' intention to complain, including durability, price, level of product dissatisfaction and the severity of the product failure.
- 4 To describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumers' intention to complain.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research design

This study formed part of a comprehensive research project focusing on the factors influencing clothing consumers' complaint intentions following an in-store/online service failure or product failure. For the research at hand, we employed a quantitative survey research design to explore and describe consumers' evaluation of clothing product failure and their subsequent complaint behavioural intentions. Cross-sectional research was conducted using an electronic questionnaire to collect empirical data.

1.5.2 Sample and sampling techniques

The unit of analysis for this study was South Africans 19 years and older who purchase ready-to-wear clothing at clothing retailers. Due to time and monetary constraints, non-probability sampling

was employed. Non-random quota sampling was used to recruit participants to include a diverse group of participants in terms of gender, age, income, education and population group to reflect the diversity of the larger population of clothing consumers. In addition, field workers invited participants willing to participate in the research using snowball sampling. Participants were requested to participate in the study via WhatsApp or e-mail invitations. Each of the 30 fieldworkers (undergraduate students and five Masters students) linked to the bigger research project had to collect at least 30 questionnaires as part of their training. Two screening questions were used to determine if participants qualified for inclusion in the study: 1) Are you older than 19? (yes/no) and 2) In which province of South Africa do you live? (9 options). A total of 1814 useful questionnaires were used for the bigger study. The subsample of respondents who completed questions about clothing product failure included 816 respondents.

1.5.3 Measuring instrument

A self-administered online questionnaire was developed and administered using Qualtrics software.

The structured questionnaire contained the following sections:

Section A determined participants' preference to purchase clothes in the offline/online shopping context and the offline/online clothes retailer from which they mostly shop for themselves.

Section B determined the respondents' likelihood of experiencing specific product/service failures in the clothing retailing (offline/online) context, based on scenarios. Respondents had to rate the levels of dissatisfaction and the severity of the failure they would experience in two separate questions. They also had to indicate whom they would blame for the failure. After selecting the shopping context, the failure scenarios were displayed randomly to participants to ensure even distribution of product/service failure encounters. The items for product failure were based on Kincade *et al.*'s (1998) list of apparel product failures. The items for service failure were derived from Holloway & Beatty (2003), Beneke, Hayworth, Hobson & Mia (2012) and Rosenmayer, McQuilken, Robertson & Ogden (2018). The items for the product-specific variables, level of dissatisfaction, and product failure severity were measured on Likert-type scales.

Section C measured participants' emotional state following the product failure based on emotion scales adapted from Schoefer & Diamantopoulos (2008) & Tronvoll (2011).

Section D measured participants' complaint intentions following the specific product failure. The complaint intention items were derived from Wirtz and Matilla (2004), Lee & Cude (2012), Clark (2013) & Chan *et al.* (2016).

Section E measured participants' motives underlying their complaint behavioural intentions with items derived from Mitra & Webster (1998), Loo, Boo & Khoo-Lattimore (2013), and Sundaram & Yilmaz (2016).

Section F measured selected product-specific variables, including price and durability related to consumer complaint behavioural intention. The items were derived from Keng & Liu (1997) and Phau & Sari (2004).

Section G measured participant personality using Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann's (2003) 10-item personality measure (TIPI).

Section H measured participants' demographic information, including gender (male, female, other), age (19 years of age and older), monthly household income (less than R10 001, R10 000 to R19 999, R20 000 to R29 999, R30 000 to R49 999, R50 000 or more) level of education (less than grade 10, Grade 10 or 11, Grade 12, Degree/Diploma, Postgraduate), population group (Black, Coloured, Indian, White, other), and the province they live in.

The reader should note that the measurement instrument explained in this section relates to the larger study on the factors influencing clothing consumers' complaint intentions following an in-store/online service failure or product failure. For the study at hand, only the product failure scenarios were relevant, and only sections B (partly), D, F and H, were analysed.

1.5.4 Data collection procedure

Data were collected with a self-administered online questionnaire using Qualtrics software. A total of thirty final-year students in the B Consumer Science Clothing Retail study program and five Masters' students in Clothing Retail Management were requested to invite respondents to participate in the study using e-mail or WhatsApp invitations. The questionnaire was electronically distributed across South Africa according to a predetermined sampling plan. The students were trained as fieldworkers before the commencement of the data collection. Each field worker had to encourage at least 30 respondents to complete the survey. The questionnaire included a consent letter to inform participants of the purpose of the research, to guarantee confidentiality

and that participation is voluntary. Informed consent was obtained by requesting willing participants to indicate their agreement to participate in the study regarding the conditions stated in the consent letter. The respondents had to respond to screening questions to ensure that they complied with the precondition for participation in the research, i.e. they should be 19 years of age and older and should reside in South Africa. The participants accessed the questionnaire by clicking on the shared e-mail/WhatsApp invitation link.

1.5.5 Data analysis

The data set obtained using Qualtrics software was sent to a statistician at the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria, who assisted with the data analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics are all about describing, graphically displaying and summarising data. Inferential statistics covers the estimation of population values based on sample values through the construction of confidence intervals and statistical hypothesis testing (also known as significance testing). (Cooper & Schindler, 1998:485) Inferential statistics are, therefore, associated with analyses with an estimation or hypothesis-testing focus (Mishra, Pandey, Singh, Gupta, Sahu & Keshri, 2019). Inferential statistics, namely exploratory factor analysis (EFA), was used to reduce the complaint intention data into meaningful categories. Univariate ANOVAs were done to determine the effect of the independent variables on the respective complaint intention factors.

1.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

1.6.1 Validity

The stages of the research process: conceptualisation, operationalisation, sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation, were performed with validity in mind (Neuman, 2014:42; Kumar, 2022, Mouton, 1996:109-111). Validity essentially resolves around the suitability of each step in determining your intentions. However, measurement techniques are more closely related to validity (Kumar, 2022). The amount to which a particular measurement accurately represents the concept it is designed to measure is referred to as validity (Kumar, 2014:214; Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013:258; Delport & Roestenburg, 2011a:173; Babbie & Mouton, 2002:123; Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). The amount to which a measure accurately captures the essence of the idea under study is referred to as validity, according to Babbie (2020:321). Theoretical validity and measurement validity are two of the components of validity according to Mouton's (1996:111–112) validity framework. Construct validity was ensured by formulating clear conceptual definitions. The in-depth literature review differentiated between clothing product failures and

explained how consumers assess product quality. The review also covered the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm regarding consumers' product performance expectations, performance perceptions and dissatisfaction judgments. Consumer complaint behaviour (CCB) was conceptualised in terms of its specific dimensions.

The questionnaire items corresponded to the study objective, thus ensuring content validity. To guarantee the construct validity, the constructs for this study were accurately defined, as discussed under theoretical validity. The survey included straightforward, understandable questions linked logically to the measured objectives. The study leaders and a statistician critically evaluated the questionnaire and accordingly adjusted it where needed. The questionnaire was pre-tested to guarantee the respondents' comprehension of the items and that they would be able to follow the instructions (Wiid & Diggins, 2015:174; Zikmund *et al.*, 2013:302).

1.6.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the degree to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent (Pietersen & Maree, 2021:260). The constructs were conceptualised precisely to safeguard against measurement errors. The questionnaire was pre-tested, ensuring that the wording was precise. Basic but specific instructions facilitated respondent comprehension of the measuring instrument. Trained fieldworkers received detailed information about the aim and objectives. The researcher interpreted Cronbach's alpha values to ascertain the scale items' internal reliability.

1.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

“Researchers have a moral and professional obligation to adhere to the code of ethics” (Neuman, 2014:145-146; Strydom, 2011:129). The consent letter indicated the study's overall aim, the respondents' responsibilities, the time needed to fill in the questionnaire, the justification for the study, and that the research formed part of a larger research project in the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences, University of Pretoria. Respondents were not forced to participate in the study. Respondents participated voluntarily and could withdraw from the study without penalty (Salkind, 2012:86; Strydom, 2011:116). The respondents' anonymity was guaranteed, and they were assured that their responses would be kept confidential. The principal investigators' contact details and affiliation were provided. A space (tick-box) for respondents to indicate agreement with the terms and conditions, thereby acknowledging informed consent to take part in the study. The University of Pretoria Research Ethics Committee (Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences) approved the research project before the commencement of the data

collection (Ethics Approval Number: (NAS169/2019). The researcher reported the findings honestly and without bias.

1.8 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

The dissertation is structured in five chapters, as outlined in the paragraphs below.

Chapter 1 presents the introduction and background of the study, problem statement and justification. The research aim and objectives, research design and methodology, data analysis, quality of the data, and ethical aspects are also presented. The structure of the dissertation is briefly explained.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature on clothing retailing and the importance of product satisfaction. Product quality is discussed in detail, as well as the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm, product performance and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction it brings. Consumer complaint behaviour (CCB) and taxonomies for CCB are explained. The difference between complaint behaviour and intentions is indicated. Possible implications for the retailers in terms of complaint handling are included. The conceptual framework shows the relationships between the essential constructs of the study. Based on the theoretical discussion of the constructs, the research aim and objectives are listed.

Chapter 3 provides the research design and methodology used in this study. The sampling plan, techniques and size are explained. The measuring instrument (online questionnaire), data collection procedure, coding and capturing of data and data analysis are discussed. The operationalisation of constructs is presented in table format. The statistical methods, including exploratory factor analysis, the Chi-Square test, and univariate ANOVA are explained. Validity and reliability measures to ensure the quality of the research and ethical considerations were discussed.

Chapter 4 represents the results. Descriptive and inferential statistics are used to discuss the findings. The results are interpreted in the order of the objectives.

Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of the findings of the study. The theoretical contributions, research limitations, and recommendations for future studies are included.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter describes and explore the importance of product quality, product failure, consumer complaint (CCB) behaviour when consumers experience product failure and the objectives to support the study.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review provides the theoretical background to this study. The chapter focuses on clothing retailing, the importance of product satisfaction, how the consumer perceives quality and which elements contribute to good quality products, the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm, and product performance and satisfaction/dissatisfaction. It also looks at consumer complaint behaviour/intention and how the consumer will behave and act on product failure, consumer complaint behaviour versus complaint intention, including the conceptual framework, demographics in this study and the aims and research objectives.

2.2 CLOTHING RETAILING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PRODUCT SATISFACTION

The South African clothing retail industry contributes approximately eight percent to the country's manufacturing gross domestic product (GDP) and 3% to the total GDP (Statistics South Africa, 2020). Since the global financial crisis in 2008, South Africa's economic growth has declined. In 2019, South Africa experienced a technical recession, with little development and decreasing employment levels (Sheefeni, 2022). Due to the unstable economy and consumers' subsequent weakening spending power, clothing retailers must make a concerted effort to gain a competitive edge.

In addition to traditional brick-and-mortar clothes shopping, consumers are spoiled for choice as they can buy clothes online from the comfort of their homes. The accelerating growth in online shopping across the world and South Africa provides retailers ample opportunities to meet evolving consumer needs (Deloitte.Digital, 2021). "Clothing, electronics, footwear, household appliances and health products are the most popular categories among South African online shoppers", reflecting an international trend (Statista, 2020). The Deloitte Global State of the Consumer Tracker longitudinal survey results suggest that post-covid, consumers' buyer behaviour will increasingly become a blend of in-store and online shopping across categories.

These results imply that retailers should focus on omni-channel shopping opportunities to cater for consumers' preferences (Deloitte.Digital, 2021). The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) (2008) (Act 68 of 2008) applies to "an agreement concluded between a consumer and supplier in the ordinary course of business". In the retail environment, consumer-based contracts, including online shopping, are regulated by the CPA, in terms of which consumers are entitled to timely performance and completion of services, and to be informed of any delays. Additionally, when receiving products, the quality must be the same as advertised, meet reasonable expectations in terms of price and condition, be in full working order and be free of flaws and defects. "In terms of the CPA, consumers have the right to return defective or substandard goods to the supplier/manufacturer within six months after delivery at the supplier's expense" (Mphahlele, Ombudsman, 30 July 2021). Clothing product failure occurs post-purchase, the last stage in the "customer journey". This stage includes consumer evaluation of product performance failure and complaint behaviours (Istanbulluoglu, Leek & Szmigin, 2017, Frasquet *et al.*, 2021). Seven percent of the complaints received by the 'Ombudsman' for the financial year 2020/2021 accounted for the clothing industry (online). Complaints percentages in the retail sector show a significant shift concerning online shopping. The number of complaints regarding the clothing sector is shown as follows:

2018-19: 300

2019-20: 515

2020-21: 589

Irrespective of the shopping context, it is essential that customers are satisfied with their purchases. Customer satisfaction correlates with customer retention (customer loyalty), while dissatisfaction reduces the customer base and tarnishes the retailer's reputation (Garín-Muñoz, Pérez-Amaral, Gijón López 2015). Therefore, customer dissatisfaction is a severe problem that retailers should try to prevent. However, product failures are inevitable, and retailers should find ways to address consumer dissatisfaction. One of the ways that clothing retailers can ensure a competitive advantage is by understanding the clothing product failures that consumers experience and the factors influencing the complaint avenues they pursue. Such an understanding can help retailers improve product quality and address customer dissatisfaction.

2.3 PRODUCT QUALITY

Product quality has become essential for retailers to differentiate their products from competitors (Swinker & Hines, 2006; Kadolph, 2007). The International Organization for Standardisation conceptualises quality as "the totality of characteristics of a whole" that can meet consumers' explicit and implicit needs (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008; Castelo & Cabral, 2018). In general, quality

refers to the “superiority” or “excellence of a product”, while perceived quality refers to “the consumer's evaluation of a product's total superiority” (Zeithaml, 1988; Fiore & Damhorst, 1992; De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008). Zeithaml (1988) suggests that researchers should differentiate between “objective or mechanical quality” and “perceived (observed) quality as the consumer experiences it”. The former primarily revolves around technical product qualities, while the latter, in addition, involves emotional and symbolic qualities.

Clothing quality is a particularly multi-layered issue. Consumers experience product quality during the entire garment “life cycle” – when buying, using and taking care of it, and disposing of unneeded or unused items. Imperfections in the technical quality of clothing, including holes or tears, are primary reasons for product disposal (Laitala, Boks & Klepp, 2015). Consumers have various opinions about quality's role in garment durability. Consumers generally believe quality and aesthetics are essential when purchasing clothes (Niinimäki, 2010). Also, perceptions of value influence consumers' attempts to extend garment life (McNeill, Hamlin, McQueen, Degenstein, Wakes, Garrett & Dunn, 2020). The Lexico Dictionary (2020) describes quality as (1) “the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind,” (2) “the degree of excellence of something”, and (3) “a distinctive attribute or characteristic possessed by someone or something” (Lexico, 2020). Material features relate to the objective quality of clothing. Objective quality can be evaluated with various objective methods, including tests for breaking strength, tear strength, abrasion resistance, colourfastness, effects of laundering (e.g., colour and dimensional change), seam strength and pilling (Bubonia, 2014; Cooper, Claxton, Hill, Holbrook, Hughes, Knox & Oxborrow, 2014). “Quality experience” refers to “the assessment of garment quality during the use phase and is based on the consumer's own experience” (Björk, 2014). Connor-Crabb and Rigby (2019) identified two stages of product quality evaluation: the “pre-use” phase, i.e., the objective quality of the clothing items garment, and the “during-use” phase, i.e., subjective quality, “particularly the relationships between garment quality, user behaviour and perceptions during use”. They highlighted that perceived quality is linked to consumers' daily affairs and the circumstances within which clothing is used, including how clothing is worn and laundered. While “objectively measurable elements of clothing” usually refer to static properties, these physical traits can be defined differently and depend on various factors. Quality perceptions can change over time (Connor-Crabb & Rigby, 2019). For example, demographic factors may affect consumers' quality assessment. According to Jin (2010), cultural and regional differences may determine consumers' appraisal of garment attributes when purchasing clothing as consumers may prioritise different aspects in particular cultural situations. Pujara & Chaurasia's (2010) suggested that gender and location influence consumers' quality assessment.

In addition to material aspects, garments have a “behavioural dimension”, which refers to “functional and aesthetic characteristics, such as durability, comfort, and beauty” (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008). De Klerk & Lubbe (2008:47) indicated that the consumers might think about “what the item can and will do for me, suggesting what kind of emotions and inner experiences the garment can evoke when wearing it”. The garment’s physical properties and behavioural qualities are related as the product’s material qualities influence the behavioural characteristics. Clothing’s behavioural characteristics are grouped into functional and aesthetic behavioural characteristics (De Klerk & Tselepis, 2007). Functional behavioural characteristics relate to clothing products’ function and durability, including appropriateness for specific occasions, the ability to hold its appearance and structure when used and laundered, or the ability to fit the user comfortably (De Klerk & Tselepis, 2007). According to O’Neal, Fiore & Kimle (1997, p. 55), beauty or aesthetic experiences, whether at the sensory, emotional or cognitive level, are considered aesthetic behavioural characteristics. The sensory dimension relates to the visual and tactile aspects, shaped by fabric colour and texture. The emotional dimension relates to the garment’s ability to stimulate pleasure and inspiration. The cognitive dimension relates to how the garment portrays symbolic messages and facilitates the user’s integration within cultural and social groups (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008). Tselepis (2005) pointed out that extrinsic garment attributes generally indicate specific intrinsic attributes. Clothing consumers with limited product experience depend on extrinsic attributes to evaluate clothing quality (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2004). Brand familiarity functions similarly (Park & Stoel, 2005). Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan (2011) studied the effects of symbolic brand associations, brand prestige and perceived quality on brand loyalty. These authors suggested that perceived quality directly correlates with consumers’ brand attitudes and loyalty. In addition, their research suggested that high-status brands symbolise quality (Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan, 2011).

Fletcher (2012, p. 226) indicates that “a garment will last only as long as its least durable component.” Therefore, the materials, components, and workmanship should be excellent when developing durable products. A customer-based perspective of quality assumes that individual consumers can best define quality according to the satisfaction of their wants and needs. From a customer’s perspective, goods that satisfy an individual’s preferences would be considered the best quality (Scheller & Kunz, 1998). Based on personal variables such as knowledge (Hines & Swinker, 2001), personal preference and values (Swinker & Hines, 2006), consumers may use specific concrete and abstract product attributes to evaluate product quality (Makopo, De Klerk & Donoghue, 2016). Intrinsic product cues include fabric, workmanship, design and finishes, and concrete characteristics inherent to the product. The entire product must be changed if one wishes to change these cues (Swinker & Hines, 2006; Makopo, De Klerk & Donoghue, 2016). On the other hand, extrinsic product cues are concrete characteristics, including product brand and

price that can be changed without changing the product's structure (Swinker & Hines, 2006). Shiffman *et al.*, (2008) indicate that consumers judge product quality based on various intrinsic and extrinsic informational cues. Extrinsic cues include price, store image, service environment, brand image and promotional message.

Various researchers show that consumers use price as an indicator of product quality (Huddleston, *et al.*, 2001). Among other things, consumers' value perceptions differ, based on age and income as demographic variables (Lee, 2011). For some consumers, extrinsic cues such as brand names, could significantly influence product quality perceptions more than price (Auh & Shih 2009; Kara *et al.* 2015; Ozcan & Gunasti 2019). Brand-loyal consumers may switch between brands, or look for better pre-purchase offers if new products contain all the relevant qualities (Ahuja, 2015).

Customer perceived value refers to the " consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received versus what is given. "This means that consumers consider the benefit-cost relationship, i.e. compare the estimated net gain with the costs of giving up "time, money, and energy to buy, wear, and dispose of the product". (i.e., benefits versus costs) (Kardes, Cronley & Cline, 2008). Consumers can only assess experience attributes, sensory aspects such as tactile properties when using a product. Credence attributes, including durability and safety, a particular case of experience attributes, can only be evaluated after extended product usage (Kardes *et al.*, 2008). Significant others, including friends and family, often share their product beliefs with potential buyers. Consumers also use others' feedback to shape their understanding of the attributes and advantages of unfamiliar products and brands (Kardes *et al.*, 2008). If customers' needs are not addressed, they may quickly go to another retail location and complain to friends and family about their previous poor experiences (Bouzaabia, Bouzaabia, & Capatina, 2013). Consumers often consider the two attributes of price and quality to be related (or correlated) (Kardes *et al.*, 2008). Brown & Rice (2014:71) explained that apparel product quality has two dimensions: a "physical dimension", indicating what the clothing item is, and a 'performance dimension", indicating what the item can do. As the garment's physical characteristics determine product performance, consumers choose clothing products with specific physical features that will meet their performance expectations. Physical characteristics determine the garment's tangible form and composition. Physical characteristics relate to intrinsic factors such as the design, textiles, construction and finishes. Intrinsic factors cannot be changed without changing the item. The performance characteristics of apparel products relate to functional and aesthetic performance. Functional performance refers to properties such as durability and utility. For example, consumers' evaluation of the utility of a garment would manifest in perceptions of garment fit, comfort, ease of care, and the correspondence between actual

product performance and intended use. Consumers' evaluation of garment durability also relates to their superiority perceptions of garment construction, including seams remaining intact, the sturdiness of seams and hems, trims, zippers and buttons, and garment structure, including shrinking and stretching resistance during use and care. Aesthetic performance refers to the aesthetic experience the apparel item can bring about, whether on a sensory, emotional, or cognitive level (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008; Brown & Rice, 2014: 72). Aesthetic performance relates to how the garment's design, material, and construction fulfil appearance expectations. For example, whether the design elements (colour, line, shape, form, and texture) of the garment reflect sound design principles (balance, proportion, emphasis, rhythm and unity), and how well the garment retains its appearance after wear and care (e.g., the colour does not fade, the fabric resists pilling) (Brown & Rice, 2014). However, one should remember that the distinction between functional and aesthetic performance is not clear-cut, as the consumers' evaluation of the performance dimensions may overlap.

2.4 THE EXPECTANCY DISCONFIRMATION PARADIGM, PRODUCT PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION

The expectancy disconfirmation paradigm has been used widely in consumer behaviour research to explain consumers' evaluation of the consumption process and their subsequent satisfaction/dissatisfaction (Babin & Harris, 2018). Following product purchase, consumers evaluate goods by comparing their expectations for product performance with actual product performance (Martínez-Tur, Tordera, Peiro & Potocnik, 2011). Individuals' perception is aligned with their frame of reference and based on their experiences and expectations or pre-consumption beliefs (Hoyer & Stockburger-Sauer, 2009). Positive disconfirmation occurs when actual product performance exceeds expected performance, resulting in satisfaction. However, negative disconfirmation occurs when actual product performance is less than the desired performance level, resulting in dissatisfaction. (Huang, 2017; Du Preez, Visser & Van Noordwyk, 2018). Customers are more likely to complain when dissatisfaction increases, the purchase is essential to them, the perceived benefits of complaining outweigh the costs, they consider themselves competent, and they perceive issues with company response times (Cho *et al.*, 2001, 2002b).

Consumers' expectations about clothing product performance relate to four categories: aesthetic expectations, economic expectations, physiological expectations and social-psychological expectations (Hines & O'Neal, 1995; Swinker & Hines, 2006). Swinker & Hines (2006) define aesthetic expectations of a product as image, style and fashionability expectations. Economic expectations relate to serviceability (functionality/utility) and financial expectations. For example,

consumers generally believe high-quality products will last longer than low-quality ones, and will save them money in the long run. While physiological expectations relate to comfort and fit, social-psychological expectations relate to how one feels or believes others view a person in a garment (Swinker & Hines, 2006). Product failure perceptions occur when product performance turns out worse than anticipated performance expectations, i.e., when negative disconfirmation occurs (Spreng & Jr. 2003; Bhattacharjee & Premkumar, 2004).

Mechanical product failures, such as problems with zippers, could cause consumer dissatisfaction and embarrassment (Nkrumah, Gavor, & Pardie, 2015). Product failure is one of the main reasons consumers are unsatisfied with locally produced clothing, in addition to fitting problems and missed delivery deadlines (Keiser & Garner, 2012). Moreover, understanding consumers' assessment of product performance (and quality), and the specific factors influencing their purchase decisions and subsequent satisfaction/dissatisfaction, may aid retailers and marketers in selecting merchandise to promote their business (De Klerk & Lubbe, 2008).

