

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology employed in the study. It begins with a discussion on the research design of the study which is mainly quantitative in approach. Thereafter, outline the design of the research instrument, scales and measurements. The data collection procedure and finally, the data analysis techniques used will also be presented.

### **3.2 Research Design**

This study was confined to the working adults in the Klang Valley area (Selangor and Kuala Lumpur). As Klang Valley is the most developed region in Malaysia, most of the commercial, business and industries can be found in this area. Further, most of the modern retail establishments are also located in this area (KPMG, 2006).

The data related to the research was collected through primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected using convenience sampling method. The survey was conducted over a period of two weeks. The respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire which intends to elicit their decision-making style towards casual wear buying. A sample size of 400 respondents from Malaysia's three major races namely Malay, Chinese and Indian was targeted.

The purpose of the secondary data search is to have an overview of the fashion apparel industry and population distribution in Malaysia. It is also to have an overview and understanding of the past research done in this area. The data was collected from Fashion retailers' annual report, news articles from the internet, academic journals and previous research reports.

### **3.3 Measurement Instrument**

A self-administered questionnaire was employed to gather data for this study. The questionnaire consists of four pages with two sections (refer to Appendix A). Part one (Section A) measured the casual wear buying decision-making orientation of the respondents and part two (Section B) was designed to collect the demographic information of the respondents.

The scale used to measure the consumer decision-making styles towards casual wear buying in part one (Section A) were adapted from the 40-item Likert scaled Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986). The scales were re-modified so that it fits the casual wear buying context. The 40-items in the CSI were meant to measure eight different factors in the decision-making orientation of the respondents namely (1) Perfectionistic, High-Quality Consciousness; (2) Brand Consciousness; (3) Novelty-Fashion Consciousness; (4) Recreational, Hedonistic Shopping Consciousness; (5) Price and "Value for Money" Consciousness; (6) Impulsive and Carelessness; (7) Confused by Over-choice and (8) Habitual and Brand-Loyal Orientation. All scales were measured

on a 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The reliabilities of the CSI Scale, according to Sproles and Kendall (1986), ranged from 0.48 to 0.76.

Part two (Section B) collected the demographic data which include the respondents gender, ethnic group, year of birth, marital status, level of education, occupation, monthly personal income and household size. These demographic questions were presented using the closed-ended multiple choice format. The demographic data were intentionally collected at the end of the questionnaire in order to prevent unnecessary resistance from the respondents in completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was originally prepared in English. It was then translated into Bahasa Melayu. The translation was done as the targeted respondents were from all three major ethnic groups in Malaysia and consideration was given to those respondents who are more comfortable with the National Language of Malaysia. In order to ensure that the Bahasa Melayu version of the questionnaire is having the equivalent meaning of the English version, the researcher had requested a Malay school headmaster to check the translated questionnaire. The suggestions and comments given by the checker were considered and incorporated as appropriate. The completed Bahasa Melayu questionnaire was then given to five Malay administrative officers of the school to fill up before distributing them to the other respondents. The five initial Malay

respondents found no difficulties in understanding and answering the Bahasa Melayu version questionnaire.

### **3.4 Sampling Method**

The non-probability sampling method was used in the study. A convenience sample of 400 working adults in the Klang valley was targeted. The sample was structured by quota based on the approximate percentage representation of the three ethnic groups in Malaysia. At the end of the survey, 380 usable questionnaires were collected with the percentage distribution of 58% Malay; 25% Chinese and 17% Indian.

The survey was conducted over a period of two weeks in April 2010. The respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire which intends to elicit their decision-making style towards casual wear buying. A sample size of 400 respondents from Malaysia's three major races namely Malay, Chinese and Indian was targeted.

A total of 430 questionnaires were distributed to individuals either through e-mail or hardcopy with the expectation that some of the targeted respondents might not respond to the questionnaire. The subjects were employees from the government and private organizations. These subjects were considered suitable for the study as they are working adults, equipped with the consumer related knowledge and buying power. The initial recipients of the questionnaire were

also requested by the researcher to help to distribute the questionnaire to their friends, colleagues and relatives until the targeted samples were realized. A reminder was e-mailed to the individuals who received the questionnaire through e-mail when a reply was not received after three days. The data collection process took approximately two weeks. The sample distribution of the three major races was controlled as much as possible to ensure a representation of the three major races based on the ratio of the Malaysian population.

### **3.5 Data Analysis Techniques**

Statistical analysis of the data collected from the survey was accomplished using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences – SPSS Version 13.0 software. The collected data was first entered into the software and was then screened to detect for errors. Errors found in the data file were corrected. Nine items that measured consumer decision-making style of casual wear buying were negatively worded and hence were recoded accordingly. The recoding was done as such: 1→5, 2→4, 3→3, 4→2 and 5→1. After that, the data was ready to be analyzed.

In the beginning, a preliminary analysis was carried out by looking at the descriptive statistics and normality of the data distribution. Then Factor analysis was conducted to determine the number of factors underlying the data. This was also to determine the applicability of the CSI developed by Sproles and Kendall

(1986). Then, internal validity of each factor was investigated using Cronbach's Alpha to justify the reliability of the items measuring a particular factor.

Finally, to identify the different decision-making style of the three major races in Malaysia, frequency analysis of each item in the applicable factors were then carried out separately for each race.

### **3.6 Summary**

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology where the research design, measurement instrument, sampling method and data analysis techniques used to conduct the study is discussed.

The findings of the study based on the samples collected will be presented in the next chapter.