# THE MATURE FEMALE CLOTHING SHOPPER: PROFILES AND SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR

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## OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie is onderneem ten einde die vroulike kledingverbruikers van 55 en ouer te tipeer. Die veranderlikes wat 'n bydrae kon lewer ten opsigte van die verskille in verbruikersgedrag is ondersoek. Die verbruikers is gesegmenteer as die kledinggematigdes, kleding-entoesiaste en die kleding-onbetrokkenes. Die drie groeperings verskil beduidend van mekaar ten opsigte van die volgende veranderlikes naamlik: kleding-betrokkenheid, kleding-oriëntasie, aktiwiteite, belangstellings, opinies, familie oriëntasie, behoeftes en media gebruik. Geen beduidende verskille kon gevind word tussen die drie groeperings ten opsigte van die veranderlikes evalueringskriteria van klere en winkeleienskappe nie. Profiele van die verskillende trosse is ontwikkel en die bemarkingsimplikasies is uitgewys. Aanbevelings vir verdere navorsing word gedoen.

## ABSTRACT

This study was designed to profile the mature female clothing shopper. More specifically certain variables that could be attributed to differences in consumer behaviour were investigated. Mature female clothing shoppers were segmented as clothing moderates, clothing enthusiasts and the clothing unconcerned. These three cluster groups significantly differed regarding clothing involvement, clothing orientation, activities, interests, opinions, family orientation, needs and media usage. No significant differences were found among the three groups regarding evaluative criteria for clothing and clothing store attributes. Profiles of the clusters were developed, along with applicable marketing implications. Recommendations for further research are made.

In the USA the most important consumer market in terms of growth is the mature market (consumers of 55 years and older). Contrary to research on the clothing preferences and problems of the elderly or mature consumer where specific trends have repeatedly been confirmed by various researchers, there is a need for comprehensive research on the marketplace behaviour of the mature consumer (Huddleston, Ford & Bickle, 1993, p. 27; Lumpkin, 1985, p. 271; Shim & Bickle, 1993, p. 55). Very little, if any, research on this growing market segment has been done in South Africa. American research findings cannot without question be accepted as valid for South African circumstances, but have to be tested empirically. Lumpkin (1985, p. 286) wrote: "Research should continue to focus on this important group of consumers to develop a more complete profile of the sub-segments, so that marketing strategies can be matched to their needs."

## PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The broad research aim of this study is to enhance the existing body of knowledge on the mature female clothing shopper. This can be achieved by setting the following goals:
(a) to investigate differences in the consumer behaviour of elderly/mature female clothing shoppers,
(b) to investigate certain variables that could be attributed to these differences, i.e. clothing involvement, clothing orientation, clothing evaluative criteria, clothing store attributes, lifestyle and media usage,
(c) to profile different clusters/groups of consumers that share the same characteristics according to the differentiation variables and
(d) to examine the implications for marketers in reference to the marketing mix, target markets (consumer profiles) and evaluation criteria set by elderly consumers in the evaluation of clothing stores and -items.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The mature market constitutes a heterogeneous group of consumers and lends itself to the basic requirements for effective **market segmentation**, i.e. measurability, size, reachability, identification, sufficiency, stability and accessibility (Greco, 1984, p. 7; Schiffman & Kanuk, 1994, pp. 82-85). Research on segmenting mature consumers has been reported by several researchers. They have investigated various basis for this segmentation. Lumpkin (1985, pp. 272-289) identified three market segments of consumers who have unique shopping orientation profiles, i.e. active shoppers, economic shoppers and uninvolved or apathetic shoppers. Based on information sources Lumpkin, Greenberg and Goldstucker (1985, pp. 75-105) divided the market into three segments: confident comparison shoppers, inactive/apathetic, critical shoppers as well as price and quality/guarantee-conscious, personalized shoppers. Lifestyle characteristics and the importance of retail store attributes served as bases for segmenting the market into five groups, i.e. shoppers, positive thinkers, the educationally orientated, socially active consumers and credit prone consumers (Huddleston et al., 1993, pp. 26-31). Research by Greco and Paksoy (1989, pp. 7-23) was developed into psychographic and perceived information source importance profiles of mature fashion-conscious and non-fashion-conscious shopper segments. This provides evidence that clothing consumers may be segmented on the basis of fashion-consciousness and not age alone. Mail order catalogue users could be viewed as a market segment. Shim and Bickle (1993, pp. 53-64) divided these shoppers into three groups according to perceived height, i.e. petite, medium and tall. A profile of elderly heavy catalogue users can be found in Shim and Mahoney's research (1992, pp. 49-58).