2.5 CONSUMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOUR

Day and Landon (1977) introduced a two-dimensional taxonomy of consumer complaint behaviour: *action* and *no action*. The primary decision involves taking action or no action (figure 2.1). Action refers to private and public action. Private action includes warning family and friends about the product or retailer, boycotting the product and switching between brands or retailers. Consumers may take public action by complaining to the retailer to seek redress., e.g., a refund, exchange, free repairs or replacement, contacting voluntary consumer protection organisations or the media, or taking legal action. (Day & Landon, 1977:229-432; Broadbridge & Marshall, 1995; Phau & Sari, 2004; Arora & Chakraborty, 2020). While private action involves informal complaint action directed to people inside the consumer's group of significant others, public action involves more formal complaint procedures directed to entities outside the consumer's group of trusted people (Phau & Sari, 2004; Clark, 2013) (figure 2.2). Private action keeps complaints hidden, whereas public action makes them visible to retailers. No action suggests that the customer refrains from taking further action by making excuses not to complain and ignoring the issue and therefore remains loyal to the retailer (Garín-Muñoz *et al.*, 2015).

Figure 2.1 show Istanbuluoğlu, Leek and Szmigin's (2017) combined complaint behaviour taxonomy based on seminal authors work published between 1970 and 1988.

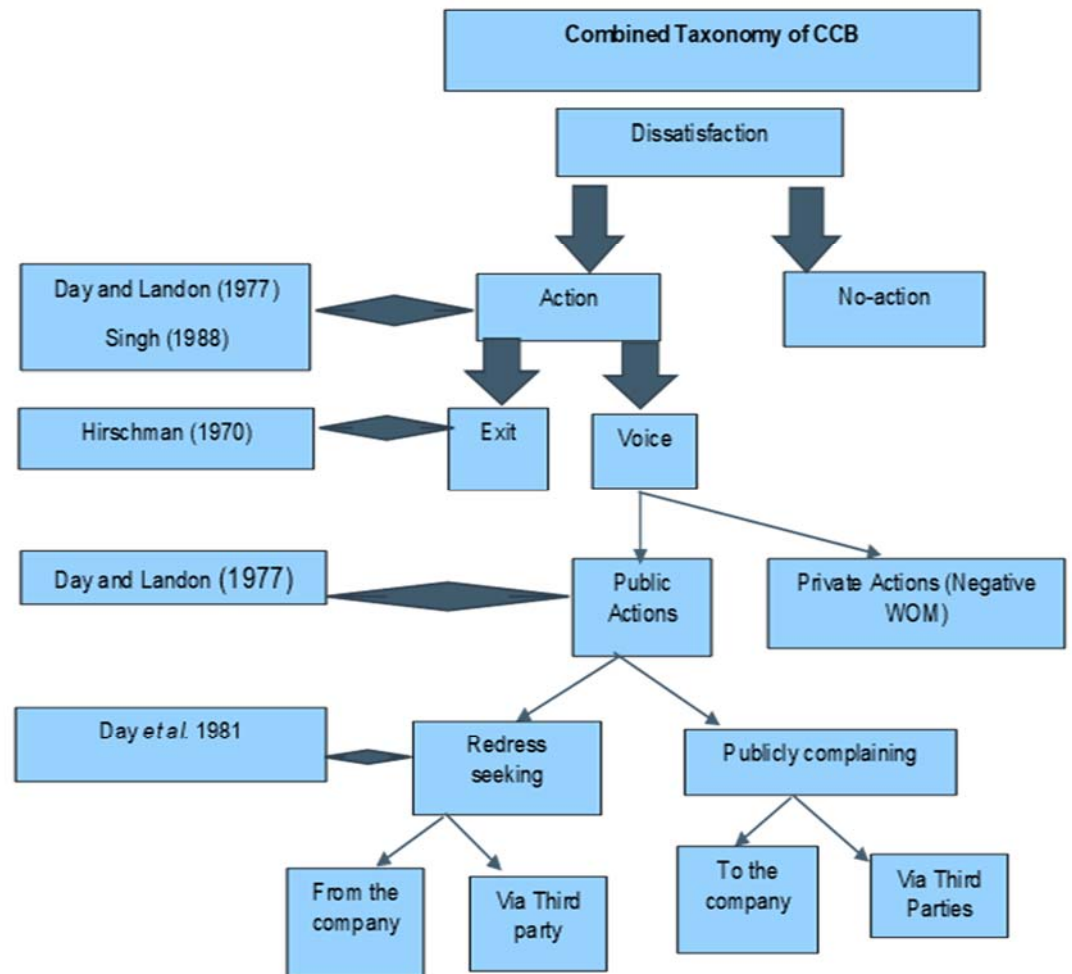


FIGURE 2.1 COMBINED TAXONOMY OF CCB BASED ON SEMINAL AUTHORS' WORK (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017:33)

Crié (2003) accepted Day & Landon's (1977) distinction between "action" and "no-action" as the initial response to unhappiness, referring to these as "behavioural" and "non-behavioural" responses. Crié also distinguished between "public" (i.e., viewed by the company) and "private" actions (i.e., not seen by the company) (figure 2.2). Mattila and Wirtz (2004) expanded on Day & Landon's (1977) work by incorporating channel choice into their complaint model. Mattila & Wirtz (2004) argue that customers can choose between a complaint medium based on the interaction associated with the specific channel. Direct face-to-face or telephonic complaints are examples of interactive channels. In contrast, written communication involves remote communication with retailers, such as posted letters or electronic messages.

As more consumers increasingly use the Internet and social media to complain, either taking a public or private approach, Clark (2013) expanded on the work of Mattila & Wirts (2004) by adding semi-interactive communication. Semi-interactive communication incorporates social media as a

consumer complaint channel choice. Social networking is a semi-interactive medium done remotely. However, although these complaints are directed at retailers, many consumers can view them (Frasquet *et al.*, 2019). The recent rise of social media has given many customers the ability to complain online to seek redress or vent frustration, even though customers may use a variety of channels to communicate their complaints, such as face-to-face contact, the telephone, and postal mail (Tripp & Grégoire, 2011).

Websites that facilitate consumer complaints fall into three categories, according to Bailey (2004): (1) specific hate sites about businesses created by irate customers; (2) general complaint websites that allow customers to voice their grievances with businesses publicly; and (3) websites of related governmental or non-profit organisations with interest in international consumer protection. According to Cho *et al.* (2002b), those who complain online do so because they assume they will get a quick response. Lack of justice may cause people to believe that their contracts have been broken, which would then trigger negative reactions like emotional outbursts, fury, changing their behaviour, spreading rumours about the service provider, and boycotting them (Gelbrich, 2010; Weun, Beatty, & Jones, 2004).

Before the emergence of social media, many dissatisfied consumers did not file complaints because they believed that the costs associated with doing so would be significantly more than the advantages of service recovery (Sharma, Marshall, Alan Reday, & Na, 2010). Nowadays, consumers use alternative communication channels to voice their complaints, including sharing negative information on personal blogs, forum posts, and other social media (Ward & Ostrom, 2006; Frassetto *et al.*, 2021). When dissatisfied customers fail to complain, companies are likely to lose on two fronts: firstly, the lifetime income lost from customers who may quit silently, and secondly, the capacity to address problems using dissatisfied customers' feedback. A direct complaint to the company presents a chance to transform a negative experience into a positive one (Goodman 2006). Anderson (2000:322) explicitly recommended that "it is beneficial to encourage dissatisfied customers to seek redress because these customers (i.e., complainants) provide retailers with the opportunity to address and remedy the problem".

Figure 2.2 shows Istanbulluoglu *et al.*'s (2017) integrated taxonomy of CCB.

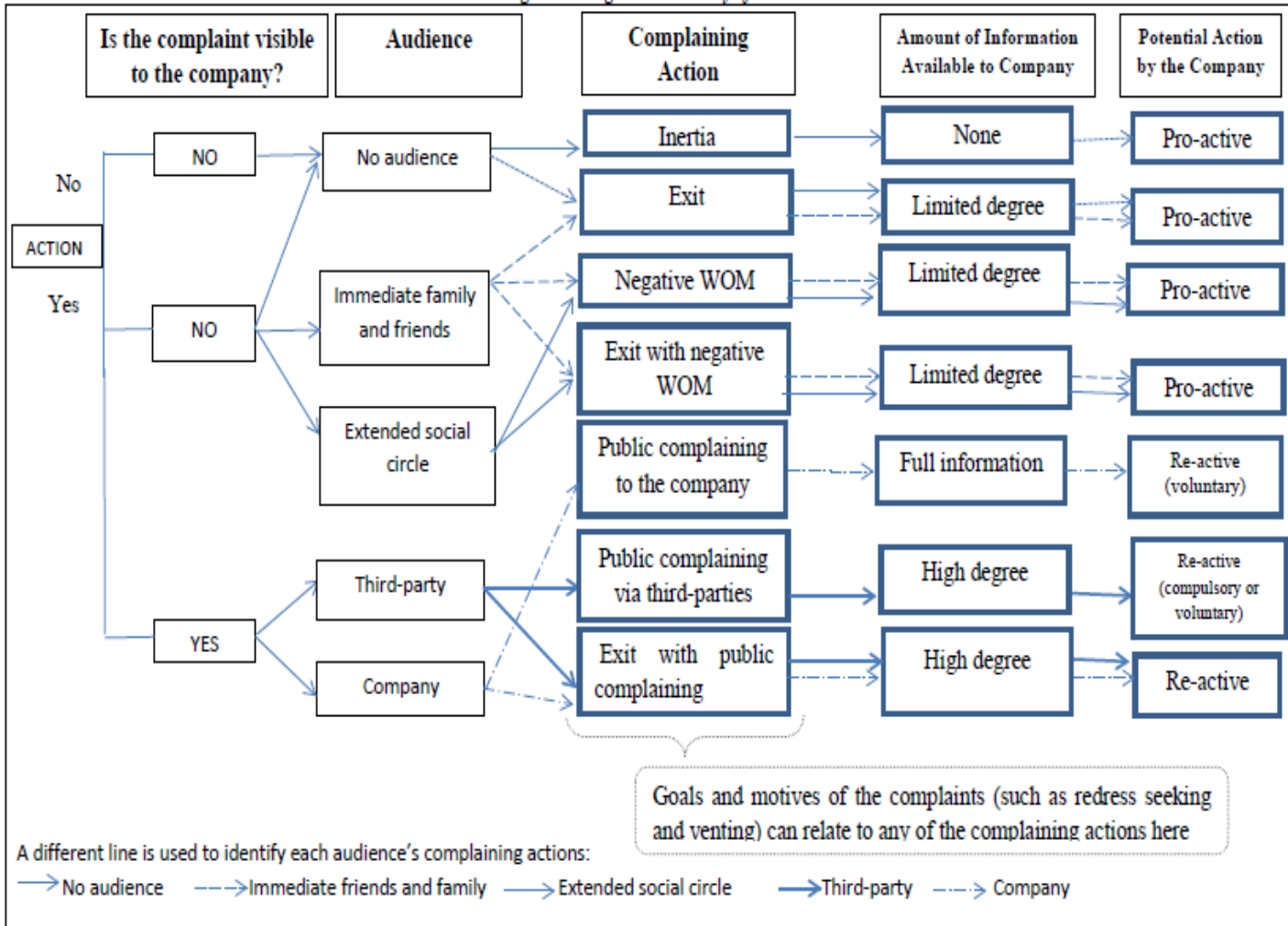


FIGURE 2.2 INTEGRATED TAXONOMY OF CCB (Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017:34)

The combined taxonomy of CCB discussed above forms the foundation for Istanbulluoglu *et al.*'s (2017:34). integrated taxonomy of CCB, allowing for technological developments that have introduced new complaint channels. Their proposed complaint actions included: inertia (applicable when consumers do not take action), exit, negative word-of-mouth, exit with negative word-of-mouth, public complaining to the company, public complaining via third parties, and exit with public complaining. Different lines link the complaint audience with specific complaint actions (See Figure 2.2).

Consumer complaint behaviour is triggered once consumer dissatisfaction occurs (Stephens & Gwinner, 1998; Souiden, Ladhari, & Natarajan, 2019). Dissatisfied consumers may engage in

behavioural and non-behavioural responses (Singh, 1988; Istanbulluoglu *et al.*, 2017). Behavioural responses include complaining to the retailer, appealing to a third party, such as consumer protection organisations, expressing negative word-of-mouth, and boycotting the retailer or product (Von der Heyde & Dos Santos, 2008). However, research shows that many customers do not care much about informing retailers about their valid complaints for various reasons (Day, Grabiske, Schaetzle, & Staubach, 1981; Garín-Muñoz, Pérez-Amaral, Gijón & López R, 2015), resulting in retailers receiving far fewer complaints than in reality (Choraria, 2013; Haverila & Naumann, 2009). Although non-complaining behaviour is more difficult to observe than complaining behaviour, researchers concur that no action should be considered a legitimate complaint behavioural response (Phau & Sari, 2004).

Consumers are more likely to complain to retailers in public or privately to friends and family (Balaji & Sarkar, 2013; Casado-Diaz & Nicolau-Gonzalbez, 2009) as perceived injustice increases. Swanson, Frankel, Sagan & Johansen (2011) reiterate that customers are more likely to seek redress by complaining to the service provider following unfair interactions. The service provider is often unaware of the service failure and unable to rectify or repair the problem when consumers complain privately (Bodey & Grace, 2007). Retaliation using negative word-of-mouth harms retailers more than patronage loss of existing customers, as customers damage the service provider's reputation and spread rumours about their negative experiences to many of their friends and family whom they trust (Gelbrich, 2010; Sparks & Browning, 2010).

2.5.1 Factors affecting consumer complaint behaviour

Consumers' experiences with certain products or services are directly associated with their expectations. While experience involves memory recall of what has happened in the past, expectations relate to individuals' beliefs about the likelihood of a future event/experience. Consumers feel dissatisfied when their expectations are not met, i.e., actual product performance is lower than product expectations. Product dissatisfaction could prevent consumers from purchasing similar products (Singh, 2016).

Although dissatisfaction is a precursor of complaining, various factors influence consumers' complaint behaviour, including consumer-related, product-specific, and redress environment variables (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2009; Souiden *et al.*, 2019, Arora & Chakraborty, 2020, Frasquet *et al.*, 2021). Consumer-related variables or individual factors include, among other things: demographics (Ndubisi & Ling, 2006; Tronvoll, 2007, Garín-Muñoz *et al.*, 2015), personality factors (Sharma & Marshall, 2010; Bodey & Grace, 2007; Ekinci, Calderon & Siala,

2016), attitudes (Velázquez, Blasco, Contrí & Saura, 2009; Souiden *et al.*, 2019), personal values (Liu & McClure, 2001), culture (Blodgett, Hill & Bakir, 2006; Schoefer, Wäppling, Heirati & Blut, 2019), knowledge and experience as consumers (Broadbridge & Marshall, 1995), and causal attributions for product failure (Laufer, 2002). Product-specific factors include the type of product, product benefits, product importance, product price, the product's social visibility, durability, frequency of use, the cause of product failure, product dissatisfaction, and the severity of the product problem (Phau & Sari, 2004; Stephens & Gwinner, 1998; Donoghue, De Klerk & Isaacs, 2012; Sharma, Marshall, Allan-Reday & Na, 2010; Garín-Muñoz *et al.*, 2015). Redress environment variables relate to situational factors in the redress environment (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2009).

Consumers from various age groups, income levels, levels of education and cultural backgrounds display multiple types of consumer complaint behaviours and intentions (McColl-Kennedy & Sparks, 2003; Ngai *et al.*, 2007; Yuksel *et al.*, 2006; Kim *et al.*, 2010). Generation Y consumers' clothing involvement has been linked to greater perceptions of clothing brand status (O'Cass and Choy, 2008), influencing their intentions to complain. Wang & Zhang (2018:779) maintain that the younger generations are more inclined to complain than older consumers. However, Soares, Zhang, Proenca & Kandampully (2017:539) suggest the contrary. Also, research findings indicate that complainers have higher income and education levels than non-complainers (Pau & Sari, 2004). Some studies indicate that complainers tend to work in professions that pay well and are younger than those who do not complain (Chan *et al.*, 2016). The link between specific demographic variables and complaint intention is therefore inconclusive and probably depends on the failure context (Garín-Muñoz *et al.*, 2015). Consumers' coping strategies to deal with product dissatisfaction may differ depending on gender (Chan *et al.*, 2016). Some studies suggested that female customers are more likely to voice their dissatisfaction than males when complaining in person to the retailer (Heung & Lam, 2003), but (Mahayudin *et al.*, 2010) dispute this and argue that males would prefer the active complaint approach. Female consumers are more fashion-conscious than men (Anić & Mihić, 2015) and shop therefore more often for clothing (Chea, 2011). Complainers also tend to exhibit greater self-confidence and individualistic traits (Pau & Sari, 2004). Personality type is a factor that might better forecast why consumers prefer one complaint modality over another (Harrington & Loffredo, 2009).

Kincade *et al.* (1998) studied the impact of product-specific variables on consumers' post-consumption behaviour for apparel products. Product cost and product type were related to redress and repurchase behaviour among dissatisfied consumers. Redress behaviour was significantly associated with the product's durability, product significance, and product cost. As

the durability and product cost increased, the respondents were more likely to return the product to the store. Phau & Sari (2004) confirmed that consumers were more likely to complain when the unsatisfactory product was expensive and used frequently and over a long time. Therefore, one can assume that consumers who purchase costly durable goods, including durable clothes, would likely return those goods when product failure occurs. Similarly, consumers prepared to pay more for clothing items will probably expect more value for their money and will probably be more likely to complain when product failures occur. As clothing product failures may vary from simple loose stitches to more severe problems, including holes and shrinkage, fasteners break or become undone, decorative trimmings become loose, the colour of the clothing bleeds into another, printed designs rubs off, small balls or fluff form on the fabric's surface, one can assume that the severity of the product failure and the level of dissatisfaction experienced could also affect the type of complaint intentions chosen.

“Redress environment variables” refer to factors controlled or primarily influenced by retailers (Homburg, Fürst & Koschate, 2010; Donoghue & De Klerk, 2013). Redress environment factors that may affect consumers' complaint intentions include their perceptions of the complaint situation, the firm's response time, and the perceived benefits relative to the costs of complaining (Lee & Cude, 2012). Based on previous studies, retailers should encourage their customers to voice their grievances rather than leave without saying anything (e.g., East, 2007). By encouraging active complaining, retailers can obtain valuable feedback (East, Hammond, & Wright, 2007). Online channels facilitate shame-prone consumers and “convenience seekers” to complain, allowing retailers to keep track of customers who may otherwise defect silently (Andreassen & Streukens, 2009; Snellman & Vihtkari, 2003). When retailers do not address customers' grievances, they may switch to a different retail outlet and complain to their friends about their negative experiences (Bouzaabia, Bouzaabia, & Capatina, 2013). Understanding redress environment factors would allow retailers better understand post-return statistics (Kincade *et al.*, 1998; Donoghue & De Klerk, 2006). However, these factors fall outside the scope of the current study and are therefore not discussed here.

Customer complaints suggest that clothing retailers should identify problem areas and resolve issues (Garín-Muñoz, Pérez-Amaral, Gijón & López, 2015.). By addressing complaints properly, retailers can convert dissatisfied customers into devoted ones (Kaur & Sharma, 2015). Previous studies confirmed that the primary cause of complaints is dissatisfaction (Liu, McClure, 2001). Some customers accept, justify, or ignore their discontent by doing nothing (Singh, 1988). Researchers concur that service businesses should acknowledge, embrace, and promote client complaints (Heung & Lam, 2003).

2.5.2 Consumer complaint behaviour versus consumer complaint intention

Reviews of consumer complaint behaviour literature show that most studies are based on recalling past dissatisfaction and particular complaint actions, with complaint behaviours being measured on a dichotomous (yes/no) scale. Memory recall studies imply that actual product dissatisfaction would be a precondition for the respondent's inclusion in the study. However, to provide control and reduce the effect of memory decay, respondents are often asked to indicate what they would do in a hypothetical situation (Lee & Cude, 2012; Sengupta, Ray, Trendel, & Van Vaerenbergh, 2018). In this case, intentions are typically measured on a least like/most likely Likert-type scale (Singh, 1988). Hypothetical questions are without constraint (Fisher *et al.*, 2010:216) and would allow respondents to participate in the study without being dissatisfied with specific products. Hypothetical questioning would facilitate data collection, as it would be easier for the researchers and field workers to recruit respondents since dissatisfaction with product performance is no longer a prerequisite for inclusion in the study. However, Frasquet *et al.* (2021) indicate that scenario manipulation does not measure consumers' "real life" emotions and cognition. Also, as intentions are measured instead of actual behaviour, one should realise that the research findings are limited to intention data, which do not reflect "real life" reactions (Weiner, 2000). The intention-behaviour gap implies that intentions do not always transpire into behaviour (Hassan, Shiu, & Shaw, 016).

2.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR CLOTHING RETAILERS

Clothing product failures occur post-purchase and cannot be detected immediately when the product is purchased. These failures often become apparent after wearing or washing the product. Consumers tend to complain more readily when clothing items are expensive and are supposed to be durable. Consumers generally employ price and durability as mental shortcuts to deduce product quality. Consequently, consumers will be very disappointed when product performance falls short of predetermined product performance expectations. Although fast-selling and low-quality products have become the norm, clothing retailers should be encouraged to develop better-quality products that match consumers' price-quality and durability expectations.

Failure to achieve a goal often results in feelings of frustration. Individuals' responses differ in frustrating and adverse situations, including product failure. For example, some consumers can quickly adapt, and some may experience anxiety and a sense of loss (Shiffman *et al.*, 2008). Retailers should be aware of the different types of complaint behaviour consumers may engage in, including seeking redress directly from retailers (Mattila & Wirtz, 2004; Panda, 2014; Weber &

Sparks, 2004), boycotting retailers or brands (Hirschman, 1970; Kim *et al.*, 2010), warning friends about sub-standard quality products and unethical retailers (Johnson *et al.*, 2010; Ndubisi & Ling, 2006), complaining on online discussion forums and social media, (Andreassen & Streukens, 2009), complaining to consumer protection agencies (Yen, 2016), or remaining passive and doing nothing. Retailers should consider these complaint behaviours as coping strategies to deal with adverse events (clothing product failures).

As many consumers tend to remain silent about product failures, manufacturers or retailers may assume that consumers approve of their products, creating a false sense of security. Retailers should therefore not misjudge the negative impact of non-complainers' behaviour (Souiden *et al.*, 2019). Non-complainers tend to justify the product problem, forget about it, and do not communicate their dissatisfaction to retailers. Similarly, consumers who complain privately to friends and family do not allow retailers to resolve product dissatisfaction. Businesses are therefore recommended to welcome consumer complaints, because they give them a chance to obtain feedback and fix their service flaws (Robertson, 2012). Dissatisfied customers typically inform more people about negative experiences than satisfied customers about successful outcomes (Weiner, 2000). By spreading negative word-of-mouth, consumers would instead share valuable information with their significant others than with retailers or other parties who might be able to solve the problem, doing irreparable harm to retailers' reputations. As with negative word-of-mouth, switching between retailers or brands are common practice amongst dissatisfied consumers. Although these behaviours are invisible to retailers (Gyasi, 2012), the impact thereof becomes apparent when sales figures decline. Retailers must therefore understand the implications of non-complaining and private or hidden complaint behaviour. Complaints should be seen as valuable feedback to retailers. Without complaints, retailers cannot inform manufacturers about product problems, and lose the opportunity to correct failures or improve product quality. Clothing retailers should therefore encourage dissatisfied consumers to complain to them to allow them to resolve product problems, turn unhappy customers into happy ones, maintain relationships and ensure profitability (Souiden *et al.*, 2019). Retailers should manage customer complaints to retain customers and prevent negative behaviours, including badmouthing, complaining to third parties (consumer protection organisations, ombuds and newspapers), switching between retailers, and customer attrition (Garín-Muñoz *et al.*, 2015).

