

Consumer behaviour in the purchase of apparel products may have great influence on the outcomes obtained by the consumer. Judging the quality of clothing requires knowledge and skills during planning, purchasing and consumption. This factor has not been given a lot of focus and yet it is a concern raised by consumers of all ages. The present study on its part targeted undergraduate students at Moi University to investigate the attitudinal and normative factors that influence the choice of apparel products, and the satisfaction derived from the chosen apparel with specific reference to sex, year of study and department of study.

The literature review concentrated on evaluating apparel quality, importance of dress/appearance among college students; clothing importance, social participation and self concept; attitudinal versus normative influence in clothing selection; and developing consumer knowledge and skills for apparel consumption. A cross-sectional survey design was used to investigate the relationship between the attitudinal and normative factors that influence clothing selection and satisfaction. Relationships between the variables were determined. The sample consisted of 116 males and 94 females. The respondents were purposively selected from five (5) faculties out of nine (9) from which (4) departments were also purposively sampled. Purposive sampling was necessary to include subjects from various campus locations and subject majors. The names of the students from each department were stratified into two sampling frames of males and females, according to the year of study and then selected by systematic random sampling. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect information from the sample. Descriptive statistics including means, frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the quantitative data. Correlations, Chi-square analysis, T- test, and simple Anova were done to determine the relationships and differences between various variables respectively.

Qualitative data was triangulated with the rest of the findings to check for new information and confirm the findings. The data was presented using tables and bar charts. It was found out that both attitudinal and normative factors affect the choice and satisfaction of apparel among the respondents studied. The use of various attributes studied and the satisfaction derived from them in choosing apparel varied by sex, year of study and course of study to varying degrees. Highly critical characteristics of apparel quality included color/print/design, price, and fashionability of the product. Salient groups and salient sources were both used by the respondents as referents for choice of apparel, although salient groups were used to a greater degree for deriving satisfaction. The female respondents showed greater interest in knowing more about apparel selection than the respondents. In the final analysis it was not possible to totally separate attitudinal (person-specific) and normative (interpersonal) influences of apparel choice and satisfaction. The knowledge and skills needed prior to selecting apparel were not highly utilized.