**Clothing involvement and clothing orientation** of the mature consumer seem to be unexplored by researchers. Clothing involvement is defined as "a person's perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and

interests" (Zaichkowsky, 1985, p. 342). Laurent and Kapferer (1985, p. 43) refer to five facets of involvement, i.e. the perceived importance of the product; the perceived risk associated with the product including the perceived importance of negative consequences in case of a poor choice; as well as the perceived probability of making such a mistake; the symbolic or sign value attributed to the product; and the hedonist value of the product. Clothing involvement has been determined in segmentation studies of tuxedo customers (May, Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992, pp. 31-38) and big and tall men (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1991, pp. 16-24) but no such information regarding the mature consumer could be found. Clothing orientation could be described in a similar way as shopping orientation, i.e. a shopper's style that places particular emphasis on certain activities, interests and opinions regarding clothing (definition adapted from Shim & Mahoney, 1992, p. 57). Clothing orientation has been included as a variable in a segmentation study by Shim and Kotsiopulos (1991, p. 18). They used an adapted form of Solomon's (1987, pp. 110-128) and Tigert, Ring and King's (1975, pp. 46-52) questionnaires to identify clothing orientation. However, no research could be found that determined clothing orientation of mature consumers. Fashion innovativeness, fashion interest and fashion awareness are dimensions of clothing orientation but research on the mature consumer and fashion is scant, especially in connection with market segmentation. Lifestyle characteristics such as social activity, positive thinking, shopping orientation and credit-pronenes seem to be predictors of fashion opinion leadership of mature consumers (Huddleston et al., 1993, pp. 26, 28-30; Greco & Paksoy, 1989, p. 20).

Lumpkin and his co-workers investigated specific aspects of the elderly consumers' behaviour. Patronage behaviour, use of information sources, **store and product attributes** as well as age and retirement as key factors in determining shopping behaviour are examples of variables that were tested. Quite a number of attributes have been identified. When compared with research findings of Huddleston and her co-workers certain attributes seem to be of importance, e.g. product quality, attractive prices, sizes and styles suited to age, store reputation, variety in one store and availability of advertised products. Retailers' and elderly consumers' viewpoints of the importance of store attributes were also compared (Huddleston, Ford & Mahoney, 1990, p. 75; Lumpkin & Hite, 1988, pp. 315-323; Lumpkin et al., 1985, pp. 75, 87, 101, 102; Lumpkin, 1985, pp. 271, 276, 280-284; Lumpkin, 1984, pp. 622-626; Lumpkin & Greenberg, 1982, pp. 69, 79, 82-84).

Psychographics and demographics alone are not sufficient to typify consumers to the extent that marketers can use the typologies to channel their marketing efforts. It is therefore necessary to focus attention on **lifestyle** in order to form a more comprehensive view of consumer characteristics (Fox, 1989, pp. 80-83; Huddleston et al., 1990, p. 73). Lifestyle can be described as a composite of perceptible and non-perceptible variables that culminates in a person's daily living. The different components of lifestyle are shown in Figure 1.
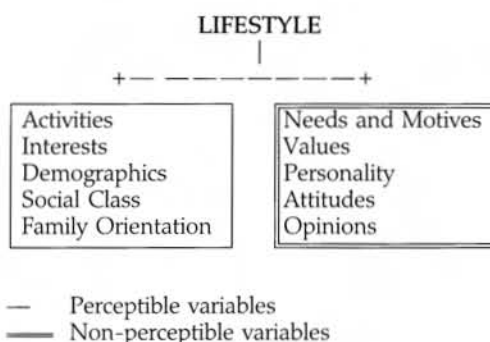


LIFESTYLE

| Activities | Needs and Motives |
| Interests | Values |
| Demographics | Personality |
| Social Class | Attitudes |
| Family Orientation | Opinions |

— Perceptible variables
— Non-perceptible variables

**Figure 1: The lifestyle-component model**
(Fox, 1989, p. 81)

Due to the difficulty and complexity of measuring the non-perceptible variables more emphasis was placed on the perceptible variables in the research without totally disregarding the non-perceptible variables.