Consumers may prefer to complain to other people or retailers using social media, with more people accessing the Internet. Social media has made it easier for consumers to share their thoughts with a broad audience, causing consumers to feel more empowered (Grégoire, Salle, & Tripp, 2015). Consumers often believe they are more likely to get feedback when they complain on social media than when going to the retailer (Clark 2013, Frasquet *et al.*, 2021). With access

to social media, consumers could spread negative word-of-mouth about their product dissatisfaction. Retailers should realise that, when complaints go viral, they create negative publicity, damaging a retailer's reputation (Melancon & Dalakas, 2018). Retailers' complaint-handling staff should handle social media complaints promptly to avoid further complaint escalation. Consumers have the right to complain to retailers about dissatisfaction due to product failure. However, some consumers may feel uncomfortable addressing complaint-handling staff in person. Complaint-handling staff should therefore be trained to encourage consumers to express their dissatisfaction and not perceive the act of complaining as something personal, but rather as a means of identifying the exact cause of product failure. Sometimes people struggle to express their dissatisfaction and the actual problem. Asking the right questions could help retailers find the appropriate solutions to empower consumers. It could benefit clothing retailers to create platforms where consumers can complain more privately about product failures to avoid social embarrassment issues (Garín-Muñoz *et al.*, 2015). Retailers should consider using interactive websites to reduce consumers' cognitive dissonance after making a purchase.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the literature review, the conceptual framework (Figure 2.3) was developed to guide the research and indicate the relationship between constructs. The numbers displayed in the figure correspond with the objectives of the study.

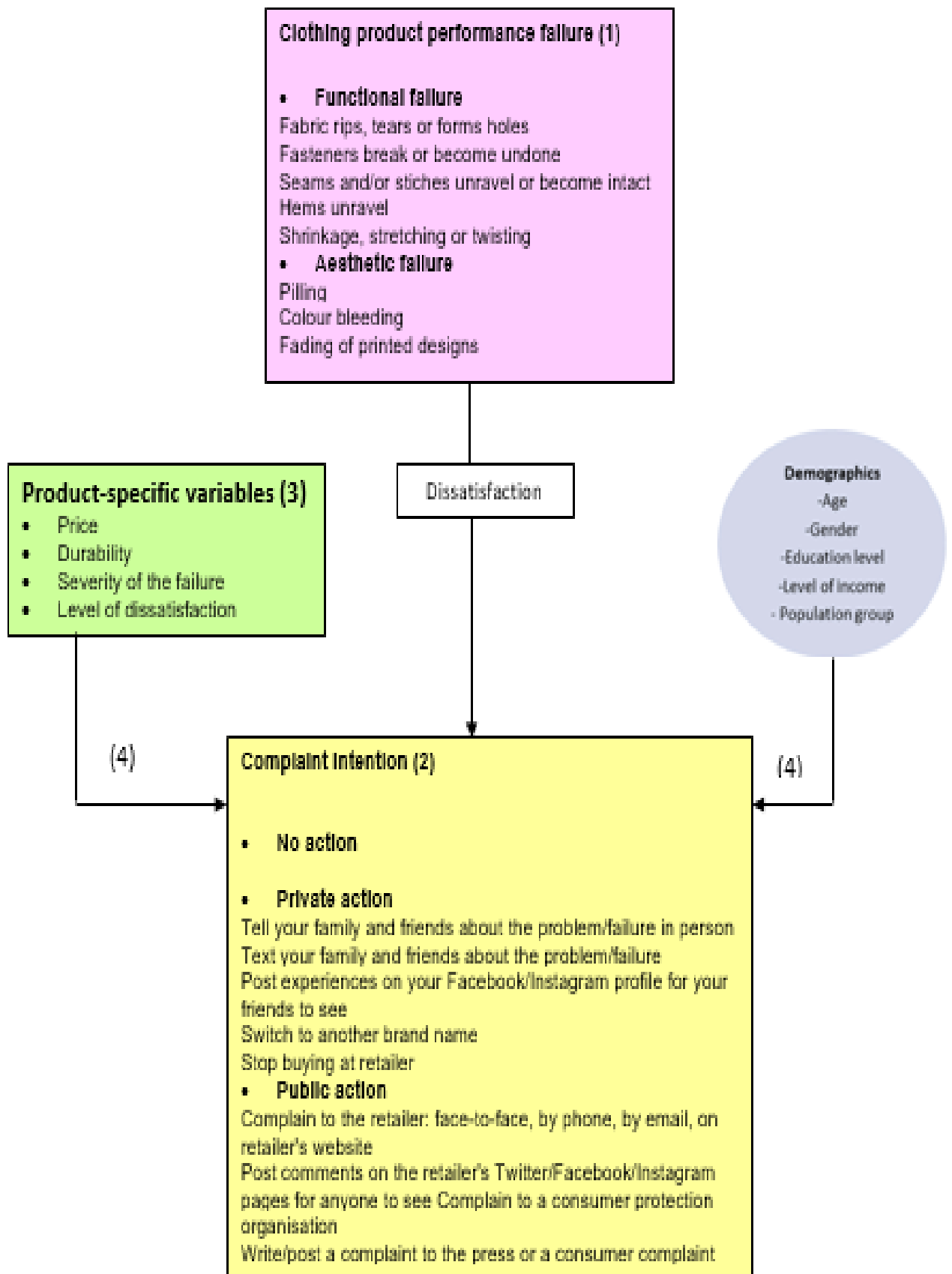


FIGURE 2.3: SCHEMATIC CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CONSUMERS' INTENTION TO COMPLAIN FOLLOWING CLOTHING PRODUCT PERFORMANCE FAILURE

Clothing consumers have specific expectations of product performance in a particular use situation. Post-purchase, consumers evaluate product performance according to their expectations. The conceptual framework shows that product failure (quality problems) occurs when product performance falls short of consumers' initial expectations. Kincade *et al.*, (1998) defined product failure as the failure of a product to maintain its desired quality. Product performance failures relate to functional and aesthetic performance failures. Functional performance failures may render the garment unwearable, including shrinkage, holes and twisting. In contrast, aesthetic performance failures may alter the appearance without influencing the garment's wearability, including pilling, colour fading, colour bleeding, and fading of printed designs (Kincade *et al.*, 1998).

Once dissatisfaction occurs, consumers may engage in behavioural and non-behavioural responses to resolve it (Day & Landon, 1977:229-432; Broadbridge & Marshall, 1995; Arora & Chakraborty, 2020). Consumers may refrain from action by rationalising and forgetting about the problem. Consumers may complain privately by warning family and friends about the product or seller, boycotting the product type, and switching brands or retailers. Additionally, consumers may engage in public action, including seeking redress directly from the retailer or manufacturer, complaining to a public consumer protection agency, and complaining to a voluntary organisation or the media (Day & Landon, 1977:229-432; Day & Bodur, 1978; Broadbridge & Marshall, 1995; Phau & Sari, 2004; Arora & Chakraborty, 2020). With more people accessing the internet, consumers may prefer to complain to other people or retailers using social media (Grégoire *et al.*, 2015).

Consumers often rely on price and durability expectations to infer product quality. Consumers may take part in particular complaint actions, depending on product-specific variables, including the product price, durability, level of product dissatisfaction, product failure severity, and specific demographic characteristics. Consumers are more likely to take particular complaint actions as product price, durability, product dissatisfaction and product failure severity increase. Demographic variables, including gender, age, level of education, income level and population group, have been linked to different types of complaint behaviour (McCull-Kennedy & Sparks, 2003; Ngai *et al.*, 2007; Yuksel *et al.*, 2006).

2.8. AIM OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

2.8.1 Aim of the research

This study aims to describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumer complaint intentions following perceptions of clothing product performance to profile specific types of complainers.

2.8.2 Research objectives

- 1 To explore and describe consumers' perception of clothing product performance failures.
- 2 To explore and describe consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure.
- 3 To describe the product-specific variables associated with consumers' intention to complain, including durability, price, level of product dissatisfaction and the severity of the product failure.
- 4 To describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumers' intention to complain.

2.9 CONCLUSION

Clothing quality is a multi-faceted issue. Consumers perceive product quality subjectively. Flaws (failures) relate to functional and aesthetic dimensions. Consumers often use price to guide their clothing quality decision-making as price serves as a heuristic to deduce product quality. When the product performs worse than expected, dissatisfaction occurs. Consumer dissatisfaction with clothing product failures is inevitable. Consumers have different ways of expressing dissatisfaction about unmet needs. For example, some may complain publicly on social media as an alternative complaint medium to traditional complaint avenues. Consumer complaint behaviour (CCB) will take on different forms. Some will choose to take action, while others will take no action. Both complaint dimensions are essential to the retailer. Various factors influence consumers' likelihood to complain, including consumer-related variables, particularly demographics, age, gender, population, education level, and monthly household income, and product-related variables, including price, durability, product dissatisfaction, and product failure severity. Consumers' complaint behaviours (and intentions) affect retailers' complaint handling. Retailers will be unable to resolve product problems and the associated customer dissatisfaction

when the consumers choose not to complain to them directly but rather to tell family or friends or switch brands or retailers. The hidden” complaint actions cause customer attrition. Consumer complaints on social media pages could be more detrimental to retailers when the negative publicity spreads widely and quickly.

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and methodology and the procedures used to ensure the quality of the study and ethical conduct during the research process.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter thoroughly discusses the research design and methodology of the study. "Research design" and "research methodology" should not be confused, as these constructs refer to two distinct aspects of a research project. A research design is "a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct the research". In contrast, the research methodology focuses on the "research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used" (Mouton, 2001:55). Differently stated, the research design provides the framework for how the study will be conducted, i.e., to provide guidelines for the procedure to be employed in the study. At the same time, the methodology explains the research process and technique used, including selecting participants, data collection and documentation, and data analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:74, Cresswell, 2014:12, Hartel & Bosman, 2016:38).

The research methodology section provides an overview of the 1) sampling plan in terms of the unit of analysis, sampling technique and sample size, 2) measuring instrument, 3) data collection method, 4) coding and capturing of the data, 5) data analysis, 6) operationalisation of concepts, 7) statistical methods to analyse the data, 8) the quality of the data concerning validity and reliability considerations to reduce bias and measurement error, and 9) application of ethical principles.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a quantitative survey research design using deductive reasoning to explore and describe the area of interest. Reasoned argumentation, or "top-down theorising", starts with exploring broad theoretical aspects and ends with applying them to the topic (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014:48). Researchers, among other things, conduct exploratory research to shed light on the research topic, or explain the main concepts (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:96; Babbie, 2007:88). Descriptive analysis enables researchers to describe the characteristics of phenomena by reporting the frequencies of specific variables and depicting the relationships between phenomena as accurately as possible (Babbie, 2007:89, Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014:75).

A survey refers to collecting "information on a wide range of cases, each case being investigated only on the particular aspect under consideration" (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:47). A self-administered online survey was used to conduct a cross-sectional exploration and description of consumers' evaluation of product/service failures in the clothing retail context and their subsequent complaint behavioural intentions. The research can also be described as empirical.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

The following section elaborates on the sampling plan, sampling technique and sample size, measuring instrument, data collection method, coding and capturing of the data, data analysis, operationalisation of the concepts, statistical techniques, quality of the data concerning validity and reliability considerations, and ethical issues.

3.3.1 Sampling plan

3.3.1.1 Unit of analysis, sampling technique and sample size

The unit of analysis for this study was South African consumers older than 19 years who purchase ready-to-wear clothing at in-store or online clothing retailers.

Due to time and monetary constraints, non-probability sampling was employed, including non-random quota, convenience, and snowball sampling. Quota sampling ensured a sample with similar demographic characteristics to the population. Thirty (30) final year B Consumer Science students in the Clothing Retail study program and five Consumer Science Masters students, all linked to the study at hand, were trained as fieldworkers. These fieldworkers intentionally recruited a diverse group of participants in terms of gender, age, income, education, and population group to reflect the diversity of the larger population of clothing consumers. Although non-random quota sampling is less exact than stratified sampling, it is convenient and inexpensive (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2006). The fieldworkers also recruited respondents using convenience sampling by targeting respondents the most easily available to them (Maree & Pietersen, 2019:219). In addition, field workers encouraged respondents to forward the survey link to suitable respondents willing to participate in the study using snowball sampling. Participants were requested to participate in the survey via WhatsApp or e-mail invitations. Each of the 30 fieldworkers (undergraduate students and five Masters' students) had to collect at least 30 questionnaires as part of their training. The researchers, therefore, anticipated a sample size of 1050. Two screening questions guaranteed the inclusion of relevant respondents: Are you

older than 19 years of age? (yes/no), and in which province of South Africa do you live? (9 options). (See Addendum A for the consent letter and questionnaire).

3.3.2 Measuring instrument and pre-testing

A self-administered online questionnaire was employed using Qualtrics software. Using online questionnaires is advantageous, as it is cost-effective, respondents can complete the questionnaire when they want to, and the response is quick (Maree & Pietersen, 2013:9). Unfortunately, researchers have limited control over the conditions in which the questionnaire is completed. Respondents must also have stable internet access and a device for completing the questionnaire (Neuman, 2007:187-188).

The multi-sectioned, structured questionnaire consisted of the following sections: Section A determined respondents, preference to purchase clothing in-store or online and the retailer where they mostly buy clothing for themselves. Section B used three scenarios to explore and describe respondents' perceptions of clothing product performance, and in-store and online service failures. Section C measured respondents' emotional state following the product/service failure based on Schoefer & Diamantopoulos (2008) & Tronvoll's (2011) scales. Section D measured participants' complaint intentions following the product/service failure. The complaint intention items were derived from Wirtz & Matilla (2004), Lee & Cude (2012), Clark (2013) & Chan *et al.* (2016). Section E measured participants' motives underlying their complaint behavioural intentions with items derived from Sundaram, Mitra & Webster (1998), Loo, Boo and Khoo-Lattimore (2013), & Sundaram and Yilmaz (2016). Section F measured selected product-specific variables, including price and durability related to specific consumer complaint behavioural intentions. The items were derived from Keng & Liu (1997) and Phau & Sari (2004). Section G measured participant personality using Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann's (2003) 10-item personality measure (TIPI). Section H determined participants' demographic information: gender (male, female, other), age (open question), monthly household income (less than R10 000, R10 001 to R19 999, R20 000 to R29 999, R30 000 to R49 999, R50 000 or more), level of education (less than grade 10, Grade 10 or 11, Grade 12, Degree/Diploma, Postgraduate), population group (Black, Coloured, Indian, White, other), and their home province (See Addendum A for the questionnaire).

The reader should note that the research team developed the above-mentioned measurement instrument for a larger research project in the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences. Only

the product failure scenario was relevant to this part of the research project and sections B, D, F, and H were analysed.

The trained fieldworkers pre-tested the online questionnaire before collecting the survey data. Pre-testing is essential to try out the data collection method, refine questionnaire items by identifying ambiguous wording (Wiid & Diggines, 2015:174; Creswell, 2014:161), determine whether respondents can complete the questionnaire, and ascertain the time needed to complete the questionnaire. Experts from the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences, a statistician, and reviewers of the University of Pretoria's Research Ethics Committee (Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences) scrutinised the questionnaire.

3.3.3 Data collection procedure

Data were collected with a self-administered online questionnaire using Qualtrics software between July and September 2019. Each of the 30 final-year students in the B Consumer Science Clothing Retail study program and five Master's students in Clothing Retail Management had to invite 30 participants via e-mail or WhatsApp. The students were trained as fieldworkers before the commencement of the data collection. The questionnaire was accompanied by a consent letter to inform participants of the purpose of the research and to guarantee confidentiality and that participation is voluntary. Informed consent was obtained by requesting willing participants to indicate their agreement to participate in the study. Two screening questions ensured that respondents complied with the preconditions for participation in the study, i.e., they should be older than 19 years and reside in South Africa. The respondents accessed the questionnaire by clicking on the e-mail/WhatsApp invitation link.

3.3.4 Coding and capturing the data

Using Qualtrics survey software, the responses are automatically captured into an electronic database, eliminating copying data from completed paper-based questionnaires into an electronic database. While building the questionnaire, Qualtrics automatically assigns a numeric code to each answer. Automatic coding means that the researcher or field worker need not code the responses by hand, as with paper-based questionnaires.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

A statistician at the Department of Statistics, University of Pretoria, assisted with analysing the data using descriptive and inferential statistics. The term "descriptive statistics" refers to various statistical techniques used to meaningfully arrange and summarise data (Pietersen & Maree, 2019). Descriptive statistics are firstly categorised into numerical or graphic representations and, secondly, quantitative and qualitative data. By doing so, the properties of the data are better understood (Field, 2013). Researchers attempt to conclude using inferential statistics that go beyond the immediate facts alone. For example, inferential statistics are used to assess the likelihood that an observed difference between groups in a study is reliable or may have occurred by chance. Researchers therefore, use descriptive statistics to simply describe what is happening in the data, whereas inferential statistics conclude more general circumstances from the data (Trochim, 2022). This study used descriptive statistics, including frequency analysis, means, graphical representations, inferential statistics, exploratory factor analysis, chi-square tests and univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

3.5 OPERATIONALISATION

Table 3.1 shows the operationalisation of the constructs.

TABLE 3.1 OPERATIONALISATION IN TERMS OF OBJECTIVES, CONCEPTS, DIMENSIONS, INDICATORS AND STATISTICAL METHODS

Concepts	Dimensions	Indicators	Measurement of scale items	Data Analysis
1 To explore and describe consumers' perception of clothing product performance failures.				
Clothing product performance failures	Functional performance failures	Fabric rips, tears, or forms holes (V4.2). Fasteners (e.g., zippers, buttons etc.) break or become undone (V4.3). Decorative trimmings (e.g., embroidery, sequins, ribbons) become undone (V4.4). Seams and/or stitches unravel or do not stay intact (V4.5) Hems unravel (V4.6). Clothing item does not keep its shape due to shrinking, stretching or twisting (V4.10). V4.11 Other:	Items adapted from Kincaide, Giddings, & Chen-Yu, 1998. Some items were self-developed.	Descriptive statistics Frequency tables
	Aesthetic performance failures	Small balls of fluff form on the fabric's surface (V4.1). The colour of the item fades after being washed (V4.7). Bright colours bleed into lighter colours of the item after being washed (e.g., the white stripes of your blue and white striped shirt turn light blue) (v4.8). Printed designs on the fabric rub off/fade (V4.9). V4.11 Other:		
2 To explore and describe consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure				
Intention to complain	No action	Do nothing about the problem/failure (V10.1)	Items adapted from Phau & Sari, 2004. Lee & Cude (2012), Wirtz & Matilla (2004, Clark (2013) & Chan <i>et al.</i> (2016).	Frequency tables and EFA
	Private action	Tell your family and friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them. (V10.2) Text your family and friends about the problem/failure (e.g., using WhatsApp) (V10.3) Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see (V10.4) Switch to another brand name (V10.5) Stop buying at the retailer (V10.6)		
	Public action	Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face) (V10.7) Complain to the retailer by phone (V10.8) Complain to the retailer by e-mail (V10.9) Complain on the retailer's website (V10.10) Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see (V10.11) Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g., the National Consumer Commission) (V10.12) Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website (e.g., hellopeter.com) (V10.13)		

3 To describe the product-specific variables associated with consumers' intention to complain, including durability, price, level of product dissatisfaction and the severity of the product failure				
Product-specific variables	Price	The higher the price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem (V24.1). The higher the price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer (V24.2).	Items adapted from Keng & Liu, 1997, Phau & Sari, 2004.	Calculation of frequencies and frequency analysis Chi Square tests
	Durability	The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem (V24.3). The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer (V24.4)		
	Dissatisfaction	Rate your level of dissatisfaction with this product failure (failure x) (V6)		
	Product failure severity	How severe (serious) would you consider the product failure) (V7)		
4 To describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumers' intention to complain.				
Product-specific variables	Same as Objective 3	Same as Objective 3	Same as objective 3	Univariate ANOVA
Demographics	Gender Age Education Income Population	(See Section H of the questionnaire)		
Complaint behavioural intentions	Same as Objective 2	Same as Objective 2	Same as Objective 2	

3.5.1 Explanation of statistical methods

3.5.1.1 Exploratory factor analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) reduces measurable and observable variables into a smaller number of underlying variables with a common variance (Bartholomew, Knott, & Moustaki, 2011). EFA can be considered a data reduction technique where an extensive set of variables may be 'reduced' into smaller groups or factors (Pallant, 2011). Factor analysis reveals whether the identified factors are measured by the items intended to measure them. The internal reliability of each factor is determined using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha value >0.7 is generally considered acceptable (Pietersen & Maree, 2020:264-266).

3.5.1.2 Chi-square tests

Chi-square tests determine the relationship or association between two nominal variables. Two-way cross tables (contingency tables) of the two variables form the foundation for calculating the chi-square test statistic. A p -value < 0.05 indicates a significant relationship or association between the two variables. (Pietersen & Maree, 2020:297-299).

3.5.1.3 Univariate ANOVA

According to Field (2013) and Pallant (2011), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is typically employed to analyse factorial experimental designs when more than two related or dependent groups need to be compared on a single quantitative measure or score. ANOVA "compares three or more population means of a metric variable". A p -value <0.05 indicates that statistically significant differences exist among the means. A post hoc test is done to indicate which of the groups differ significantly (Mazzocchi, 2008:154). A univariate ANOVA compares the individual effect of different independent variables on the dependent variable. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances verifies that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups (p -value >0.05) (Pallant, 2011:207).

3.6 QUALITY OF THE DATA

3.6.1 Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which a measure accurately reflects the concept it is supposed to measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2020). A researcher can establish content and face validity before data collection, while criterion and construct validity can be determined following it. Content validity concerns how well a measure involves the range of meanings included in a concept (Kumar,

2020:214; Zikmund & Babin, 2013:258; Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011a:173; Babbie & Mouton, 2002:123; Leedy & Ormond, 2015:115). Content validity was ensured by matching the specific questionnaire items with the objectives of this study. A thorough review of the literature was done on consumers' perceptions of clothing quality, perceptions of clothing product failure, the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm, consumers' complaint behaviour following product dissatisfaction, and the factors influencing consumer complaint behaviour to ensure theoretical validity. The researcher developed conceptual definitions based on the literature review.

Face validity does not refer to what an instrument measures, but what it appears to measure (Delpont, 2019:262). To establish face validity, a researcher must subjectively assess the presentation and relevance of the measuring instrument about whether the instrument's items are relevant, reasonable, unambiguous and clear (Oluwatayo, 2012). The questionnaire wording was straightforward, language edited and approved by a statistician, contributing to face validity. Gravetter & Forzano (2003: 87) suggest that face validity is the least scientific of all the validities.

To ensure construct validity, the constructs for this study were precisely clarified, as already discussed in the paragraph on theoretical validity.

The supervisors and a statistician scrutinised the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that the respondents understood the questions. The questionnaire consisted of different sections with items that measured the specific objectives. Most of the items were adapted from existing scales.

3.6.2 Reliability

"Reliability is primarily concerned not with what is being measured, but with how well it is being measured every time it is used" (Roestenburg, *et al.*, 2021:206). Reliability refers to whether scores for items on an instrument are internally consistent and stable over time, and whether there was consistency in test administration and scoring (Creswell, 2018:233). Reliability therefore involves a measuring instrument's ability to produce consistent numerical results each time it is applied (Roestenburg, *et al.*, 2021:206). Neuman (2007:116-117) suggests a clear conceptualisation of all constructs, increasing the level of measurement, using multiple indicators of a variable, using pre-tests, pilot studies, and replication to improve the reliability of measures. A consent letter with clear instructions accompanied the questionnaire. Fieldworkers were trained.

Testing for reliability is crucial, since it refers to the consistency between a measuring instrument's components (Huck, 2007). A scale has high consistency dependability when its components "hang together" and measure the same construct (Huck, 2007, Robinson, 2009). Cronbach's alpha values

determine the internal reliability of scale items, with Cronbach's Alpha > 0,7 indicating acceptable reliability of the measurement scale (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017:360; Babin & Zikmund, 2016:280).

3.7 ETHICS

The word ethics is derived from the Greek term *ethos*, which signifies character, is derived from the word ethics. Morality, integrity, fairness and honesty are all aspects of ethics. Integrity is the ability to act by one's awareness of what is right and wrong. Social researchers must prioritise ethics (Leavy & Scotti, 2017:43). De Vos *et al.* (2005:57) define ethics as widely accepted moral principles that offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most proper conduct towards respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants, and students. An ethical researcher would therefore ensure that research is conducted with integrity (Matthews & Ross, 2010:72). The seriousness of ethical concerns is evident in the various codes of ethics created and published by professional associations whose members engage in research (Babbie 2007: 27,71).

