

## Abstract

### Purpose

The paper seeks to identify ethical issues arising from body cathexis research and analyse categories for attention. To also highlight methodological considerations in generating body size data through measurement for fashion products.

### Design/methodology/approach

This study presents instrumental activities and strategies for conducting and implementing focus groups for investigating body cathexis and related body measurements for fashion products. Five homogenous groups of 30 females aged 19-44 years, were employed. Purposive and proportionate sampling procedures involving both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied and analysed by triangulation. Aspects of the methodology of measurement are presented in this paper but analysis of measurement data is presented in a subsequent paper. Key ethical principles by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), UK have been also evaluated in relation to the integrity of such a study.

### Findings

The study found that deciding on procedures regarding collating data on psychological issues related to garment fit is an obscure process that is not clearly documented in literature. It raised significant issues relating to sensitivity to respondents' concerns when conducting an investigation into body cathexis for fashion products. A framework for ethical and methodological practice in researching body cathexis and ethical deliberation in generating body measurement data has therefore been presented.

### Originality/value

This study presents guidelines for ethical practice and develops an ethical framework for research and professional practice.