The influence of retirement on lifestyle and consumer behaviour is mentioned by Lumpkin and Greenberg (1982, p. 84) as well as Huddleston et al. (1993, p. 30). The importance placed on retail attributes in relationship to lifestyle characteristics is pointed out by Huddleston et al. (1990, p. 73). A relationship was found between the lifestyle characteristics of mature female consumers and the importance of retail store attributes (convenience attributes, age-related attributes, quality/reputation, price attributes and credit attributes) (Lumpkin et al., 1985, pp. 95-99). Lifestyle characteristics such as social activity, positive thinking, shopping orientation and credit-proneness seem to be predictors of fashion opinion leadership (Huddleston et al., 1993, pp. 26, 28-30; Greco & Paksoy, 1989, p. 20).

Traditionally consumers' age has been considered an important basis for market segmentation e.g. children, teens and adults. According to Martin (1976, p. 453) major differences exist among generations with particular emphasis on alternatives considered, predispositions formed prior to shopping and reliance on media for information. Lifestyle patterns of this group are of interest too because lifestyles directly impact on preferences and consumption (Shim & Bickle, 1993, p. 53). According to Smith and Moschis (1985, p. 75) elderly consumers differ from younger consumers and there may be more differences among elderly consumers than among younger market segments.

Knowledge of consumer's **media usage** enables the marketer to target the prospective consumer and predict media usage. It is therefore common practice in lifestyle and typology research to include media items (Fox, 1989, pp. 180-184; Terblanche, 1990, pp. 218-221; Shim & Kotsiopulus, 1991, p. 19). Media exposure of the elderly and their relationship to fashionability were examined. The results indicated that significant differences existed between fashionability and media exposure for female styles. Those who selected classic styles used more sources of fashion information than those who selected fashionable styles (Chowdhary, 1988, pp. 23-30).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
**Sample selection and profile**
The population of interest for this study is mature female clothing shoppers in clothing stores/boutiques. The target population was defined as all female clothing shoppers over the age of 55 living in the municipal area of Stellenbosch during the time of the study (November 1993). Data was obtained from voters lists of the voter areas, i.e. Stellenbosch and Helderberg. These lists were provided by the Department of Internal Affairs. From the total of 16 945 people a universe of 1 144 (6,75%) ladies (55 years and older) were drawn using their birth dates. These names were cross-controlled with the telephone directory for the area. Kaiser and Chandler (1984, p. 207) states that "... telephone directories have been noted as providing fairly good sampling frames, although a given directory may not include new subscribers or those who have requested unlisted numbers". For the pre-test a systematic random stratified sample was taken of all the residential areas and a reply rate of 65,38% (n = 68) was obtained. Using the same method of sample generation, the main study sample size was N = 367 of which 212 questionnaires were usable for statistical analysis. This reflects a reply rate of 57,76%.

The majority of the sample participants (50%) were in the age grouping 55 to 64. The rest of the sample represented the age groupings 65 to 74 (32%) and 75 and older (17%). Of these participants 65% were still married and lived in their own houses.

Total annual income varied between less than R999 and more than R300 000 with an average income of between R10 000 and R59 000 (57%). The qualifications of the participants were relatively high with 79% having standard 10 or higher diplomas. Forty three percent are retired and a further 33% never followed any career.

Clothing expenditure ranged between less than R99 per month and 79% of the sample spend between R0 to R299 per month on clothing. These purchases were not only made in the Stellenbosch municipal area but also in other centres.

In summary the sample profile reflected a young-older female buyer, with (a) relatively high education qualifications; (b) a moderate income; and (c) living in her own home. The sample profile is influenced by the relatively large grouping of females who were retired and not employed. Due to the moderate income very little is spend on clothing on a monthly basis.

## Measurement of constructs

As the lifestyle and clothing shopping behaviour of consumers were studied, a questionnaire had to be designed with the objectives of the study as guideline.

Section A of the compiled questionnaire reflected *demographic* information and questions on the geographic buying orientation.

The Personal Involvement Index (PII) of Zaichkowsky (1985) was used as base document to construct Section B, namely *clothing involvement*. Twenty word pairs were used on a 7-point semantic differential scale. This method has been extensively used by May et al., (1992, p. 33) as well as Shim and Kotsiopulos (1991, p. 18). The standardized alpha coefficients reported by these studies were 0,87 and 0,90 respectively. Shim and Kotsiopulus (1991, p. 18) used eight out of the original 20 items and reported high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0,90). May et al. (1992, p. 33) used four items and reported an alpha coefficient of 0,87.