Principles to guarantee research ethics should be in place, including "providing truly informed consent", "determining and articulating risks and benefits", "selecting research participants fairly", protecting participants from unwanted physical or mental distress, and treating respondents' information with confidentiality (Elias & Theron, 2012:150). Honest researchers would not hesitate to recognise their indebtedness to others (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:102).

The survey was conducted ethically by adhering to the following ethical principles as stipulated by Babbie (2012:34), Matthews & Ross (2014:73-75), Leedy & Ormrod (2015:121-122), and Wiid & Digging, 2015:31):

- The consent letter contained a brief description of the background of the study, the objectives of the study, the time needed to complete the questionnaire, an indication that participation is voluntary, a guarantee of respondent anonymity and confidentiality, the particulars of the principal investigator to indicate "authority" to conduct the research (The consent letter was printed on a UP letterhead to enhance credibility).
- Respondents provided informed consent to participate in the study by clicking on the link provided in the WhatsApp or e-mail invitation and agreeing to the terms and conditions for participation in the study.
- Respondents participated willingly and could withdraw from the study without explaining why.
- The online questionnaire did not contain any questions that could cause harm or discomfort to the respondent.
- The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria approved the research project before the commencement of the data collection (Approval number: NAS169/2019) (See Addendum B).

- The research findings were reported with honesty and as much objectivity as possible.

3.8 DATA PRESENTATION

The raw data is available in hard copy and electronic format at the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences, University of Pretoria.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The researcher carefully considered this quantitative study's research strategy and methodology to ensure the best research techniques to obtain valid and reliable data. A survey research design, using a self-administered online questionnaire, was employed. South African consumers at least 19 years old and who purchase ready-to-wear clothing at clothing retailers were the unit of analysis. The data collection process was carried out with caution to collect relevant data while respecting the privacy of all respondents. Adhering to ethical principles was an essential component of the entire investigation.

CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the study's results, including the sample's demographic characteristics. Results are presented in line with the study's objectives. The findings are interpreted and discussed in terms of existing literature. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to describe and summarise the quantitative data gathered through the self-administered structured online questionnaire. The descriptive statistics are presented in tables and figures with numerical summaries of the frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics were used, including EFA, the Chi-square test and Univariate ANOVA.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Demographics refer to the identifiable and measurable statistics of a population. Demographic information is essential to determine whether the respondents of a study are representative of the population (Stam, 2010). Demographic characteristics, including age, gender, income, occupation, and education, are often used for market segmentation. (Shiffman, *et al.*, 2008).

The target population for this study was South African consumers, both male and female, of all population groups residing in any of the nine provinces of South Africa who were 19 years or older at the time of data collection. Age and geographic location were therefore prerequisites for inclusion in the study. A total of 816 useful online questionnaires were collected through convenience, quota, and snowball sampling methods, as explained in Chapter 3. Section H of the questionnaire measured the respondents' demographic characteristics. Table 4.1 summarises the demographic profile of the sample. In addition, Figures 4.1 - 4.3 portray the distribution of specific demographic characteristics.

TABLE 4.1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (N = 816)

Demographic characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	197	24.1
Female	618	75.8
Other	1	0.1
Total	816	100
Population Group		
White	590	72.4
Black	119	14.6
Indian	55	6.7
Coloured	33	4.0
Other	19	2.3
Total	816	100
Age		
Emerging Millennials	179	21.9
Young Millennials	160	19.6
Older Millennials	127	15.6
Middle-aged consumers	257	31.5
Mature consumers	93	11.4
Total	816	100
Education		
Lower than Grade 10	4	0.5
Grade 10 or Grade 11	10	1.2
Grade 12	202	24.8
Degree/Diploma	403	49.4
Postgraduate	197	24.1
Total	816	100
Monthly household income		
Less than R10 000	124	15.2
R10 001 – R19 999	133	16.3
R20 000 – R29 999	118	14.5
R30 000 – R49 999	173	21.2
R50 000 or more	268	32.8
Total	813	100
Provinces respondents reside in		
Eastern Cape	13	1.6
Free State	7	.9
Gauteng	578	70.8
Kwazulu-Natal	61	7.5
Limpopo	48	5.9
Mpumalanga	26	3.2
Northern Cape	2	0.2
North West	33	4.0
Western Cape	48	5.9
Total	816	100

4.2.1 Gender distribution

Respondents were selected by employing non-probability sampling techniques through voluntary participation. Although the field workers were encouraged to ensure an equal distribution of both genders, most respondents were female (75.8%). (See Table 4.1). This finding could indicate that female consumers are more willing to complete questionnaires than men, as stated in prior research (Sharma & Uniyal, 2017; Curtin, Presser & Singer, 2000). According to the most recently available census data (Stats SA 2016), females represent 51% of the South African population and males 49%, indicating that the data collected for this research does not represent the population at large. Still, due to the large sample size, the data is acceptable to produce useful findings. Male customers are said to be participating in shopping to a greater extent than they did in the past (Chen-Yu & Seock, 2002:51; Jackson, Stoel & Brantley. 2011; Theodoridis & Chatzipanagiotou, 2009:713).

4.2.2 Age distribution

The classification of consumers into cohorts is mainly based on life experiences and age bands (Shiffman *et al.*, 2008). Researchers have appropriately named these collectives, for example, Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers, to name a few. Weiss (2003) reported that younger consumers are “more likely to buy products on the spur of the moment and change brands”, while older consumers (27 to 39 years) are “looking for less mass-marketed products, while also being affordable.”

Respondents had to be 19 years or older to participate in the study. Respondents indicated their exact age in an open-ended question in the questionnaire. The age distribution varied between 19 and 80 years. The fieldworkers were instructed to collect data from diverse age groups across different geographic areas in South Africa. Table 4.1 shows that the Millennial cohort consisting of emerging (19-25 years), young (26-32 years), and older Millennials (33-39 years) constituted the most prominent age cohort (57%), followed by middle-aged consumers (31.5%) and mature consumers (11.4%). The higher proportion of younger respondents, could be attributed to the fact that the fieldworkers had more access to younger respondents or that these respondents were more willing to participate in the study.

4.2.3 Level of education

Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 show the education level distribution.

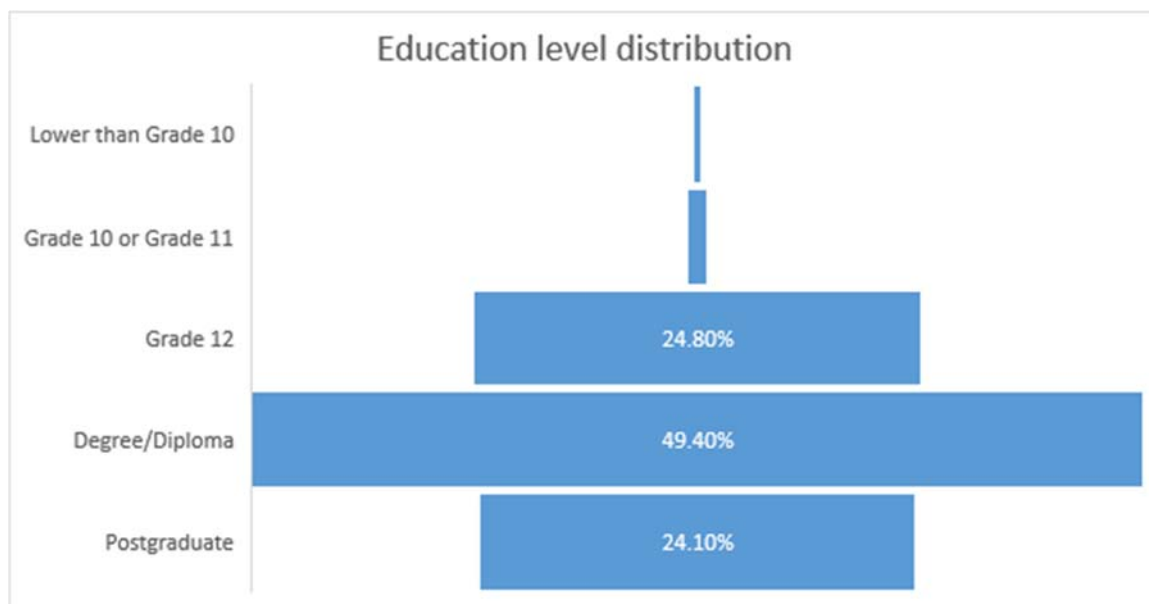


FIGURE 4.1: EDUCATION LEVEL DISTRIBUTION

Most respondents possessed some form of tertiary education: 49.4% had a diploma/degree, constituting half of the sample, and 24.1% had a postgraduate degree. A total of 24.8% had grade 12. Negligible few respondents (1.7%) did not complete their secondary schooling. The level of education distribution could be due to the digital nature of the questionnaire, which required respondents to have a device with an Internet connection.

4.2.4 Total monthly household income

The questionnaire distinguished five income categories to aim for a sizeable representation in each category. Monthly household income influences consumers' spending power (Diamond, Diamond, & Litt, 2015:62). Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2 show the sample's total monthly household income distribution.

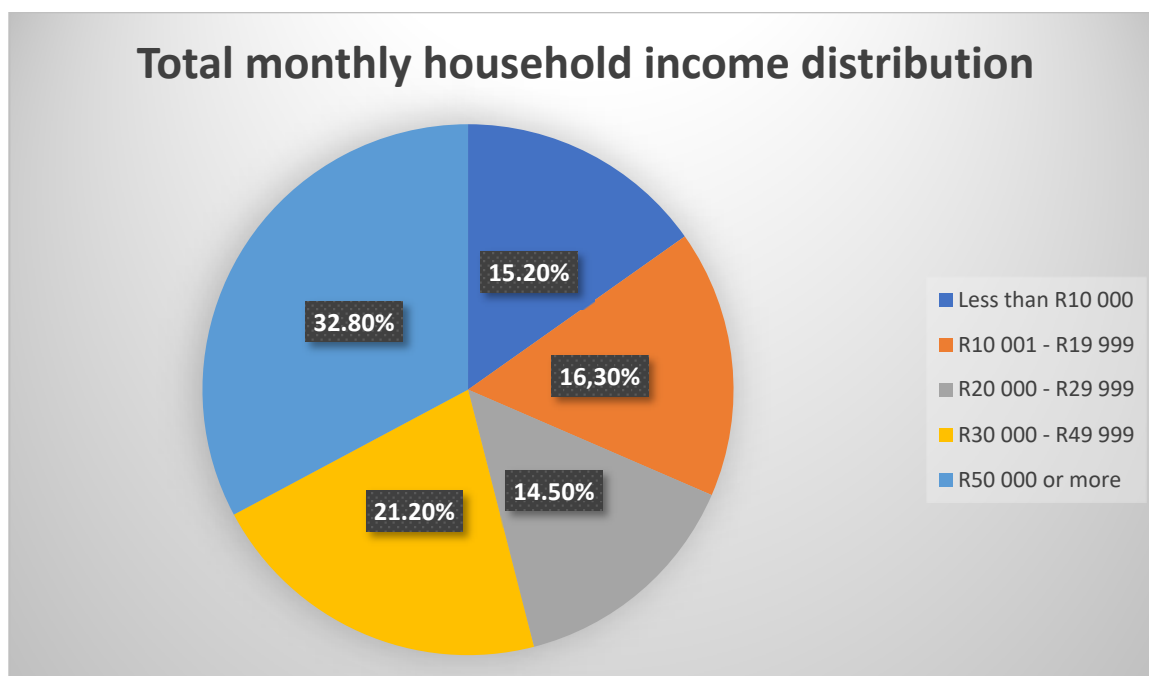


FIGURE 4.2: MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION

A total of 15.2% of respondents' total monthly household income was less than R10 000 (lower income group), 16.3% earned between R10 001 and R19 999 (lower-middle income group), 14.5% earned between R20 000 and R29 999 (upper-middle income group), 21.2% earned between R30 000 and R49 999 (upper-income group), and 32.82% earned R50 000 and more (elite income group). More than half of the respondents (54%) earned more than R30 000. These respondents are likelier to own a web-enabled device with an Internet connection (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017:281; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:145).

4.2.5 Population categories

The sample's population distribution is shown in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.3.

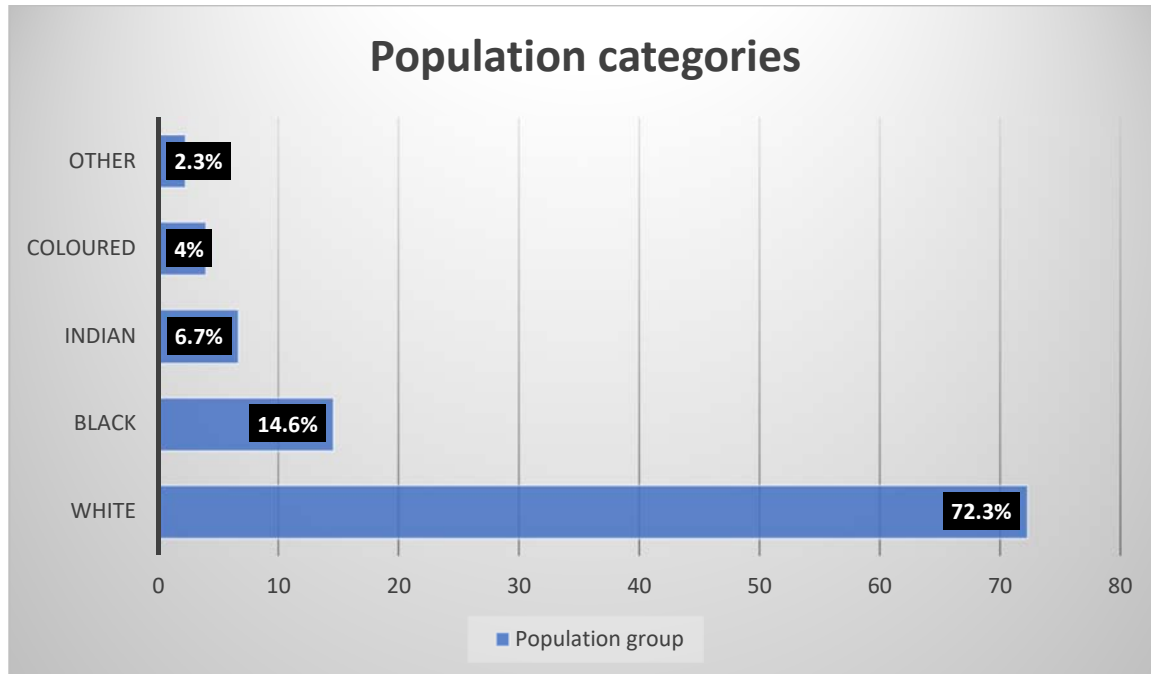


FIGURE 4.3: POPULATION CATEGORIES

Five population categories were distinguished, namely: White (72.3%), Black (14.6%), Indian (6.7%), Coloured (4.0%) and Other (2.3%). According to Statistics South Africa (2016), the White population group constituted 4.5 million (0.08%) and the Black population group 44.8 million (80.66%) of the total population. The population group data for the study at hand is, therefore, not representative of the entire population of South Africa despite quota sampling efforts. Research has shown that consumers from different population groups demonstrate different purchasing behaviours and attitudes (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2011).

4.2.6 Province

Table 4.1 shows that the majority of the respondents (70.8%) resided in Gauteng, the economic hub of South Africa. Finance, government, manufacturing, construction and four other industries are heavily represented in the province (Stats SA, 2019). Gauteng's growth rate was close to the national rate as the province is the biggest contributor to the national GDP and has a significant representation of nearly all economic activity.

4.3 RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

The results below are discussed in the order of the study objectives.

4.3.1 Results of objective 1: To explore and describe consumers' perception of clothing product performance failures

Respondents had to select three product failures from a list of possible product failures that would cause them the most dissatisfaction. They then had to choose one of the three product failures that would cause them to be the most dissatisfied. Table 4.2 shows the product failure that would cause respondents the most dissatisfaction.

TABLE 4.2: PRODUCT FAILURE THAT WOULD CAUSE THE MOST DISSATISFACTION

Product failures	n	%
Small balls of fluff form on the fabric's surface	70	8.6
Fabric rips, tears or forms holes	259	31.7
Fasteners (e.g., zippers, buttons etc.) break or become undone	79	9.7
Decorative trimmings (e.g., embroidery, sequins, ribbons) become undone	17	2.1
Seams and/or stitches unravel or do not stay intact	62	7.6
Hems unravel	9	1.1
The colour of the item fades after being washed	72	8.8
Bright colours bleed into lighter colours of the item after being washed	42	5.1
Printed designs on the fabric rub off	16	2.0
Clothing item does not keep their shape due to shrinking, stretching, or twisting	190	23.3
Total	816	100

Table 4.2 shows that almost a third of the respondents (31.7%) would be the most dissatisfied when the fabric rips, tears or forms holes, while nearly a quarter (23.3%) would be the most dissatisfied when the clothing item does not keep its shape due to shrinking, stretching or twisting. Almost 10% of the respondents (9.7%) would be the most dissatisfied when fasteners (e.g., zippers, buttons, etc.) break or become undone. These structural failures would possibly render the garment unwearable. Only one percent (1.1%) of the respondents believed that hems would unravel. Consumers could repair frayed hems by re-stitching on a sewing machine or repairing it by hand compared to other failures. The remainder of the failures relates to the aesthetic appearance of the garment: pilling (8.6%), colour fading (8.8%), colour bleeding (5.1%), undoing of decorative trimmings (2.1%), and designs rubbing off (2%). The latter failures do not influence the garment's wearability/usability.

Kincade, *et al.*, (1998) categorised clothing product failures (quality failures) into "those that rendered the garment unwearable" (e.g. holes, shrinkage) and those that may alter the appearance but left the garment wearable (e.g., fading)". However, in the current study, respondents would be more dissatisfied with failures causing the garment to be unwearable than aesthetic failures. Chan *et al.*, (2016) indicated the main reasons for complaints about Hong Kong fashion retail chain stores were

service and product quality. Laitlala *et al.*, (2015) suggested that flaws in the technical quality of the garment, such as holes or tears, are one of the significant reasons for the disposal of clothing. Other common reasons for disposal included worn appearance, stains, fading of colour, loss of elasticity, change of shape and pilling. To a degree, these reasons for clothing disposal match the product failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction with much-desired and expensive clothing items purchased at clothing retailers. Consumers will often tolerate colour fading to compromise for the low price of fast fashion products (Cassidy, 2017; Gabrielli, Baghi & Codeluppi, 2013; Joy, Sherry, Venkatesh, Wang & Chan, 2012; Laitala, *et al.*, 2015, Niinimaki, *et al.*, 2020). Product failures, therefore, influence clothing usability and durability.

4.3.2 Results of objective 2: To explore and describe consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure

Respondents had to indicate whether they would take some form of complaint action or not. A total of 172 respondents indicated that they would not take action, while 644 indicated they would. Researchers suggest that no action is a way of expressing dissatisfaction, despite its passivity (Loo, *et al.*, 2013; Day & Landon, 1977; Landon, 1977). Dissatisfied customers who do not complain are of particular concern to retailers. Non-complainers deprive retailers of valuable feedback that they could use to improve products, therefore missing the opportunity to remedy the dissatisfaction (Phau & Sari, 2004). Table 4.3 shows the different types of complaint intentions measured with multiple response questions. The grouping of items is based on existing literature (See Chapter 2).

TABLE 4.3: TYPES OF COMPLAINT INTENTIONS (N = 644)

Private or public complaint intentions	Sub-dimensions	Items	Likelihood of complaining Number of responses (%)			
			Not at all likely	Unlikely	Likely	Extremely likely
Private action	Boycott Brand/Retailer	Switch to another brand	23 (2.8)	144 (17.6)	345 (42.3)	132 (16.2)
		Stop buying at the retailer	51 (7.9)	232 (36.0)	281 (43.6)	80 (12.4)
	Negative word-of-mouth	Direct word-of-mouth				
		Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them	47 (5.8)	75 (9.2)	349 (42.8)	173 (21.2)
		Electronic word-of-mouth				
		Text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)	136 (21.1)	179 (27.8)	228 (35.4)	101 (15.7)
		Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see	275 (42.7)	261 (40.5)	84 (13.0)	24 (3.7)
Public action	Redress seeking	Interactive				
		Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	77 (12.0)	120 (18.6)	252 (39.1)	195 (30.3)
		Semi-interactive				
		Complain on the retailer's website	142 (22.0)	237 (36.8)	208 (32.3)	57 (8.9)
		Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see	297 (46.1)	260 (40.4)	70 (10.9)	17 (2.6)
		Remote				
		Complain to the retailer by e-mail	118 (18.3)	199 (30.9)	231 (35.9)	96 (14.9)
	Complain to the retailer by phone	131 (20.3)	256 (39.8)	199 (30.9)	58 (9.0)	
	Complain to press/consumer complaint website	290 (45.0)	270 (41.9)	68 (10.6)	16 (2.5)	
	Complain to Government/consumer protection agencies	242 (37.6)	313 (48.6)	79 (12.3)	10 (1.6)	

Table 4.3 shows regarding private action, 56% of the respondents were likely to extremely likely to stop buying at the retailer, and 58.5% to switch between brands. Concerning negative word-of-mouth, almost two-thirds of the respondents (64%) were likely to extremely likely to tell their family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them, and more than half (51.1%) would contact their significant others using WhatsApp. In contrast, 83% indicated that they were unlikely to not at all likely to post their bad experiences on social media, like Facebook or Instagram/Twitter, for their friends to see. These findings imply that respondents would communicate their dissatisfaction to family and friends via traditional word-of-mouth rather than electronic word-of-mouth (sharing experiences via WhatsApp and social media). Consumers typically seek advice about products and services from trusted family and friends (Kerrane, Hogg & Bettany 2012). The findings of this study could imply that trust manifests in respondents' person-to-person interaction

instead of electronic communication. Previous research has shown that personal experience, word-of-mouth, and retailers' marketing endeavours shape consumers' product performance expectations (Woodruff, Cadotte & Jenkins, 1983; Solomon, 1996:325; Laufer, 2002). Negative word-of-mouth affects consumers' product expectations negatively and has detrimental consequences for retailers, including revenue reduction (Luo, 2007), compromised reputations (Heung & Lam, 2003) and even reduced employee productivity (Brown, 2015).

Regarding public action, most of the respondents (69.4%) were likely to extremely likely to complain to the retailer in person, and half by e-mail. In comparison, many were unlikely to not at all likely to phone the retailer (59.1%) and post negative comments on the retailer's website (58.8%). The majority were unlikely to not at all likely to complain on the retailer's social media pages (86.5%). Respondents would rather complain to the retailer by going to the retailer in person or by writing an e-mail than contacting the retailer by phone or using semi-interactive channels, such as the retailer's website and social media pages. It could be that consumers believe they would be better able to resolve the problem or obtain redress by personally complaining to complaint handling staff or interacting via e-mail. Consumers might think they would be more successful in getting e-mails answered, as they can escalate the matter. Consumers might consider it a waste of time to phone retailers due to unsatisfactory customer service experiences in the past (e.g. staff do not answer the phone). In addition, they might lack experience posting complaints online or believe they will not achieve anything (i.e. perceive the probability of success to be low).

Most of the respondents were unlikely to not at all likely to contact third parties – the press and consumer complaint websites (86.9%) or consumer protection organisations (86.2%). It could be that respondents perceive the probability of successful complaint handling to be low, or they do not know they may contact the relevant industry ombud (alternative dispute resolution agent) or the National Consumer Commission.

4.3.2.1 Exploratory factor analysis to reveal the underlying consumer complaint intention structure

The complaint intention items were grouped into meaningful categories using EFA. Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) (extraction method) was performed using Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (p -value = 0.000), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy at 0.755 indicate that the data was appropriate for factor analysis (See Table 4.4).

TABLE 4.4: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0,755
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2012.772
	df	66
	Sig.	0,000

Kaiser's criterion were used to decide the number of factors to extract. Both of these analyses were done as Kaiser's criterion may result in overestimating the number of factors extracted (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Field & Miles, 2010:553). Kaiser's criterion, which requires retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than one, suggested that four factors could be extracted. As a general rule, factor loadings between 0.3 to 0.4 were considered to meet the minimal interpretation level for the factor structure. (Hair, Anderson, Babin & Black, 2010:117).

The factor structure is presented in Table 4.5.