*Clothing orientation* represented Section C of the questionnaire, making use of the work reported in Tigert et al. (1975, p. 47). A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the construct of clothing orientation. Tigert et al. (1975) report extensively on validating the construct with an independent fashion specific lifestyle/AIO factor analytical technique. Both questionnaires for sections B and C were slightly adjusted for language.

Sections D and E respectively measured *evluative criteria regarding clothing* (Cassill & Drake, 1987, p. 24) and *store attributes* regarding clothing stores (Lumpkin et al., 1985, p. 83) making use of a 5-point Likert type-scale. The main purpose of these sections was to determine those attributes respondents considered as important when selecting clothing or choosing a clothing store.

New items were generated for the measurement of *lifestyle and media usage* (Du Preez & Du Toit, 1991, pp. 9-13; Terblanche, 1990, pp. 206-221; Fox, 1989, pp. 169-184). These items in Section F represented interests, opinions, family orientation, needs and media usage. The responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire was subjected to an item analysis. The refined questionnaire was constructed for use in the main study. Questionnaires were available in Afrikaans and English.

## Questionnaire administration and gathering of data

A pilot study was performed in order to refine the questionnaire for further usage. Field workers were trained to gather the data by personally handing out the questionnaires and also re-collecting them. Their training included handling possible questions regarding the meaning of questionnaire items and helping very elderly and sick respondents to fill out the questionnaire. The main study was undertaken in the same manner but due to the greater sample size 23 field workers were employed and trained.

## Statistical Analysis

The SPSS-X statistical package (release 4.1) was used in all statistical procedures (SPSS-X User Guide, 1988).

The pilot study and the main study data was submitted to descriptive statistical analysis and reliability testing after which all items with item-total correlation ratings lower than 0,20 and –0,20 were eliminated.

Due to the high item-total correlation on the various sub-scales composite variables were computed from the sub-scale items for further analysis.

The Ward clustering method was used to cluster participants based on the squared Euclidian distance between subjects in the10-dimensional computer variable space (SPSS-X User Guide, 1988).

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to determine whether mean differences on the vector of sub-scale/composite variables among clusters are attributable to chance.

## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The aims of the study were to investigate certain variables that could attribute to differences in the consumer behaviour of mature female clothing shoppers. The following results, in accordance with the goals of the study, were obtained.

### Reliability analysis of the main study

The results of the reliability analysis, after elimination of items, are given in Table 1.

### TABLE 1
### COEFFICIENT ALPHA OF THE SUB-SCALES

| VARIABLE | NUMBER OF ITEMS | COEFFICIENT ALPHA |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Clothing involvement | 20 | 0,93 |
| Clothing orientation | 7 | 0,83 |
| Clothing evaluation criteria | 23 | 0,83 |
| Clothing store attributes | 29 | 0,91 |
| Activities | 4 | 0,56 |
| Interests | 8 | 0,62 |
| Opinions | 5 | 0,73 |
| Family orientation | 4 | 0,78 |
| Needs | 5 | 0,43 |
| Media usage | 17 | 0,75 |

Due to the high coefficient alpha ratings of the different sub-scales it can be argued that the different sub-scale items are high in homogeneity. It is therefore justifiable to combine the different items to form new composite variables for further analysis.

### Cluster analysis and MANOVA

Cluster analysis was performed on all the sub-scales of the questionnaire using the SPSS-X program (4.1) to try and partition the total sample of respondents into a number of relatively homogeneous sub-groups that are large enough to be profitably cultivated (SPSS-X User Guide, 1988). A graphical summary (icicle plot) of the cluster analysis, combined with the distance between the two most dissimilar points contained in the clusters that are combined at each stage as provided by the agglomeration schedule, was used to determine the appropriate number of clusters to extract for further analysis.

Based on the criteria of cluster size and homogeneity the extraction of three clusters was deemed appropriate, with Cluster 1 (n = 113), Cluster 2 (n = 71) and Cluster 3 (n = 28).

This substantiates the fact that mature consumers cannot be considered a homogeneous group.

Description of the extracted clusters centered on those composite variables on which cluster membership produces statistically significant differences. To determine the dimensions along which clusters differ a one-way MANOVA was performed via SPSS with cluster membership as independent variable and the 10 composite variables as dependent variables. Wilk's lambda was used to test the statistical significance of the cluster membership main effect. The results of the multivariate tests of significance are shown in Table 2. As can be seen from Table 2 the multivariate null hypothesis of no cluster membership main effect can be rejected ($p < 0,05$).

From table 2 it follows that approximately 77% ($\eta^2 = 1 - \lambda = 1 - 0.23248$) of the variance in the optimal linear combination of the 10 composite variables is accounted for by cluster membership.

### TABLE 2
### MULTIVARIATE TESTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

| TEST | VALUE | APPROX. F | HYPOTH. DF | ERROR DF | SIG. OF F |
|------|-------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Pillais | 0.95014 | 18.19090 | 20.00 | 402.00 | 0.000 |
| Hotellings | 2.51591 | 25.03328 | 20.00 | 398.00 | 0.000 |
| Wilks | 0.23248 | 21.47985 | 20.00 | 400.00 | 0.000 |
| Roys | 0.68261 | | | | |

Rejection of the multivariate null hypotheses of no cluster membership effect on an optimal linear continuation of the dependent variables led to a series of univariate ANOVAs to determine the precise dimensions along which clusters differ significantly. The results of the univariate F-tests are reported in Table 3.

### TABLE 3
### UNIVARIATE F-TESTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

| VARIABLE | F | SIGNIFICANCE OF F |
|----------|---|-------------------|
| Clothing involvement | 129.30208 | 0.000* |
| Clothing orientation | 18.69556 | 0.000* |
| Clothing evaluation criteria | 2.19143 | 0.114 |
| Clothing store attributes | 1.63284 | 0.198 |
| Activities | 18.01217 | 0.000* |
| Interests | 13.37195 | 0.000* |
| Opinions | 20.73088 | 0.000* |
| Family orientation | 4.56394 | 0.011* |
| Needs | 10.03463 | 0.000* |
| Media usage | 12.83135 | 0.000* |

\* $p < 0,05$

The variables clothing evaluation criteria and clothing store attributes did not significantly differentiate among the three clusters. These variables were eliminated in the typology of the clusters.

The typology of the clusters was based on the mean scores of composite variables which significantly discriminate among the various clusters.

The average cluster profiles defined in terms of the composite variables are graphically portrayed in Figure 2.

To clarify the identity of the different clusters, the original variables comprising each composite variable were also studied. Differences on the original variables tend to give a clearer picture of the nature of the differences among clusters.

# CLUSTER PROFILES
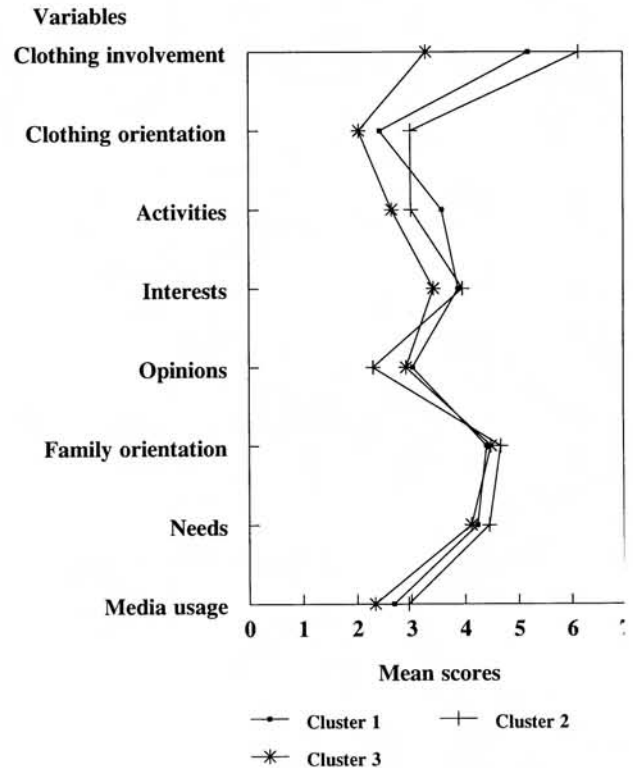*(mean scores of significant variables)*



Figure 2: CLUSTER PROFILES

*Cluster 1 profile (n = 113): THE CLOTHING MODERATES*
*Clothing involvement*: This cluster is characterized by a positive moderation in clothing involvement. Word pairs, i.e. important, of concern, relevant and means a lot to me, showed the tendency of the cluster towards a positive moderation in the responses.

*Clothing orientation*: The opinion leadership and opinion receiving of this group are limited towards the buying of clothing. The women are not actively involved in fashion news and consequently do not read a lot about fashion. The clothing moderates are uncertain whether they are keeping their wardrobe up to date as well as whether they keep up with fashion changes.