TABLE 4.5: STRUCTURE MATRIX FOR COMPLAINT INTENTIONS

Complaint intention items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
VP10.3 Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see	0.781	0.070	0.089	0.133
VP10.10 Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see	0.738	0.144	0.063	0.090
VP 10.12 Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website	0.581	0.272	0.110	0.046
VP10.7 Complain to the retailer by phone	0.044	0.715	0.017	0.096
VP10.8 Complain to the retailer by e-mail	0.214	0.657	0.005	0.087
VP10.9 Complain on the retailer's website	0.500	0.534	0.086	0.082
VP10.6 Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	0.063	0.432	-0.076	-0.081
VP10.11 Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g., the National Consumer Commission)	0.311	0.403	0.104	0.045
VP10.5 Stop buying at the retailer	0.143	-0.064	0.787	0.150
VP10.4 Switch to another brand name	0.77	0.042	0.704	0.083
VP10.2 Text family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g., using WhatsApp)	0.153	0.019	0.042	0.840
VP10.1 Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them	0.057	0.048	0.156	0.538
Mean	1.73	2.34	2.76	2.73
Standard deviation	0.64297	0.61301	0.69009	0.78082
Eigenvalues	3.486	1.818	1.258	1.189
% Variance explained	16.194	14.049	9.910	9.032
Cronbach's Alpha	0.769	0.719	0.729	0.636

Hair, *et al.* (2010:109) and Malholtra, Nunan and Briks (2017:718) recommend the proportion of the total variance explained by the retained factors should be at least 60%, and sometimes even less, depending on the problem and the preciseness of the information. According to Streiner (1994), as a general rule the proportion of the total variance explained by the retained factors should be at least 50%. The total percentage of variance explained in the following extraction was 49.18%. The first factor accounted for 24.98% of the variance, the second for 15.15%, the third for 10.49% and the fourth for 9.91%. The correlation of the items within each factor was analysed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient - a measure of the internal consistency of items measuring the same construct

(Pietersen and Maree, 2020a:261). Ideally, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 (DeVellis, 2003). Chronbach's alpha is regarded as a measure of an instrument's internal reliability or internal consistency (Pietersen & Maree, 2020a:261).

The factors were qualitatively labelled in terms of their content:

Factor 1: Electronic complaints (3 items)

Factor 2: Complaining to the retailer and consumer protection organisation (5 items)

Factor 3: Switching intention (2 items)

Factor 4: Negative word-of-mouth (2 items)

Factor 1: Electronic complaints:

Factor one was associated mainly with the negative electronic word-of-mouth (scale items adapted from Lee and Cude (2012) and Clark (2013), and retained the following items:

- VP10(3) Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see
- VP10(10) Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see
- VP 10.12 Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website

This factor captured complaint intention via electronic communication. The three items reflected consumers' use of electronic means of communication: posting experiences on personal Facebook/Instagram profiles for friends to see, posting comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see, and writing/posting a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine, etc.) or a consumer complaint website. The Cronbach's Alpha (0.76) shows that the items are internally consistent, therefore measuring the same construct.

Factor 2: Complaining to retailers and consumer protection organisations:

Factor two is associated mainly with redress-seeking from retailers and consumer protection organisations (scale items adapted from Lee and Cude (2012) and Clark (2013), and retained the following items:

- VP10.7 Complain to the retailer by phone
- VP10.8 Complain to the retailer by e-mail
- VP10.9 Complain on the retailer's website
- VP10.6 Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)
- VP10.11 Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g., the National Consumer Commission)

The second factor corresponded to the different ways of complaining directed to retailers (2nd parties) and consumer protection organisations (3rd parties). Four of the five items related to complaint intentions directed to the retailer: complain to the retailer by phone, by e-mail, on the retailer's website, and in person. Consumers complain to retailers by phone or by e-mail remotely. In contrast, complaints to retailer websites constitute semi-interactive complaints. Seeking redress directly from retailers implies face-to-face contact. The item "complain to a consumer protection organisation" loaded with the complaint items directed to retailers. Respondents could consider retailers and consumer protection organisations on the same level based on redress provision. The Cronbach Alpha (0.71) is acceptable.

Factor 3: Switching intention:

Factor three is associated mainly with brand/retailer boycotting or switching and retaining two items:

- VO10(4) Switch to another brand name
- VO10(5) Stop buying at the retailer

The third factor corresponded most strongly with switching intention. Consumers may privately switch between brands or retailers without retailers knowing of product failures. Cronbach's Alpha (0.72) shows that the items are internally consistent.

Factor 4: Negative word-of-mouth:

Factor four was associated with negative word-of-mouth and retained two items:

- VP10.1 Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them
- VP10.2 Text family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g., using WhatsApp)

Negative word-of-mouth intention manifested in the likelihood of telling friends and family about the problem/failure in person and texting friends and family about the problem/failure using WhatsApp. Retailers remain unaware of service shortcomings as these intentions relate to private action. Although Cronbach's alpha (0.63) for factor four can be considered questionable, the grouping of the items is meaningful based on the theoretical interpretation of the conceptual basis for the variables.

For interpretation of the individual factors means (M), the following applied:

$M \leq 1.5$, Highly unlikely (weak intention)

$M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$, unlikely (relatively weak intention)

$M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$, likely (relatively strong intention)

M > 3.6, highly likely (strong/pertinent intention).

Based on the factor means, electronic word-of-mouth (mean = 1.73) and complaining to retailers and consumer protection organisations (mean = 2.34) are relatively weak complaint intentions, while switching intention (mean = 2.78) and negative word-of-mouth (mean = 2.73) are relatively strong complaint intentions. Switching intention is the most relatively-pertinent complaint intention, followed by negative word-of-mouth intention, both of which are private actions. While complaining to the retailer is a relatively weak public complaint intention, electronic word-of-mouth is the least pertinent complaint intention.

4.3.3 Results of objective 3: To describe the product-specific variables associated with consumers' intention to complain, including durability, price, level of product dissatisfaction and the severity of the product failure

4.3.3.1 Level of dissatisfaction with the product failure and severity of the failure

Respondents had to rate their dissatisfaction with the product failure on a 4-point Likert-type scale and product failure severity on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The results are shown in Table 4.6.

TABLE 4.6: LEVEL OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRODUCT FAILURE AND SEVERITY OF THE FAILURE

Level of dissatisfaction with the product failure	n	%
Slightly dissatisfied	13	1.6
Moderately dissatisfied	70	8.6
Very dissatisfied	300	36.8
Extremely dissatisfied	433	53.0
Total	816	100
Severity of the failure	n	%
Not at all severe	8	1.0
Slightly severe	44	5.4
Moderately severe	175	21.4
Very severe	353	43.3
Extremely severe	236	28.9
Total	816	100.0

n = 816 (total sample of respondents)

Table 4.6 shows that more than a third of the respondents (36.8.8%) would be very to extremely dissatisfied with the product's failure, and more than half (53%) would be extremely dissatisfied. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a clothing product presupposes more than merely the consumer's

reaction to the behavioural characteristics of the product (De Klerk & Tselepis, 2007). Dissatisfaction results when the clothing item's performance is lower than the consumers' initial product performance expectations (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). A total of 43.3% of the respondents indicated that the product failure would be very severe, nearly a third (28.9%) extremely severe, and 21.4% moderately severe. The severity of product failure can be linked to the type of product failure, product durability and cost (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2006). In this study, respondents had to react to a hypothetical scenario where a much-desired expensive clothing item failed after being worn and washed for the first time.

4.3.3.2 Agreement/disagreement with statements linking the price and durability of the clothing items to specific complaint intentions

Respondents also had to indicate how strongly they agree/disagree with statements linking the price and durability of the clothing items to specific complaint intentions, i.e., telling friends and family about the problem and complaining to the retailer. The results are shown in Table 4.7.

TABLE 4.7: AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS LINKING PRICE AND DURABILITY TO SPECIFIC COMPLAINT INTENTIONS

Level of agreement/ disagreement	Price and complaint intentions				Durability and complaint intentions			
	The higher price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem.		The higher the price of the item, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer.		The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem.		The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer.	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Strongly disagree	27	3.3	22	2.7	24	2.9	44	5.4
Disagree	73	8.9	80	9.8	72	8.8	98	12.0
Neither agree nor disagree	82	10.0	73	8.9	128	15.7	135	16.5
Agree	380	46.6	367	45.0	406	49.8	345	42.3
Strongly agree	254	31.1	274	33.6	186	22.8	194	23.8
Total	816	100.0	816	100.0	816	100.0	816	100.0

n = 816 (total sample of respondents)

Table 4.7 shows that most respondents agreed to strongly agreed that they would tell their significant others (77.7%) and complain to the retailer (78.6%) the higher price of the clothing item. Also, most respondents agreed to strongly agreed that they would tell their friends and family (72.6%), while two-thirds would complain to the retailer (66.5%) if the durability of the item fails. Respondents are

more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth and complain to retailers due to higher product prices than durability. According to research, when there is more perceived injustice, people are more likely to complain to the service provider in public, or privately to friends and family (Balaji & Sarkar, 2013; Casado-Diaz & Nicolau-Gonzalbez, 2009). Studies have shown that dissatisfied customers share their experiences with twice as many people as satisfied customers do (Dubrovski, 2001; Rad, 2011). Consumers often use price as a heuristic to deduce product quality (Erasmus, Donoghue & Dobbstein, 2022). High-quality products are assumed to be more expensive to produce and, as such, are likely to have a higher price (Gorostidi-Martinez, Xu & Zhao, 2017). According to Priilaid & Hall (2016), retail price is viewed as the most established predictor of product quality, referred to as the price-quality inference.

4.3.3.3 Relationship between product-specific variables and complaint intentions

Tables 4.8 to 4.13 shows the relationships between product-specific variables and complaint intentions. Table 4.8 shows respondents' complaint intention by agreement with the likelihood of telling friends and family about the problem when the price of the clothing item is higher.

TABLE 4.8: COMPLAINT INTENTION BY AGREEMENT WITH THE LIKELIHOOD OF TELLING FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT THE PROBLEM, THE HIGHER THE PRICE OF THE CLOTHING ITEM

Compliant intention			The higher the price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem			p-value
			Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	
Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them	Unlikely	n	28	23	71	<0.001
		%	38.9%	36.5%	13.9%	
	Likely	n	44	40	438	
		%	61.1%	63.5%	86.1%	
Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g using WhatsApp)	Unlikely	n	45	44	226	<0.000
		%	62.5%	69.8%	44.4%	
	Likely	n	27	19	283	
		%	37.5%	30.2%	55.6%	
Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for friends to see	Unlikely	n	60	55	421	0.655
		%	83.3%	87.3%	82.7%	
	Likely	n	12	8	88	
		%	16.7%	12.7%	17.3%	

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

The price of clothing merchandise is a concrete measure that indicates affordability. Price may also indicate quality and status (Sheinin & Wagner, 2003). More respondents who agreed they would be more likely to tell their friends and family about the problem, when the product is more expensive, were likely to do so in person or by phoning them (86.1%) than those unlikely (13.9%). Also, more respondents who agreed (86.1%) were likely to talk to family and friends in person or by phoning them than those who were indifferent (63.5%) or disagreed (61.5%). The p-value (<0.001) indicates

a highly significant relationship between the agreement level to complain to friends and family about the problem, when the product price is higher, and the likelihood of telling friends and family in person (Table 4.8). According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2007), friends, family, and colleagues are valuable personal information sources that may influence consumer decision-making. Consumers obtain and share information through personal communication with significant others whom they respect and whose opinions they value.

Respondents who agreed that they would be more likely to tell friends and family about the problem with an item with a higher price were more likely to text their family and/or friends about the problem/failure using WhatsApp (55.6%) than those who were unlikely (34.1%). Also, fewer respondents who were indifferent (30.2%) or disagreed (37.5%) were likely to text family and friends than those who agreed (55.6%). The *p*-value (<0.001) shows a highly significant relationship between agreement level to complain to friends and family, when product price is high, and intention to text family and friends about the problem/failure (Table 4.8).

Irrespective of the agreement level, the respondents were equally unlikely to post their experiences on their Facebook/Instagram profiles. The *p*-value (0.494) shows no relationship between the agreement level of talking to friends and family about the higher product price and the intention to post experiences on Facebook/Instagram profiles for friends to see (Table 4.8).

Table 4.9 shows respondents' complaint intention by agreement with the likelihood of telling friends and family about the problem, the higher the durability of the clothing item.

TABLE 4.9: COMPLAINT INTENTION BY AGREEMENT WITH THE LIKELIHOOD OF TELLING FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT THE PROBLEM, THE HIGHER THE DURABILITY OF THE CLOTHING ITEM

Compliant intention			The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem			<i>p</i> -value
			Disagree	Neither agrees nor disagree	Agree	
Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them	Unlikely	n	24	26	72	<0.000
		%	38.7%	26.0%	14.9%	
	Likely	n	38	74	410	
		%	61.3%	74.0%	85.1%	
Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g using WhatsApp)	Unlikely	n	41	68	206	<0.000
		%	66.1%	68.0%	42.7%	
	Likely	n	21	32	276	
		%	33.9%	32.0%	57.3%	
Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for friends to see	Unlikely	n	55	86	395	0.294
		%	88.7%	86.0%	82%	
	Likely	n	7	14	87	
		%	11.3%	14.0%	18%	

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

More respondents who agreed with the likelihood of talking to family and friends about the problem as product durability increases were likely to tell family and friends about the product failure in person, or by phoning (85.1%), than those who were unlikely to (14.9%). The same pattern emerged for those who were indifferent or disagreed and were likely or unlikely to tell family and friends. However, proportionately fewer respondents who were indifferent (74%) or disagreed (61.3%) were likely to talk to significant others in person or by calling them than those who agreed (85.1%). At the same time, proportionately more respondents who were indifferent (26%) or disagreed (38.7%) were unlikely to tell family and friends than those who agreed (14.9%). The p -value (<0.0001) indicates a highly significant relationship between the agreement level with the likelihood of talking to friends and family, the longer the clothing item is supposed to last, and the intention to tell family and friends about the problem/failure (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 shows that proportionately more respondents who agreed with the likelihood of talking to family and friends about the problem as product durability increases were likely to WhatsApp family and friends about the product failure (57.3%) than those who were unlikely to (42.7%). Also, more respondents who were indifferent (68%) or disagreed (66.1%) with the likelihood of talking to family and friends as product durability increases were unlikely to WhatsApp family and friends about the product failure than those who agreed (42.7%). A highly significant relationship exists between the agreement with the likelihood of talking to friends and family, the longer the expected product durability, and the intention to WhatsApp them (p -value < 0.0001).

The p -value (0.294) shows no relationship between the likelihood of talking to friends and family as product durability expectations increase and the intention to post experiences on Facebook/Instagram profiles for friends to see (Table 4.9). The groups of respondents who agreed (82%), were indifferent (86%), and disagreed (88.7%) with the likelihood of talking to family and friends as product durability increases were equally unlikely to post their experiences on their Facebook/Instagram profiles.

Table 4.10 shows respondents' complaint intention by agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the price of the clothing item.

TABLE 4.10: COMPLAINT INTENTION BY AGREEMENT WITH THE LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLAINING TO THE RETAILER, THE HIGHER THE PRICE OF THE CLOTHING ITEM

Compliant intention			The higher the price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer			p-value
			Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	
Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	Unlikely	n	24	12	161	0.423
		%	31.6%	22.6%	31.3%	
	Likely	n	52	41	354	
		%	68.4%	77.4%	68.7%	
Complain to the retailer by phone	Unlikely	n	43	28	244	0.662
		%	56.6%	52.8%	47.4%	
	Likely	n	33	25	271	
		%	43.4%	47.2%	52.6%	
Complain to the retailer by e-mail	Unlikely	n	43	26	248	0.390
		%	56.6%	49.1%	48.2%	
	Likely	n	33	27	267	
		%	43.4%	50.9%	51.8%	
Complain on the retailer's website	Unlikely	n	55	32	292	*0.034
		%	72.4%	60.4%	56.7%	
	Likely	n	21	21	223	
		%	27.6%	39.6%	43.3%	
Post negative comments on the retailer's social media pages	Unlikely	n	44	25	214	*0.024
		%	57.9%	47.2%	41.6%	
	Likely	n	32	28	301	
		%	42.1%	52.8%	58.4%	

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

The price of clothing merchandise is a concrete measure that indicates affordability. Price may also indicate quality and status (Sheinin & Wagner, 2003). More respondents who agreed with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases were likely to contact the retailer in person (68.7%) than unlikely (31.3%). However, the same pattern emerged for those who were undecided or disagreed. The *p*-value (0.423) shows no significant relationship between the level of agreement to complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face), the higher the product price, and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer in person. (Table 4.10).

The *p*-values show no significant relationship between agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer by phone (*p*-value = 0.662) and by e-mail (*p*-value = 0.390) (Table 4.10). Therefore, agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases does not play a role in complaining to the retailer by phone or e-mail.

Proportionately more respondents who disagreed (72.4%) about the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website than respondents who were indifferent (60.4%) or agreed (56.7.4%). A significant relationship exists between the agreement level to contact the retailer as product price increases and the likelihood of posting experiences on the retailer's social media pages for anyone to see (*p*-value = 0.034).

More respondents who agreed (58.4%) with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases were likely to post comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see than those who were indifferent (52.8%) or disagreed (42.1%). The *p*-value (0.024) shows a significant relationship between the agreement level to contact the retailer as the price of the product increases and the likelihood of posting experiences on the retailer's social media pages for anyone to see (Table 4.10).

Agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases could not be associated with complaining to the retailer in person, by phone, or by e-mail. Fewer respondents who agreed (56.7%), or were indifferent (60.4%), were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website compared to those who disagreed (72.4%). An association exists between the agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product price increases and complaining on the retailer's website. Also, more respondents who agreed (43.3%) or were indifferent (39.6%) were likely to complain on the retailer's social media pages than those who disagreed (27.6%). The latter finding could imply that respondents realise that social media could help them voice their dissatisfaction due to the failure of expensive clothing items. Retailers' social media pages could become a vital complaint avenue for dissatisfied clothing consumers.

Table 4.11 shows respondents' complaint intention by agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the clothing item should be.

TABLE 4.11: COMPLAINT INTENTION BY AGREEMENT WITH THE LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLAINING TO THE RETAILER, THE MORE DURABLE THE CLOTHING ITEM SHOULD BE

Compliant intention			The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer			<i>p</i> -value
			Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	
Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	Unlikely	n	39	36	122	*0.020
		%	39.0%	37.5%	27.2%	
	Likely	n	61	60	326	
		%	61.0%	62.5%	72.8%	
Complain to the retailer by phone	Unlikely	n	59	69	259	*0.037
		%	59.0%	71.9%	57.8%	
	Likely	n	41	27	189	
		%	41.0%	28.1%	42.2%	
Complain to the retailer by e-mail	Unlikely	n	60	54	203	*0.010
		%	60.0%	56.3%	45.3%	
	Likely	n	40	42	245	
		%	40.0%	43.8%	54.7%	
Complain on the retailer's website	Unlikely	n	70	64	245	*0.005
		%	70.0%	66.7%	54.7%	
	Likely	n	30	32	203	
		%	30.0%	33.3%	45.3%	
Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see	Unlikely	n	89	87	381	0.253
		%	89.0%	90.6%	85.0%	
	Likely	n	11	9	67	
		%	11.0%	9.4%	15.0%	

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

Table 4.11 shows that more respondents agreed (72.8%) with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as the durability perceptions increased and were willing to complain to the retailer in person than those who were indifferent (62.5%) or disagreed (61%). A significant relationship exists between the agreement level to contact the retailer as durability perceptions increase and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer in person (p -value = 0.020). More indifferent respondents (71.9%) were unlikely to phone the retailer than those who disagreed (59%) or agreed (57.8%) (p -value = 0.037). More respondents who agreed (54.7%) were likely to e-mail the retailer than those who were unlikely to (45.3%). Also, more respondents who agreed (54.7%) were more likely to e-mail the retailer than those who were indifferent (43.8%) or disagreed (40.0%). A significant relationship exists between the agreement level to contact the retailer as durability perceptions increase and the likelihood of e-mailing the retailer (p -value = 0.010). More respondents who agreed were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website (54.7%) than those who were likely (40.0%), or those who were indifferent (43.8%). In addition, more respondents who disagreed (70.0%) were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website than those who were indifferent (66.7%) and agreed (54.7%). Irrespective of agreement level, equal proportions of respondents were unlikely to post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see (p -value = 0.253).

The higher the agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product durability increases, the more likely respondents were to contact the retailer in person. The agreement level cannot be associated with likelihood of posting information on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages.

Respondents were more inclined to talk to family and friends or complain to the retailer in person; the higher the agreement with the likelihood to tell family and friends or complain to the retailer, the higher the product's durability. However, durability could not be connected to respondents' intention to post comments on their personal Facebook/Instagram profiles for friends to see, nor on retailers' Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see.

Table 4.12 shows respondents' complaint intention by their level of dissatisfaction with the specific product failure.

TABLE 4.12: COMPLAINT INTENTION BY PRODUCT DISSATISFACTION

Complaint intention			Rate your level of dissatisfaction with this product failure		p-value
			Slightly/moderately dissatisfied	Very/extremely dissatisfied	
Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face or by phoning them)	Unlikely	n	20	102	*<0.001
		%	44.4%	17.0%	
	Likely	n	25	497	
		%	55.6%	83.0%	
Text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)	Unlikely	n	30	285	*0.013
		%	66.7%	47.6%	
	Likely	n	15	314	
		%	33.3%	52.4%	
Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see	Unlikely	n	39	497	0.522
		%	86.7%	83.0%	
	Likely	n	6	102	
		%	13.3%	17.0%	
Switch to another brand name	Unlikely	n	23	144	*<0.001
		%	51.1%	24.0%	
	Likely	n	22	455	
		%	48.9%	76.0%	
Stop buying at the retailer	Unlikely	n	25	258	0.104
		%	55.6%	43.1%	
	Likely	n	20	341	
		%	44.4%	56.9%	
Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	Unlikely	n	18	179	0.155
		%	40.0%	29.9%	
	Likely	n	27	420	
		%	60.0%	70.1%	
Complain to the retailer by phone	Unlikely	n	32	355	0.118
		%	71.1%	59.3%	
	Likely	n	13	244	
		%	28.9%	40.7%	
Complain to the retailer by e-mail	Unlikely	n	30	287	*0.015
		%	66.7%	47.9%	
	Likely	n	15	312	
		%	33.3%	52.1%	
Complain on the retailer's website	Unlikely	n	33	346	*0.041
		%	73.3%	57.8%	
	Likely	n	12	253	
		%	26.7%	42.2%	
Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see	Unlikely	n	41	516	0.347
		%	91.1%	86.1%	
	Likely	n	4	83	
		%	8.9%	13.9%	
Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)	Unlikely	n	40	515	0.585
		%	88.9%	86.0%	
	Likely	n	5	84	
		%	11.1%	14.0%	
Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine, etc.) or a consumer complaint website	Unlikely	n	39	521	0.952
		%	86.7%	87.0%	
	Likely	n	6	78	
		%	13.3%	13.0%	

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

Table 4.12 indicates that more respondents (83%) were likely to tell their family and/or friends about the problem/failure face-to-face or by phoning them when very/extremely dissatisfied, than those unlikely to inform them (17%). The service provider is often uninformed of the service failure and unable to fix or remedy the issue when clients engage in private complaining (Bodey & Grace, 2007). The same pattern emerged for respondents who were likely to tell significant others about the problem when slightly to moderately dissatisfied (55.6%) than those who were unlikely to (44.4%).

The p -value (<0.001) indicates a highly significant relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and intention to complain to significant others in person or by phoning them. The higher the level of dissatisfaction, the more likely respondents are to engage in negative word-of-mouth in person or by calling family and/or friends.

More respondents were likely to WhatsApp family and/or friends about the problem/failure when they were very to extremely dissatisfied (52.4%) than those unlikely to inform them (47.6%). More respondents who were slightly to moderately dissatisfied were unlikely to WhatsApp family and friends (66.5%) than those who were likely to do so (33.3 %). The p -value (0.013) indicates a significant relationship between the level of dissatisfaction and intention to WhatsApp significant others in person. The higher the level of dissatisfaction, the more likely respondents are to WhatsApp family and/or friends (Table 4.12).