*Activities:* This group is the most active of all the clusters. When buying clothes at a sale the women tend to compare prices, which can be a reflection of the groups knowledge of clothing, as they enjoy needlework and making their own clothes. They are also very active in the church and community.

*Interests*: The interests of cluster 1 are on par with the activities of the group. The cluster members enjoy cooking and entertaining. They have an interest in nature, health and dressing stylishly (without taking any fashion risks).

*Opinions*: A moderately positive opinion towards South Africa and its future is endorsed by this group. Some neutral opinions are recorded on whether yesteryear's clothing was better than today's as well as scepticism towards change. This can be seen as a reflection of cluster 1's buying behaviour towards clothing.

*Family orientation*: All the clusters are characterized by a very positive orientation towards family gatherings, relationships and the value of the family in the community. This can to a large extent be explained by the nature of the sample of this study.

*Needs*: All the clusters reflected a great need for financial security, self-respect and security. This can be seen as a

reflection of the age of the sample and the need for a secure old age. In cluster one there is a neutral response towards whether the respondent is willing to spend money on clothing items.

*Media usage*: Radio is the medium of communication used most by cluster 1. This is reflected in the responses as they have a low viewing rate on television entertainment programmes. Cluster members also enjoy watching some television and reading magazines. Information regarding clothing is mainly drawn from magazines and very little is gathered from television, radio and newspapers. The magazine used by cluster 1 to gather clothing information is the Sarie (a family magazine with a primarily female target audience). The clothing moderates have very limited exposure to any form of fashion speciality magazines.

### Cluster 2 profile (n = 71): THE CLOTHING ENTHUSIASTS
*Clothing involvement*: The clothing enthusiasts are typified by a very strong positive clothing involvement on word pairs. The cluster members see clothing as very important, of high concern to them, very relevant and useful, valuable, beneficial and very interesting and desirable. All these positive perceptions about clothing show a good amount of enthusiasm for clothing in this cluster.

*Clothing orientation*: None of the three clusters are early buyers of fashion clothing or opinion leaders in fashion. Members of cluster 2 are, notwithstanding the abovementioned, the earliest buyers of fashions and ranked the highest in the sharing of clothing information. The clothing enthusiasts have an above-average exposure to fashion magazines. They use these magazines to try and keep their wardrobes up to date with fashion trends but not necessarily to try to dress in that manner.

*Activities*: The clothing enthusiasts do not compare many prices when buying clothes, do not enjoy buying on a sale and do not make any of their own clothes. This may be due to the fact that they enjoy bying quality fashion items and are therefore not very price-conscious. These cluster members are also involved in church and community activities.

*Interests*: The clothing enthusiasts have an active interest in fashion and entertaining. Nature and gardening are also recorded as fields of interest. The fact that the clothing enthusiasts are very health-conscious is also reflected in their concern for dressing stylishly.

*Opinions*: Cluster 2 has the most positive orientation towards life and likes the changes and challenges that life offers. The opinion that today's clothing is better than yesteryear's is substantiated in the clothing buying behaviour.

*Family orientation*: Of all the clusters, this cluster has the strongest family ties and interest in the family.

*Needs*: Strong needs towards financial security, self-respect and security are prevalent. The clothing enthusiasts do not mind spending money on clothing and they find doing so most enjoyable.

*Media usage*: Cluster members watch a fair amount of television and entertainment programmes. Magazine readership is the highest of all clusters and they therefore get most of their clothing information from magazines. Radio listening is relatively high but they do not use this media vehicle for gathering clothing information. The Sarie and Fair Lady are the two magazines mostly read by cluster members.

### Cluster 3 profile (n = 28): THE CLOTHING-UNCONCERNED
*Clothing involvement*: The clothing-unconcerned responded moderately negatively in their perceptions towards clothing. Clothing is seen as items which are not very important, relevant, essential or exciting.

*Clothing orientation*: Cluster 3 members do not have a positive orientation towards fashion. This is reflected in their behaviour, i.e. not buying fashion items, not giving any fashion information, not being interested in fashion trends and not reading fashion news. Fashion changes are not adhered to and keeping a wardrobe up to date is of little concern to the cluster members.