More respondents were likely to switch to another brand name when they are very to extremely dissatisfied with the product failure (76.0%) than those unlikely with the product failure (24.0%). More respondents, slightly to moderately dissatisfied with the product failure (51.1%), were unlikely to switch brand names than those who were likely to (48.9%). A highly significant relationship exists between the level of dissatisfaction and intention to switch brand names (p -value = <0.001). (Table 4.12).

No significant relationship exists between the level of dissatisfaction and to stop supporting the retailer (p -value = 0.104). More respondents, very to extremely dissatisfied, were likely to stop buying at the retailer than those who were unlikely to. The same proportion of respondents, slightly to moderately dissatisfied, were unlikely to stop buying at the retailer as those likely to. (Table 4.12).

Dissatisfaction level played a role in respondents' intentions to switch privately between brand names but not between retailers. These findings could imply that respondents realised that the product associated with a particular brand name caused dissatisfaction, not the retailer. Therefore, the retailer is not to blame for the product failure, and the respondent would instead switch between brand names.

Irrespective of the level of dissatisfaction, respondents were equally likely to complain to the retailer in person (p -value = 0.155) and similarly unlikely to complain to the retailer by phoning (p -value = 0.118). More respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied were likely to complain via e-mail (52.1%) than those who were unlikely to (47.9%). In comparison, more respondents who were slightly to moderately dissatisfied were unlikely to complain using e-mail (66.7%) than those who were likely to (33.3%). A significant relationship exists between the level of dissatisfaction and intention to complain via e-mail (p -value = 0.015). More respondents who were slightly to moderately

dissatisfied were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website (73.3%) than those who were likely to (26.7%). Also, more respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website (57.8%) than those likely to (42.2%). A significant relationship exists between the level of dissatisfaction and intention to complain on the retailer's website (p -value = 0.041). Irrespective of dissatisfaction, respondents were equally likely to complain to the retailer in person. Irrespective of dissatisfaction, respondents were equally unlikely to phone the retailer or post comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see. Proportionally more respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied were inclined to contact the retailer via e-mail than those who were unlikely to. This could imply that respondents experiencing high levels of dissatisfaction might believe that e-mailing retailers is a valid complaint option.

Irrespective of dissatisfaction level, more respondents were unlikely to complain to a consumer protection organisation (88.9%) or to write/post a complaint to the press or a consumer complaint website (86.7%) than those likely. Therefore, dissatisfaction is not related to the intention to complain to a consumer protection organisation (p -value = 0.585) or to write/post a complaint to the press or a consumer complaint website (p -value = 0.952).

Table 4.13 shows respondents' complaint intention by product failure severity

TABLE 4.13: COMPLAINT INTENTION BY SEVERITY OF THE PRODUCT FAILURE

Complaint intention			How severe (serious) would you consider the product failure?		p-value
			Not at all to moderately severe	Very/extremely severe	
Tell your family and/or friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them	Unlikely	n	45	77	<0.001
		%	29.6%	15.7%	
	Likely	n	107	415	
		%	70.4%	84.3%	
Text your family and/or friends about the problem/failure (e.g., using WhatsApp)	Unlikely	n	84	231	0.073
		%	55.3%	47.0%	
	Likely	n	68	261	
		%	44.7%	53.0%	
Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see	Unlikely	n	132	404	0.173
		%	86.8%	82.1%	
	Likely	n	20	88	
		%	13.2%	17.9%	
Switch to another brand name	Unlikely	n	48	119	0.069
		%	31.6%	24.2%	
	Likely	n	104	373	
		%	68.4%	75.8%	
Stop buying at the retailer	Unlikely	n	68	215	0.822
		%	44.7%	43.7%	
	Likely	n	84	277	
		%	55.3%	56.3%	
Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)	Unlikely	n	75	122	<0.001
		%	49.3%	24.8%	
	Likely	n	77	370	
		%	50.7%	75.2%	
Complain to the retailer by phone	Unlikely	n	111	276	<0.001
		%	73.0%	56.1%	
	Likely	n	41	216	
		%	27.0%	43.9%	
Complain to the retailer by e-mail	Unlikely	n	96	221	<0.001
		%	63.2%	44.9%	
	Likely	n	56	271	
		%	36.8%	55.1%	
Complain on the retailer's website	Unlikely	n	96	283	0.217
		%	63.2%	57.5%	
	Likely	n	56	209	
		%	36.8%	42.5%	
Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see	Unlikely	n	137	420	0.133
		%	90.1%	85.4%	
	Likely	n	15	72	
		%	9.9%	14.6%	
Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)	Unlikely	n	138	417	0.060
		%	90.8%	84.8%	
	Likely	n	14	75	
		%	9.2%	15.2%	
Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine, etc.) or a consumer complaint website	Unlikely	n	138	422	0.108
		%	90.8%	82.8%	
	Likely	n	14	70	
		%	9.2%	14.2%	

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

The *p*-value ($p = <0.001$) indicates a significant relationship between product failure severity and intention to complain to significant others in person or by phoning them. The more severe (very to extremely) the product failure, the more likely respondents would spread negative word-of-mouth in person or by making a phone call. No significant relationships exist between the severity of the product failure and the intention to WhatsApp others (p -value = 0.073) and the intention to post

experiences on Facebook/Instagram (p -value = 0.173). Therefore, product failure severity did not play a role in WhatsApp intention. Also, irrespective of the product failure severity, respondents were equally unlikely to post their experience on their Facebook/Instagram profiles (Table 4.13).

Irrespective of product failure severity, more respondents were likely to switch brand names than those unlikely. The same pattern applied to switching between retailers. Therefore, differing product failure severity levels cannot be associated with respondents' intentions to switch between brand names (p -value = 0.069) and retailers (p -value = 0.822).

More respondents experiencing higher (very to extreme) levels of product failure severity were likely to complain to the retailer in person (75.2%) than those unlikely to (24.8%). In contrast, equal proportions of respondents experiencing lower levels of severity (not severe at all to somewhat severe) were likely (50.7%) or unlikely to complain to the retailer in person (49.3%). This implies that higher levels of product failure severity are associated with complaining to the retailer in person (p -value <0.001). More respondents experiencing higher levels of product failure severity were unlikely to phone the retailer (56.1%) than those likely to (43.9%) (p -value <0.001). The same pattern emerged for those experiencing lower levels of product failure severity. The p -value (p <0.001) indicates a highly significant relationship between product failure severity and intention to e-mail the retailer, with more respondents experiencing higher levels of product failure severity likely to e-mail the retailer (55.1%) than those unlikely to (44.9%). In contrast, more respondents experiencing lower levels of product failure severity were unlikely to e-mail the retailer (63.2%) than those likely to (36.8%). Irrespective of product failure severity, more respondents were unlikely to complain on the retailer's website (very to extremely severe: 57.5%; not at all to moderately severe: 63.2%) or post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages (very to extremely severe: 85.4%; not at all to moderately severe: 90.1%) than those likely to post comments. Therefore, the level of product failure severity is not related to the intention to complain on the retailer's website (p -value = 0.217) or post comments on the retailer's social media pages (p -value = 0.133). The same applies to the intention to complain to a consumer protection organisation (p -value = 0.060) or to write/post a complaint to the press or a consumer complaint website (p -value = 0.108) (Table 4.13).

4.3.4 Objective 4: To describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumers' intention to complain

Univariate ANOVA was performed to compare the individual effect of different independent variables (demographic groups, dissatisfaction with product failure, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price, likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price, likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product, and likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the

product) on the dependent variable (complaint factor). Table 4.14 shows the independent variables, groups per independent variable, and the number of responses per group.

TABLE 4.14: INDEPENDENT VARIABLES, GROUPS PER INDEPENDENT VARIABLE, AND THE NUMBER OF RESPONSES PER GROUP

Independent variables	Groups	n
Gender	Male	156
	Female	487
	Other	1
Age	Emerging millennial	127
	Young millennial	125
	Older millennials	100
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	292
Education	Grade 12 and lower	167
	Degree/diploma	323
	Postgraduate	154
Total monthly household income	Less than R20 000	191
	R20 000 – R49 000	231
	R50 000 or more	222
Population group	White	469
	Black	90
	Other	85
Dissatisfaction with product failure	Slight to moderate	45
	Very to extreme	599
Product failure severity	Not at all to moderate	152
	Very to extreme	492
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price	Disagree	72
	Neither agree nor disagree	63
	Agree	509
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher product price	Disagree	76
	Neither agree nor disagree	53
	Agree	515
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product	Disagree	62
	Neither agree nor disagree	100
	Agree	482
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the product	Disagree	100
	Neither agree nor disagree	96
	Agree	448

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action)

Separate univariate ANOVAs were run to compare the effect of the independent variables on each complaint factor (dependent variable). In each case, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances verified that the variances are equal across groups or samples, with p -values >0.05 . The dependent variable includes electronic complaints (Factor 1), complaints to retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2), switching intentions (Factor 3) and negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4). Bonferroni post-hoc tests were done after finding statistically significant results to determine where the differences lie. Only differences among the means of three or more groups are indicated in multiple comparison tables, as the differences between two groups are apparent.

The results and interpretation of the respective Univariate ANOVAS are shown below:

4.3.4.1 Univariate ANOVA: Electronic complaints (Factor 1) by independent variables

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances verified that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups (p -value = 0.359). Table 4.15 shows the tests of between-subject effects for electronic complaints across the independent variables.

TABLE 4.15: TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS - ELECTRONIC COMPLAINTS (FACTOR 1) BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: Electronic complaints (Factor 1)					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	26.483 ^a	21	1.261	3.277	<0.001
Intercept	20.185	1	20.185	52.457	.000
Gender	.617	2	.308	.801	.449
Age	9.968	3	3.323	8.635	<0.001
Education	.585	2	.293	.760	.468
Total monthly household income	1.095	2	.547	1.422	.242
Population group	6.053	2	3.027	7.866	<0.001
Dissatisfaction with product failure	.405	1	.405	1.053	.305
Product failure severity	.497	1	.497	1.291	.256
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price	2.169	2	1.084	2.818	.060
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price	2.989	2	1.495	3.884	.021
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product	1.728	2	.864	2.246	.107
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the product	.262	2	.131	.340	.712
Error	239.337	622	.385		
Total	2188.222	644			
Corrected Total	265.820	643			

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action), * p -value = significant at the 0.05 level,

Table 4.15 shows that age (p -value <0.0001), population (p -value <0.001), and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price (p -value = 0.021), had a significant effect on electronic complaints.

Table 4.16 shows the multiple comparisons of electronic complaints (Factor 1, dependent variable) across the different age groups, population groups and likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price group (independent variables).

TABLE 4.16: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF ELECTRONIC COMPLAINTS (FACTOR 1) BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: Electronic complaints (Factor 1)						
Age groups		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Emerging Millennial	Young Millennials	-.1822	.07815	.120	-.3890	.0247
	Older Millennials	-.4095*	.08293	<.001	-.6290	-.1900
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	-.1654	.06594	.074	-.3399	.0091
Young Millennials	Emerging Millennial	.1822	.07815	.120	-.0247	.3890
	Older Millennials	-.2273*	.08322	.039	-.4476	-.0071
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	.0168	.06630	1.000	-.1587	.1923
Older Millennials	Emerging Millennials	.4095*	.08293	<.001	.1900	.6290
	Young Millennials	.2273*	.08322	.039	.0071	.4476
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	.2442*	.07187	.004	.0539	.4344
Middle-aged/Mature consumers	Emerging Millennial	.1654	.06594	.074	-.0091	.3399
	Young Millennials	-.0168	.06630	1.000	-.1923	.1587
	Older Millennials	-.2442*	.07187	.004	-.4344	-.0539
Population group		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
White	Black	-.1609	.07139	.074	-.3322	.0105
	Other	-.1363	.07313	.189	-.3118	.0393
Black	White	.1609	.07139	.074	-.0105	.3322
	Other	.0246	.09382	1.000	-.2006	.2498
Other	White	.1363	.07313	.189	-.0393	.3118
	Black	-.0246	.09382	1.000	-.2498	.2006
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	-.1379	.11101	.644	-.4043	.1286
	Agree	-.2267*	.07622	.009	-.4097	-.0438
Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	.1379	.11101	.644	-.1286	.4043
	Agree	-.0889	.08948	.963	-.3037	.1259
Agree	Disagree	.2267*	.07622	.009	.0438	.4097
	Neither agree nor disagree	.0889	.08948	.963	-.1259	.3037
Based on observed means. The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .385. *The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Tables 4.17 and 4.18 show the descriptive statistics for electronic complaints (Factor 1) across demographic variables and the other independent variables.

TABLE 4.17: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN ELECTRONIC COMPLAINTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Gender			Age categories				Highest level of education			Population group			Monthly household income		
		Male	Female	Other	Emerging Millennials	Young Millennials	Older Millennials	Middle-aged/Mature consumer	Secondary schooling	Diploma/ degree	Postgraduate qualification	White	Black	Other	Middle income	Upper middle income	Elite income
Electronic complaints (Factor 1)	n	156	487	1	127	125	100	292	167	323	154	469	90	85	191	231	222
	Mean	1.66	1.75		1.55 ^a	1.74 ^a	1.96 ^b	1.72 ^a	1.66	1.75	1.76	1.69	1.85	1.82	1.65	1.73	1.78
	Std. dev.	0.66	0.64		0.57	0.36	0.69	0.64	0.57	0.64	0.71	0.62	0.71	0.69	0.58	0.63	0.75
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.449			<0.001*				0.468			<0.001*			0.242		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance, * Significant at the 5% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

Multiple comparison results presented statistical differences between the groups. Table 4.17 shows that emerging Millennials (mean = 1.55) differed from older Millennials (mean = 1.96), and older Millennials differed from young Millennials (mean = 1.74). Also, middle-aged/mature consumers (mean = 1.72) differed from older Millennials. Older Millennials were more likely to complain using electronic means (posting experiences on personal Facebook/Instagram profiles, the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages, consumer complaint websites and online newspapers) than the other age categories. However, the means reflect a relatively weak complaint intention ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$). Older Millennials are generally more techno-savvy than middle-aged/mature consumers (Bannon, Ford & Meltzer, 2011). Although the *p*-value (<0.001) indicates overall differences between population group and intention to complain electronically, the multiple comparisons did not show the differences (*p*-values for multiple comparisons >0.05). The group means for population group and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product, price indicates relatively weak complaint intentions.

TABLE 4.18: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN ELECTRONIC COMPLAINTS AND OTHER INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Dissatisfaction with product failure		Problem failure severity		Likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher product price			Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer the more durable the product		
		Slightly to moderately	Very to extremely	Not at all to moderately	Very to extremely	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
Electronic complaints (Factor 1)	n	45	599	152	492	72	63	509	76	53	515	62	100	482	100	96	448
	Mean	1.56	1.74	1.64	1.76	1.69	1.58	1.75	1.54 ^a	1.67 ^{ab}	1.76 ^{bc}	1.57	1.62	1.77	1.61	1.66	1.77
	Std. dev.	0.63	0.64	0.58	0.66	0.68	0.67	0.63	0.63	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.60	0.65	0.64	0.62	0.64
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.305		0.256		0.060			0.021*			0.107			0.712		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action), Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

Respondents who disagreed (mean = 1.54) that they would be more likely to complain to the retailer the higher the product price differed from those who agreed (mean = 1.67) (Table 4.18). Respondents who disagreed were highly unlikely to complain via electronic means. In contrast, those who agreed were unlikely to complain via electronic means. Therefore, respondents who disagreed weakly intended to complain using electronic complaint means. In contrast, those who agreed had a relatively weak complaint intention. ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$)

4.3.3.2 Univariate ANOVA: Complaints to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2) by independent variables

Levene's test showed the assumption of equal error of variance was met (p -value = 0.128). Table 4.19 shows the tests of between-subject effects for complaints to the retailer and consumer protection organisations across the independent variables.

TABLE 4.19: TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS - COMPLAINTS TO THE RETAILER AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ORGANISATIONS (FACTOR 2) BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: Complaints to retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2)					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	38.346	21	1.826	5.587	<0.001
Intercept	37.084	1	37.084	113.468	0.000
Gender	0.113	2	0.057	0.173	0.841
Age	7.583	3	2.528	7.734	<0.001
Education	3.589	2	1.795	5.491	0.004
Total monthly household income	0.188	2	0.094	0.287	0.751
Population group	3.592	2	1.796	5.495	0.004
Dissatisfaction with product failure	0.507	1	0.507	1.551	0.213
Product failure severity	6.324	1	6.324	19.351	<0.001
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price	3.910	2	1.955	5.981	0.003
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price	2.427	2	1.213	3.713	0.025
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product	0.563	2	0.282	0.862	0.423
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the product	1.283	2	0.641	1.963	0.141
Error	203.283	622	0.327		
Total	3764.360	644			
Corrected Total	241.630	643			

* p -value = significant at the 0.05 level.

Age (p -value <0.001), population group (p -value = 0.004), education (p -value = 0.004), product failure severity (p <0.001), the likelihood of telling friends or family, the higher the product price (p -value = 0.003), and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price (p -value = 0.025), differed significantly across intention to complaint to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2) (Table 4.19).

Table 4.20 shows the multiple comparisons of intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2) by the demographic groups and other independent variables that differed significantly based on the Univariate ANOVA.

TABLE 4.20: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF COMPLAINTS TO THE RETAILER AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ORGANISATIONS (FACTOR 2) BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: complaints to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2)						
Age groups		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Emerging Millennial	Young Millennials	-0.1492	0.07203	0.232	-0.3399	0.0414
	Older Millennials	-0.2260*	0.07643	0.019	-0.4283	-0.0237
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	-0.3281*	0.06077	<0.001	-0.4890	-0.1673
Young Millennials	Emerging Millennial	-0.1492	0.07203	0.232	-0.0414	0.3399
	Older Millennials	-0.0768	0.07670	1.000	-0.2798	0.1262
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	-0.1789*	0.06111	0.021	-0.3406	-0.0172
Older Millennials	Emerging Millennials	0.2260*	0.07643	0.019	0.0237	0.4283
	Young Millennials	0.0768	0.07670	1.000	-0.1262	0.2798
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	-0.1021	0.06624	0.742	-0.2774	0.0732
Middle-aged/Mature consumers	Emerging Millennial	0.3281*	0.06077	<0.001	0.1673	0.4890
	Young Millennials	0.1789*	0.06111	0.021	0.0172	0.3406
	Older Millennials	0.1021	0.06624	0.742	-0.0732	0.2774
Education Level		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Grade 12 and lower	Degree/diploma	-0.1503*	0.05449	0.018	-0.2811	-0.0195
	Postgraduate	0.0151	0.06387	1.000	-0.1382	0.1684
Degree/diploma	Grade 12 and lower	0.1503*	0.05449	0.018	0.0195	0.2811
	Postgraduate	0.1654*	0.05598	0.010	0.0310	0.2998
Postgraduate	Grade 12 and lower	-0.0151	0.06387	1.000	-0.1684	0.1382
	Degree/diploma	-0.1654*	0.05598	0.010	-0.2998	-0.0310
Population group		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
White	Black	.0821	.06579	.638	-.0758	.2400
	Other	-.0790	.06739	.726	-.2407	.0828
Black	White	-.0821	.06579	.638	-.2400	.0758
	Other	-.1610	.08647	.189	-.3686	.0465
Other	White	.0790	.06739	.726	-.0828	.2407
	Black	.1610	.08647	.189	-.0465	.3686
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price						
Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	.0635	.09862	1.000	-.1733	.3002
	Agree	.0977	.07198	.526	-.0751	.2705
Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	-.0635	.09862	1.000	-.3002	.1733
	Agree	.0342	.07635	1.000	-.1491	.2175
Agree	Disagree	-.0977	.07198	.526	-.2705	.0751
	Neither agree nor disagree	-.0342	.07635	1.000	-.2175	.1491
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	-.1181	.10231	.746	-.3637	.1275
	Agree	-.1581	.07025	.074	-.3268	.0105
Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	.1181	.10231	.746	-.1275	.3637
	Agree	-.0400	.08247	1.000	-.2380	.1579
Agree	Disagree	.1581	.07025	.074	-.0105	.3268
	Neither agree nor disagree	.0400	.08247	1.000	-.1579	.2380
Based on observed means. The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .327. *.The mean difference is significant at the 0,05 level.						

Tables 4.21 and 4.22 show the descriptive statistics for complaints to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2) across demographic variables and the other independent variables.

TABLE 4.21: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN COMPLAINTS TO THE RETAILER AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ORGANISATIONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Gender			Age categories				Highest level of education			Population group			Monthly household income		
		Male	Female	Other	Emerging Millennials	Young Millennials	Older Millennials	Middle-aged/Mature consumer	Secondary schooling	Diploma/ degree	Postgraduate qualification	White	Black	Other	Middle income	Upper middle income	Elite income
Complaints to retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2)	n	156	487	1	127	125	100	292	167	323	154	469	90	85	191	231	222
	Mean	2.27	2.36		2.13 ^a	2.28 ^{ab}	2.35 ^b	2.45 ^{bc}	2.27 ^a	2.42 ^b	2.25 ^c	2.34	2.26	2.42	2.27	2.40	2.33
	Std. dev.	0.61	0.61		0.54	0.60	0.64	0.61	0.62	0.58	0.65	0.61	0.60	0.67	0.60	0.61	0.63
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.841			<0.001				0.004			0.004			0.751		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, analysis of variance * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

Table 4.21 shows that emerging Millennials (mean = 2.13) differed significantly from older Millennials (mean = 2.35) and Middle-aged/Mature consumers (mean = 2.45). Also, middle-aged/mature consumers differed from Young Millennials (mean = 2.28). Middle-aged/mature consumers were more likely to contact the retailer or consumer protection organisations than the other age groups. However, the means ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$) reflect relatively weak complaint intentions. Middle-aged/mature consumers and older Millennials probably had more opportunities to complain about dissatisfactory products, implying that they might have gained more complaint experience than younger consumers (Bannon, Ford & Meltzer, 2011). Respondents with Grade 12 or less (mean = 2.27) differed significantly from respondents with a degree/diploma (means = 2.42), while the latter differed from respondents with a postgraduate qualification (mean = 2.25). The means indicate that respondents with a degree or diploma were more likely to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations than respondents with Grade 12 or less and those with a post-graduate qualification. However, the means ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$) reflect a relatively weak complaint intention. Although the p -value (0.004) indicated overall differences between population group and intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations, the multiple comparisons did not show the differences (p -values for multiple comparisons > 0.05).

TABLE 4.22: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN COMPLAINTS TO THE RETAILER AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Dissatisfaction with product failure		Problem failure severity		Likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price			Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer the more durable the product		
		Slightly to moderately	Very to extremely	Not at all to moderately	Very to extremely	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
Complaints to retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2)	n	45	599	152	492	72	63	509	76	53	515	62	100	482	100	96	448
	Mean	2.02	2.36	2.08 ^a	2.42 ^b	2.42	2.36	2.32	2.20	2.32	2.36	2.26	2.23	2.37	2.18	2.21	2.40
	Std. dev.	0.56	0.61	0.58	0.60	0.62	0.64	0.61	0.69	0.68	0.59	0.69	0.64	0.59	0.67	0.70	0.57
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.213		<0.001		0.003			0.025			0.423			0.141		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

The very to extremely severe product failure group (mean = 2.42) differed significantly from the not at all to moderately severe group (mean 2.08) in that the first-mentioned group were more likely to complain to the retailer or consumer protection organisation. However, the means ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$) reflect relatively weak complaint intentions. Although there were overall differences between the likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price, and the intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisation (p -value = 0.003), the multiple comparisons did not show the differences (p -values for multiple comparisons >0.05). The same applied to the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher product price, and the latter complaint intention.

4.3.4.3 Univariate ANOVA: Switching intentions (Factor 3) by independent variables

Levene's test showed the assumption of equal error of variance was met (p -value = 0.162). Table 4.23 shows the tests of between-subject effects for switching intention organisations across the independent variables.