*Activities:* On the activity sub-scale cluster 3 members have the lowest scores. This is a reflection of their apathy towards doing needlework or making their own clothes. The activities toward clothing show that they do not compare prices when buying clothes and do not enjoy buying at sales. Activity in the church and community is also very limited.

*Interests*: Gardening and health are of interest to the clothing-unconcerned. They have moderate interests in nature and entertainment. To dress stylishly has an average appeal and is therefore a further reflection of the cluster profile.

*Opinions*: The statement that clothes of yesteryear were better than today's received a strong positive confirmation. Neutral responses characterized cluster 3 towards change in the new South Africa, the complexities of life and scepticism towards change.

*Family orientation*: As in all clusters, members of cluster 3 have strong family ties and place a high premium on family gatherings and family relationships.

*Needs*: Needs of financial security, security and self-respect are strong, as one could forecast from the sample profile. This group, however, does not enjoy spending money on clothing, which reflects the general attitude of the clothing-unconcerned.

*Media usage*: Watching television and specifically entertainment programmes are rated highest for this group. The clothing-unconcerned does not spend a lot of time reading magazines or listening to radio programmes and is neutral towards gathering clothing information from these media vehicles. None or very little exposure is recorded to fashion speciality magazines and women's magazines.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS
Clothing marketers need to comprehend that not all mature consumers are similar in their clothing involvement, clothing orientation, lifestyle and media usage. It is therefore justifiable to segment the elderly market and to target a specific market segment by using a unique marketing and promotional mix (Bovee & Arens, 1992, pp. 242-262).

*The Clothing Moderates*: The garments targeted at this segment should reflect a stylish conservative look without being a fashion risk. The gathering of clothing information is done through magazines and radio, and promotional material should therefore be channelled through these mediums. Very little opinion leadership is noted. The lifestyle that should be portrayed in campaigns is an active, socially integrated individual who enjoys nature, needlework and community activities.

*The Clothing Enthusiasts*: This market segment is most probably the easiest to market to as the women are enthusiastic about clothing and can be reached through fashion magazines. They buy quality items and do not see price as a persuasive power in deciding to buy or not to buy. Therefore advertising messages can be focused on the quality and desirability of the garments. The portrayal of lifestyle should focus on the concern for the community, nature and health.

*The Clothing-Unconcerned*: This market segment needs to be converted to ensure a growing percentage of mature consumers who fall into the two above-mentioned categories. To encourage this conversion the marketing effort should reflect clothing as an integral part of dressing stylishly and portraying a healthy lifestyle. This market segment can be

reached through television entertainment programmes as they have the highest viewership. The endorsement or testimonial approach portraying one of the popular characters of a television programme might be successful as they can form the reference group for the clothing-unconcerned.

Mature female clothing shoppers seem to hold similar clothing and clothing store criteria for evaluation, as these variables did not significantly differ among the respective groups of mature female consumers.

## LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study could be used as a point of departure for further research on the mature clothing consumer in South Africa. There are, however, certain limitations which should be kept in mind when generalizing and interpreting the findings of this study. A relatively small sample from a restricted geographic area has been studied. Underprivileged groups with low incomes and limited education were underrepresented. This is also the case with reference to the severely handicapped and the frail elderly. Lumpkin et al., (1985, p. 79) refer to this problem. Another viewpoint is that the relatively better educated and more affluent elderly represent the active consumers. Marketers and manufacturers are usually more concerned or interested in the active consumer. A study of the needs and problems regarding the clothing of underprivileged groups in Stellenbosch has already been conducted by Visser, Van Wyk, Senekal and Uys (1993).

In-depth research is needed to clarify the extent to which mature consumers use evaluative criteria for clothing and clothing stores as well as what these criteria are. Research by Lumpkin et al. (1985) to assess the importance of store attributes to mature consumers and by Cassill and Drake (1987) to identify females' clothing selection criteria could be of value in this regard.

Segmenting the mature market by clothing involvement and explaining the relationships to consumer characteristics and shopping orientation are also of importance. Research on the mature consumer and fashion is scant and the need for research is clear (Visser, 1994). The results of this research indicate that clothing involvement and clothing orientation can be measured successfully by means of inventories developed and tested abroad.

The findings of this study will further assist retailers to better understand mature consumers and subsequently to adjust their services rendered. This could in turn help in satisfying the needs of this increasingly important group of consumers. Lumpkin (1985, p. 286) wrote: "Research should continue to focus on this important group of consumers to develop a more complete profile of the sub-segments, so that marketing strategies can be matched to their needs."

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