TABLE 4.23: TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS - SWITCHING INTENTIONS (FACTOR 3) BY DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: Switching intentions (Factor 3)					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	24.050	21	1.145	2.525	<0.001
Intercept	58.953	1	58.953	129.957	0.000
Gender	1.108	2	0.554	1.221	0.296
Age	1.811	3	0.604	1.331	0.263
Education	1.542	2	0.771	1.700	0.184
Total monthly household income	0.098	2	0.049	0.109	0.897
Population group	0.714	2	0.357	0.787	0.456
Dissatisfaction with product failure	4.546	1	4.546	10.022	0.002
Product failure severity	0.087	1	0.087	0.192	0.661
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price	0.181	2	0.091	0.200	0.819
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price	0.808	2	0.404	0.891	0.411
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product	5.874	2	2.937	6.474	0.002
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the product	2.056	2	1.028	2.266	0.105
Error	282.162	622	0.454		
Total	5204.000	644			
Corrected Total	306.211	643			

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action), * p-value = significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.23 shows that dissatisfaction with the product failure (p -value = 0.002) and the likelihood of telling friends or family when durability is at stake (p -value = 0.002) significantly affected switching intention.

Table 4.24 shows the multiple comparisons of switching intention (Factor 3) by the likelihood of telling friends or family about the problem, the more durable the product.

TABLE 4.24: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF SWITCHING INTENTION BY TELLING FRIENDS OR FAMILY, THE MORE DURABLE THE PRODUCT

Dependent Variable: Switching intention (Factor 3)						
Likelihood of telling friends or family about the problem, the more durable the product		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	.0187	.10887	1.000	-.2426	.2801
	Agree	-.2298*	.09087	.035	-.4479	-.0116
Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	-.0187	.10887	1.000	-.2801	.2426
	Agree	-.2485*	.07401	.003	-.4261	-.0708
Agree	Disagree	.2298*	.09087	.035	.0116	.4479
	Neither agree nor disagree	.2485*	.07401	.003	.0708	.4261

Based on observed means.
 The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .454.
 *. The mean difference is significant at the 0,05 level.

Tables 4.25 and 4.26 show the descriptive statistics for switching intention (Factor 3) across demographic variables and the other independent variables

TABLE 4.25: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN SWITCHING INTENTION AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Gender			Age categories				Highest level of education			Population group			Monthly household income		
		Male	Female	Other	Emerging Millennials	Young Millennials	Older Millennials	Middle-aged/Mature consumer	Secondary schooling	Diploma/ degree	Postgraduate qualification	White	Black	Other	Middle income	Upper middle income	Elite income
Switching intention (Factor 3)	n	156	487	1	127	125	100	292	167	323	154	469	90	85	191	231	222
	Mean	2.82	2.74		2.75	2.76	2.90	2.71	2.77	2.71	2.85	2.77	2.79	2.66	2.73	2.75	2.80
	Std. dev.	0.73	0.68		0.76	0.60	0.68	0.69	0.67	0.67	0.74	0.69	0.71	0.69	0.70	0.66	0.71
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.296			0.263				0.184			0.456			0.897		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

No significant differences existed between the different demographic groups and switching intention (p -values >0.05) (Table 4.25).

TABLE 4.26: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN SWITCHING INTENTION AND OTHER INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Dissatisfaction with product failure		Problem failure severity		Likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher product price			Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer the more durable the product		
		Slightly to moderately	Very to extremely	Not at all to moderately	Very to extremely	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
Switching intention (Factor 3)	n	45	599	152	492	72	63	509	76	53	515	62	100	482	100	96	448
	Mean	2.38 ^a	2.79 ^b	2.65	2.79	2.53	2.68	2.80	2.53	2.76	2.79	2.59 ^a	2.57 ^{ac}	2.82 ^b	2.62	2.75	2.79
	Std. dev.	0.69	0.68	0.65	0.70	0.66	0.83	0.67	0.71	0.75	0.68	0.76	0.74	0.66	0.75	0.70	0.67
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.002		0.661		0.819			0.411			0.002			0.105		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance. * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

Table 4.26 shows that the group who were very to extremely dissatisfied with the product failure (mean = 2.79) differed significantly from those who were slightly to moderately dissatisfied (mean

2.38). Respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied were likely to switch between retailers and brands, reflecting a relatively strong switching intention ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$). In contrast, those who experienced slight to moderated dissatisfaction were unlikely to switch, reflecting a relatively weak complaint intention ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$). In addition, those who disagreed that they were more likely to tell family or friends the more durable the product (mean = 2.59), differed from those who agreed (mean = 2.82). Those who agreed were more likely to switch between retailers than those who disagreed, with the means reflecting relatively strong complaint intentions.

4.3.4.4 Univariate ANOVA: Negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4) by independent variables

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances verified that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups (p -value = 0.413). Table 4.27 shows the tests of between-subject effects for negative word-of-mouth across the independent variables.

TABLE 4.27: TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS OF NEGATIVE WORD-OF-MOUTH (FACTOR 4) BY THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: Negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4)					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	70.521	21	3.358	4.497	<0.001
Intercept	47.957	1	47.957	92.781	0.000
Gender	0.373	2	0.187	0.361	0.697
Age	11.289	3	3.763	7.280	<0.001
Education	0.766	2	0.383	0.741	0.477
Total monthly household income	0.002	2	0.001	0.002	0.998
Population group	0.299	2	0.150	0.290	0.749
Dissatisfaction with product failure	5.102	1	5.102	9.870	0.002
Product failure severity	3.072	1	3.072	5.943	0.015
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the product price	9.813	2	4.906	9.492	<0.001
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price	1.732	2	0.866	1.675	0.188
Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product	12.851	2	6.425	12.431	<0.001
Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the more durable the product	2.108	2	1.054	2.039	0.131
Error	321.505	622	0.517		
Total	5196.500	644			
Corrected Total	392.026	643			

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, * p -value = significant at the 0.05 level.

Age (p -value <0.001), dissatisfaction with product failure (p -value = 0.002), product failure severity (p -value = 0.015), the likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price (p -value <0.001), and the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product (p -value <0.001) had a significant effect on negative word-of-mouth intention (Table 4.27).

Table 4.28 shows the multiple comparisons for negative word-of-mouth across the different age groups, the likelihood of complaining to family or friends, the higher the product price groups, and the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the longer the clothing product should last groups.

TABLE 4.28: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF NEGATIVE WORD-OF-MOUTH (FACTOR 4) BY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent Variable: Negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4)						
Age groups		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Emerging Millennial	Young Millennials	0.1563	0.09058	0.510	-0.0835	0.3960
	Older Millennials	0.2043	0.09612	0.204	-0.0501	0.4587
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	0.4209*	0.07642	<0.001	0.2186	0.6232
Young Millennials	Emerging Millennial	-0.1563	0.09058	0.510	-0.3960	0.0835
	Older Millennials	0.0480	0.09646	1.000	-0.2073	0.3033
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	0.2646*	0.07685	0.004	0.0613	0.4680
Older Millennials	Emerging Millennials	-0.2043	0.09612	0.204	-0.4587	0.0501
	Young Millennials	-0.0480	0.09646	1.000	-0.3033	0.2073
	Middle-aged/Mature consumers	0.2166	0.08330	0.057	-0.0038	0.4371
Middle-aged/Mature consumers	Emerging Millennial	-0.4209*	0.07642	<0.001	-0.6232	-0.2186
	Young Millennials	-0.2646*	0.07685	0.004	-0.4680	-0.0613
	Older Millennials	-0.2166	0.08330	0.057	-0.4371	0.0038
Likelihood of telling friends/family about the problem, the higher the price of the item		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	0.0496	0.12403	1.000	-0.2481	0.3473
	Agree	-0.4570*	0.09052	<0.001	-0.6743	-0.2397
Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	-0.0496	0.12403	1.000	-0.3473	0.2481
	Agree	-0.5066*	0.09602	<0.001	-0.7371	-0.2761
Agree	Disagree	0.4570*	0.09052	<0.001	0.2397	0.6743
	Neither agree nor disagree	0.5066*	0.09602	<0.001	0.2761	0.7371
Likelihood of telling friends or family about the problem, the more durable the product		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	-0.0532	0.11621	1.000	-0.3322	0.2257
	Agree	-0.5028*	0.09700	<0.001	-0.7357	-0.2700
Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	0.0532	0.11621	1.000	-0.2257	0.3322
	Agree	-0.4496*	0.07900	<0.001	-0.6392	-0.2599
Agree	Disagree	0.5028*	0.09700	<0.001	0.2700	0.7357
	Neither agree nor disagree	0.4496*	0.07900	<0.001	0.2599	0.6392
Based on observed means.						
The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .517.						
* The mean difference is significant at the 0,05 level.						

Tables 4.29 and 4.30 show the descriptive statistics of negative word-of-mouth across demographic variables and the other independent variables.

TABLE 4.29: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN NEGATIVE WORD-OF-MOUTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Gender			Age categories				Highest level of education			Population group			Monthly household income		
		Male	Female	Other	Emerging Millennials	Young Millennials	Older Millennials	Middle-aged/Mature consumer	Secondary schooling	Diploma/ degree	Postgraduate qualification	White	Black	Other	Middle income	Upper middle income	Elite income
Negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4)	n	156	487	1	127	125	100	292	167	323	154	469	90	85	191	231	222
	Mean	2.72	2.73		2.98 ^a	2.83 ^a	2.78 ^{ab}	2.56 ^b	2.71	2.70	2.80	2.69	2.90	2.81	2.77	2.72	2.71
	Std. dev.	0.75	0.79		0.81	0.71	0.80	0.75	0.77	0.78	0.79	0.78	0.76	0.78	0.81	0.78	0.76
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.697			<0.001				0.477			0.749			0.998		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

Emerging Millennials (mean = 2.98) differed significantly from middle-aged/mature consumers (mean = 2.56), and the latter group differed from young Millennials (mean = 2.83). Emerging and young Millennials are more likely than middle-aged/mature consumers to engage in negative word-of-mouth. The respective means imply relatively strong word-of-mouth intentions for the respective age groups. ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$). By spreading negative word-of-mouth to family and friends using face-to-face communication or WhatsApp, customers engage in hidden complaint behaviour that could harm the retailer’s reputation and reach a wider audience with updates about negative product experiences. (Gelbrich, 2010; Sparks & Browning, 2010).

TABLE 4.30: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TO INTERPRET MULTIPLE COMPARISONS BETWEEN NEGATIVE WORD-OF-MOUTH AND OTHER INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Complaint intention per factor		Dissatisfaction with product failure		Problem failure severity		Likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price			Likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product			Likelihood of complaining to the retailer the more durable the product		
		Slightly to moderately	Very to extremely	Not at all to moderately	Very to extremely	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
Negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4)	n	45	599	152	492	72	63	509	76	53	515	62	100	482	100	96	448
	Mean	2.27 ^a	2.77 ^b	2.54 ^a	2.79 ^b	2.34 ^a	2.33 ^a	2.83 ^b	2.55	2.73	2.76	2.35 ^a	2.40 ^a	2.85 ^b	2.61	2.62	2.78
	Std. dev.	0.74	0.77	0.79	0.77	0.82	0.85	0.74	0.85	0.78	0.77	0.89	0.78	0.73	0.83	0.78	0.77
	p-value, Univariate ANOVA	0.002		0.015		<0.001			0.188			<0.001			0.131		

n = 644 (respondents willing to take action, Univariate ANOVA, Univariate analysis of variance * Significant at the 5% level, ** Significant at the 10% level, Means with different superscripts differ significantly on the 5% level, Bonferroni pairwise post-hoc tests

Respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied (mean = 2.77) differed significantly from those who were slightly to moderately dissatisfied (mean = 2.27). Respondents with higher levels of product dissatisfaction ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$) were likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth, i.e. they had a relatively strong intention to tell their family or friends about the problem in person or by phoning them and by using WhatsApp. In contrast, respondents with lower levels of dissatisfaction ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$) were unlikely to engage in negative word-of-mouth, reflecting a relatively weak complaint intention. Product failure severity significantly affected negative word-of-mouth intention (p -value = 0.015). Respondents who experienced very to extreme severe product failure (mean = 2.79) were more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth than those who experienced no to moderate severe product failures (mean = 2.54). However, the means ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$) reflect a relatively strong complaint intention. The same pattern emerged for the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product and word-of-mouth intention (p -value <0.001). Respondents who agreed with the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem as product durability increases (mean = 2.85) were likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth, i.e. they had a relatively strong word-of-mouth intention. In contrast, those who disagreed (mean = 2.35) or were indifferent (mean = 2.40) were unlikely to engage in negative word-of-mouth, reflecting a relatively weak complaint intention. The same pattern applied to the agreement with the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the higher the price, and word-of-mouth intention.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The sample (N = 816) was categorised into gender groups, of which 24.1% were male, and 75.8% were female. Population groups included White (72.4%), Black (14.6%), Indian (6.7%), Coloured (4.0%) and 'other' (2.3%). A more representative sample of the country's population would be ideal, but financial restraints made it difficult to get a more representative sample. Age groups included: Emerging Millennials 21.9%, Young Millennials 19.6%, Older Millennials 15.6%, Middle-aged consumers 31.5% and mature consumers 11.4%. Education groups included 0.5% with less than grade 10, 1.2% with grade 10 or 11, 24.8% with Grade 12, 49.4% with a degree/diploma, and 24.1% with a postgraduate qualification. The sample also included monthly household income groups. A total of 32.8% of the respondents earned a monthly household income of R50 000 or more, 21.2% earned R30 000 – R49 999, 14.5% made R20 000 – R29 999, 16.3% earned R10 001 – R19 999, and 15.2% earned less than R10 000.

The first objective of this study was to explore and describe consumers' perceptions of clothing product performance failures. The results of objective 1 showed that 31.7% of the respondents would be the most dissatisfied when the fabric rips or form holes, 23.3% with clothing items that do not keep their shape due to shrinking, stretching or twisting, and 9.7 when the fastener (zippers/buttons) break or become undone. The second objective was to explore and describe consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure. A total of 172 respondents indicated that they would not take action, while 644 would take action. Regarding private action, 56% of the respondents were likely to extremely likely to stop buying at the retailer, and 58% indicated they would switch brands. Also, 64% of respondents indicated that they would tell their family/friends about the problem face-to-face or by phoning them (negative word-of-mouth). In addition, 83% indicated that they would not post their bad experiences on social media like Facebook/Twitter for friends to see. Regarding public action, 69.4% indicated they would complain to the retailer in person, 59.1% indicated that they would phone the retailer, and 58.8% indicated that they would post negative comments on the retailer's website. Respondents indicated that they are not likely to complain to third parties like the press.

Objective 3 was to describe the product-specific variables associated with consumers' intention to complain, including durability, price, level of product dissatisfaction and the severity of the product failure. The respondents had to react to a hypothetical product failure scenario where a much-desired expensive clothing item failed after being worn and washed for the first time. Almost all of the respondents, 89.8%, indicated that they would be very to extremely dissatisfied when a product failure occurs, while 72.2 % indicated the failure would be very to extremely severe. A total of 77.7% of the respondents would tell significant others about the product problem the more expensive the

item, while 78.6% would complain to the retailer. Objective 4 described the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumers' intention to complain. Age, population group, and likelihood to complain to the retailer, the higher the price, affected electronic complaints (Factor 1). Older millennials were more likely to complain using electronic means (posting on social media). Age, population group, education level, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling friends/family, the higher the product price, affected intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2). Dissatisfaction with the product failure and the likelihood of telling friends or family when durability is at stake, significantly affected switching intention (Factor 3). No significant differences existed between the different demographic groups and switching intentions. Age, dissatisfaction with product failure, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the price, and the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable product affected negative word-of-mouth intention (Factor 4).

CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a brief overview of the study, followed by the conclusions per the research objectives, the practical and theoretical implications, and limitations and recommendations for future research.

5.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, i.e., product cost, product durability, product dissatisfaction, and the severity of the product failure; consumer-related variables, i.e., demographics; and consumer complaint intentions following perceptions of clothing product performance failure. Respondents had to indicate anticipated clothing product failures based on a product failure scenario. Items adapted from existing scales were used to measure perceptions of clothing performance failures (Kincade, *et al.*, 1998), consumer complaint intentions (Phau & Sari, 2004; Lee & Cude 2012; Wirtz & Matilla, 2004; Clark 2013; Chan *et al.* 2016), and selected product-specific variables, including product dissatisfaction, product failure severity, and price and durability related to specific consumer complaint behavioural intentions (Keng & Liu, 1997, Phau & Sari, 2004). Respondents had to rate the severity of the anticipated failure and their level of dissatisfaction. Respondents indicated the type of complaint actions they would employ. This study included clothing consumers 19 years and older who reside across South Africa. The data was collected with an online questionnaire and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The main findings are discussed below.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS IN TERMS OF OBJECTIVES

5.2.1. Objective 1: Consumers' perception of clothing product performance failures

Respondents had to react to a hypothetical product failure scenario about a much desired expensive clothing item. Respondents had to select three product failures from a list of 10 possible failures that would cause them to be the most dissatisfied to assist in narrowing down the response options. Respondents then had to identify the failure that would cause the most dissatisfaction. Almost a third of the respondents indicated they would be the most dissatisfied when the fabric rips, tears, or forms holes, while nearly a quarter when the clothing item does not keep its shape due to shrinkage, stretching, or twisting. Also, almost 10% indicated that they would be the most dissatisfied when

fasteners like zippers, buttons, etc., break or become undone. In these instances, the failures could make the garment unwearable. Only 8.8% of respondents would be dissatisfied when the item's colour fades after being washed. Therefore, the results show that most respondents expect structural failures to be more pertinent than aesthetic failures. Structural failures are generally considered more severe and would make the garment unuseful or unwearable. The findings correspond with Laitlala *et al.* (2015), who found the reasons for clothing product disposal relate to technical flaws, like holes or tears, that render the garment unwearable.

5.2.2 Objective 2: Consumers' intention to complain following clothing product performance failure

The data relating to consumers' complaint behavioural intentions were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistical analysis (EFA). Respondents had to indicate whether they would take action or not. A total of 172 respondents indicated that they would not take action, while 644 stated that they would complain. Respondents intended to engage in various types of complaint behavioural options. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (64%) indicated that they were likely to extremely likely to tell their family and/or friends about the failure in person or by phoning them, and more than half would WhatsApp them. However, the majority of respondents were not likely to post their dissatisfaction with the product failure on their Facebook/Instagram profiles for their friends to see. They were unlikely to not at all likely to complain on the retailer's website (58.8%) and post negative comments on the retailer's social media/pages for all to see (86.5%). Consumers are generally more inclined to talk about negative experiences than positive ones (Weiner, 2000). Also, consumers share their negative experiences with twice as many people as they would about a positive experience. 10-15 people (Rad, 2011). As consumers trust their significant others' opinions, negative word-of-mouth could create negative expectations about retailers and their products, to their detriment. With social media, complainers can reach a much wider circle of friends. Fortunately for retailers, most respondents were not likely to post their dissatisfaction with the product failure on their Facebook/Instagram profiles to their friends. Also, more than half of the respondents were likely to extremely likely to switch between brands or retailers. As private complaint actions are not visible to retailers, they remain unaware of the consumers' dissatisfaction and can not resolve it.

Respondents would rather complain to retailers (second parties) in person or by e-mail than by phone or posting information on retailers' social media pages. Most respondents were also not inclined to complain to the media or third-party consumer protection organisations. There could be various reasons for respondents' choice of complaint action, but these fall outside the current study's scope.

The EFA resulted in four relevant factors: electronic complaints (Factor 1), complaining to the retailer and consumer protection organisation (Factor 2), switching intention (Factor 3), and negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4). Electronic complaints (negative electronic word-of-mouth) (mean 1.73) and complaints to the retailer and consumer protection organisation had the lowest mean scores (mean = 2.34), indicating relatively weak complaint intentions. Respondent's switching intention had the highest mean score (mean = 2.78), followed by negative word-of-mouth (mean = 2.73), indicating relatively pertinent complaint intentions. Therefore, consumers who purchase much desired expensive clothing items would probably be likely to switch brands or retailers or tell significant others about the product problem when a product failure occurs. However, their intentions to contact the retailer or a consumer protection organisation or to communicate to a broader consumer audience using negative electronic word-of-mouth are relatively weak.

5.2.3. Objective 3: The product-specific variables associated with consumers' intention to complain

Product-specific variables included: the level of product dissatisfaction, the severity of the product failure, product price and durability. Almost all of the respondents (89.9%) indicated they would be very to extremely dissatisfied with the product failure, and most (72.2%) stated the failure would be very to extremely severe. Also, more than three-quarters of the respondents strongly agreed that they would tell significant others (77.7%) or complain to the retailer (78.6%) about the problem, the higher the item's price. The same pattern emerged for durability and intention to tell family or friends (72.6%) or the retailer (66.5%) but to a lesser degree. Product price seems to play a more prominent role in the intentions to contact family/friends or the retailer than product failure severity. A possible reason for this could be that price is more concrete to judge than durability.

Respondents were more inclined to tell family and friends about the product problem in person; the more they agreed with the likelihood of contacting friends, the higher the product price. However, the agreement level with complaining to the retailer (the higher the price) could not be connected to the likelihood of complaining to the retailer in person. Respondents were probably more likely to contact family and friends to gain emotional support or vent anger the higher the product price. Respondents complained to retailers about product failures irrespective of product price. Agreement level with the likelihood of talking to significant others, the higher price could not be linked to posting information on personal social media pages for friends to see. However, respondents were more likely to post information on retailers' social media for anyone to see; the higher the agreement with the likelihood to complain to the retailer as product price increases. Respondents could consider it more worthwhile to post comments where everybody could see them than posting them only to personal friends. By using the retailer's social media to post complaints, complainants could reach a much wider audience and put retailers under pressure to resolve complaints (Grégoire, *et al.*, 2015).

A highly significant relationship exists between the agreement level to complain to friends and family when the product price is high and the intention to text family and friends about the problem/failure. More respondents who agreed were likely to WhatsApp their friends or family about the product problem than those who were unlikely. This finding emphasises the importance of negative word-of-mouth via WhatsApp as a complaint channel.

The conclusions for the agreement with the likelihood of telling family and friends as product price increases by complaint intention also apply to the agreement with the likelihood of telling family and friends as durability expectations increase by the different complaint intentions. The higher the agreement level with the likelihood of informing significant others about the problem as perceptions of product durability increase, the higher the likelihood of talking to trusted family and friends face-to-face or by phoning them. Also, as durability perceptions increased, respondents who agreed to tell family and friends about the problem were more likely to WhatsApp their friends and family than those who were indifferent or disagreed. Retailers should be aware that consumers are more likely to communicate their dissatisfaction about product failure to their significant others when the product is more durable. Negative word-of-mouth about product failure, specifically durable products, could be detrimental to clothing retailers' reputations. Although social media has become a space for individual expression (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016), agreement with the likelihood of talking to friends and family about the problem, the more durable product, cannot be associated with posting experiences on Facebook/Instagram profiles for friends to see.

The higher the agreement with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer as product durability increases, the more likely respondents were to contact the retailer in person or complain by e-mail. The agreement level could not be associated with the likelihood of posting information on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages.

Respondents' level of dissatisfaction is related to specific complaint intentions. The higher the level of dissatisfaction, the more likely respondents were to engage in negative word-of-mouth in person or by calling family and/or friends, to Whatsapp family and/or friends, and to switch brands. Dissatisfaction level played a role in respondents' intentions to switch privately between brand names but not between retailers. Dissatisfaction level was not related to the likelihood of complaining to the retailer in person or by phoning them. However, more respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied were likely to complain via e-mail than those who were slightly to moderately dissatisfied. Respondents with high dissatisfaction levels could believe that complaining via e-mail is a better alternative than confronting retailers in person.

Significant relationships exist between the severity of the failure and telling family and friends (p -value = <0.001), complaining to the retailer in person (p -value = <0.001) and complaining to the retailer by e-mail (p -value = <0.001). Respondents were equally likely to complain to the retailer in person, irrespective of the level of dissatisfaction. However, the higher the product failure severity, the more likely the intention to complain to the retailer in person. Product failure severity appears to play a more prominent role in intention to complain to the retailer in person than dissatisfaction.

5.2.4 Objective 4: To describe the relationship between selected product-specific variables, demographics and consumers' intention to complain

Separate univariate ANOVAs were done to compare the effect of the different independent variables on the specific dependent variable. The independent variables included: product-specific variables and demographic characteristics. The dependent variables constituted the four factors extracted from the EFA, i.e., electronic complaints (Factor 1), complaining to the retailer and consumer protection organisation (Factor 2), switching intention (Factor 3), and negative word-of-mouth (Factor 4).

Age, population group, and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price significantly affected electronic complaint intention (Factor 1). Although the means reflected a relatively weak complaint intention using electronic means, older Millennials were more likely to post negative experiences than the other age groups. Electronic means included personal Facebook/Instagram profiles, the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages, consumer complaint websites, and online newspapers. The group means for the population groups indicate a relatively weak complaint intention. Also, respondents who disagreed with the likelihood of complaining to the retailer - the higher the product price - had a weak complaint intention ($M \leq 1.5$). In contrast, those who agreed had a relatively weak complaint intention ($M > 1.6 \leq 2.5$).

Age, population group, education, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling friends or family, the higher the product price, and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price affected intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations (Factor 2). Middle-aged/mature respondents and respondents with a degree or diploma were more likely to contact the retailer or consumer protection organisations, though the means reflected relatively weak complaint intentions. The means for the different population groups also reflected relatively weak complaint intentions. Respondents who agreed they would experience very to extremely severe product failures were more likely to complain. Intention to complain to the retailer or consumer protection organisation was relatively weak across the product failure severity groups, and the likelihood of telling family and friends as well as the retailer groups, the higher the product price.

Only product failure dissatisfaction and the likelihood of telling friends or family the more durable the product significantly affected switching intention (Factor 3). Respondents who were very to extremely dissatisfied and those who agreed they would be more likely to tell family or friends the more durable the product intended to switch between retailers or brands, reflecting relatively strong switching intentions ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$). Higher levels of product failure dissatisfaction and product durability perception influenced respondents' intention to switch between retailers or brands.

Age, product failure dissatisfaction, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling family and friends, the higher the product price, and the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem, the more durable the product had a significant effect on negative word-of-mouth intention (Factor 4). Negative word-of-mouth manifested in the willingness to tell family or friends about the problem in person or by phoning them and using WhatsApp. The means for the respective age groups imply relatively strong word-of-mouth intentions ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$). Emerging and young Millennials were more likely to spread negative word-of-mouth. Higher levels of product dissatisfaction ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$) can be associated with negative word-of-mouth, with means ($M > 2.5 \leq 3.5$) reflecting a relatively strong complaint intention. Respondents who agreed with the likelihood of telling family and friends about the problem as product price and durability increased had relatively strong word-of-mouth intentions.

Only three independent variables influenced electronic word-of-mouth intention: older Millennials, the different population groups and those who agreed that they would complain to the retailer, the higher the product price had relatively weak electronic complaint intentions. Two demographic variables and one product-specific variable were relevant. Six independent variables influenced the intention to complain to the retailer and consumer protection organisations: age, education level, population group, product failure severity, the likelihood of telling friends or family, the higher the product price, and the likelihood of complaining to the retailer, the higher the product price, though the means reflected relatively weak complaint intentions. Three demographic variables and three product-specific variables were relevant. Respondents were more inclined to complain when the higher the product price and the more severe the product failure. Electronic word-of-mouth and complaints to retailers or consumer protection organisations are visible to retailers. Therefore, retailers will become aware of the consumers' product failure dissatisfaction.

Switching intention and "traditional" negative word-of-mouth are hidden complaint actions as retailers are unaware of these actions. The effect of these actions manifests in decreased sales and lower levels of customer loyalty. Only two independent variables influenced switching intention: product dissatisfaction and the likelihood of telling friends or family the longer the product should last. The intention to switch retailers or brands was relatively strong. Two product-related variables were relevant. Interestingly, demographic variables did not affect switching intention.

Word-of-mouth intention was relatively strong. Five independent variables affected negative word-of-mouth intention: age, product failure severity, product failure dissatisfaction, the likelihood of telling friends or family the higher the product price, and the likelihood of telling friends or family the more durable the product. Emerging and young Millennials were likelier to engage in negative word-of-mouth with family or friends in person (or by phoning them) and texting Whatsapp messages. One demographic variable and four product-related variables were relevant.

5.3 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Understanding how perceived clothing product failure influences post-purchase consumer behaviour is essential for retailers. The results of this study aid in creating an awareness of the clothing product failures consumers expect to experience and their specific complaint intentions. Customer feedback about dissatisfactory products would allow retailers and manufacturers to source/develop products that best meet consumers' quality expectations. Retailers should establish effective return policies and customer complaint-handling programs to resolve product failure dissatisfaction.

An awareness of the different kinds of complaint intentions would enable retailers to understand the impact of private complaint actions, including switching brands, boycotting retailers and traditional negative word-of-mouth, and activities visible to retailers, including electronic complaints and complaints to retailers.

This study has shown that dissatisfied consumers are more likely to engage in private complaint actions when clothing product failure occurs. Respondents had a relatively strong intention to inform their family or friends about their dissatisfaction by telling them in person (or by phoning them) and WhatsApping them. Traditional negative word-of-mouth is detrimental to retailers as consumers tend to inform more people about negative experiences that could tarnish retailers' reputations. Although clothing retailers cannot prevent customers from spreading negative word-of-mouth, they should invest in developing/sourcing products that meet quality expectations that could alleviate the negative effect of "harmful" word-of-mouth. Respondents were more likely to spread negative word-of-mouth the more severe the product failure severity, the higher the level of product failure dissatisfaction, the higher the product's price, and the more durable the product should be. Retailers should be aware that emerging and young Millennials are more likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth. It is, therefore, essential that they should be satisfied with clothing products to prevent them from harming retailers.

Respondents were also more likely to switch brands and boycott the retailer. These findings emphasise that respondents would keep their dissatisfaction "private", which on its own, is a problem

for clothing retailers and manufacturers. When dissatisfied customers fail to complain to retailers by leaving silently, retailers lose the opportunity to address product problems and resolve customer dissatisfaction. Clothing retailers should, therefore, explicitly encourage customers to complain to them directly to facilitate retailers to address and remedy the problem. Higher levels of product dissatisfaction could be linked to switching intentions. Therefore, it is essential that consumers are satisfied with clothing products.

Respondents had relatively weak electronic complaint intentions and intentions to complain to retailers and consumer protection organisations. Electronic word-of-mouth and complaints to retailers or consumer protection organisations are visible to retailers. Therefore, clothing retailers can do something about consumers' dissatisfaction. Retailers should address complaints effectively by improving their complaint handling. Effective complaint handling will help retailers build sustainable long-term relationships with consumers, which are much more profitable in the long run.

5.4 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

In the South African context, studies have been done on consumer dissatisfaction and CCB with specific product categories, including major household appliances (Donoghue & De Klerk, 2008) and custom-made clothing (Makopo *et al.*, 2016). This current study extends the previous studies by grouping the different complaint intentions into meaningful categories: electronic word-of-mouth, intention to complain to the retailer or consumer protection organisation, switching intention, and negative word-of-mouth. In addition, the study describes the effect of demographic variables (consumer-related variables) and product failure dissatisfaction, product failure severity, product durability, and price (all product-specific variables) on consumers' complaint intentions following perceptions of clothing product failure. The scale items used in this study were adapted from existing scales to understand better the factors influencing clothing consumers' complaint intentions following product failure. The scale items and methodology developed for this specific study could be valuable for future researchers to explore the factors influencing consumers' complaint behaviour/intentions concerning different product categories, such as luxury brands and fast fashion brands.

5.5 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents were recruited using convenience, quota and snowball sampling, all non-probability sampling techniques. Although an effort was made to target clothing consumers with specific demographic characteristics to reflect the demographic profile of South African adult consumers, the sample demographics were over-represented. For example, the sample included more White respondents, females, respondents with higher education levels, respondents with higher income levels, and respondents residing in Gauteng than anticipated. To address this problem, fieldworkers

could distribute hardcopy questionnaires to groups of respondents with predefined demographic quotas. Data collection with hardcopy questionnaires will also allow participants without internet access to participate. Due to the non-probability sampling, the findings cannot be generalised to the bigger population of clothing consumers.

This study formed part of a more extensive study of which the questionnaire included eight sections. Only sections A, B, D, F, and H were relevant to my research project. These sections measured where respondents purchase most of their clothing for themselves (A), their perceptions of anticipated product failure (B), complaint intentions (D), product-specific variables and complaint intentions (F) and demographic variables (H). The anticipated product failures that would cause the most dissatisfaction and the complaint items measured respondents' likelihood to experience specific product failures and to engage in complaint actions. Therefore actual perceptions and behaviour were not measured, implying that the research findings are limited to intention data, which do not reflect "real life" reactions (Weiner, 2000; Frasquet *et al.*, 2021). However, measurement on intention scales (rating scales) allows the researcher to do more sophisticated statistical analysis than dichotomous response scales, often used in memory recall studies (Lee & Cude, 2012; Sengupta *et al.*, 2018). With memory recall, memory lapses are possible (Frasquet *et al.*, 2021). Hypothetical questioning counters the effect of memory recall and allows participation without dissatisfaction with a particular event – a precondition for inclusion in memory recall studies (Fisher *et al.*, 2010:216). Scenario-based research allows the respondents to "role play" by responding to the hypothetical scenario, although it may seem artificial. However, scenario-based research is commonly applied in consumer complaint behaviour studies to facilitate data collection and more sophisticated statistical analysis.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study makes a theoretical contribution to the current South African and international body of literature on perceived clothing product failure and the effect of product-specific variables and demographics on consumers' complaint intentions.

Clothing product failures cause customer dissatisfaction. Consumers may respond in different ways. Consumers are more likely to complain to their friends/family or switch between brands or retailers than to contact retailers or consumer protection organisations and use electronic modes to express dissatisfaction. Private complaint actions are not ideal, as retailers do not get the opportunity to resolve the problem or turn dissatisfied customers into satisfied ones. Complaints on social media can go viral, which could be very damaging to retailers. Unfortunately, many consumers do not realise how valuable their feedback is to retailers. By complaining, consumers become part of the solution.

Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning (Bill Gates).

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Addendum A

Consent letter and questionnaire



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

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

CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This research forms part of a larger research project in the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences, University of Pretoria to explore consumers' intentions following clothing product failure and in-store/online service failure associated with clothing retailers.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

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

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

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

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

WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE AND RIGHTS OF ACCESS TO DATA

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

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

CONSENT

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

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

I agree to the terms and conditions as stated above:

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

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

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

Yes

No

In which province of South Africa do you live? (9 options)

Eastern Cape

Free State

Gauteng

KwaZulu-Natal

Limpopo

Mpumalanga

Northern Cape

North West

Consumer complaint behaviour questionnaire

Section A – Retailer information

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

Section B – Failure scenario

Product	Service
Product failure V3 <i>Imagine that you recently purchased an expensive clothing item that you really wanted at retailer X. After having worn and washed the item once, you realise that you are not completely satisfied due to product failure.</i>	In-store service failure V3 <i>Imagine that you are shopping for clothing for yourself at retailer X. During your shopping experience you realise that you are not completely satisfied with the in-store service delivery.</i>
V4 Select three product failures that will cause you to be the most dissatisfied .	V4 Select three in-store/online service failures that will cause you to be the most dissatisfied .
V4.1 Small balls of fluff form on the fabric’s surface V4.2 Fabric rips, tears or forms holes V4.3 Fasteners (e.g. zippers, buttons etc.) break or become undone V4.4 Decorative trimmings (e.g. embroidery, sequins, ribbons) become undone V4.5 Seams and/or stitches unravel or do not stay intact V4.6 Hems unravel V4.7 Colour of the item fades after being washed V4.8 Bright colours bleed into lighter colours of the item after being washed (e.g. the white stripes of your blue and white striped shirt turn light blue) V4.9 Printed designs on the fabric rub off/fade V4.10 Clothing item does not keep their shape due to shrinking, stretching or twisting V4.11 Other:	In-store service failures V4.1 Untidy store areas (e.g. fitting rooms, till points, etc.) V4.2 Unorganised store layout V4.3 Unpleasant atmosphere (e.g. loud music/staff, uncomfortable room temperature, etc.) V4.4 Unfriendly staff V4.5 Unhelpful staff V4.6 Incompetent staff V4.7 Poor customer service support V4.8 Poor communication with customers V4.9 Unfair return/exchange policy V4.10 Unclear return/exchange policy V4.11 Refund problems V4.12 Stock availability issues (e.g. out of stock) V4.13 Inaccurate information (e.g. misleading product information, incorrect pricing of products) V4.14 Missing price tags V4.15 Difficulties while paying (e.g. under-staffed, trainees serving customers, etc.) V4.16 Long waiting time in queues
	Online service failures V4.17 Received wrong product V4.18 Received wrong size V4.19 Late delivery of products V4.20 Purchased goods never arrived V4.21 Purchased goods damaged during delivery V4.22 Shipment/tracking problems V4.23 Navigational problems on website V4.24 Insufficient information provided on website V4.25 Products incorrectly listed on website as “in stock” when they are in fact out of stock V4.26 Inaccurate information provided on website

	V4.27 Credit card over-charge V4.28 Confusing payment options V4.29 Difficulties when paying V4.30 Unsecure payment facilities V4.31 Poor customer service support V4.32 Poor communication with customers V4.33 Unfair return/exchange policy V4.34 Unclear return/exchange policy V4.35 Refund problems
V5 Which one of the three product failures listed below would cause you to be the most dissatisfied ? V5.1 V5.2 V5.3	V5 Which one of the three in-store/online service failures listed below, would cause you to be the most dissatisfied ? V5.1 V5.2 V5.3
V6 Rate your level of dissatisfaction for this product failure (failure x). (1 = Slightly dissatisfied; 2 = Moderately dissatisfied; 3 = Very dissatisfied; 4 = Extremely dissatisfied)	V6 Rate your level of dissatisfaction for this service failure (failure X). (1 = Slightly dissatisfied; 2 = Moderately dissatisfied; 3 = Very dissatisfied; 4 = Extremely dissatisfied)
V7 How severe (serious) would you consider the product/service failure? (product / In-store / Online -) (1 = Not at all severe; 2 = Slightly severe; 3 = Moderately severe; 4 = Very severe; 5 = Extremely severe)	
V8 Who would you blame for the product failure (failure x)? V8.1 the retailer V8.2 the manufacturer V8.3 myself V8.4 Someone else	V8 Who would you blame for the In-store / Online service failure (Failure x) V8.1 the retailer V8.2 my self

Section C – Negative emotions

V9 Please indicate your emotional state following the product/service failure. ((product / In-store / Online) (1 = Not at all X; 2 = Slightly X; 3 = Moderately X; 4 = Very X; 5 = Extremely X)					
I would feel ...	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
V9.1 anxious					
V9.2 angry					
V.9.3 ashamed					
V9.4 sad					
V9.5 frustrated					
V9.6 irritated					
V9.7 disgusted					
V9.8 embarrassed					

Section D – Consumer complaint intention

V10 Following the product/service failure (product / In-store / Online), would you take action? Action means: Informing family and friends about the problem/failure, switching the brand name/retailer, complaining to the retailer, and complaining via social media, etc. (1 = yes, 2 = no) Following the product/service failure (product / In-store / Online) how likely are you to _____

(1 = Extremely unlikely; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Likely; 4 = Extremely likely)	
	Possible items
V10.1	1 Tell your family and friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them?
V10.2	2 Text your family and friends about the problem/failure (e.g. using WhatsApp)
V10.3	3 Post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see
V10.4	4 Switch to another brand name
V10.5	5 Stop buying at the retailer
V10.6	6 Complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)
V10.7	7 Complain to the retailer by phone
V10.8	8 Complain to the retailer by e-mail
V10.9	9 Complain on the retailer's website
V10.10	10 Post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages for anyone to see
V10.11	11 Complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)
V10.12	12 Write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) or a consumer complaint website (e.g. hellopeter.com)

Section E – Motives for complaint intention

V11 Motives		Note: Only for 3 & 4 answered to above questions
(1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree		
V11 No-complaining motives	V11 Why would you not do anything about the problem/failure?	
V11.1	Complaining is too much effort.	
V11.2	The complaint process is a waste of time.	
V11.3	The retailer would not be able to fix the problem.	
V11.4	The problem/failure experienced is no big deal.	
V11.5	I had purchased from the retailer many times before without problems and therefore will not be especially angered when the failure occurs.	
V11.6	I am too shy to complain.	
V11.7	I do not want to be perceived as a nuisance or troublemaker.	
V11.8	The retailer has an unfair return/exchange/refund policy.	
Private action motives		
V12 Family and friends	V12 Why would you tell your family and friends about the problem/failure in person (face-to-face) or by phoning them?	
V12.1	To warn them against the retailer	
V12.2	To prevent them from experiencing the same problem	
V12.3	To feel less dissatisfied	
V12.4	To get rid of my anger	
V12.5	To seek their advice	
V12.6	To harm the retailer	
V12.7	To seek empathy	
V12.8	To stand up for my rights as a consumer	
V13 Private	V13 Why would you text your family and friends about the problem/failure using WhatsApp?	
V13.1	To warn them against the retailer	
V13.2	To prevent them from experiencing the same problem	
V13.3	To feel less dissatisfied	
V13.4	To get rid of my anger	

V13.5	To seek their advice
V13.6	To harm the retailer
V13.7	To seek empathy
V13.8	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V14 Private social media	V14 Why would you post your experience on your Facebook/Instagram profile for your friends to see?
V14.1	To warn them against the retailer
V14.2	To prevent them from experiencing the same problem
V14.3	To feel less dissatisfied
V14.4	To get rid of my anger
V14.5	To seek their advice
V14.6	To harm the retailer
V14.7	To seek empathy
V14.8	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V15 Brand switching	V15 Why would you switch to another brand name?
V15.1	I do not consider the brand name reliable anymore
V15.2	To get rid of my anger
V15.3	To harm the brand name
V15.4	To feel less dissatisfied
V16 Boycotting retailer	V16 Why would you stop buying at the retailer?
V16.1	I do not consider the retailer reliable anymore
V16.2	To get rid of my anger
V16.3	To harm the retailer
V16.4	To feel less dissatisfied
Public action motives	
V17 Complain to the retailer in person	V17 Why would you complain to the retailer in person (face-to-face)?
V17.1	To obtain redress (get a refund/voucher or return/exchange the product)
V17.2	To resolve the problem
V17.3	To better understand the reason for the failure
V17.4	To prevent other consumers from experiencing the same problem
V17.5	To get rid of my anger
V17.6	To feel less dissatisfied
V17.7	To ensure that the retailer is aware of the problem
V17.8	To get an apology from the retailer
V17.9	To help the retailer in preventing future problems/failures
V17.10	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V18 Complain to the retailer by phone	V18 Why would you complain to the retailer by phone?
V18.1	To obtain redress (get a refund/voucher or return/exchange the product)
V18.2	To resolve the problem
V18.3	To better understand the reason for the failure
V18.4	To prevent other consumers from experiencing the same problem
V18.5	To get rid of my anger
V18.6	To feel less dissatisfied
V18.7	To ensure that the retailer is aware of the problem

V18.8	To get an apology from the retailer
V18.9	To help the retailer in preventing future problems/failures
V18.10	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V18.11	Complaining by phone requires less hassle than visiting the retailer in person
V19 Complain to the retailer by e-mail	V19 Why would you complain to the retailer by e-mail?
V19.1	To obtain redress (get a refund/voucher or return/exchange the product)
V19.2	To resolve the problem
V19.3	To better understand the reason for the failure
V19.4	To prevent other consumers from experiencing the same problem
V19.5	To get rid of my anger
V19.6	To feel less dissatisfied
V19.7	To ensure that the retailer is aware of the problem
V19.8	To get an apology from the retailer
V19.9	To help the retailer in preventing future problems/failures
V19.10	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V19.11	Complaining by e-mail requires less hassle than visiting the retailer in person
V20 Complain on the retailer's website	V20 Why would you post a complaint on the retailer's website?
V20.1	To obtain redress (get a refund/voucher or return/exchange the product)
V20.2	To resolve the problem
V20.3	To better understand the reason for the failure
V20.4	To prevent consumers from experiencing the same problem
V20.5	To get rid of my anger
V20.6	To feel less dissatisfied
V20.7	To ensure that the retailer is aware of the problem.
V20.8	To get an apology from the retailer
V20.9	To help the retailer in preventing future problems/failures
V20.10	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V20.11	Complaining on the retailer's website is more convenient than at the retailer in person
V20.12	Complaints on the retailer's website are handled more effectively than in the store
V21 Retailer's social media pages	V21 Why would you post negative comments on the retailer's Twitter/Facebook/Instagram pages? (i.e. where anyone and the retailer can see the post)?
V21.1	To prevent other consumers from experiencing the same problem
V21.2	To get rid of my anger
V21.3	To feel less dissatisfied
V21.4	To ensure that the retailer is aware of the problem
V21.5	To get an apology from the retailer
V21.6	To help the retailer in preventing future problems/failures
V21.7	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V21.8	To get the problem resolved faster than when complaining in the store
V21.9	As complaints are visible to the public, it can be damaging to the retailer
V21.10	Sharing my dissatisfaction may harm the retailer's reputation
V21.11	To prevent others from shopping at the retailer
V22 Consumer protection organisation	V22 Why would you complain to a consumer protection organisation (e.g. the National Consumer Commission)?
V22.1	To seek assistance in resolving the problem as the retailer is unable to resolve the problem

V22.2	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V22.3	To get rid of my anger
V22.4	To feel less dissatisfied
V22.5	To aid in warning other people against the retailer
V23 Complain to newspaper	V23 Why would you write/post a complaint to the press (newspaper, magazine etc.) and/or a consumer complaint website (e.g. hellopeter.com)?
V23.1	To seek assistance in resolving the problem as the retailer is unable to resolve the problem
V23.2	To stand up for my rights as a consumer
V23.3	To get rid of my anger
V23.4	To aid in warning other people against the retailer
V23.5	By complaining, problems will be addressed that will be to the benefit of other consumers
V23.6	To get the problem resolved faster than when complaining in the store
V23.7	As complaints are visible to the public, it can be damaging to the retailer
V23.8	Sharing my dissatisfaction may harm the retailer's reputation
V23.9	To prevent other consumers from experiencing the same problem
V23.10	To feel less dissatisfied
V23.11	To seek other people's advice

Section F- Product specific variables and consumer complaint behavioural intention

Only for clothing product

V24 Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below:

- V24.1 The higher the price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem.
- V24.2 The higher the price of the clothing item, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer
- V24.3 The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to tell my friends and family about the problem
- V24.4 The longer the clothing item should last, the more likely I am to complain to the retailer

(1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree

Section G – Consumer personality

V25 PERSONALITY INVENTORY

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

You should rate the extent to which **the pair of traits both apply to you**, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

- 1 = Disagree strongly
- 2 = Disagree moderately
- 3 = Disagree a little
- 4 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 = Agree a little
- 6 = Agree moderately
- 7 = Agree strongly

- V25.1 Extraverted, enthusiastic
- V25.2 Critical, quarrelsome
- V25.3 Dependable, self-disciplined
- V25.4 Anxious, easily upset
- V25.5 Open to new experiences, curious
- V25.6 Reserved, quiet

- V25.7** Sympathetic, warm
- V25.8** Disorganised, careless
- V25.9** Calm, emotionally stable
- V25.10** Conventional, uncreative

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

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

Thank you for taking time to participate in the study.

Addenda B

Ethics approval



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Ethics Committee

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

ETHICS SUBMISSION: LETTER OF APPROVAL

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

Reference number: NAS169/2019
Project title: The role of consumer-related variables in consumers' complaint behavioural intentions following product or service failure in the clothing retail context

Dear Dr S Donoghue,

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

Please note the following about your ethics approval:

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

Ethics approval is subject to the following:

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

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

We wish you the best with your research.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Donoghue'.

Chairperson: NAS Ethics Committee

Addenda C

Plagiarism declaration

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The Department of Consumer and Food Sciences places great emphasis upon integrity and ethical conduct in the preparation of all written work submitted for academic evaluation.

While academic staff teach you about referencing techniques and how to avoid plagiarism, you too have a responsibility in this regard. If you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required, you should speak to your lecturer before any written work is submitted.

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

Students who commit plagiarism will not be given any credit for plagiarised work. The matter may also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious contravention of the University's rules and can lead to expulsion from the University.

The declaration which follows must accompany all written work submitted while you are a student of the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences. No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and attached.

Full names of student: Rozanne Grobbelaar

Student number: 20072580

Topic of work: Educator

Declaration

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

SIGNATURE:

