

Comfort in clothing: a Baumanian critique of how clothing contributes to the well-being of women in the United Kingdom.

CROSS, K.A.

2021

The author of this thesis retains the right to be identified as such on any occasion in which content from this thesis is referenced or re-used. The licence under which this thesis is distributed applies to the text and any original images only – re-use of any third-party content must still be cleared with the original copyright holder.

COMFORT in

CLOTHING

A Baumanian critique of how
clothing contributes to the
well-being of women
in the United Kingdom.

Karen Ann Cross



PhD
2021

COMFORT IN CLOTHING

A Baumanian critique of how clothing contributes to the well-being
of women in the United Kingdom.

Karen Ann Cross

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the

Robert Gordon University

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2021

KEY WORDS

well-being, comfort, appearance management, positive psychology, fashion,
clothing, dress, Bauman, Liquid Modernity, identity

ABSTRACT

This Comfort in Clothing study explores how fashion, clothing and dress practices contribute to the psychosocial well-being of women in the UK. Fashion is a global industry, fuelled in recent times by the growth of the athleisurewear sector, reflecting the postmodern preoccupation with comfort, leisure and well-being in Western societies. Well-being is identified as important to the individual and on a wider societal level, with rising mental health issues identified as a global health concern and well-being statistics reported by numerous developed economies. Bauman, a prominent sociologist, acknowledged the anxieties of the postmodern actor in his concept of Liquid Modernity, attributing them to the fast pace of change and overwhelming freedom of choice, factors inherent in today's fashion industry. Thus, this study makes an original contribution to theoretical knowledge by applying Bauman's concept of Liquid Modernity to the phenomenon of well-being in relation to clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice.

Literature related to comfort in clothing, well-being, positive psychology and identity was reviewed. Research exists in terms of physical and physiological comfort in clothing, however a gap was identified in terms of the psychological comfort gained from the everyday use of non-elite fashion and clothing. The key elements of well-being were identified as community, work, time, the body, place, individuality, emancipation, income, colour and confidence, with these being mapped to the research focus of fashion, clothing and dress practice. The concepts of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being and positive psychology were also explored. Examination of existing fashion research revealed the applicability of an interpretive world-view and multi-modal qualitative methodology. Qualitative data was gathered in the form of innovative, participant-produced image/narrative elicitations from a key informant sample. In addition, focus groups were conducted with an expanded sample. All participants were females currently living in the UK, who were mostly interested or very interested in fashion. Triangulation of the resultant multiple data types was employed during the analysis stage.

The value of this Comfort in Clothing study lies in the contribution to knowledge of everyday dress practices in the postmodern era, and how those lived experiences and autobiographical memories of dress impact the psychosocial well-being of the participants. The key findings confirm that female appearance management remains firmly focused on the body and controlled by the fear of judgement, both self-judgement and the judgement of others. Hedonic well-being, gained from presenting oneself properly in public and feeling good through looking good was prevalent. Bauman's definition of the individualistic person was found to dress as a community-minded citizen, seeking the solidity of normative, ritualised dress practices and rejecting fashion's fast-paced and perpetual change. This suggests a disconnect between the fashion industry as a driver of creative destruction and constant consumption, and the clothing consumer's need for the safety and solidity of routine and the known. A hierarchy of attachment emerged, which found clothing to be under-valued, suggesting an opportunity for increased eudaimonic well-being through adoption of clothing with longevity, enabling meaning and memory to accrue and ultimately, to provide comfort in Liquid Modernity.

Table of Contents	Page No
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Well-being	2
1.2 Clothing	3
1.3 A Critical Lens	5
1.4 Bauman	8
1.5 Rationale	10
1.6 Aim and Objectives	10
1.7 Chapter Overview	11
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW	13
2.1 Dress Definitions	15
2.1.1 Clothing	16
2.1.2 Fashion	19
2.1.3 Fast Fashion	23
2.1.4 Value	24
2.2 Comfort	25
2.2.1 A Short History of Comfort	26
2.2.2 Physiological Comfort	27
2.2.3 Physical Comfort	28
2.2.4 Psychological Comfort	29
2.3 Discomfort	31
2.3.1 Corsets	32
2.3.2 Choice (and the Fashion Victim)	33
2.4 Happiness	35
2.5 Well-being	38
2.5.1 Well-being: Community	40
2.5.2 Well-being: Work	41
Uniforms	43
Power Dressing	44
2.5.3 Well-being: Time	45
Leisure Time: Physical	46
Leisure Time: Non-physical	46
Leisure Clothing	48
Athleisure Wear	48
2.5.4 Well-being: The Body	49
The Social Body	51
The Covered Body	52
The Physical Body	53
2.5.5 Well-being: Space and Safety	55
2.5.6 Well-being: Individuality	56
2.5.7 Well-being: Emancipation and Income	57
2.5.8 Well-being: Colour	60
2.5.9 Well-being: Confidence	61

2.6	Identity	62
	2.6.1 Appearance Management	67
2.7	Culture	69
2.8	Psychology	72
	2.8.1 Positive Psychology	73
2.9	Summary	77
	2.9.1 Research Questions	79
	2.9.2 Reflexivity	81
3.0	METHODOLOGY	83
3.1	Research Paradigm	84
	3.1.1 The Researcher's Worldview	86
	3.1.2 Researching Fashion	89
3.2	Research Methods	90
	3.2.1 Method One: Literature Review	91
	3.2.2 Method Two: Focus Groups	92
	3.2.3 Focus Group Sample	92
	3.2.4 Key Informant Focus Groups	93
	3.2.5 Expanded Sample Focus Groups	94
	3.2.6 Focus Group Participant Overview	98
	3.2.7 Focus Group Design	101
	3.2.8 Focus Group Structured Task 1: 15 Garments	101
	3.2.9 Focus Group Structured Task 2: Mind-maps	121
	3.2.10 Focus Group Open Discussion	123
	3.2.11 Method Three: Image and Narrative Elicitations	124
	3.2.12 Image and Narrative Elicitation: photoshoots	125
	3.2.13 Image and Narrative Elicitation: artefacts	128
3.3	Participant Coding	130
3.4	Ethical Issues	131
3.5	Summary	132

4.0	ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	133
4.1	A Concept of Comfort: Comfort Mind-maps	135
4.1.1	Method Overview	135
4.1.2	Initial Coding	137
4.1.3	Focused Coding	145
4.1.4	Well-being Themes Identified in: Mind-maps	153
4.2	15 Comfortable Garments: Three Words	156
4.2.1	Method Overview	156
4.2.2	Initial Coding	162
4.2.3	Focused Coding	162
4.2.4	Well-being Themes Identified in: 15 Garments	168
4.3	Comfortable Clothed Identities: Photoshoot Elicitation	190
4.3.1	Method Overview	190
4.3.2	Focused Coding	193
4.3.3	Well-being Themes Identified in: Photoshoots	212
4.4	Psychological Comfort in Clothing I: Artefact Elicitation	216
4.4.1	Method Overview	216
4.4.2	Initial Coding	216
4.4.3	Focused Coding	241
4.4.4	Well-being Themes Identified in: Artefacts	251
4.5	Psychological Comfort in Clothing II: Focus Groups	253
4.5.1	Method Overview	253
4.5.2	Initial Coding	255
4.5.3	Focused Coding for RQ5	277
4.5.4	Focused Coding for RQ6	291
4.5.5	Well-being Themes Identified in: Focus Groups	300

5.0	CONCLUSION	310
5.1	Objective 1	313
5.2	Objective 2	315
5.3	Objective 3	317
5.4	Objective 4	318
	5.4.1 Comfort Charters	319
5.5	Contributions to Knowledge	336
	5.5.1 Reflection	341

APPENDICES

Appendix I	Focus Group PowerPoint Presentation
Appendix II	Focus Group Structured Task Handouts
Appendix III	Focus Group Script
Appendix IV	Focus Group Transcription Guide
Appendix V	Focus Group Consent Form
Appendix VI	Fifteen Garments Constant Comparative Analysis
Appendix VII	Comfort Mind-maps Constant Comparative Analysis
Appendix VIII	Dress Artefact Form

List of Figures	Page No
1.0 INTRODUCTION	
1. A Foucauldian Well-being Panopticon	4
2. A Baumanian Well-being Synopticon	6
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW	
3. Literature Review Key Topics	14
4. Nostalgic Simulacrum	18
5. Defining Comfort	25
6. Impression	30
7. Happy Victims	34
8. Happiness Timeline	36
9. I Shop Therefore I Am	47
10. Body Positivity	53
11. Safety	54
12. Signal Preference Taxonomy	58
13. Suffragette Colours	59
14. McCracken's Fashion Meaning Categories	71
15. Seligman's PERMA Model	74
16. Well-being Web (literature review summary)	78
17. Research Question Mapping	80
3.0 METHODOLOGY	
18. Research Paradigm	87
19. The Researcher's Frame of Reference	89
20. Multi-method Research Design	90
21. Semi-structured Focus Group Process	95
22. Fashion Management Student Feedback	97
23. Focus Group Participant Overview	99
24. Generational Cohorts	100
25. Garment 1	103
26. Garment 2	104
27. Garment 3	105
28. Garment 4	106
29. Garment 5	107
30. Garment 6	108
31. Garment 7	109
32. Garment 8	110
33. Garment 9	111
34. Garment 10	112
35. Garment 11	113
36. Garment 12	114
37. Garment 13	115
38. Garment 14	116
39. Garment 15	117
40. Participant Response to Dress Artefacts Exemplar	119
41. Mind-map Exemplars	120
42. Data Cleaning Exemplar	121
43. Word Cloud Exemplar	122
44. Image and Narrative Exemplar (Photoshoot)	126
45. Image and Narrative Exmplar (Artefact)	129

4.1 A CONCEPT OF COMFORT

46.	Comfort Mind-map Themes	134
47.	Comfort Word Cloud: Clothes	136
48.	Warm and Cosy	137
49.	Knits and Oversized Clothes	137
50.	Comfort Word Cloud: Place	138
51.	Comfort Word Cloud: Food	138
52.	Comfort Word Cloud: Actions	140
53.	Comfort Word Cloud: Feelings	140
54.	Comfort Word Cloud: People	142
55.	Comfort Word Cloud: Time	142
56.	Family and Friends	143
57.	A Concept of Comfort	144
58.	Home/People	146
59.	Home Time and Place	148
60.	Home/Product	150
61.	Well-being, Comfort and Clothing I	154

4.2 FIFTEEN COMFORTABLE GARMENTS

62.	Garment 1 Word Cloud	157
63.	Garment 2 Word Cloud	157
64.	Garment 3 Word Cloud	157
65.	Garment 4 Word Cloud	158
66.	Garment 5 Word Cloud	158
67.	Garment 6 Word Cloud	158
68.	Garment 7 Word Cloud	159
69.	Garment 8 Word Cloud	159
70.	Garment 9 Word Cloud	159
71.	Garment 10 Word Cloud	160
72.	Garment 11 Word Cloud	160
73.	Garment 12 Word Cloud	160
74.	Garment 13 Word Cloud	161
75.	Garment 14 Word Cloud	161
76.	Garment 15 Word Cloud	161
77.	Participant Awareness of Physiological, Physical and Psychological Comfort in Clothing	166
78.	Animal Print Cultural References	174
79.	Stripe Cultural References	176
80.	Stripe Cultural References 2	178
81.	Tartan Cultural References	180
82.	Floral Trouser Cultural References	182
83.	Tweed Cultural References	184
84.	Colour Connotations	186
85.	Well-being, Comfort and Clothing II	189

4.3 COMFORTABLE CLOTHED IDENTITIES

86.	Comfortable Clothed Identities	191
87.	The Private Self – Figures A, B, C and D	192
88.	The Unrestricted Self – Figures E and F	194
89.	The Unrestricted Self – Figures G, H, I and J	196
90.	The Body-conscious Self – Figures K, L, M and N	198
91.	The Body-conscious Self – Figure O	200
92.	The Confident Self – Figures P and Q	202
93.	The Confident Self – Figures R, S, T and U	204
94.	Comfortable Clothed Identities	206
95.	The Private Self	208
96.	The Unrestricted Self	209
97.	The Body-conscious Self	210
98.	The Confident Self	211
99.	Well-being, Comfort and Clothing III	214

4.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT IN CLOTHING I

100.	Frequency of Dress Artefacts	217
101.	Associations of Clothing and Dress with Psychological Comfort	218
102.	Firsts	220
103.	First Time	221
104.	Recall	222
105.	Recent	222
106.	Recent Time	223
107.	Longevity	224
108.	Emotional	224
109.	Forever	225
110.	Memories	226
111.	Memory	227
112.	Ritual	228
113.	Lucky Charms	228
114.	Regret	229
115.	Familiar People and Places	230
116.	Trusted	231
117.	Family Gift Giver	232
118.	Boyfriend	233
119.	Reminders of Home	234
120.	Event Places	234
121.	Homesickness	235
122.	Appearance Management	236
123.	Weight Consciousness	236
124.	Confidence in Clothing Image Cloud	237
125.	Confidence in Black Image Cloud	238
126.	Colour Confidence	239
127.	Psychological Comfort: Seeking Solidity	240
128.	Belonging	242
129.	Black	244
130.	Heirlooms	246
131.	Meaning and Memory	248
132.	Well-being, Comfort and Clothing IV	250

4.5 PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT IN CLOTHING II

133.	Focus Group Discussion Themes	254
134.	The Psychological Comfort of Feeling Unrestricted	256
135.	High Heels	258
136.	The Safety of Scarves	260
137.	The Perception of Judgement	262
138.	The Comfort of Black	264
139.	Status Brands	266
140.	Sentimental Jewellery	268
141.	Avoiding Cultural Visibility	270
142.	The Psychological Comfort of Perfume	272
143.	Black = Thin	274
144.	The Magic Dress	275
145.	Clothing as Camouflage	276
146.	Matching Underwear	278
147.	Brand Value	279
148.	The Black Dress	280
149.	Makeup Rituals	282
150.	Clothing Confidence	284
151.	Makeup Confidence	286
152.	Outfit Regret	286
153.	Subjective Associations and Lived Experiences	288
154.	The Prioritisation of Psychological Comfort	290
155.	The Versatility of Jeans	292
156.	The Comfort of Chilling	294
157.	Hierarchy of Attachment	296
158.	Psychological Comfort	298
159.	Home, Work Out and Out Out	305
160.	Well-being, Comfort and Clothing V	308

5.0 CONCLUSION

161.	A Model of Well-being gained through Dress Practice	312
162.	A Model of Psychological Comfort gained through Dress	314
163.	A Model of Comfort in Constancy through Dress Practice	316
164.	The Comfort of Constancy	319
165.	The Comfort of Control	321
166.	The Comfort of Camouflage	323
167.	The Comfort of Colour	325
168.	The Comfort of Confidence	327
169.	The Comfort of Convenience	329
170.	The Comfort of Chilling	331
171.	The Comfort of Community	333
172.	The Comfort of Cherished	335

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.	Clothing, Dress and Fashion Terms	15
2.	Consumer Needs Model	16
3.	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	27
4.	Clothing Comfort Models	29
5.	Seligman's Happiness Formula	37
6.	Bauman's Five Orthodox Narratives of the Human Condition	39
7.	Theories related to Identity	65
8.	Appearance Management Theories	68
9.	Cultural Definitions Related to Clothing and Dress	70
10.	The Social Psychology of Dress	67
11.	LIFE (Layered Integrated Framework Example)	75

3.0 METHODOLOGY

12.	Research Theories and Paradigms	85
13.	Literature Search Strategy	91
14.	Focus Group Design	101
15.	Criteria Informing Dress Artefact Choice	102
16.	Analysis of Photographic Images	127
17.	Descriptive Coding of Participants	130



1.0
COMFORT
IN
CLOTHING:
INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

'A bad outfit can really get me down.'

Alexa Chung (*Harper's Bazaar* 2015 p. 107)

In contemporary Western society, clothing is ubiquitous; people wear clothes, consume fashion and employ complex dress practices daily. People are increasingly anxious, which is linked by sociologist Bauman (2012) to the demise of community, the rise of individuality and the fast pace of change. Community, individuality and fast change can all be connected to fashion, with fashion sub-cultures increasingly fragmented (Jenss 2016), a democratised fashion system affording the individual overwhelming choice (Corner 2014) and fast fashion reducing the lifespan of clothes and trends (Lynas 2010). These high levels of anxiety and change underpin the increasing interest in well-being.

1.1 Well-being

'Measures of wellbeing are not only important for governments and decision-makers in organisations, but for the general public too, with polls reflecting a growing appetite among citizens for governments to attend to subjective wellbeing.'

Hone *et al.* (2014 p. 62)

Deci and Ryan (2000) note that well-being has interested scholars across history. The dictionary definition of well-being is: 'the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy (*Cambridge Dictionary* 2018c). However, levels of happiness in Western societies have remained static for the past fifty years and rising mental health issues are identified as a global health concern (Mair 2018; Davies 2015; Burnham 2012). In 2010, the Office for National Statistics commenced the Measuring National Well-being (MNW) programme, with the aim of publishing statistics to facilitate the monitoring and understanding of well-being in the United Kingdom (UK) (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Davies (2015) notes that national well-being statistics are reported by numerous developed economies and that well-being can now be measured by a range of consumer technologies. Li Edelkoort, one of the world's most respected trend forecasters (*Fashion Capital* 2014; McKelvey and Munslow 2008) published *The Well Being Bible* (2014), an indication of the importance of the well-being industry. Health and Wellness is referred to as the next trillion-dollar industry (Amed 2015), with consumers increasingly spending their disposable income on products, experiences and activities that improve their lives. This is described as health creep, or the consumerisation of health by Krom (2014). Krom (2014 np) goes on to state that wellness is now a 'consumer mind-set', which has gone beyond a trend and become a lifestyle. Wellness is described as individual, multi-dimensional and influenced by community and environment (Krom 2014). WGSN's (2015) Wellthness consumer insight report details phenomena such as 'health bragging', as affluent customers become more comfortable flaunting a healthy lifestyle than luxury goods on social media' (p. 5). The report also describes the concept of stealth wealth, where wellness is a desired status

symbol and consumers use healthy lifestyle choices such as cleanse concierges and work-to-workout wardrobes. Similarly, Krom (2014), describing wellness as a status symbol, refers to it as the new black, thus linking the concept to something enduring that will not fall out of fashion (Fox 2018; Eisman 2006). In 2020, the concept of well-being has evolved into the **comfort** economy (King 2020) during the Covid-19 pandemic, with brands offering self-care and relief from anxiety in the form of food, homewear and comfortable clothing.

1.2 Clothing

'Fashion Matters. To the economy, to society and to each of us personally. Faster than anything else, what we wear tells us the story of who we are – or who we want to be. Fashion is the most immediate and intimate form of self-expression.'

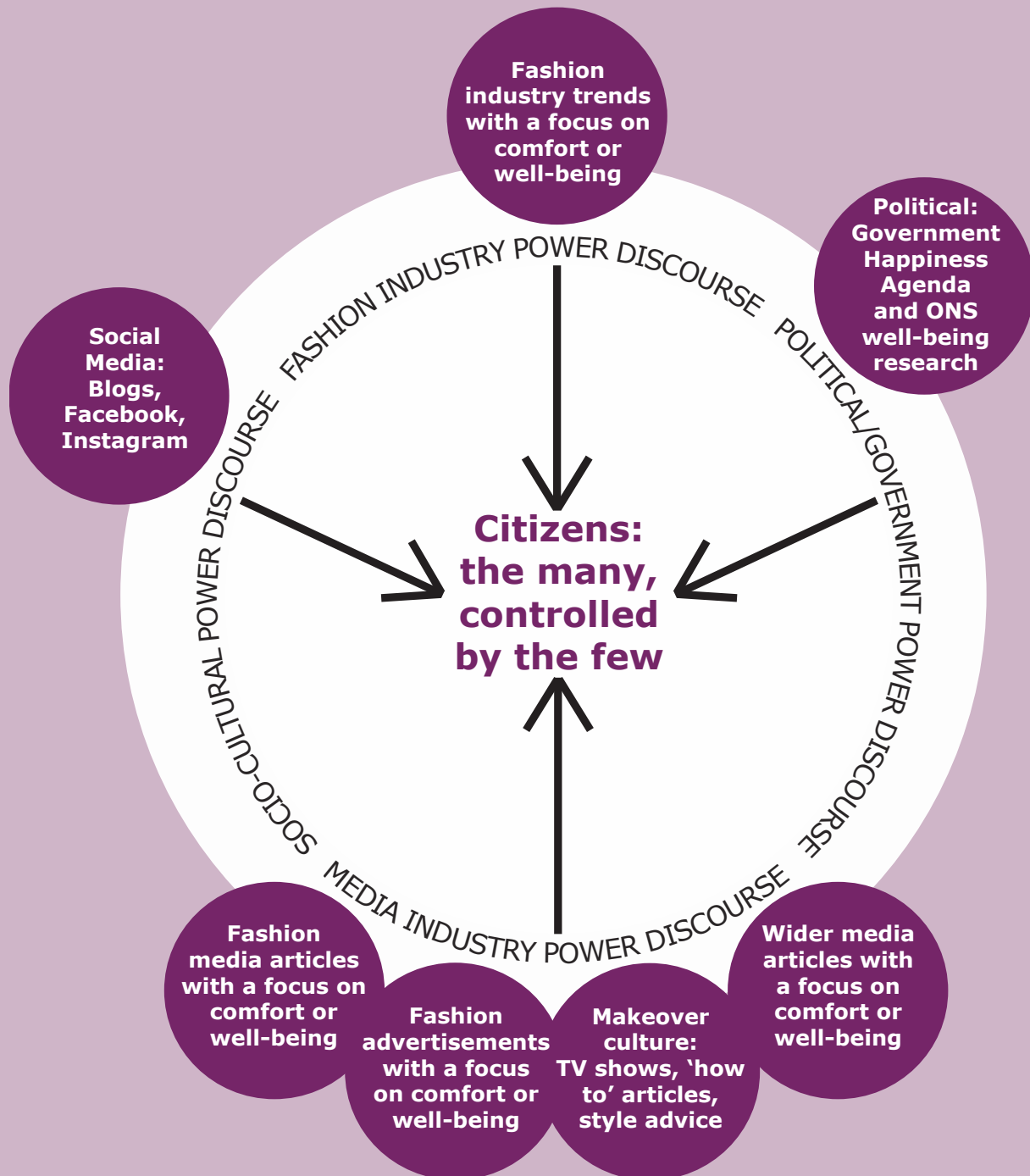
Corner (2014 p. 4)

The fashion industry generates 2.5 trillion dollars in global annual revenues (Amed *et al.* 2020) and is the second biggest worldwide economic activity for intensity of trade (Corner 2014), confirming that fashion does indeed matter on a global and industrial scale as well as to the individual consumer. Despite economic difficulties in the UK since the 2008 global recession, the clothing retailing market has continued to grow, with spending on clothing rising at a more rapid rate than total consumer spending (Keynote 2015). In 2018, the UK fashion industry was worth £32 billion to the UK economy, supporting 890,000 jobs (Sleigh 2018), although the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic has already seen several fashion businesses fail, with the British Fashion Council forecasting that up to half of the British fashion sector could fold (Elan 2020).

Amed (2015) states that fashion brands need to engage with consumers on a deeper level to provide fulfilment, meaning and experience. The Covid 19 pandemic has seen renewed calls for change in the fashion industry, to move away from fast, disposable fashion and mass consumption to the production of fewer goods with more sustainable and ethical practices (Elan 2020), supporting the well-being of both people and planet. Advocating the importance of fashion to well-being, the University of the Arts London conceived a Well-being Research Hub, aiming to 'facilitate a deeper understanding of human behaviour in the fashion and creative industries and the potential for improving quality of life through understanding psychological well-being' (Arts 2015a np). The hub evolved into the Better Living Research Hub and offers a MSc Applied Psychology in Fashion course (Arts 2018). In 2015, the Hub presented the Better Lives Lecture Series to explore how fashion could improve the way humans live, focusing on the role of positive psychology (Arts 2015b, see section 2.8.1 Positive Psychology). Hefferon (cited in Arts 2015b np) states that, 'clothes have the ability to influence our confidence, performance, posture and attitude', recognising the psychosocial importance of clothing in human interactions and social settings.

Figure 1

Foucauldian Panopticon, where society is disciplined by the fashion and well-being discourses of those in power



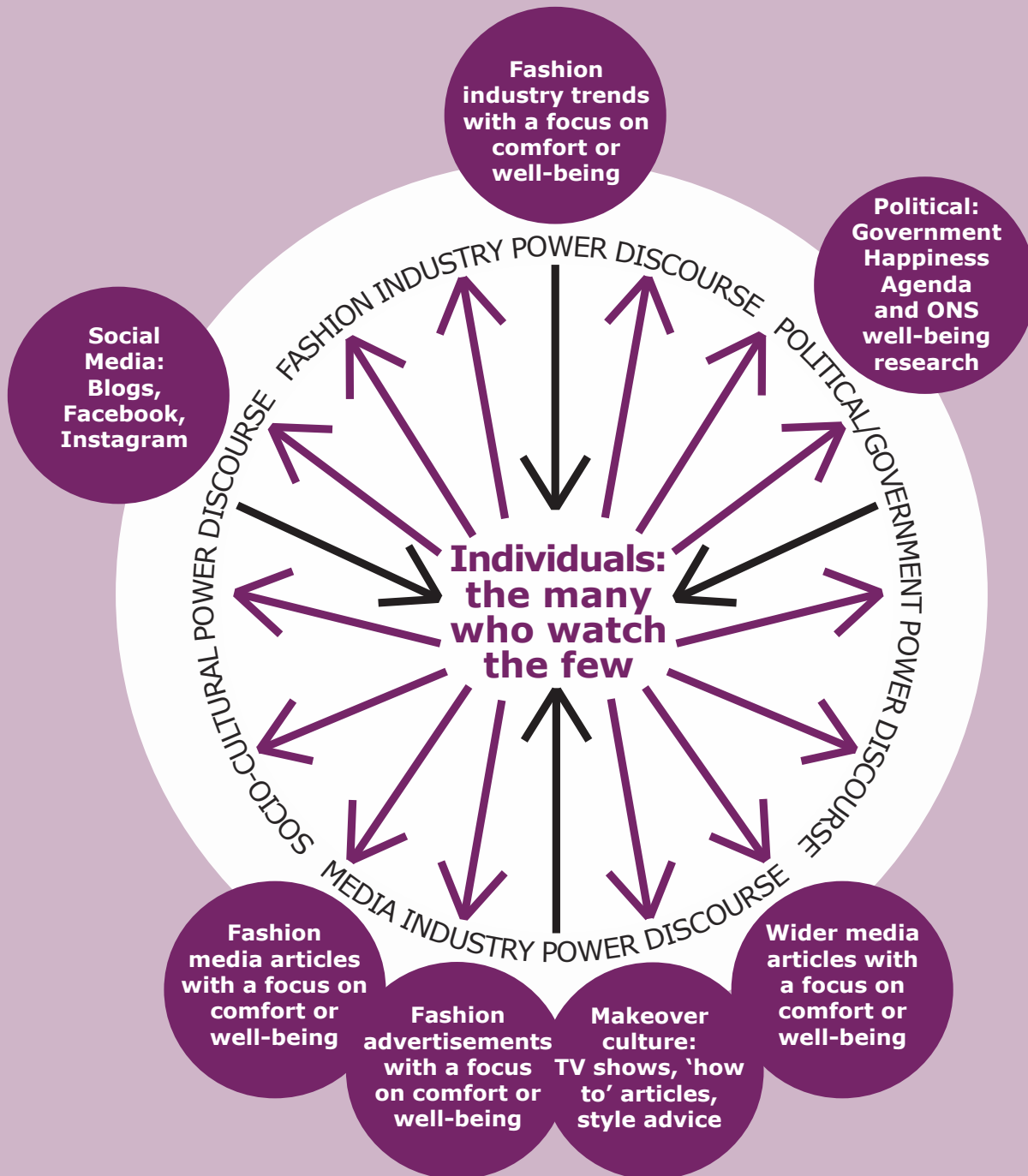
Source: author's own, adapted from Bauman (2012), Mathiesen (1997) and Foucault (2005[1975])

1.3 A critical lens

Fashion and clothing scholars agree that fashion encompasses cultural and social disciplines (Jenss 2016; Mida and Kim 2015; Smelik 2015; Barnard 2014; Kawamura 2011; Craik 2009). As a nascent and undervalued discipline, fashion research seeks to gain credibility by embracing critical theorists' perspectives. Foucault's theories of the body (1979) and power (1977) were first explored for this Comfort in Clothing study, since established fashion researchers such as Craik (1994), Finkelstein (2007) and Kaiser (2012) have used Foucault's philosophies in studies related to the fashioned body and identity (Tynan 2016). For example, Finkelstein (2007 p. 211), utilizing a Foucauldian perspective, describes fashion as 'collective, systemized and prescriptive', acknowledging fashion's critical role in society. Foucault posits Panopticism (see Figure 1), whereby individuals in society are totally visible to those in power and thus compliant. Fashion is a part of visual culture (Smelik 2015) and Foucault noted the concept of normalizing judgments through gaze (i.e. by visual means). In applying Panopticism to the concept of well-being, one would assume that people would be complying with the dominant well-being discourses surrounding them, leading to high levels of happiness and well-being, however, as discussed in section 1.1, this is not the case, perhaps due to Foucault's failure to acknowledge the agency of the individual (Entwistle 2000) and the development of mass media (Mathiesen 1997).

Figure 2

Baumanian Synopticon, where society watches those in power and selects from the well-being discourses they present



Source: author's own, adapted from Bauman (2012), Mathiesen (1997) and Foucault (2005[1975])

Bauman posited that the metaphor of Panopticon is outdated, showing preference instead for Mathiesen's (1997) concept of the 'synoptical society of shopping/watching addicts' (Bauman 2012 p. 89). Having studied Bauman's work, it is argued that Bauman's identification of a post-panoptical stage of modernity, without need for a visible, local control and with no need for mutual engagement, is more applicable to the research topic (see Figure 2). In applying Synopticism to the concept of well-being, it is assumed that engagement with well-being is down to the choice of the individual, as they watch and select from dominant (mainly mass media) discourses (Mathiesen 1997). Bauman's work has not been widely used in fashion and clothing research to date, therefore this Comfort in Clothing study utilises Bauman's (2012) theory of Liquid Modernity to provide a critical theorist lens, facilitating a new contribution to fashion and clothing research.

1.4 Bauman

Sociology is the study of human society. Zygmunt Bauman (1925-2017) was a sociologist and considered a prominent Critical Theorist (Routledge 2016). Society was defined by Bauman as an 'imagined being', which has replaced God 'in His function as administrator and supervisor of human affairs' (2011 p. 57). Where orthodox sociology was concerned with human obedience and conformity, sociology in modern times, according to Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity, is more concerned with freedom, autonomy and responsibility. Bauman used the term Liquid Modernity where other authors use 'postmodernity, late modernity, second or hyper modernity' (2011 p. 11). In this 'liquid modern, consumer-orientated economy' (2011 p. 15), Bauman suggested a culture of consumerism. Although there are those that reject consumerism (Nixon and Gabriel 2015), both ideologically (anti-consumption protest) and psychologically (viewing consumerism as a form of toxic contamination), Bauman's opinions on consumerism reflect the UK fashion system in terms of speed of change and throw-away disposal (House of Commons 2019; Lynas 2010). Increasing interest in sustainability, transparency and circular fashion is evident (Amed *et al.* 2020; Mintel 2017); however, there remains an attitude-behaviour gap (Jacobs *et al.* 2018; Park and Lin 2020) in consumer behaviour that suggests, in terms of fashion and clothing purchases, a culture of consumerism pervades.

Bauman acknowledged a move towards individualisation, with diverse and deregulated opportunities for people's progress and improvement, and stated that '[l]iving among a multitude of competing values, norms and life-styles, without a firm and reliable guarantee of being in the right, is hazardous and commands a high psychological price' (2012 p. 214). Thus, Bauman suggested the choices available to contemporary society are '...too wide for **comfort**...' (p. 73) causing anxiety, in alignment with Clarke and Miller (2002) and Nixon and Gabriel (2015). Uncertainty increases in proportion to the number of competing choices or possibilities that must be selected from, and uncertainty-related anxiety is higher when there is no clear framework (e.g. religion) to follow (Hirsh, Mar and Peterson 2012). Bauman asserts that solidity, in the form of societal rules, routines and norms once provided stability and collective well-being to the citizen, who was committed to the common interests of society. Hirsh, Mar and Peterson agree that a 'community of like-minded others' reduces uncertainty. According to Bauman, the move towards individualisation has led to a lack of solidarity, a more fragmented society, with the citizen now replaced by the person, who shows less commitment to society and is more concerned with their individual problems.

Bauman describes community, an orthodox narrative of the human condition, as 'the last relic of the old-time utopias of the good society' (2012 p. 92), with a sense of togetherness engendered by likeness or being of the same mind. Togetherness includes encountering others, interacting and having dialogues. Unpredictability and 'uncertainty of prospects' makes community a struggle and puts a strain on the individual's self-confidence (Bauman 2011 p. 66). Bauman alluded to the false or forced nature of contemporary community, positing the carnival or cloakroom community, requiring spectacle to bring normally disparate individuals together in a more communitarian perspective. Those individuals temporarily conform, for example by adhering to a sartorial dress code specific to the occasion. These spectacles provide an opportunity for the individual to gain respite from the anxiety of solitary choice (encompassing the orthodox narratives of individuality and emancipation).

Bauman also alluded to the use of appearance-management strategies in the creation of successful identities, stating '...the future Gloriana needs to buy a lot of paint for make-up and change her hair-style, the head-dress and the rest of her attire. There is no assertion but self-assertion, not identity but made-up identity' (2012 p. 179). Bauman cites Jeffrey Weeks' (2000) concept of identity stories, tales that restore 'a lost sense of security, for rebuilding lost confidence' and for making 'meaningful interaction with others possible' (2011 p. 80), however in Liquid Modernity trust and commitment is down to the individual, rather than being a natural part of belonging. Meaningful interaction is important, as Bauman claims the solution to the problems of life in Liquid Modernity is friendship, in line with the ancient Greek description of friends as the 'totality of social life' (2011 p. 85).

The theory of Liquid Modernity also acknowledges constant change, and Bauman linked the fast-changing nature of contemporary society with uncertainty and anxiety. In alignment, Hirsh, Mar and Peterson posit that uncertainty is experienced as anxiety, and note the 'critical importance' (2012 p. 1) of managing uncertainty for an individual's well-being. Intolerance of uncertainty is linked to fear of the unknown (Carleton 2016; Boswell *et al.* 2013), with Clark and Beck (2010) describing anxiety as an on-going subjective response to the experience of fear. Bauman posited that change was previously seen as necessary, linked with the concept of modernisation that would provide an end-state of perfection, whereby hard work and strain would be replaced with '**comfort** and leisure' (p. xi). However, this concept of perfection has been replaced with perpetual modernisation, perpetual change. People fear change as it involves unknowns (Barlow *et al.* 2014), therefore find change psychologically uncomfortable (Schein 1996) as it upsets the status quo, or equilibrium. In Lewin's (1947) three-step change model, for change to be successfully implemented, the final step involved refreezing, to stabilise and integrate the change into the community it affects (Kritzonis and Hills 2005). Similarly, Lippitt, Watson and Westley's (1958) Phases of Change theory argued that change is more likely to lead to stability if it spreads and is widely accepted, i.e. becomes known. Bauman's description of Liquid Modernity suggests that these refreezing and spreading processes do not fully take place; that the speed of change is now such that there is no time for change to be comfortably embedded and accepted at societal level.

Bauman noted the diminishing role of work (one of the orthodox narratives of the human condition) in providing a sense of order, value and self-improvement to people, stating that '[w]ork can no longer offer the secure axis around which to wrap and fix self-definitions, identities and life-projects' (2012 p. 140). Bauman stated that both work and marriage are now subject to a short-term mentality, with an increasing frequency of change. This brings the benefits of flexibility but the burden of uncertainty, with Bauman acknowledging that routine may be boring but that it also affords protection, or safety; a human need (Maslow 1943) linked with well-being (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Urban life, underpinned by the hazards of constant change and a lack of security, is a main source of anxiety, with Bauman highlighting the 'unholy trinity of uncertainty, insecurity and unsafety' (2012 p. 181). Bauman also noted that many people are unhappy, without being able to articulate why, or what might be causing their unhappiness. Thus, the postmodern human's condition is identified by Bauman as an on-going challenge, the very meaning of 'staying alive and well' (2012 p. 135), suggesting Bauman's concepts are an appropriate choice for research with a focus on well-being. In *Culture in a Liquid Modern World* (2011), Bauman links fashion to the tensions between a need for social support, belonging and a longing for safety, and the human desire for individuality and independence; topics explored in relation to fashion and well-being in section 2.0, the literature review.

1.5 Rationale

Initial exploration of literature in sections 1.1 and 1.2 confirms the importance and timeliness of the clothing and well-being foci. Given the reach and influence of the fashion industry, established in section 1.2, it is argued that this research is worthwhile, aiming to address gaps identified in existing literature related to the study of everyday (non-elite) clothing (Jenss 2016; Tynan 2016; Gibson 2012; Craik 1994) and the psychological aspects of comfort in clothing (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Similarly, Ruggerone (2016) notes a gap in existing fashion and clothing research regarding feelings experienced about clothing and feelings experienced while wearing clothes, with an emphasis on the body and the practices of dressing, arguing 'that the way we feel about and in our clothes is a relevant phenomenon with a definite impact on our social behaviour and ultimately our social life' (p. 574). In applying Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity, this research also seeks to add a unique critical lens to fashion and clothing theory.

Seeking well-being is currently a prevalent social behaviour, with well-being seen as a government concern (The Global Council for Happiness and Wellbeing 2019; Davies 2015; Burnham 2012) and a growth industry (Amed 2015; Krom 2014). The Office for National Statistics and the Council for Happiness and Wellbeing both note the importance of measuring things that may impact national and global well-being, and in turn economic growth and sustainable future planning (The Global Council for Happiness and Wellbeing 2019; Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). It is therefore suggested that this qualitative study will be of interest to the fashion industry, the wider well-being industry and the political sphere, based on May's (2002) suggestion that interpretive research is increasingly being utilized to provide evidence for decisions 'affecting the emotional and material existence of people' (p. 125) and to create local or national policies. The advent of the Covid 19 **comfort** economy (King 2020) confirms the timeliness of this study.

1.6 Aim and objectives

Creswell (2014) describes the importance of an uncomplicated, straightforward working title for the research, as a tangible focus. The working title for this research was Comfort in Clothing. Creswell describes a research problem as an 'issue or concern that needs to be addressed' (2014 p. 20). The problem may arise from a gap or conflict in the available academic literature or from 'real-life' problems found in the workplace, the home, the community, and so forth' (p. 20). As established in section 1.1, there is a zeitgeist for well-being, but there are increased levels of anxiety and depression that suggest well-being is not easy to achieve in real life, therefore, the aim of this Comfort in Clothing study is:

To analyse how clothing, fashion and dress contribute to the psychosocial comfort and well-being of women in the UK, applying Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity as a critical lens.

To achieve the aim, the following objectives were developed:

- 1.** To analyse critically the phenomenon and origin of well-being, with a focus on clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice.
- 2.** To propose a psychological concept of comfort, with a focus on clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice.
- 3.** To determine the role and value of comfort to women in the UK, with a focus on clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice.
- 4.** To propose the critical dimensions of psychological comfort in clothing and female appearance management in Bauman's Liquid Modernity.

1.7 Chapter overview

Chapter 1.0 Introduction defines the scope of this Comfort in Clothing study, proposes the critical underpinning and a rationale for the research, and states the aim and objectives.

Chapter 2.0 Literature Review provides meta-synthesis of multiple, mainly qualitative research studies to identify core themes related to clothing, comfort and well-being, presented in the form of a conceptual literature review with emergent research questions.

Chapter 3.0 Methodology clarifies the researcher's worldview and details the interpretivist research paradigm, inductive approach, qualitative methodology and multi-methods used to gather primary data for this Comfort in Clothing study.

Chapter 4.0 Analysis and Discussion presents key findings, data analysis and detailed discussion of each method in five sections, enabling triangulation of the multi-method data sets to bring the research to valid conclusions.

Chapter 5.0 Conclusion summarises the key findings for objectives 1, 2 and 3, culminating in a series of comfort charters that address objective 4. Original contributions to knowledge are identified and recommendations for future research are made.



2.0

COMFORT

IN

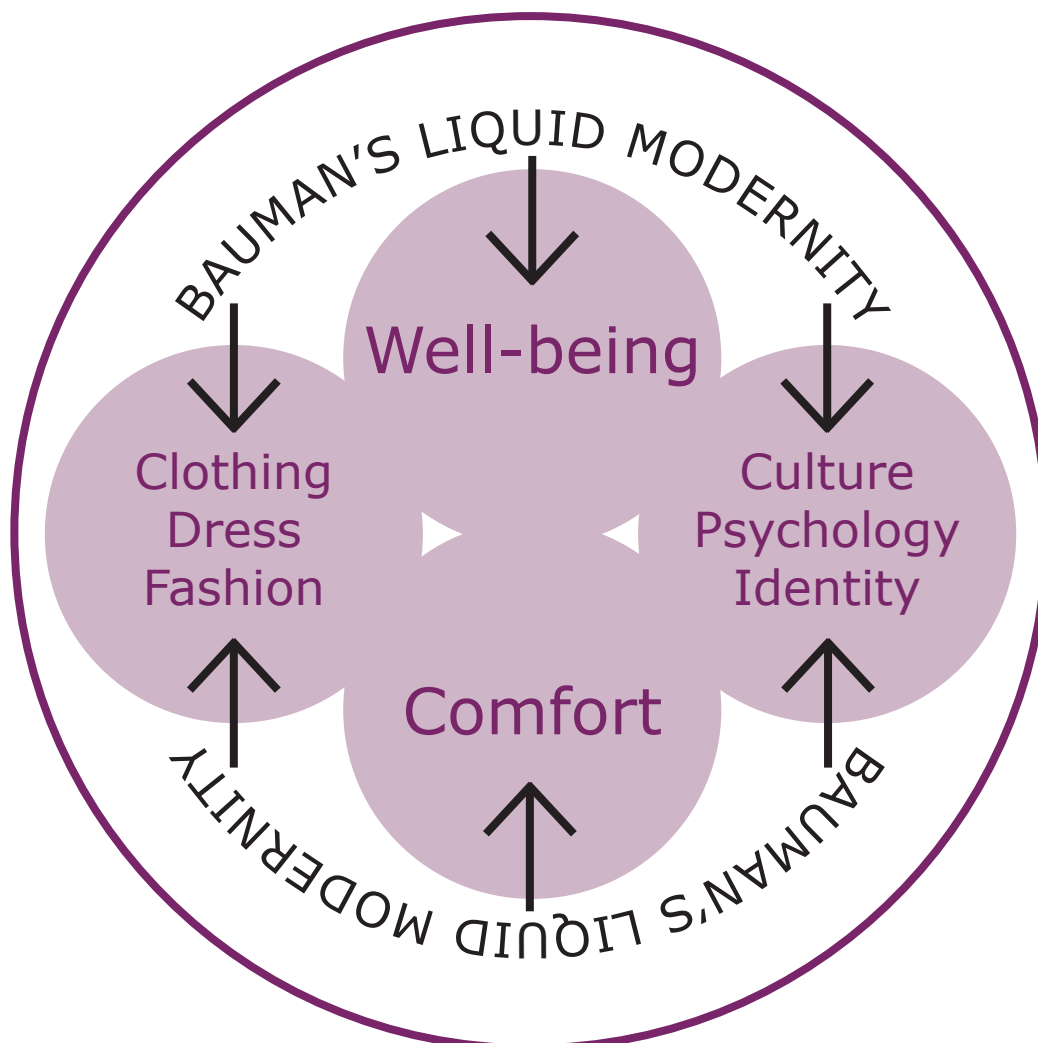
CLOTHING:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

A scoping literature review pertaining to the key foci of well-being and clothing was initially undertaken, to provide broad and cross-disciplinary knowledge. From this, a conceptual literature review (Grant and Booth 2009) is presented in this section. Clothing is further explored through dress practices, appearance management and fashion. Well-being is initially explored through the categories identified in the ONS (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015) Measuring National Well-being report (time, work, leisure, safety and income), with links made to clothing and dress practice where possible. Further investigation into well-being indicates several other factors: colour, community and confidence. This led to exploration of aspects of culture, identity and psychology linked to both clothing and well-being (see Figure 3). Throughout the literature review, Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity is applied where synergies are apparent.

Figure 3 Literature review key topics



2.1 DRESS DEFINITIONS

Kawamura (2011) states that clothing, fashion and dress terms need to be defined at the start of the research process. Key terms are collated in Table 1, which suggests that dress in an inclusive term, encompassing clothing, style, fashion, costume and body adornment practices.

Table 1 Clothing, dress and fashion terms

Clothing	Costume	Dress	Fashion	Style
Clothing is described by Craik (2009) as a collective term for garments, clothes or apparel, and is seen as 'necessities for all members of the UK population' by market research company Mintel (2017).	Costume is 'an intentional alteration of appearance for performative purposes' (Whitehead and Petrov 2017 p.4), and a 'departure from normative identity' (p.17).	There is agreement among fashion researchers that dress includes material objects such as clothes, accessories and jewellery, and body adornments such as hairstyles and tattoos (Whitehead and Petrov 2017; Mida and Kim 2015; Craik 2009), as well as sensory modifications including feel, smell and sounds (Eicher 1995).	Fashion is the prevailing style (Hancock 2016; Jenss 2016; Craik 2009) at a given time, characterised by change or transience (Crewe 2017; Whitehead and Petrov 2017) and existing 'in many areas of life, not only in the way we dress, but also in many other areas such as food, home furnishings, and even our way of thinking' (Kawamura 2011 p.9).	Style is 'a combination of silhouette, construction, fabric, and details that make the performance of an outfit distinctive' (Craik 2009 p.3); 'an aesthetic based not just on what you wear, but how you wear it' (Miller 2010 p.121).

Source: author's own

Corner (2014) describes dressing as a physical act. Being able to dress is a sign of independence, as is being able to choose how to dress, giving clothes value and significance to the wearer. Eicher (1995) describes dress as 'a coded sensory system of non-verbal communication that aids human interaction in space and time' (Jenss 2016 p. 204), recognising the widely agreed social aspects of dress (Whitehead and Petrov 2017; Barnard 2014; Entwistle 2000; Miller, Jasper and Hill 1991). The everyday occurrence, or 'ordinary consumption' (Jenss 2016 p. 45) of dress is also acknowledged by Craik (2009) and in Entwistle's (2000) discussions on the dressed body in everyday life. Clothing is often the most visible aspect of dress and can be segmented into functional and fashionable products (Keynote 2015). Clothing choice is based on many factors, and preference for certain types of clothing can be dynamic, changing with seasons, the environment, activity and age (Ruggerone 2016; Pine 2014; Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

2.1.1 Clothing

'Clothes are shorthand for being human; they are an intimate, skin-close craft form.'

(Wilcox 2001 p. 1)

The above quote correlates with Watkin's (1995) view that clothing is an individual's portable and most intimate environment. Belk (1988 p. 151) identifies both clothing and housing as 'a "second skin" in which others may see us'. Kamalha *et al.* (2013) identify clothing as an essential human need. Kawamura (2011) cites English Philosopher Thomas Carlyle who, in 1831, noted that adornment was the first purpose of clothing, above modesty or warmth. Virginia Woolf describes 'frock consciousness' throughout her writing, observing that clothes have 'more important offices than to merely keep us warm. They change our view of the world and the world's view of us' (Picardie 2015 p. 144). Barnard (2014) explains that, as clothing is functional, it can be thought of as a tool. Functions of clothing include keeping warm and dry, constructing identity, and communication, which Barnard claims is the most important function; that whatever other function clothing performs, it simultaneously performs the function of communication. In agreement, Mida and Kim (2015) state that clothing and accessories may communicate social values such as class, belonging, gender or identity. Communication can be described as an 'expressive' need in Lamb and Kallal's (1992) Consumer Needs Model, which incorporates the functional, expressive and aesthetic needs of clothing consumers, further explored in Table 2.

Table 2 Consumer needs model

Consumer Needs Model	Functional	Expressive	Aesthetic
Discussion	Carroll and Gross define the functional aspects of clothing as protection and comfort. Pine (2014) states that comfort, planned activity and the weather influence clothing choice. These can all be described as functional needs, which include thermal balance, safety and protection, mobility, unrestricted movement and anthropological considerations such as fit, with Crewe (2017) noting that the fit of garments is often ignored. Fit is crucial to performance but also affects how garments look (aesthetic) and how the wearer feels (expressive).	Consumers may need to communicate identity, gender or belonging. Clothes, as artefacts, have cultural agency, carrying ideological meanings that influence attitudes, social behaviour and the construction of identity. Crewe states that '[o]ur clothes become us. We inhabit them and they tell stories about us' (2017 p. 127). Expression may be an emotional response related to how clothing influences self-esteem, with Pine (2014) suggesting a link between mood and clothing, linking to psychological comfort.	Pine (2014) suggests that aesthetics account for less than ten percent of clothing choices. Aesthetic needs include appearance and tradition. Baumeister and Leary (1995) note that being considered as unattractive can lead to social exclusion and anxiety. Baron (2013) states that women develop heuristics for clothing selection over time, prioritising specific brands, shops and websites as a short cut to the styles and fit already deemed successful.

Source: author's own, adapted from Lamb and Kallal (1992)

In agreement with Table 2, Ruggerone (2016) posits that the human mind considers both aesthetics and function (practicality) when choosing what to wear, but that the act of putting the clothes on the body (wearing) can change how the clothing items are then perceived. Aesthetics are vital to the initial sale and overall success of a garment (Watkins 1995) as clothing and accessories are commodities of the 'material-economic world' (Thompson 2017 p. 1). Miller, in *The Comfort of Things* (2008) posits that people value material possessions, building memories associated with them, and that these possessions and associated memories can offer comfort in times of need. Habermas and Paha (2002) describe clothing as a non-linguistic form of mnemonic media, material objects in which to store and from which to retrieve memories. While clothing is recognised for its functional purposes, an item of clothing can become an indexical sign of a specific event or time when it is used as a reminder of the past. If that item is no longer used functionally, but still kept as a reminder, it becomes a souvenir. Similarly, Pine (2014) notes that people keep items of clothing for sentimental or nostalgic reasons, to feel connected to memories or others or past selves. Vintage items of clothing can also reconnect the wearer with the past, offering reassurance and acting as a 'material memory jogger' (Crewe 2017 p. 127). Cili and Stopa (2019) note the implications of memory to psychological well-being, defining individual, autobiographical memories as those related to specific places and times. As a component of a Self Memory System (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004), autobiographical memories contribute to self-coherence, the need to maintain a coherent and stable record of the self's interaction with the world that extends beyond the present moment. The long-term self involves the interaction of an autobiographical knowledge base and the conceptual self, which consists of socially-constructed schemas drawn from culture. The working self organises current experiences, involving short episodic memories, establishing preferences and priorities, and achieving goals. An individual's transition from one lifetime period to another can be emotional, necessitating re-categorisation of goals to a standard or ideal in the psychological present. Linking to the concept of autobiographical memory, Savas (2004) developed a theory of attachment and detachment related to possessions. Reasons for attachment were the past (family heirlooms, gifts, memories of past events and people), experiences such as enjoyment, independence and confidence (described as desirable feelings), utilitarian aspects (such as usefulness or performance), personal being (reflecting the self), social being (including social status, brands, social identifiers) and form (aesthetic considerations such as style and colour). Detachment occurred due to utilitarian aspects (poor quality or performance), form (the wrong colour or style) and personal being (where boredom or a poor reflection of self is experienced). Ruggerone (2016 p. 583) supports this, citing Woodward's (2007) exploration of phrases such as 'it doesn't suit me' or 'it is not me' as encounters in which 'a productive relationship failed to be formed', applying a Deleuzian lens where productive relationships are described as enabling and increasing the power of the agent to act.

Sensing whether an item of clothing is 'right' or 'wrong' translates as positive emotions such as ease or self-confidence or negative emotions such as awkwardness or embarrassment. Ruggerone (2016) describes this as the communication of perceived embodied feelings, or the rationalizing of the affects, noting that these affects could explain the different relationship consumers have with clothes compared to other possessions. Other reasons for detachment related to possessions (Savas 2004) include social being (if one belongs to an undesirable class), purchase associations (disappointment when using the item or dealing with the guilt of a superfluous purchase) and environmental, where changes, or transitions (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004) in an individual's life renders the item inappropriate or technological obsolescence renders it out of date. Clothing, especially fashionable clothing, can be described as having built-in obsolescence (Grose 2012; Jones 2005) as the fashion industry uses trends and advertising to drive consumer wants. Habermas and Paha (2002) suggest that the age of objects is linked to their ability to act as a reminder of the past. Thus, the throwaway, fast-fashion culture of contemporary Western society could impede the creation of autobiographical memories that are suggested as important in the formation, evolution and security of identity.

Figure 4 Nostalgic simulacrum in fashion



Jenss (2016 p. 153) describes how advertising teaches consumers to 'miss things they have never lost... nostalgia without lived experience or collective historical memory', labelling this as armchair nostalgia. As trends cycle ever faster, trends of the past return in shorter periods of time, making nostalgia itself a key element of fashion and clothing trends (Petrarca 2017). For example, in its Autumn/Winter 2017 collection, fashion brand Balenciaga produced an oversized grey cardigan with the hem hanging off (see Figure 4), emulating an old, worn effect; a simulacrum of aged nostalgia (Craik 2017). This is described by Baudrillard (1994[1981] p. 2) as 'substituting the signs of the real for the real', in this case the sign of a garment having been worn, having a history of existence, despite being brand new.

Similarly, Solomon and Rabolt (2009 p. 98) describe how 'used jeans' are created by chemicals and lasers, a form of 'reality engineering' that creates a 'new vintage' form of simulacrum. Jeans are a dominant feature of both functional and fashionable clothing and thus have warranted a specific focus in clothing research (Crewe 2017; Jenss 2016; David 2015). David (2015) notes that half the population of the world wear jeans daily and Jenss (2016) describes how jeans are worn by many different groups in society. Jeans can be described as a binary clothing construct, found to be both comfortable and uncomfortable; a generic uniform-like symbol of conformity yet, at the same time, a symbol of individuality that can morph to the body shape of the wearer (Jenss 2016). Research participants reported jeans as their most-worn garment, a go-to item of clothing used to blend in or in times of anxiety. Pine's (2003) findings found that, when feeling depressed, over half the respondents wore jeans, compared to only one-third when happy (thus insinuating that jeans can signify depression, indicating the wearer is not concerned with their appearance). Crewe (2017) describes jeans as generic, ubiquitous and every-day, worn by all ages and by the unfashionable and the fashionable.

2.1.2 Fashion

'Fashion is an outcome of multiple agents, institutions, and practices that intersect and it is in many ways a barometer of change in a rapidly evolving world'
(Crewe 2017 p. 30)

In many languages, the word for fashion, mode or moda, is derived from the Latin word modus (shape or manner) and root-linked to modernity (Jenss 2016). Barnard (2014) defines fashion as decorative while Crewe (2017 p. 111) views it as an 'aesthetic market'. Lang and Lang (1961) defined the difference between 'taste' and 'aesthetics', whereby taste represents purely subjective judgement, compared to aesthetics, which requires consistency of aesthetic principles, in keeping with fashion as a collective phenomenon. Heller (2007) argues that fashion was present through precise descriptions of clothing in twelfth- and thirteenth-century French literature, and Welters and Lillethun (2018) challenge

the notion of fashion's emergence in the mid-fourteenth century as Eurocentric, evidencing changes in dress in many cultures throughout history. Kawamura (2011) identifies fashion as being distinct from dress or clothing, and the complexity and changeable nature of fashion is widely agreed (Whitehead and Petrov 2017; Jenss 2016; Wodak and Meyer 2016; Craik 2009). This propensity for change is not new; in 1721, the French social critic Charles de Secondat Montesquieu commented on the speed of change in Parisian fashions (Kawamura 2011). Fashion was disseminated and promoted through twice-yearly fashion shows and global media publications such as Vogue magazine throughout the twentieth century.

Jenss (2016) describes twentieth-century fashion as symbolic of aesthetics, culture, social, political and economic factors. Arguably, technology is absent from Jenss' description. In the twenty-first century, digital technologies have transformed the dissemination and consumption of fashion, enabling consumers to interact and immerse themselves in fashion culture, irrespective of location. Crewe (2017) notes this intersection of material and virtual fashion and connects it with the social realities of contemporary culture, describing a 'computer-consumer-commodity nexus' (p. 130). People are more connected than ever to the screens of mobiles, tablets and laptops. Crewe (2017) argues that digital technologies have altered 'existing cultural forms of signification such as fashion magazines and photography' (p. 129). No longer are magazine editors or designers the only cultural gatekeepers (Solomon and Rabolt 2009) of fashion; influence now also evolves from bloggers (Halvorsen *et al.* 2013) and the consumers themselves as co-creators (Humphreys and Grayson 2008), from vast geographies, generating new concepts of fashion, identity, the self and the body. Corner (2014) agrees that fashion is now democratised. One designer, magazine or city can no longer dictate hemlines, silhouettes or styles. This democratisation makes fashion increasingly complex and varied (Jenss 2016), presenting the consumer with a 'multitude of simultaneously "fashionable" styles of clothing and personal appearance' (Kaiser, Nagasawa and Hutton 1991 p. 166), leading to confusion for the consumer. Throughout the history of fashion, its paradoxical nature emerges, with Corner (2014) noting that fashion meets both cultural and biological needs. Further fashion binaries include:

Negative/Positive

Early fashion commentators held polarised views. In 1750, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1780) described fashion's negative impact on virtue and morals while Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) and Honore de Balzac (1799-1850) wrote more positively (Kawamura 2011). Fashion was regarded positively in times of war, with the UK edition of Vogue magazine launched during the First World War, bringing an element of aspiration and fantasy to difficult times. During the Second World War, fashion was used by the government to encourage acceptance

of fabric rationing and a make-do-and-mend mind-set through aesthetically pleasing design by prominent British designers (Beward 1995). In current times, fashion is viewed negatively for its impact on the environment, with the UK government's Environmental Audit Committee launching a 2018 investigation into the clothing industry and the fast-fashion phenomenon (House of Commons 2019).

Modesty/Immodesty

Modesty and immodesty are cultural constructs. Modesty theory is linked with certain religions and posits that people wear clothes because they believe that being naked is shameful. Conversely, Immodesty theory suggests clothes are worn to draw attention to certain parts of the body, as a sexual lure (Gurel and Beeson 1979). Entwistle (2000) notes the higher level of moral concern that is associated with women's dress, compared to men, which links with Laver's (1950) Seduction Principle (Barnard 2002), whereby clothing is a means of making women more attractive to men. The concept of the 'shifting erogenous zone' posited by fashion researchers such as Flugel (1950) and Laver (1950) suggests that using clothing to conceal or reveal certain parts of the body is linked to fashion trends and fashion's need for constant reinvention (Barnard 2002 p. 58). This is manifest in the recent trend for modest fashion (Independent 2019), described by Vogue magazine as no longer 'the dowdy domain for religious folk' (Usher 2018 np), enabling women to be feel fashionable while conforming to the requirements of their faith.

Ordinary/Extra-ordinary

Jenss (2016) posits the idea of fashion as both ordinary and extraordinary. Extraordinary, elite fashion is seen in the advertising and editorial of glossy fashion magazines such as Vogue and Harper's Bazaar, on couture catwalks, celebrities (Gibson 2012) and in museum collections. Ordinary, non-elite fashion (Jenss 2016; Tynan 2016; Craik 1994) is embedded in everyday lives, seen in personal wardrobes, photographs and general-interest media publications. Miller (2010) argues that ordinary people on the streets of London look very different to the fashions seen in glossy magazines, although this opinion does not consider street-style or straight-up fashion photography (Shinkle 2008), which is now a regular feature in most fashion magazines. Shinkle (2008 p. 206) links 'the wave of imagery involving amateur models' with reality television and reality portraiture facilitated by camera phones and blogs, stating '[l]ike reality television, the appearance of non-professional models reflects a simultaneous obsession with manufacturing celebrities out of ordinary people'. As discussed in section 1.5 Rationale, there are gaps in existing literature related to the study of ordinary, everyday clothing (Jenss 2016; Tynan 2016; Gibson 2012; Craik 1994), with fashion research often focusing on elite dress.

Superficial/Important

Crewe (2017) notes the superficiality of fashion, described by Breward (2003) as a 'subordinate feminine' area of interest (Crewe 2017 p. 14). Similarly, Jenss (2016 p. 26) discusses fashion's 'precarious status – as low culture, entertainment'. Whitehead and Petrov (2017) also note fashion's lack of cultural status. This is binary to the trickle-down theory that places fashion within high culture for those of high social status (Jones 2005). Corner's (2014) assertion that the fashion industry is the second largest worldwide economic activity for intensity of trade and fashion's £32 billion contribution to the United Kingdom's economy (Sleigh 2018) also highlight the importance of fashion, while in 'Why clothing is not superficial', Miller (2010) shows that clothes affect the wearer, playing an active part in determining the self at any given time and place, rather than being merely symbolic. Thus, fashion's cultural, economic and anthropological importance is suggested.

Individual/Social

Grose (2012 p. 148) states that 'fashion is all about self-image.' Fashion as the embodied practice of the individual (Entwistle 2003), alluding to a sense of agency (Jenss 2016) and avoiding conformity (Craik 1984; Sapir 1931) is binary to fashion as the collective, cultural construction (Mida and Kim 2015; Barnard 2014) of society. Classical fashion theories, such as Veblen in 1899 and Simmel in 1904 (Kawamura 2011) emerged at the start of the twentieth century and focused on groups, inclusion and exclusion (e.g. a group wearing a similar style and excluding others who do not dress that way). More recently, the Women Fashion Power exhibition in London (Design Museum 2015) examined fashion's mirroring of society and how clothing reflects women's position in society. The exhibition sought to explore how women use fashion to define the self and their place in the world. Kaiser (2012 p. 42) considers fashion as a form of 'social play', however Von Busch (2016) uses a darker tone, describing fashion as a 'violent playground' (p. 181) linked to the 'potential violence of social competition' (p. 189). Barnard (2014) argues that classic and retro fashions are 'ideological phenomena' (p. 58) used to avoid the dominant social group. Another element of the individual/social fashion binary then is the feeling of alienation women experience by upward social comparisons to fashion-clad celebrities and glossy fashion magazines versus the feelings of elation when women experience the 'click' (Guy and Banim 2000) of getting it right (Jenss 2016). Von Busch (2016 p. 193) notes the 'inherent cruelty embedded in aesthetic judgements, where the demarcation of "in" and "out" also reflects the social status of included and excluded'. Miller (2010) comments on the freedom of dress practice in contemporary London, which leads to anxiety about what to wear due to the lack of rules or social conventions. This aligns with Bauman's (2012) assertions about anxiety engendered by freedom of choice in contemporary Western society.

Craft/Mass produced

Finally, Crewe (2017) notes the craft, skill and longevity of luxury fashion and argues for a return to 'considered consumption' (p. 69) of clothing as long-

term investment pieces. Corner (2014) describes how craft is experiencing a resurgence due to a backlash against cheap mass production, showing that the connection between creator and consumer can have commercial benefits, as well as ethical and environmental. Similarly, Lynas (2010 np), discusses 'slow design' as a carefully considered holistic approach, which can be appreciated and increase the bond between object and owner, related to the practical, emotional and nostalgic connections people make with possessions. For example, holiday purchases are linked to cultural significance, emotion and nostalgia (Lynas 2010), and craft garments gain value from association with territory or place of production, cultural specificity or history (Crewe 2017). These can be compared with quick purchases made during lunch hours, which satisfy immediate needs but may not nourish long term. Lynas (2010) applies the three main aspects of the more established slow-food industry, good, clean and fair, to the fashion industry. Bespoke fashion is described as good, offering longevity and attachment due to better design, transparency of process and higher quality. Reducing clothing waste in landfill, utilizing cradle-to-cradle systems and local production are discussed to make fashion clean. The impact of the fashion industry, in terms of employment and the complex chain of manufacture are also discussed, in terms of unethical practice and Fairtrade (with cotton production identified as a successful Fairtrade product). In contrast, Bauman (2012) posited that products are no longer valued for longevity, that transient possession and a throwaway culture focused on speed, change and replacement is the norm, describing the fluid modernity of mass-produced fast fashion.

2.1.3 Fast Fashion

'And we are all thrown into an unstoppable hunt for novelty.'

(Bauman 2012 p. xii)

Fast fashion, using poor-quality fabrics and construction, and following fleeting trends, leads to garments that are quickly disposed of (Lynas 2010). The fast-fashion industry can be linked with Bauman's (2012) description of twenty-first century modern society, where words such as compulsive, obsessive and overwhelming are used, along with the notion of 'creative destruction' (p. 28), as fashion is often focused on phasing out, with each season's trends dismantled and replaced with something new. Bauman's (2012 p. 125) concept of 'fluid modernity' sees long-term replaced with short-term, embodied by the fast-fashion industry, which has reduced the typical fashion cycle from eighteen months to just two weeks. Crewe (2017) notes the impact of the Internet on fashion, enabling an ever-faster pace of dissemination of fashion content, driving consumer desire, and cites Cline (2013 p.5), who states that 'one need not have the sharpest fashion acumen or know a single thing about clothes to accumulate massive amounts of them' (p. 39). Crewe goes on to note that consumers love or even worship their possessions and that, within the fashion market, price is not the only measure of value.

2.1.4 Value

'clothing that is kept beyond its fashionable life often has "symbolic qualities" and holds "personal memories" for the owner'
(de la Haye, Taylor and Thompson 2005 p. 14)

Continuing the binary category, Crewe (2017 p. 152) notes the 'binary divide between active, agentive, communicative humans, and passive, silent, fixed objects' such as items of clothing and jewellery. The highly subjective nature of the value of fashion is dependent on 'judgement devices' (Crewe 2017 p. 3), such as brands and labels. These provide knowledge that consumers can use to make consumption judgements and decisions. In other words, branding can create 'commodity meaning' (Crewe 2017 p. 81), creating value and distinction. Belk (1988) and Thompson (2017) describe the Marxist concept of commodity fetishism, the predominance of exchange value over use value that suggests consumers worship certain goods. Commodity fetishism is certainly present in the price of luxury fashion goods. According to Hameide, luxury products can offer feel-good sensations, with this 'emotional reward' (2011 p. 109) being a strong purchase motivator. In contrast to Hameide's concept of emotional reward, Davies (2015 p. 143) notes that 'aspirational values' related to power, status or money are linked to a lowered sense of 'self-actualisation' and an increased risk of depression.

Gifts have value beyond their monetary worth. Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self posits that gifts are given to significant others to make them happy (in turn bringing happiness to the self). Rochberg-Halton (1984) established that as people get older, possessions regarded as special are often gifts that become symbols of the gift-giver. Belk (1988 p. 149) notes that some people seek the 'sympathetic magic' or 'contagion' of possessions that belonged to valued others (i.e. that retain a part of that valued other's extended self). A fascination with objects from the past may also involve nostalgia (Belk 1988). The past can be important to one's sense of self and possessions offer a convenient memory store and sense of past and place, described by Habermas and Paha as 'temporal-spatial contiguity' (2002 p. 124). Crewe (2017 p. 117) agrees that gifts gain 'elevated moral and sentimental status' through the relationship with the gift-giver, and acknowledges that fashion objects can accrue value in excess of market worth from 'beyond-market explanations' (p. 3), such as history, love, memory, place and social relations, aligning with Maslow's (1943) belonging needs. Linked to this, Bluck *et al.* (2005) describe the social function of individual autobiographical memories, which can enable relationship-building and facilitate feelings of empathy and understanding. Memories can imbue objects with agentive qualities, stories of their own, as the human actor attaches meaning and value through time, place, experience, use or wear; even stains and rips can become marks of value. Clothes can also provide sensory experiences and produce emotions in the wearer, which all engender memory. Examples of this could be special clothes, from something as simple as jeans that have become

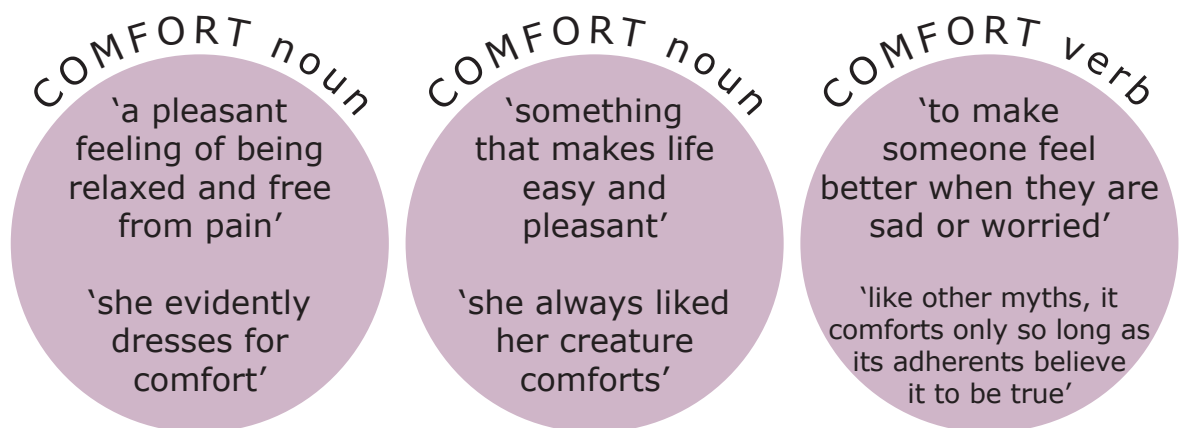
very worn over time to an outfit worn on an important night out; clothes that hold personal memories associated with history or a moment in time. These autobiographical memories, based on past experiences with items of clothing, could have a directive function (Bluck *et al.* 2005), which could help individuals to make decisions or manage emotions, thus offering psychological comfort.

2.2 COMFORT

'comfort corresponds to everything contributing to the well-being and convenience of the material aspects of life'
(Pineau 2008 p. 271)

Pineau's (2008) statement on comfort corresponds with the concept of clothing as material culture described in section 2.7, but neglects the concept of psychological comfort discussed in section 2.2.4. Comfort is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as a noun and verb (2018a), as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Defining comfort



Source: author's own, adapted from *Cambridge Dictionary* (2018a)

2.2.1 A short history of comfort

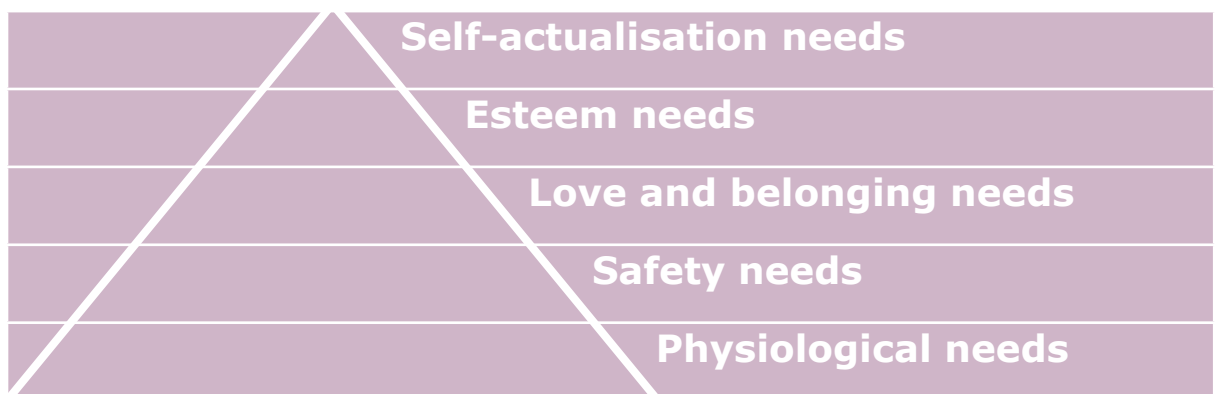
Steele (2001 p. 24) describes comfort as a 'relative concept', which was not considered important for many centuries, noting that the word comfort only entered the French language in 1815, although the English word comfortable had been used in France by 1786. Comfort, in products ranging from corsets to furniture, became a valued property in the nineteenth century. Steele's (2001) research into corset advertisements noted most highlighted comfort as a feature. In 1887 Amelia Jenks Bloomer stated that women's dress should focus on function, comfort and health, with aesthetics being a secondary consideration. This links to the Aesthetic Dress Movement (ADM), which evolved in the UK, associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and Arts & Crafts Movement. The ADM advocated simple and elegant silhouettes with unrestricting undergarments (Design Museum 2015). As early as 1909 Selfridges on London's Oxford Street had The Rest Room, described as 'Shopping Comfort'. Chanel's 1920's jersey flapper dress liberated women by 'enabling them to move more freely and more comfortably, and even to get dressed and out of the house more quickly, than previous fashions' (Barnard 2014 p. 61), hinting that the time-poor consumer (Solomon and Rabolt 2009) is not a new phenomenon.

Retail analysts have found that the use of comfort as a fashion marketing strategy tends to target the mature consumer, but that research suggests almost a quarter of female consumers aged 15-25 prioritize comfort over style (Clements 2015). In a study of four hundred people, Pine (2014) found that 52% dress to be comfortable. Moran and Skeggs (2004) link comfort primarily with domestic settings. Jayne and Ferencuhova (2013 p. 331) suggest wearing comfortable clothes is 'an everyday "political" response' to economic and political change, describing them as a coping mechanism for managing uncertainty. Entwistle (2006) established that fashion buyers brief designers to create styles with saleability, flattering to a range of body shapes and that are comfortable to wear. Comfort therefore can be thought of as a quality aspect which leads to both performance and user satisfaction. Clothing comfort can be categorized into three areas: physiological/ergonomic, sensorial/tactile/ physical and psychological (Kamalha *et al.* 2013; Mukhopadhyay and Midha 2008; Slater 1985).

2.2.2 Physiological Comfort

Maslow's (1943) theory of human behaviour explains the prioritisation of physiological needs above all others (see Table 3). In Maslow's words, 'the desire for a new pair of shoes are, in the extreme case, forgotten or become of secondary importance' (p. 373) if a person is desperately hungry. However, Maslow acknowledges that such extreme hunger is rare in a 'normally functioning peaceful society' (p. 374).

Table 3 Maslow's hierarchy of needs



Source: author's own, adapted from Maslow (1943)

Physiological comfort is concerned with the thermal regulation of the body. Fourt and Hollies (1970 p. 3) describe 'quiet comfort', or 'resting comfort' as a condition of thermal neutrality sought in most work and civilian environments. There is a British Standard (BS EN ISO 7730) for thermal comfort, described as 'the condition of the mind which expresses satisfaction with the thermal environment' (Kamalha *et al.* 2013 p. 431). Physiological comfort is therefore dependent on the environment, but also on the wearer's body mechanisms, the pulmonary, cardiovascular, central nervous, skeletomuscular and digestive systems. Metabolic rates vary between individuals and are affected by food, drink and activity level. Body shape also affects thermal comfort as the surface to volume ratio of tall, thin people means they can disperse more heat than shorter, more voluptuous body types (Szokolay 2008), meaning they can tolerate higher temperatures. On average, women have a lower ratio of lean body mass and as a result tend to get colder than men do (Bye and Hakala 2005). Conversely, this means women tend to have a higher tolerance to high temperatures than men. Older people are less sensitive to feelings of hot and cold (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman (2005) describe the technological development within the fashion industry of smart fabrics, which can contract or expand, thus making clothing warmer or cooler as necessary, or loosening or tightening clothing to enhance physical comfort.

2.2.3 Physical Comfort

Thermal sensations such as warmth, coolness and breathability contribute to physical comfort but are more closely aligned with physiological comfort as noted in section 2.2.2. Other aspects of physical comfort include moisture sensations such clamminess, dampness, wetness, stickiness and clinging, and pressure sensations relating to garment fit, such as being tight, loose, lightweight, heavy, soft or stiff. Acoustic properties such as rustling are sensorial, as are scent properties (see section 2.5 Well-being) and visual/aesthetic perceptions such as lustre and fuzziness (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Peck and Childers (2003) describe comfort as a controlled and conscious outcome-directed, instrumental factor related to consumer purchase goals. For example, consumers might touch an item to judge texture, temperature or weight. Thus, sensorial/tactile/physical comfort arises from clothing touching the wearer's body and is closely related to discomfort. Tactile sensations can be described as smooth, rough, prickly, sticky, scratchy, soft and stiff. Research has established that females have a more sensitive and delicate response when feeling fabrics, compared to males (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Bushnell and Boudreau (1991) state that infants can perceive textures as early as age five to nine months. Infants of this age display autotelic touch behaviour, stroking textured items that they find pleasurable (the term autotelic relates to touch instigated when seeking hedonic responses such as sensory stimulation and enjoyment). The seeking and acquisition of information using the hand is referred to as haptics by Peck and Childers (2003), with Mida and Kim (2015 p. 22) describing fabric as having 'haptic qualities'. Wright and Lynch's (1995) media congruence hypothesis maintains that 'experience attributes' (Peck and Childers 2003 p. 438) such as the feel of a sweater can only be ascertained by touching or using the item. Crewe (2017) states that the importance of tactility and surface is often ignored. Young (2005 p. 69) notes that 'touch immerses the subject in fluid continuity with the object... blurring the border between self and other'.

2.2.4 Psychological Comfort

Psychological comfort is related to the wearer's values, roles and social being, the internal self-consciousness and self-satisfaction. Kamalha *et al.* (2013) cite Branson & Sweeney's (1991) social-psychological spectrum, which involves cultural/religious/political beliefs and values, personality, body image and personal interests; these are described as personal attributes. Clothing attributes are also recognized; these include fashion, style, aesthetics, design, colour and texture. Environmental attributes, such as occasion, location, climate, social-cultural settings and norms, were also found to affect levels of psychological comfort. Table 4 provides an overview of clothing comfort models.

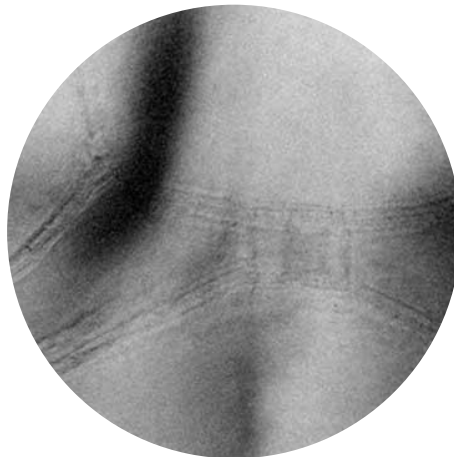
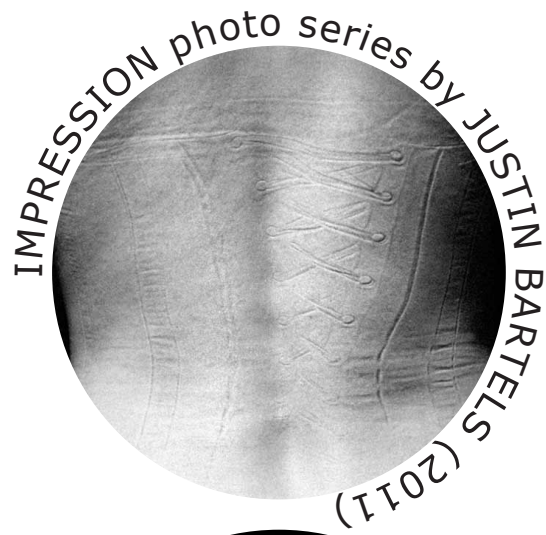
Table 4 Clothing comfort models

Author	Fourt & Hollies (1970)	Pontrelli's (1975) Clothing Comfort model	Sontag's (1985) Clothing Comfort Triad	Branson & Sweeney (1991)	Lui & Little (2009) 5Ps model
Concepts	Notes the relationship between clothing, person and environment	Describes Physical elements and Psycho-physiological elements, filtered by 'stored person modifiers', such as personality, preferences, lifestyle, previous experience, influences/ prejudices and anticipation/ expectations	Person attributes Clothing attributes Environmental attributes	Describes the wearer's ' filters ' such as previous experience, anticipations and influences	Notes Physical, Psychological, Physiological, Psychophysical, Psycho-physiological, focusing on the mind-body connection

Source: author's own, adapted from Kamalha *et al.* (2013)

Consensus can be seen among the authors in Table 4 on the relationship between the environment, clothing and the person (Sontag 1985; Fourt and Hollies 1970). Branson and Sweeney (1991) and Pontrelli (1975) agree on the importance of previous experience, anticipations and influences, which in turn links with Lui and Little's (2009) focus on mind-body connection. In Miller's (2008) research, a participant is described as using clothing as a form of comfort after bereavement, cuddling the clothes and crying for the lost relative. Wearing an item that belonged to a relative enabled the participant to take that person with them to special events, in effect giving the relative 'a good time' (p. 42) and allowing them to still be part of the participant's life. Another participant kept clothes that related to the past (connected with certain people or events, or given as gifts), bringing items to the front of the wardrobe that evoked positive memories and hiding those that caused discomfort.

Figure 6 Impression



2.3 DISCOMFORT

'what torture do women not endure, so tightly tied and bound'
(Montaigne 1588, cited in Steele 2001 p. 14)

David (2015) details the trend for contemporary marketing campaigns to use uncomfortable themes, glamourizing trauma, destruction and death. Similarly, Almond (2015) highlights the tragic beauty of the 1990's waif and heroin chic looks, describing the look as physically destructive, and notes fashion designers' use of themes related to suffering, such as witchcraft, rape, fear, war, death and gothic. Whitehead and Petrov (2018) note that dress practice can be used to threaten 'the comforts of an accepted social order' (p. 1), describing the 'adornment rituals' (p. 4) of contemporary Western society's fashions as horrifying. Examples include fashions for tattoos, piercings, toxic cosmetics and items of clothing that physically distort the body. While examples of these can be extreme, Justin Bartels' 2011 Impression photo series showed the marks that even everyday wear can leave on the body (Swann 2015), as shown in Figure 6.

Sociologist Entwistle (2003) describes dress as a second skin which one is only conscious of if something is not quite right, whether that is poor fit on the body or poor fit to the social situation (i.e. physical or psychological discomfort). Almond (2015) agrees, identifying discomfort or physical pain experienced while wearing clothing that distorts the body and the psychological pain (from deprivation, marginalization, undervaluation, embarrassment and prejudice) that leads to use of fashion for self-recreation. Whitehead and Petrov (2018) note that freedom of self-expression (i.e. psychological comfort) is often valued more than physical comfort. Miller (2008 p. 149) narrates a research participant who wanted to,

'...cleanse herself of her bad clothing experiences as a child: "I have memories of clothes I just hated... that were really uncomfortable... I remember spitting on them, throwing them on the floor. And so that's the thing about them [clothes for her son] needing to be comfortable."

In Spivack's (2014) *Worn Stories*, a musician details the physical discomfort of sweating on stage in jeans, and the discomfort of others on the tour bus as the jeans grew mouldy and smelly in the confined space. Nylon shorts from American Apparel were purchased as a replacement; easy to wear, wash, dry and replace, as there are many American Apparel stores worldwide. The physical comfort of the shorts eventually led to a form of psychological comfort, becoming part of a ritual whereby everything had to be the same, to overcome severe stage fright.

Discourse on the discomfort of dress is not a contemporary phenomenon. In a *Dialogue Between Fashion and Death*, poet and philosopher Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837) personifies Fashion as one who persuades and forces, 'all genteel men to endure daily a thousand hardships and a thousand discomforts and often pain and torment and I even get some of them to die gloriously for love of me'

(Leopardi 2010 p. 8). Corner (2014) explains how a constant feature of female dress across history is that of constraint. Generally, women of status (or wives of men of status) wore physically restrictive clothing, for example foot binding in China and tightly laced corsets in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe.

2.3.1 Corsets

'...women who wear corsets for years cannot stop wearing them without suffering discomfort'
(Steele 2001 p. 71).

Steele (2001) argues that the corset was unlikely to have caused the huge range of health issues it is historically blamed for, however modern research confirms that some of the issues reported in the 1800s were correct; corsets did indeed cause bruising and abrasion, deformity of the rib cage and reduced respiratory function, and muscle atrophy. Veblen, in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1994[1899] p. 106) described the corset as 'a mutilation, undergone for the purpose of lowering the subject's vitality and rendering her permanently and obviously unfit for work'. Steele, however, disputes this, giving examples of many mass-produced corsets for working-class women. As well as the corset, Veblen also regarded high heels as a signifier of dependency, expensive infirmity and conspicuous leisure (Steele 2001). There are records that suggest some women complained corsets or stays were uncomfortable, however the idea that 'one must suffer for beauty' (Steele 2001 p. 25) was commonplace. Steele also describes the English association of loose dress with loose morals to explain the popularity of tight lacing compared to other European countries' fashions. Corsetry became linked with valued aristocratic attributes such as discipline, self-control and being upright and proud, compared to the bent bodies of the physically working lower classes. Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman (2005 p. 155) quote the French painter Paul Gauguin's (1985[1901] p. 19) comments on European nineteenth century female dress (the S-shaped silhouette):

'Thanks to our cinctures and corsets, we have succeeded in making an artificial being out of woman.. We carefully keep her in a state of nervous weakness and muscular inferiority, and in guarding her from fatigue, we take away from her possibilities of development. Thus, modelled on a bizarre ideal of slenderness... our women have nothing in common with us [men], and this, perhaps, may not be without grave moral and social disadvantages.'

In opposition to Gauguin's views, an article in *Beauty* magazine from 1890 about corsets and corpulence noted that there were 'women whose figures require support and who, without aid of this kind, are rendered extremely uncomfortable to themselves, and beyond question, unsightly to others', stating that 'without the corset, the possessors of bulky figures would suffer both physically and mentally' (Steele 2001 p. 65). Those in favour of corsets, usually those selling them, flip the comfort/discomfort discourse by highlighting the psychological

discomfort of body dissatisfaction and the comfort gained from looking good in the right corset. Gaugin's quote, though over one hundred years old, is relevant in contemporary times, aligning with Almond's (2015) discussions on the contemporary waif look and Mair's (2018) assertion that females continue to feel pressure to conform to a narrow set of body image standards. The corset, diminished in relevance in contemporary society, is replaced by modern means of fashion constriction, of which there are many choices, including shapewear, diet and exercise (Corner 2014).

2.3.2 Choice (and the fashion victim)

'The consumers' misery derives from the surfeit,
not the dearth of choices.'

(Bauman 2012 p. 63)

Lane (2000) links proliferation of choice in capitalist economies with declines in personal well-being. Bauman (2012) described the contemporary world's abundance of seductive and addictive choice as 'too wide for comfort' (p. 73), noting that 'everything in a consumer society is a matter of choice, except the compulsion to choose' (p. 74). This choice-overloaded consumer emerges in the work of fashion researchers (Crewe 2017; Jenss 2016; Corner 2014; Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005; Clarke and Miller 2002; Crane 2000), with Rafaeli *et al.* (1997 p. 40) confirming that women face 'a wide range of available dress choices'. Crane (2000 p. 6) cites Kaiser, Nagasawa and Hutton's (1991 p. 166) reference to 'the complex range and multitude of simultaneously "fashionable" styles of clothing and personal appearance', noting that choice leads to confusion for the consumer. Cronin (2000) links choice with Western notions of individuality, where free choice should enable authenticity but whether choice is truly free is debated. Solomon and Rabolt (2009) link the availability of more options to the consumer with the perception of time poverty, which leads to increased stress. Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman (2005) discuss the choice-overloaded consumer of the future, due to the development of mass-customised garments, and suggest retailers will have to provide style consultants to help customers make their co-design choices. They also question whether people will develop greater confidence and independence through customisation, rather than conforming to existing fashion trends (thus further fragmenting the fashion industry), or whether people will become confused and crave direction. Certainly, fashion is now fragmented, or democratized; no one designer, magazine or city dictates hemlines or silhouettes (Corner 2014), with Jenss (2016 p. 4) discussing the urban-Western phenomenon of 'rapid change in clothing and appearance styles'. Corner (2014) agrees, noting that wider media and fast fashion availability mean near instant access to a huge range of styles. The fast-fashion industry can be linked with Bauman's (2012) description of twenty-first century modern society, where words such as compulsive, obsessive and overwhelming are used, along with the notion of 'creative destruction' (p. 28), as fashion is focused on phasing out, with each season's trends dismantled and replaced with something new. Bauman's (2012 p. 125) concept of 'fluid

Figure 7 Happy victims



modernity' sees long-term replaced with short-term, embodied by the temporality (Crewe 2017) of fast fashion.

Crewe attributes the decline of historical and fixed ideological identities, such as gender, class and age, to the evolution of this freer fashion system, describing 'reflexive individualized consumption' (p. 5) as a requirement when creating self-identity. Crewe notes that human agents 'increasingly inhabit multiple spaces' (2017 p. 155), which necessitates greater choice. Thus, more choice and fewer fixed identities provide greater freedom for the consumer. However, Clarke and Miller (2002), Bauman (2012), Corner (2014) and Crewe (2017) agree that increased choice leads to higher risk for the consumer, meaning that even simple and utilitarian purchases (such as jeans, t-shirts and socks) have become bewildering and overwhelming. Consumers can therefore be described as casualties of the fashion system, a normative capitalist force (Thompson 2017; Corner 2014) legitimizing addictive behaviours. Scheibehenne, Todd and Greifeneder's (2010) meta-analysis of the choice overload hypothesis acknowledges the additional cognitive resources required where more choices are available but concluded 'more choice is better' (p. 421) at least where well-defined preferences are already established. Within the psychology discipline, Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory views choice positively, positing that a sense of choice enhances intrinsic motivation, feelings of autonomy and competency (Hagger, Rentzelas and Chatzisarantis 2013). Thus, empirical evidence within the psychology and wider consumer behaviour disciplines disagrees with fashion-specific research and Bauman's assertions on the impact of choice. However, given the fashion-specific nature of this Comfort in Clothing study and the vast choice of clothing available in the contemporary Western democratised fashion system, the concept of a choice-overloaded fashion consumer seems applicable. As early as the 19th century, those seen as enslaved by fashion were referred to as fashion victims, with Whitehead and Petrov (2018) likening fashion victims to zombies, due to their 'unthinking consumption' (p. 17). The continued judgement of the fashion victim is noted by Almond (2015), pointing out that fashion consumption is judged with contempt in comparison to those who collect and consume other goods (such as books and vinyl), which attract more cultural value. The contemporary fashion victim is visualised by the Japanese photographer Kyochi Tsuzuki's Happy Victims series (see Figure 7).

2.4 HAPPINESS

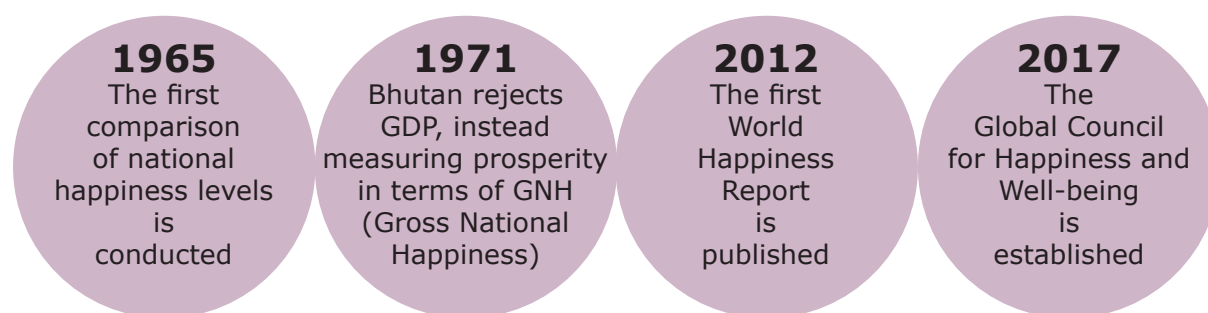
'Would it really be possible to create a wardrobe of "happy clothes",
as protection against ever feeling miserable again?'

(Pine 2014 p. 371)

In Mind What You Wear (Pine 2014), 57% of Pine's female respondents wore baggy tops when feeling low, compared to just 2% when feeling happy. 62% were more likely to wear a favourite dress when happy, compared to 6% when depressed. Pine posits that people choose certain items of clothing when happy and others when feeling depressed, and that what one chooses to wear could

boost happiness levels. Women in Pine's study described happy clothing as well-cut, figure enhancing and brightly coloured. Solomon and Rabolt (2009) describe a happy mood as being high in pleasantness and moderate in arousal. Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005) assert that the desire for happiness is a feature of Western culture. Davis (2015 p. 3) states that happiness is now a 'measurable, visible, improvable entity' enabled by new technologies. This has evolved into the 'quantified self' movement (p. 221), where individuals log various aspects of their lives via social media and apps, providing huge data sets for companies and marketers. From the Bhutanese focus on happiness as a form of prosperity, to the various happiness initiatives and policies being explored by countries worldwide; happiness is now a well-researched, interdisciplinary and monetised phenomenon (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 Happiness timeline



Source: Global Happiness and Wellbeing Policy Report (2019)

The 2019 Global Happiness and Wellbeing Policy Report (The Global Council for Happiness and Wellbeing 2019 p. 4) states that 'the "pursuit of happiness" should no longer be left to the individual', arguing that it is a societal (macro level) concern. However, Davies, in *The Happiness Industry* (2015), suggests that policies related to happiness and well-being seek to alter the behaviour of individuals towards goals selected by those in power (as discussed in section 1.3 – see Figure 1). This is described as a form of paternalism, which Davies acknowledges can offer a level of comfort and relief, as the individual is relieved from the responsibility of decision-making. In agreement, Bauman noted the Hobbesian view that freedom from societal constraint does not bring automatic happiness, arguing that human agents find taking responsibility, without norms to follow, stressful; who can be blamed if failure ensues? Society offers a form of protection, a norm that is common or average and thus, familiar and safe, described as a 'liberating dependence' (Bauman 2012 p. 20). Freedom features in Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, as a prerequisite of basic need satisfaction. Freedom to speak, act, express one's self, seek information, defend one's self and orderliness in the group are identified. Baumeister and Leary (1995) note that having close personal relationships leads to happiness and that social isolation is largely incompatible with high levels of happiness, suggesting that being included or accepted produces positive emotions, and that being excluded or rejected results in negative feelings such as anxiety. Haybron (2013) agrees on the importance of society to happiness, however Linley (2006) cautions that

happiness and well-being are culture-bound, deemed desirable by Americans and Western Europeans but not by all cultures. Bauman (2012) stated that many people are unhappy, without being able to articulate why, or what might be causing their unhappiness, noting that observing other people's experiences is used as a method of identifying one's own troubles, with the hope of then fixing them. Wood and Skeggs (2008 p.183) note how makeover television shows propose a better life 'made through an individual's correct relationship with material goods' such as fashion and clothing. The popularity of makeover culture and tendency for people to develop dress or style heuristics (Baron 2013) could therefore be linked to human agents' search for direction and stable routines (Bauman 2012), a form of protection from uncertainty and too much choice.

Bauman acknowledged the subjectivity of happiness, stating '[i]n a well organised society... every class, from kings to peasants would enjoy their very own, specific type of happiness' (2011 p. 52). Similarly, Davies (2015) notes that happiness is cultural, with research suggesting that Americans exaggerate their happiness and French people under-report it. Achor (2011) believes happiness is a choice, and a form of capital, which people can use in an uncertain economy since happy people tend to get promoted more and be in better health. There is broad agreement within happiness research that high levels of wealth and material possessions do not bring automatic happiness (The Global Happiness and Wellbeing Report 2019; Davies 2015; Haybron 2013), and that indeed this 'heroic capitalist vision' (Davies 2015 p. 113) is jeopardising the entire planet. The individual's responsibility for their own happiness is posited by positive psychologist Seligman's (2002) Happiness Formula (see Table 5). The biological (inherited) Set Point accounts for approximately 50% of one's happiness, Conditions, or life circumstances, for 20% and Voluntary Actions for 30%. Positive interventions (see section 2.8.1 Positive Psychology) can target the voluntary 30% and there are a set of twelve empirically validated positive interventions currently being used in various disciplines (Seligman 2016). Haybron (2013) provides a helpful distinction between happiness and well-being, describing happiness as a psychological construct involving positive emotions, hedonism and life satisfaction, and well-being as value notion (in terms of what might benefit an individual).

Table 5 Seligman's Happiness formula

H (Happiness) = S + C + V	
S = Set Point	Set point is the baseline level of happiness that an individual is born with. Those with lower S will have to work harder to achieve/maintain happiness.
C = Conditions	Conditions refer to circumstances in life, e.g. health, wealth, beauty, marital status and geographic location.
V = Voluntary Actions	Voluntary actions are the 'happiness strategies' that an individual has the choice of pursuing.

Source: author's own, adapted from Seligman (2016)

2.5 WELL-BEING*

'As an incredibly powerful social and economic force, fashion is capable of bringing health and well-being to those it touches physically and emotionally.'

(Davis 2015 p. 217)

Interest in well-being is not new (Deci and Ryan 2000), it was part of the Age of Enlightenment philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Davies 2015). Davies notes that national well-being statistics are reported by numerous developed economies and that well-being can now be measured by a variety of consumer technologies. Linley *et al.* (2006) argue that the study of well-being is equally as valuable as the study of illness. Worth Global Style Network (WGSN) describes the current interest in well-being as one of the 'largest movements of our time' (Buzasi 2018), emerging from the rejection of unrealistic body image ideals in the early 2000s in favour of more athletic figures, and the global health systems crisis triggered by the 2008 financial crisis. Physical and mental health are described as a basic human need (Almond 2015) and physical and mental well-being are closely related (NHS 2015b); overall well-being involves both the mind and the body. For example, sense of smell is not considered the most important sense, however loss of sense of smell can lead to depression as scents can evoke feelings of familiarity, attraction, repulsion and nostalgia (Gaye 2015). Smell can stir emotions, calm, invoke memories and relieve stress, and is described as a direct line to feelings of happiness by Solomon and Rabolt (2009). These are immediate emotions, processed in the limbic system (the most primitive part of the brain). Solomon and Rabolt go on to state that one 'can improve... whole quality of life' with sense of smell (2009 p. 322), and note the development of fragranced clothes, impregnated with micro-capsules of scent. Kamalha *et al.* (2013) agree, noting the importance of scent properties to comfort, describing scent as sensorial. Fashion brands such as H&M and Hollister use sensory branding to evoke emotions related to their brands, and many fashion brands sell scents as part of their brand offer. Moeran (2011) also recognises the importance of smell to the act of dressing, related to 'hygiene, the body, appearance, dress, and social status' (Jenss 2016 p. 209). In Spivack's (2014) *Worn Stories*, one story centres around scent; a perfume the story-teller encountered on someone slender and elegant, projecting an air of confidence which the story-teller wished to emulate. Eventually the perfume is identified as Faubourg by Hermes, with the storyteller buying it regularly despite its high cost. Crewe also explores the sensory aspects of clothing, describing it as 'a means through which to examine how people use things to transact certain aspects of being-in-the-world at a direct sensory level of experience' (2017 p. 123).

* A double-peer reviewed version of Section 2.5 was published as part of a paper presentation at the 2020 IFFTI Conference (Kent State University), titled *Womenswear Well-being Warriors*, available from: <https://oaks.kent.edu/iffiti2020/iffiti-2020-between-individual-and-society-community/womenswear-well-being-warriors>

Masuch and Hefferon (2014) posit two types of psychological well-being gained from fashion and dress. Hedonic well-being involves feelings of pleasure, whereby clothing makes the wearer feel good. Eudaimonic well-being is gained through dress practice providing a source of fulfilment or meaning, perhaps through nostalgia, for sentimental or even supernatural reasons (linking with Savas’ theory of attachment discussed in section 2.1.1 Clothing), where the actor imbues the artefact or routine with lucky or talismanic power. For example, in Miller’s (2008) research one participant’s wardrobe of clothes contained memories of significant others (mother and aunt), who made many of the clothes. These clothes afforded a method of communication with the deceased relatives, keeping them present in the participant’s life. Miller describes this as a world of ‘magical realism’ (2008 p. 34) with clothing artefacts regarded as talismans to ward off evil. Almost all the participant’s clothes represented relationships with others; they were not just things to wear.

Table 6 Bauman’s five orthodox narratives of the human condition

Community	Work	Time/space	Individuality	Emancipation
Social relationships have the same level of influence on well-being as smoking and alcohol consumption (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Connecting with others and giving to others are two of the five NHS evidence-based steps for improvement of mental well-being (NHS 2015a).	Work is regarded as a defining element of self-identity (Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005). Work is seen to provide structure, routine and a sense of self-worth (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015), and self-improvement to human agents (Bauman 2012).	The way an individual spends their time contributes to well-being (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Crane (2000) categorises time into socially constrained (family and work), socially committed (voluntary and political activity) and time for oneself (leisure). Evans, MacRory and Randall (2015) note the importance of feeling safe in one’s local area.	Baron (2013) states that adornment and self-presentation can enhance well-being and that positive skills related to this can be taught, describing an individual’s presentation of themselves through clothing as a tangible visual representation of links between body and mind.	Picardie (2015) describes the freedom of privileged women in democratic societies to choose how they dress. Fairclough (cited in Wodak and Meyer 2016) states that the well-being (including material prosperity, security and political freedom) of some people – arguably the majority – is being unfairly or unjustly sacrificed for the interests of others.

Source: author’s own, adapted from Bauman (2012)

Bauman (2012) listed the five orthodox narratives of the human condition: community, work, time/space, individuality and emancipation, all of which can be linked to well-being (see Table 6). The five orthodox narratives are explored in more detail as follows:

2.5.1 Well-being: Community

'...you do not only buy an object, you buy social respect...'

(Williams 1980 p. 188)

Baumeister and Leary (1995) describe the belongingness hypothesis, which posits that people seek 'lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships' (p. 497), arguing that a lack of attachment inhibits well-being. Similarly, Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005) note the importance of social relationships to happiness and well-being. The National Health Service (NHS) well-being self-assessment tool asks respondents to indicate response to 'I've been feeling interested in other people' and 'I've been feeling close to other people' on a scale ranging from 'None of the time' to 'All of the time' (NHS 2015a). Almond (2015 np) lists 'trusted community' and 'significant relationships' as basic human needs, with self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan 2000) similarly highlighting the need for relatedness, a 'desire to feel connected to others' (p. 231). Deci and Ryan (2000) describe how a lack of relatedness might be compensated through image-orientated goals. In relation to this Comfort in Clothing study, this could manifest by using material possessions such as clothing and accessories to gain approval from others or some sense of self-worth. In self-determination theory, internalisation is described as a natural process in which individuals attempt to transform socially sanctioned customs into self-approved values and self-regulations (Ryan, Connell and Deci 1985), meaning people will tend to internalise the regulations and values of their community or social groups (Deci and Ryan 2000) to gain social acceptance. Being able to fit in with others provides feelings of relatedness and competency, in turn linking to psychological well-being. In agreement, Baumeister and Leary (1995 p. 497) assert that the need to belong is 'a powerful, fundamental and extremely pervasive motivation'. Belongingness needs, including love and affection, are third in priority in Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs (see Table 3), focusing upon absence of significant others, sociability and group affiliation. Baumeister and Leary (1995) confirm that the prospect of losing important relationships causes anxiety, a serious negative affect, with Baumeister and Tice (1999) suggesting social exclusion as the most common cause of anxiety.

Maslow (1943 p. 394) and Bauman (2012 p. 92) both refer to the 'good society', with Maslow linking 'sickness in the individual' to 'sickness in the society' and Bauman emphasising societal togetherness engendered by likeness or being of the same mind. Togetherness includes encountering others, interacting and having dialogues. This links to Wilson's (1992) description of Western capitalist societies using fashion to confirm membership of cultural and social groups. Females shop for fashion together, with shops described as places where 'the comforting feeling of belonging' or community (Bauman 2012 p. 100) can be found; a shared space of similar activity. Anthropologist Miller's (2008) research participants regarded individualism as failure, equated with loneliness, concluding that relationships (with family, friends and wider community through work or groups) are what matter in life. Bauman agreed, stating that the solution

to 'the life problems of the contemporary world is friendship and "cheerful solidarity"', noting that, for the ancient Greeks, the term friend described the 'totality of social life' (2011 p. 85). Miller states that, '[p]eople exist for us in and through their material presence' (2008 p. 289), linking material culture with relationships, and cites anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu's (2010[1979]) argument that human orientation towards everyday artefacts (such as clothing) enables acceptance of routines and expectations of life. The order of things (e.g. how to be polite, play or dress) is a form of education gained from relationships with others. The concept of civility is important to that of community, and Craik (1994 p. 5) describes how fashion is 'a technology of civility'. Similarly, Bauman (2012) described civility as a mask-wearing activity that allows people to enjoy interaction with one another and be protected from one another in social settings, whether leisure or work.

2.5.2 Well-being: Work

'Routine can demean, but it can also protect.'

(Sennett 1998 p. 42)

Work encompasses both paid employment and other ways that people 'substantively and productively occupy their time' (Lomas, Hefferon & Ivtzan 2014 p. xii), such as studying, volunteering and raising children. Non-employed women tend to have different patterns of clothing consumption compared to employed women, with the latter focusing on convenience, fashion and flattering looks suitable for the work environment (Carroll and Gross 2010). As part of the employee's physical environment, clothing is in closest proximity to the body and potentially has the most impact on a person's immediate body comfort (Carroll and Gross 2010), and studies have shown that clothing discomfort can affect workers' performance (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Entwistle's (2003) research focused on the body, revealing that women had a home-appropriate body (wearing unstructured dress for comfort) and a work-appropriate body, dressed in formal, tailored, structured styles to maximise visibility. Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005) note that work occupies a large proportion of people's time in contemporary Western society. Similarly, Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman (2005) state that work-related activities encompass a substantial amount of adult life (forty to sixty hours of work plus commute time and the process of getting ready), resulting in work dress being the most frequently used element of a typical wardrobe and often the costliest. Peluchette, Karl and Rust (2006) argue that much previous research into work dress focused on the perceptions of others, rather than attitudes of the wearer and how they might use clothing in the workplace to influence perceptions or achieve objectives. Their empirical study found that those who were interested in clothing and saw its value, reported positive self-perceptions and increased feelings of competence, or self-efficacy (Bandura 1995). The respondents also strongly believed the effort expended on workplace attire afforded them greater influence, power and opportunity for advancement. Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggest need for power may be driven by the need to belong.

Crane (2000) posits the importance of class distinctions in the workplace, as a location for status hierarchy. Although this research is now twenty-one years old, class distinctions are still prevalent in contemporary British society, and prominent in its fashion industry (Deeley 2019). Beck (1992) describes how people are forced to consider their worth in the contemporary labour market. Having psychological capital in the work environment can refer to the mind, encompassing self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience, as well as finding meaning in tasks (Lomas, Hefferon and Ivztan 2014), with work being regarded as a defining element of self-identity (Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005) and unemployment undermining self-worth (Davies 2015). This is particularly pertinent at the time of this Comfort in Clothing study, given the rising rates of unemployment in the UK due to the Covid 19 pandemic (Amed *et al.* 2020; Partington 2020). Bauman (2012) also noted the role of work in providing a sense of order, value and self-improvement to human agents, but stated that work in contemporary society is subject to a short-term mentality. This frequency of change, described as portfolio careers, slashies or multi-hyphenates (Gannon 2018), brings the benefit of flexibility but the burden of uncertainty, leading to individualised anxieties and a lack of solidarity.

Guy and Banim (2000) found that women were more likely to conform to dress norms in work settings, aspiring to feelings of control and confidence. Most of the participants in Guy and Banim's research had 'work clothes' (p. 316) that projected qualities deemed valuable in the workplace, including competence. Thus, workwear becomes part of doing a job through semiotic interaction (Wodak and Meyer 2016). Rafaeli *et al.* (1997 p. 10) describe dress as an 'informative role symbol', noting that people have structured and detailed knowledge of dress as a role symbol. Their study of female administrative employees found that they used workplace dress to improve interpersonal relations and mentally prepare for their tasks. The participants gained psychological comfort and self-confidence from being appropriately dressed for work, described as 'a type of emotional wrapping' (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997 p. 30), and experienced psychological discomfort if they felt inappropriately dressed. In line with Cooley's (2009[1902]) Looking Glass theory, it was the perception of what others thought about them, rather than actual feedback, that drove decisions about dress or feelings of discomfort. The participants also evidenced what Peluchette, Karl and Rust (2006 p. 50) describe as 'appearance labour', the physical and psychological effort individuals expend on their workplace image. Similarly, Hefferon (2015) describes appearance management (see section 2.6.1) as a strategy that individuals can use to manipulate well-being in scenarios such as job interviews, stating that females who wear masculine clothing to job interviews are more likely to be offered the post than those who wear revealing clothes. Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman (2005) state that clothing worn at interviews has more influence on hiring decisions than physical attractiveness, with appearance estimated to influence up to 70% of employment interviewers' judgements. These quick judgments or first impressions are described as 'person perception' (p. 220), a way to learn and think about others, and employment interviews,

described by Entwistle (2003) as formal events, are identified as a situation where first impressions are important. Crane (2000) highlights the necessity to examine the meanings conveyed by and uses of occupational clothing. Many workplaces implement specific codes of dress and employee self-presentation, using corporate discipline (Entwistle 2003) to distinguish their brand and create a specific atmosphere or level of quality, often using uniforms.

Uniforms

'role-related dress'

(Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005 p. 221)

In clothing terms, uniforms are symbols of work environments (Baron 2013), acting to unify individuals through shared identity. Similarly, Corner (2014) states that uniforms, whether official (e.g. school, military or police) or a 'quasi-uniform' (p. 41) worn by a business person or football fan represent human instinct to form packs or work in groups. Biologist E.O. Wilson's *Social Conquest of Earth* details this as a key facet of human development (2013, cited in Corner 2014). Corner argues that clothes indicate belonging to a social tribe and that those who do not conform cannot build a career, describing this as 'dressing the part' (2014 p. 42). Similarly, Rafaeli *et al.* (1997) liken the wearing of workplace dress to a performance, aligning with Goffman's (2002[1959]) discussions on dramaturgy. Uniforms are also associated with rules and standards of behaviour (Baron 2013), which Entwistle (2003) relates to Foucault's idea that institutions (such as the workplace) can discipline the body through the imposition of a, usually structured, dress practice. However, Rafaeli *et al.* (1997) note the casualization of workplace dress norms and posit that this could bring greater freedom to the individual but lead to the burden of 'more effort in making dress decisions' (p. 38). This increased opportunity for psychological discomfort through making inappropriate decisions, highlights a tension between freedom and appearance labour (Peluchette, Karl and Rust 2006) that aligns with Bauman's (2012) observations on negatives associated with freedom of choice. The move to working from home imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic has changed the day-to-day dress practices of many, with comfortable loungewear and activewear seeing increased demand (de Klerk 2020). However, Mair (2020, cited in May 2020) cautions against relaxing routines of work dress, linking appearance management and work dress routines with self-esteem and therefore better productivity. Research supports the links between workplace dress and self-esteem (Peluchette, Karl and Rust 2006; Rafaeli *et al.* 1997), however there is limited evidence to link appearance directly to productivity (Sen, Voia and Woolley 2010). Some studies do suggest the positive impact of appearance management (e.g. wearing makeup) on cognitive performance (Palumbo *et al.* 2017), underpinning May's (2020) claims.

In *Worn Stories* (Spivack 2014 p. 61), one story centres around a 'pleasant but unflappable' checked pencil skirt, purchased by the story-teller (a new teacher) as a signifier of authority both to the students and the nervous new teacher. The timing was directly after the 9/11 Twin Towers terrorist attacks, with the story-teller describing how the skirt represented order in a 'splintered' world, made her feel 'taller, in charge' and 'a little uncomfortable in a way that kept me on my toes' (p. 61). The outfit is described as a uniform, put on to do a job that required an illusion of authority. Holliday's (1999) research discusses uniforms as dressing in a codified manner, which can alleviate some of the anxieties associated with what to wear to work, linking with Bauman's (2012) discussions about the anxiety of having too much choice. Respondents in Holliday's study described uniforms as giving a greater level of authority than their personal wardrobes. Homosexual respondents described tampering with work uniforms as a means of expressing, 'queer individuality within a homogenized workplace' (1999 p. 479). Masculine silhouettes are traditionally associated with power, for example Joan of Arc's adoption of male military clothing marked her as a soldier and army leader (Design Museum 2015). An androgynous look, also associated with masculine silhouettes, can be linked to autonomy and simple utility at different points in time. A contemporary female example is Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, using a version of the formal male suit (tailored jacket with trousers) as a form of security, but introducing unexpected colour to the jacket (Design Museum 2015). This correlates with Craik's (2009) assertion that minimising perceptions of femininity is an important element of power dressing.

Power dressing

'Dress at work functions to visually express status distinctions in the workplace.'

(Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005 p. 221)

Dress, over the course of history has been a powerful signal of wealth, status and authority, for example Queen Elizabeth I's use of opulent bejewelled dresses to project power and invincibility (Design Museum 2015). Whitehead and Petrov (2017) agree, noting the metaphorical and symbolic power of fashion. Crewe (2017) defines the suit as evoking authority, expertise, efficiency and formality. Both the suit and traditional tweed fabric are said to evoke a hardworking and dependable sense of Britishness (Harper and McDougall 2012). The *Women's Dress for Success* book (Molloy 1977), instructed women to concentrate on the male gaze, recognising men as the power-holders in the workplace. Luxury fashion brand Armani describes fashion as 'the primary means of outwardly representing oneself and a powerful tool' (Hunt 2017 p. 232), and claims to have pioneered the female power suit in 1975, with a focus on comfort as well as communicating authority. Similarly, power dressing is identified as a way for women to command respect (Craik 2009) as dress is a 'powerful communicator' (Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005 p. 218), with appropriate work dress conveying credibility and legitimate power or counteracting any negative associations with visible ascribed roles such as age or gender. Power dressing

tends to be classic in style, which Barnard (2014) relates to both political power and social class, positing that those who are socially dominant attempt to impose their style on others. Middle-class has evolved as the universal class in post-industrial society, due to the demise of labour-intensive industrial roles and working-class being defined as inadequate in reality television (Wood and Skeggs 2008). This middle-class is associated with being appropriate, normal and good (Savage 2003), categorising clothing in moral terms (Entwistle 2003).

The ability to power dress in a smart suit is linked to disposable income, or lack of (Holliday 1999). This is evidenced by charities such as Smart Works, which provides interview training, styling advice and high-quality clothes for unemployed women on low incomes. Smart Works opened its first Scottish base in Edinburgh in 2014. The charity organizes suit drives to secure donations of suits, blouses, dresses, coats, shoes, handbags and accessories to help women prepare physically and mentally for the world of work. Recipients of the charity's work describe the 'power of dressing well' and relate receiving and wearing the clothes as 'emotional' and 'a real "wow" moment', that gave them more confidence to return to work (Morrison 2015 p. 12). The concept of being able to access dress to look better and therefore feel better about oneself is emphasized, correlating with Von Busch's (2008) earlier research, which argued that fashion can be a 'participatory and liberating practice' (Von Busch 2016 p. 194). Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman (2005) found that taking on a new role led to the symbolic adoption of dress as an aid to being able to fulfil that new role. In opposition to the concept of power dressing is the increasing acceptability of casual dress, first introduced as a non-cost perk in the 1990s (Damhorst, Miller-Spillman and Michelman 2005 p. 218). Casual Fridays and the increased flexibility of working life have rewritten many office dress codes (Smith 2015). In 2020, the Covid 19 pandemic has led to an increased number of women in the UK working from home, and subsequent increase in casual dress (e.g. leggings and tracksuit bottoms) sales, as the government-imposed lockdown sees people become more focused on health and spending time at home (De Klerk 2020).

2.5.3 Well-being: Time

'The modern mind was after perfection... an age of stability and tranquillity – and so also to comfort and leisure.'

(Bauman 2012 p. xi)

Haybron describes time as 'the currency of life' (2013 p. 8). Solomon and Rabolt (2009) agree, describing time as one of consumers' most precious resources, stating that '[c]onsumers are increasingly time-starved' (p. 463). Leisure is a synonym of comfort (Cambridge Dictionary 2018b), and Lardi *et al.* (2010) assert that memories of leisure events (defined as fun) are associated with increased positive affect, a key indicator of well-being (Lyubomirsky, Kind and Diener (2005). Time spent on leisure activities, divided into physical and non-physical, is said to increase psychological well-being, acting as a release to the stress of everyday life and work (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015).

Leisure Time – Physical

#alldayactive

(Buzasi 2018)

'Healthies' are described as the new form of the selfie (WGSN 2015 np). Getting active is one of the five evidence-based steps advocated by the NHS to improve psychological well-being (NHS 2015). Lomas, Hefferon and Ivtzan (2014) stress the value of exercise in promoting well-being, and sports brands have evolved from merely selling sports clothing to providing experiences and personal transformation opportunities that enhance their consumers' well-being (Sherman 2016). For example, Nike's Nike+ app encourages consumers to sign up for fitness classes or local runs, offers early access to new products, enables booking of one-to-one appointments in stores and provides perks for frequent users. Consumers are invited to share both their desires and data, enabling Nike to personalise the app service to individual users, who increasingly value self-actualisation (Sherman 2016).

Leisure Time – Non-physical

'I shop therefore I am'

(Kruger 1987, cited in Corner 2014 p. 88)

It has been well documented that women are increasingly prioritising leisure in their spending; however, most women do in fact see shopping for clothes as a leisure activity (Mintel 2017). According to Forbes (Johnson 2015), American women spend around 190 hours per year shopping specifically for shoes and clothes (double the amount of time spent shopping for essential food). Hameide (2011) alludes to the experience economy, describing occasional luxury consumers who seek a special shopping experience that appeals to their senses, as a pleasure or treat. Thus, the experience of shopping can be described as hedonistic Romanticism (Campbell 1989), where Romanticism champions individuality, imagination and diversity and shops are dream-like spaces that allow shoppers to fantasise about items that would support their aspired identity. This links to one of Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves, the ideal self one would like to become; to Guy & Banim's (2000 p. 316) 'women I want to be' concept; and to Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework (see Figure 15 in section 2.8.1 Positive Psychology) where the fantasy of a new visual identity leads to P: Positive emotions and M: Meaning. Possible selves can influence decision-making, such as clothing choice, motivating the individual to choose clothing that reflects a possible self they aspire to. Hoped for or positive possible selves can include a successful self, creative self, rich self, thin self, loved self and admired self (Markus and Nurius 1986). Markus and Nurius state that 'through the selection and construction of possible selves individuals can be viewed as active producers of their own development' (1986 p. 955), however acknowledge that possible selves often arise from social comparison.

The social aspect of shopping aligns with R: Relationships from Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework, with research by Guy, Banim and Green (2001) establishing that women trust the opinions of other women when purchasing new clothing. Shopping is classified as an Activity of Daily Living (ADL) for its recognised social benefits by the World Health Organisation (Carroll and Gross 2010), with Bauman (2012 p. 99) recognising the magnetic power of the 'colourful, kaleidoscope variety of sensory sensation on offer'. As expected, Alexandra Schulman, former editor of UK Vogue agrees, stating, 'I am sure that most people will feel, as I do, that there is a great deal to be said for fashion's ability to cheer one up' (Vogue 2015 p. 45). However, Bauman (2012) described postmodern culture's addiction to shopping, noting the increase in consumption through the 'Church of Economic Growth' (p. xviii), which preaches that life can be made better by consuming more, that shopping leads to happiness. This is epitomised by 'I shop therefore I am' (see Figure 9), American conceptual artist Barbara Kruger's 1987 version of Rene Descartes's 'I think therefore I am' (Corner 2014 p. 88). Bauman (2012) went on to describe contemporary consumer culture as unsustainable (as noted in section 2.4 Happiness). In 2013, Selfridges department store launched its 'No Noise' campaign, urging its customers to 'seek out moments of peace and tranquility in a world that bombards us with information and stimulation' while capturing 'the Western world's focus on detoxing, decluttering, bettering oneself and finding greater well-being' (Crewe 2017 p. 96). Capitalising on the well-being focus, Selfridges now has a Body Studio dedicated to leisure clothing.

Figure 9 I shop therefore I am



Leisure Clothing

'The woman who affects loose garments is lazy and violates all rules of good dressing.'

(Steele 2001 p. 54)

Holliday's (1999) research initially established physical comfort as a primary motivation for leisure time clothing, however deeper analysis revealed political and subcultural reasons behind leisure clothing choice, such as being accepted in certain social settings. Crane (2000 p. 14) agrees, stating that 'within the leisure sphere, social affiliations based on age, race and ethnicity, and gender and sexual orientation are particularly salient.' Pine (2014 p. 84) cites an episode of American sitcom Seinfeld, where a character is wearing jogging bottoms:

'You know the message you're sending out to the world with these sweatpants? You're telling the world, 'I give up. I can't compete in normal society. I'm miserable, so I might as well be comfortable.'

Similarly, fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld is widely quoted as describing the wearing of sweatpants as a 'sign of defeat' (Hunt 2019 p. 42). The negative connotations of comfortable leisure clothing seem at odds with the increasingly casual nature of everyday dress and the rise in availability and sales of athleisurewear (De Klerk 2020; Busazi 2018; WGSN 2015).

Athleisure Wear

'Consumers are embracing the functionality and comfort of athleisure'

(Smith 2015 np)

As early as 2003, Entwistle had noted the relationship between the body and fabric as an indicator of cultural and social developments, giving the example of how the use of Lycra, which promotes a streamlined and fit body shape, had moved from sportswear into more mainstream garment production, emphasising the importance of movement and comfort to the modern dressed body and in turn, enabling a fit and toned aesthetic. Sports clothing was traditionally associated with the male consumer, wearing it as a form of casual wear, rather than for functional purposes (Keynote 2015). In recent years, women began to prioritise comfortable clothing and a more casual look, resulting in the rapid development of female sportswear as fashionwear (Keynote 2015). Smith (2015) uses the term 'athleisure', describing it as a 'mass movement, not a trend'; a cultural shift over the preceding five to ten years caused by the prioritization of health and well-being and an increase in the adoption of comfortable clothing. Petrarca (2017) does identify the proliferation of athleisure as a trend, but one with longevity due to the cultural shift to concern with wellness. Sportswear is engineered for comfort and health, providing utilitarian functions such as allowing the skin to breath and wicking away moisture (David 2015), however

the athleisure wear concept suggests something beyond the purely functional. Linked to athleisure wear, the term activewear is also described as a lifestyle choice rather than a fashion category (emphasising functionality as well as fashion), with high levels of growth in the sales of activewear seen in the United States and United Kingdom (WGSN 2015). Activewear is described as evoking, 'a sense of athleticism and wellbeing' (WGSN 2015 p. 6).

High fashion began to embrace the athletic look around 2012, inspired by Stella McCartney's Spring/Summer 2013 collection which referenced her designs for Team Great Britain at the London 2012 Olympics (Buzasi 2018). In 2015, The Cambridge Dictionary blog highlighted athwear as a new noun (About Words 2015), stating that shifts in lifestyle are as important as catwalk trends and reflecting the rise in status of workout clothing. Hancock (2016) noted the growth in athleisure wear sales compared with the overall clothing market, attributing it to the combination of comfort, versatility and fashionability of the styles. Similarly, Buzasi (2018) describes slowing growth of just 4% in the overall clothing market, compared with the 10% growth of athletic-inspired styles in 2016. As the 2020 Covid 19 pandemic decimates fashion sales worldwide (Amed *et al.* 2020), the activewear category has continued to show strong growth (De Klerk 2020). Keynote (2015) highlights the evolution of female-targeted activewear brands such as Lululemon and Sweaty Betty and sportswear/designer collaborations such as Stella McCartney and Adidas, as a measure of the importance of sports and leisure wear to the fashion industry. Bauman (2012) described the actions of consumers in pursuit of health and fitness as expensive, with costly fitness clothing and health foods being readily and proactively consumed in the pursuit of confidence and escape from insecurity. Linked to this, Bauman declared the body as 'a besieged fortress' (2012 p. 81).

2.5.4 Well-being: The Body

'...our clothes are too much a part of us for most of us to be entirely indifferent to their condition: it is as though the fabric were indeed a natural extension of the body, or even of the soul.'

(Bell 1976 p. 19)

Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore (1985 p. 267) assert that there is a 'normative discontent' related to body weight in women. Changes in the body, for example losing weight or aging, might change how an item of clothing interacts with the body, or affects it (Ruggerone 2016). For example, one of Guy and Banim's participants stated '[a]s I age I increasingly seek clothes which are serviceable and comfortable, which serve my body rather than express my body' (2000 p. 321). Most literature on body dissatisfaction focuses on young females, however the limited studies that include older age groups suggest that women may experience body dissatisfaction across the life span (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008; Webster and Tiggemann 2003). Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp (2008 p. 353) suggest that older women are more able to

'distance themselves from negative sociocultural influences', becoming disassociated with the prevalent media images of the youthful thin ideal as they age. Webster and Tiggemann (2003) suggest that, with age, women adopt more cognitive strategies to reduce the impact of body dissatisfaction and thus maintain higher levels of self-esteem. Cognitive control describes the perception of influence individuals have over their ability to overcome misfortune or achieve goals. Primary cognitive control strategies are active or behavioural, thus could include dress practice or appearance management (see section 2.6.1), whereas secondary cognitive control strategies involve acceptance or lowering of expectations. Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp note that '[p]erceived control over oneself and life events has been linked to self-efficacy and psychological well-being' (2008 p. 350). Webster and Tiggemann (2003) suggest that the normative nature of body dissatisfaction throughout a woman's life span is difficult to change, but that strategies to minimise the negative consequences of it could be of value, aligning with Baron's (2013) concept of flourishing style crafting.

Eicher (1995, p. 1) defines dress as 'body modifications and supplements', encompassing clothing and activities such as hairstyling, wearing makeup and using scent. Entwistle (2003) notes the tendency of fashion theory to examine creative or spectacular dress, ignoring the ordinary and everyday dress routinely worn on bodies. There is, however, broad agreement among fashion researchers that the body and clothing are inextricably linked (Jenss 2016; Ruggerone 2016; Pine 2014; Baron 2013; Entwistle 2003), with fashion described as an 'embodied practice' (Crewe 2017 p. 4). Clothing is intimate, it is worn daily on the body, against the skin (Jenss 2016). Baron (2013 p. 33) discusses Freedberg and Gallese's (2007) research on embodied cognition, recognising the connection of the body and the mind. Reaction to objects seen and worn, such as clothes, shoes and accessories, can shape emotions. Cognitive experience is gained through perceptions (visual and auditory), actions (movement proprioception) and introspection (mental states and affect), which combine as stories in memory. Autobiographical memories have a self function (Bluck *et al.* 2005), enabling individuals to create and maintain 'self-continuity' (Bluck and Alea 2008 p. 55), a coherent 'narrative identity' (Cili and Stopa 2019 p. 2), deemed essential for psychological well-being. Ruggerone (2016) posits that the human mind considers aesthetics and practicality when choosing what to wear, but that the act of putting the clothes on the body (i.e. wearing) can change how the clothing items are then perceived. Pine (2014) states that the impact clothing has on the wearer is diverse and dynamic, sending internal messages, which can alter capability, thought processes, judgements and mood. This relationship between mind and body is labelled as 'body cognition... the power of clothes to alter the psychological state of the wearer' by Pine (2014 np) and the body project by Ruggerone (2016), recognising the body as a material object, which the individual can intellectually orchestrate to market the self. However, clothing might convey one message but the body another, with Baron (2013) arguing that congruency between thoughts, feelings and visual presentation of the self are required to gain perceptions of authenticity and trustworthiness from others.

Foucault (1977), utilising eighteenth-century social theorist Bentham's Panopticon theory, posited that individuals self-manage the body due to always being on display. Similarly, Bauman cited Radner's (1997) evaluation of the success of Jane Fonda's workout book in the 1980s; a 'self-drill' (2012 p. 66) for exercise that enabled control of the body, exemplified by Fonda's own body and messages that centred on taking responsibility for oneself. In contemporary Western society, this links with Walker and Murray's (2012) discussion on 'body checking' (p. 166), a behaviour that can involve social comparison, often performed before leaving the home; and 'appearance fixing' (p. 168), including diet, exercise and specific clothing selection as a means of coping with body dissatisfaction. Body surveillance is a behavioural indicator of self-objectification (Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2012) that may lead to women becoming aware that their body does not conform to the thin ideal and thus experiencing body dissatisfaction. Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory suggests that women exist in a culture in which their bodies are looked at, evaluated and objectified, persuading women to internalise an observer's view of themselves (self-objectification), leading to habitual body monitoring and anxiety. Davies (2015) notes that individuals have little influence over their exposure to images of perfect bodies, and that this makes it harder for them to achieve contentment and more at risk of breakdown. This aligns with extensive research into the concept of thin-ideal internalisation (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Walker and Murray 2012; Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), with Ryan, Connell and Deci (1985) describing internalisation as a necessary aspect of social cohesion. Goffman (1990[1959]) recognised the body as belonging both to the individual self and the social world, aligning with Douglas' two-bodies concept (1973), whereby the experience of embodiment consists of the individual, biological, physical body and the social body.

The Social Body

A key theme related to the embodied practice of dress is the influence of society, with Mida and Kim (2015) noting that agency is limited by the internalisation of societal norms, such as the thin ideal. Fredrickson and Roberts state that 'bodies exist within social and cultural contexts, and hence are also constructed through sociocultural practices and discourses' (1997 p. 174), highlighting the role of (American) mass media in the creation and distribution of sexualised, idealised and mythical (i.e. unachievable) images of women. This illustrates the continued relevance of Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory, specifically appearance-related social comparison (Vartanian and Dey 2013), with women tending to make upwards (Brown and Dittmar 2005), or aspirational comparisons. These upward social comparisons can lead to body dissatisfaction, with appearance recognised as being central to the concept of the self. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) note that socially-observable changes to the shape of women's bodies occur during their lifetime, and link negative objectification experiences in early adolescence to increased mental health risk. As adolescent girls progress through puberty, their body attracts more attention. Fredrickson and Roberts describe this as girls learning their 'new body belongs less to them and more to

others' (1997 p. 193). For older women, objectification theory posits negative consequences for those who continue to feel pressure to conform to youthful and slim ideals of attractiveness, or positive consequences for those who relinquish self-objectification, become more autonomous and focus on their achievements. Entwistle (2003) argues the importance of dress to social order as a means of controlling and managing bodies, and notes the absence of the dressed body in modern social theory. However, this source is now eighteen years old and fashion, clothing and dress are now more visible in social theory, for example in the work of Ruggerone (2016). Jenss (2016 p. 47) locates fashion as a form of social alienation, where women may 'perceive their own dressed bodies to be far removed from the fashionable body'. Entwistle (2003) and Baron (2013 p. 36) cite Bourdieu's (1977) proposal that body disposition or 'habitus' (how one moves, walks and talks) allows the body to be a bearer of social status, with clothing providing tension between individuality (or agency) and acceptance within a group or social setting. Craik's (1994) work is also relevant, identifying clothes as constructing a personal habitat, beyond merely fulfilling warmth, comfort or modesty needs. After a prolonged period of revealing and body-conscious trends in Western fashion, a trend for modest fashion, covering the body, has slowly grown from 2014 onwards (Independent 2019).

The Covered Body

Dress practice often involves covering or disguising (Craik 1984) the body in loose-fitting garments, a form of camouflage (Barnard 2002). Fredrickson and Roberts (1997 p. 197) note that many women adopt 'conscious strategies' to avoid objectification, such as wearing loose-fitting clothes and comfortable shoes, positing these practices as a means of enhancing psychological well-being in a culture of objectification of the female body. In agreement, Picardie (2015) discusses clothes as a way of hiding the body, while at the same time revealing emotions and insecurities. Entwistle (2003 p. 142) describes the requirement for the covered body to 'meet the standards required by the moral order of the social space', acknowledging the controlling influence of society and culture. Yoo & Barker's research (2004) found that wearers with feelings of low body image, or those who were larger in size, found comfort in more covered clothing. More recently, the rise of the body positivity movement (Kessel 2018) has encouraged those with larger bodies to celebrate and show their bodies rather than covering them; this has trickled up into the advertising imagery of fashion brands at various market levels (see Figure 10). Hormones may also influence the covered body, with Gray (2009) suggesting that women feel a higher level of body confidence and dress in tighter clothes during the pre-ovulation phase of the menstrual cycle, moving to looser clothing during the menstrual phase. Entwistle's (2003) research revealed women have a home-appropriate body, which wears unstructured dress for comfort, and a work-appropriate body, clad in tailored or structured dress to render the body visible and formal. The Independent newspaper (2019) ascribes the recent rise of modest fashion to aesthetic, cultural and religious reasons, thus the covered body can offer comfort socially, spiritually and physically.

Figure 10 Body positivity



The Physical Body

Several researchers have considered the physical discomfort involved in wearing fashionable clothing, explored through the different levels of pain consumers are prepared to endure by wearing garments that distort the body (Almond 2015; Koda 2001; Steele 2001). Entwistle (2003 p. 145) notes the 1973[1935] work of anthropologist Mauss, who described unnatural 'techniques of the body' born from culture, such as the ability of women to learn to walk in heels; a skill that leads to a certain type of movement, which in turn genders the body, linking it to a situated nature of dress. Fredrickson and Roberts assert that 'physiological cues are relatively less important determinants of subjective experience for women than for men' (1997 p. 185), suggesting women learn how to ignore physiological or physical discomfort, becoming removed from how their body feels or performs due to their focus on external cues (Roberts and Pennebaker 1995). Almond (2015 np) highlights the emaciated bodies of 1990's fashion models, described as being 'achieved through physically destructive expenditures', i.e. suffering starvation to comply with the fashionable, waif look of that era. Linked to this, Foucault (1977) posited that bodies are disciplined by the individual's self-regulation according to the time and space they find themselves in.

Figure 11 Safety



VEXED GENERATION

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

2.5.5 Well-being: Space and Safety

'fashion is located in multiple sites and spaces,
ranging from bedrooms, to streets'

(Jenss 2016 p. 43)

Safety needs were identified by Maslow (1943) as the second-most prioritized, describing the individual as a 'safety-seeking mechanism' (p. 376). Maslow (1943) links the concept of safety to a common preference for that which is known, or familiar, and feeling safe in a local area can impact people's sense of well-being (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2105). Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) assert that being female in a culture that objectifies the female body leads to both safety and appearance anxieties. Clothes can be seen and experienced as a 'mediating layer' (Crewe 2017 p. 15) between the self and others, or between the body and its environment, with protection recognized as a functional aspect of clothing (Carroll and Gross 2010: Fourt and Hollies 1970). For example, socially conscious fashion brands such as 'Vexed Generation' produce weather-proof parkas and concealing masks and hoods (see Figure 11), protecting the wearer from both the elements and modern social surveillance, enabling anonymity and, therefore, a sense of freedom in a world captured by CCTV (Crewe 2017). UK company Bladerunner produces anti-slash hoodies, scarves, gloves and jackets, and has even produced stab-proof school uniforms (Bladerunner 2019), demonstrating clothing's role in providing physical safety. Clothing can also provide psychological security, with well-known brands enabling consumers to make safer choices, providing assurance of rational or emotional rewards or values (Hameide 2011). Mida and Kim (2015 p. 62) note that, unconsciously, human actors 'make assumptions and judgments about nationality, class, gender, religion, politics, occupation, age, ethnicity, and sexuality' based on dress. Linked to this, Wood and Skeggs highlight 'ontological insecurity' (2008 p. 179), whereby belonging and identity are questioned and reoriented to avoid risk. For example, wearing comfortable clothes in public spaces is regarded negatively in some cultures, associated with 'negative moral values' (Jayne and Ferencuhova 2013 p. 333) and lack of culture. Holliday's (1999) research respondents described their home environment as a safe space, a place where they had a level of control (for example, on who entered the home), and therefore psychological comfort, where they could wear physically comfortable clothing without fear of judgement. Belk (1988) asserts that a house is a symbolic body for the family, defined through the consumer products that make it home, and McCracken likens room décor to a comforting embrace. Wood and Skeggs (2008) describe how the icon of 'the good home' is established as the 'space of innocence' (p. 183). Linked to the home, wardrobes are described as 'intimate spaces' by Jenss (2016).

Barnard (2014) argues that even the most functional, anthropological elements of clothing, such as ensuring bodily warmth, are subject to cultural location and variance. Variance is a key consideration in contemporary times, as Crewe (2017

p. 155) notes that people 'increasingly inhabit multiple spaces', both private and public, linking to Bauman's (2012) description of a fragmented and changeable Liquid Modernity. Bauman likened public space to a 'giant screen on which private worries are projected' (2012 p. 40), with those public places the location for social practices (Wodak and Meyer 2016) and associated anxieties around rules and norms, aligning with Belk's (1988) identification of place as an important aspect of the extended self. For example, Almond (2015 p. 13) describes nightclubs as 'powerful social spaces' where people experiment with clothing, accessories and makeup to construct identities. Crewe (2017 p. 18) notes that,

'[d]ensely populated urban spaces reveal the performative nature of fashion and underscore the range of encounters that individuals enact in city spaces that bombard them daily with a mix of information, communication, consumerism, and commercialism.'

The hazards of urban life are also noted as a source of anxiety in contemporary times by Bauman (2012) and Wood and Skeggs, who describe 'social spaces of unfamiliarity' (2008 p. 186). Thus, busy, crowded public spaces become locations of risk and clothes can provide the safety of fitting in or standing out, as dictated by socio-cultural norms and desired by individuals.

2.5.6 Well-being: Individuality

'Clothes act as 'identity markers' and are one means by which contemporary consumers can affirm their sense of individuality'
(Crewe 2017 p. 4)

Individuality is explored further in section 2.6 Identity. Corner (2014) describes how fashion is tied to a human need to express individuality, an act of self-adornment that allows the external world to visualise an individual. Marino (2017) notes that the democratization of fashion has aided the acceptance of individuality in dress practice, but posits that the freedom of the individual to develop their own tastes and styles has reduced the progression and development (i.e. the high culture) of the fashion industry. Baron discusses first world countries' development of 'make-over culture' via television, blogs and print publications, describing them as 'superficial 'transformations'' (2013 p. 8) and arguing that there are two important elements for sustainable well-being: a focus on the individual's assets, tastes, lifestyle and aspirations, and the individual regarding appearance as a dynamic process with a level of awareness and intention. Wood and Skeggs (2008) are damning of make-over television shows as drivers of middle-class tastes, noting that transformations through new clothes are designed to generate humour (for the viewers), but discomfort and insecurity for participants. Barnard describes the relationship between dress and individual expression as complex, acknowledging that people can use clothes as a 'signifying system' (2002 p. 72) to express mood, differentiation or conformity.

Many fashion researchers acknowledge the tension between individuality, independence and assertion, with imitation, conformity or group affiliation in dress practice (Crewe 2017; Marino 2017; Shusterman 2017; Von Busch 2016; Baron 2013; Stone 2006; Entwistle 2000; Craik 1984). Barnard (2002) notes that individuals can ascribe meanings to clothes, but argues that the existence of different interpretations and disagreements (e.g. between a parent and teenager) shows that meaning cannot be the product of just one individual's intention; it is usually based on history and culture. Control over the individual can be instigated by authorities such as schools, religions, the military or governments by assigning meanings to styles and colours, censoring the individual's freedom through daily dress practice.

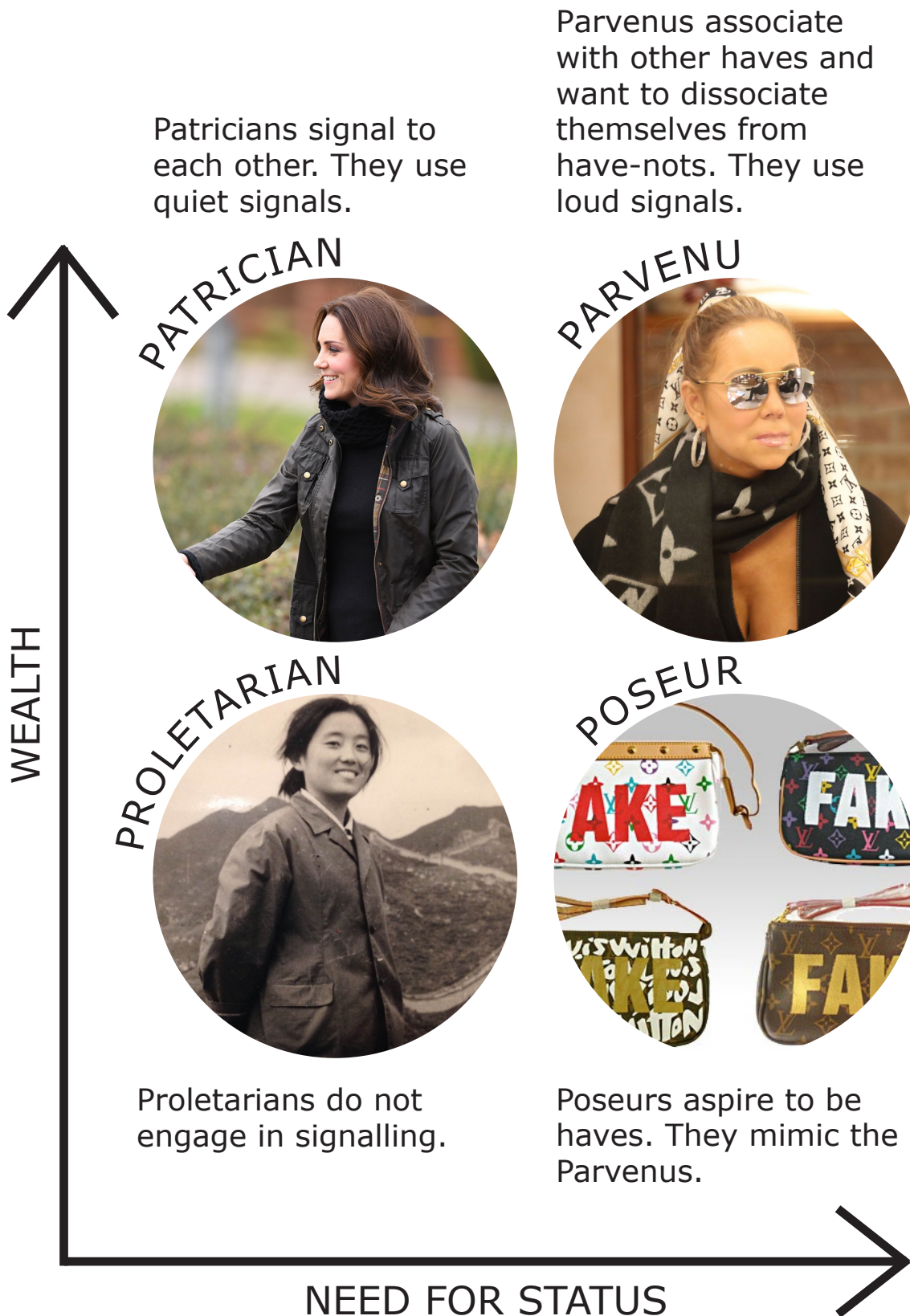
2.5.7 Well-being: Emancipation and Income

'No wealth, no freedom of movement,
no possible change.
To be ignorant of fashion was the lot of the poor the world over.
Their costumes,
whether beautiful or homespun,
remained the same.'
(Braudel 1981 p. 313)

Economic security is a basic human need (Almond 2015). Over the course of history, dress has been a powerful signal of wealth and status (e.g. Queen Elizabeth I's use of opulent bejewelled dresses to project power and invincibility), authority, moral value and gender (Design Museum 2015). Veblen (2011[1899]) noted that, as wealth in society grew, both the need to enhance self-esteem and enviousness of others became more prevalent.

Corner (2014) notes how global recession leads to a renewed interest in crafts (such as knitting and sewing, Harris Tweed fabrics, Japanese Silks and Peruvian embroidery) as human beings often find comfort in tradition during times of uncertainty. Rath and Harter (2010) note that money can influence positive well-being in terms of providing essentials, but that consuming goods does not increase long-term happiness (as discussed in section 2.4 Happiness). Similarly, there is evidence to suggest that the actions people take and the way people think have the biggest impact on well-being, rather than having more money, possessions or expensive holidays (Davies 2015; NHS 2015b; Haybron 2013). A rise in household income does generally tend to lead to a rise in happiness and life satisfaction, and a reduction in anxiety, however the level of an individual's income relative to those around them has the most impact on personal well-being; those who are wealthier than those around them tend to have better well-being than their poorer counterparts (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015).

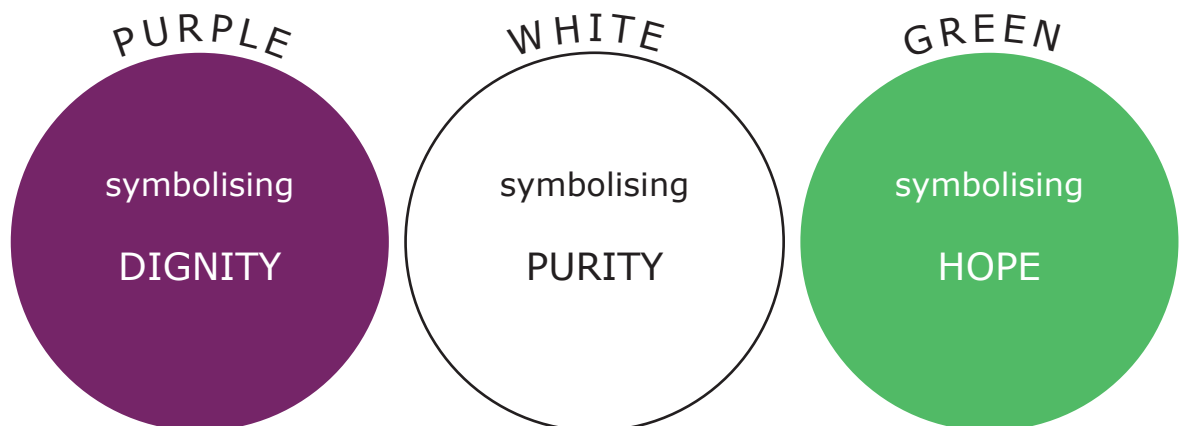
Figure 12 Signal preference taxonomy, applied to fashion



Source: author's own, adapted from Han, Nunes and Dreze (2010)

Han, Nunes and Dreze's (2010) Signal Preference and Taxonomy Based on Wealth and Need for Status categorises consumers into 'haves' and 'have-nots' (p. 16). Linked to this, Bauman (2012 p. 19) noted the "embourgeoisement" of the underdog (the substitution of "having" for "being")' and that people shop for 'ways to make others believe that we are what we wear' (p. 74). Han, Nunes and Dreze's taxonomy can be applied to fashion and clothing (see Figure 12), suggesting that Poseur, Parvenu and Patrician consumers could gain psychological comfort through clothing choice, for example through displaying luxury brand logos or limited edition (hype) products. This conspicuous consumption (Veblen 1994[1899]) is described as 'ego-assurance' by Fourt and Hollies (1970 p. 5). Research shows that luxury consumers tend to be self-conscious and individualistic, and that they are concerned with both looking and feeling good (Hameide 2011). Dress practices can also be a means of neutralising status, for example the Communist Mao suit (Barnard 2002), which relieved the anxiety of choice and visualisation of status, while politicising dress practice. Maria Grazia Chiuri's 2016 'We should all be feminists' t-shirt for Dior, and the media hype it created, demonstrate how fashion and clothing can become powerful emancipatory texts and political foci, according to Kvidal-Rovik, who states that 'sociopolitical messages placed on fashion T-shirts, circulating in the context of social media, can become a rhetorical resource for resistive communication' (2018 p. 216). Within Kvidal-Rovik's text, however, there is acknowledgement of views that suggest politicised consumption leads to less depth and a blurring of reality. Rawsthorn (2018 p. 116) describes suffragette Sylvia Pankhurst's use of colour (see Figure 13) as a 'visual strategy' and a 'weapon of political protest' used to unify the suffragettes regardless of economic standing. In addition to this symbolising of emancipation, colour emerges as a contributory factor in well-being.

Figure 13 Suffragette colours



Source: author's own

2.5.8 Well-being: Colour

'A WWD study that explored attitudes towards colour in the wardrobe revealed that a majority of women say they wear colours to reflect their moods and that bright colours make them feel good or happy.'
(Solomon and Rabolt 2009 p. 465).

Craik (2009 p. 35) states that the 'first response to a garment by the consumer is colour', with Eisman (2006) noting that consumer decisions about colour are mostly governed by emotion and intuition. For example, Pine (2014) states that sunshine yellow (a colour found in nature) can influence energy levels and protect the wearer from negative emotions. This correlates with Eisman's (2006) description of yellow as a confident, friendly and optimistic colour. Similarly, some research suggests the colour green has 'positive psychological effects' (Davies 2015 p. 245). Grey, the most neutral of all shades is described by Solomon and Rabolt (2009) as a secure and safe colour that maintains the status quo.

Pine (2014) found that happy clothes that make the wearer feel good are generally well-cut, figure-enhancing and bright in colour. This links to a 2014 study of two thousand women by Tu at Sainsbury's, which found that women tend to wear black on Mondays (possibly reflecting a back to work feeling) but brighter colours by the end of the week (Roberts 2015). Women also tend to wear darker coloured clothes while in the menstrual phase and bolder clothing during pre-ovulation (Gray 2009). In the narrative portrait, *Oh Sod it!*, Miller (2008) describes a research participant who, 'reveals her strength through colour' (p. 227). Red is the dominant colour used, and the participant has bright lipstick, hair and clothing. Participants in Holliday's (1999) research mention the wearing of bright colours as an expression of confidence in their homosexual orientation. This aligns with McDowell's (1997) assertion of grey, black and navy as the uniform of heteromascularity. In Spivack's *Worn Stories*, one story-teller describes a period of 'soul loss' (2014 p. 157), having no joy in anything, and wearing ill-fitting jeans and a grey shirt. Spivack's story-teller finds happiness in a brightly coloured teal dress, correlating with Crewe's assertion that colour is 'emotional, sensory, engaging and affective' (2017 p. 21). It should be noted, however, that colour meanings and preferences are culture-dependent (Madden, Hewett and Roth 2000). For example, in Miller's (2008) anthropological research, one participant is described as *The Orientalist* for utilising an Eastern minimalist black and white dress practice to bring a level of consistency that counteracted his view of London as a place of hyper-arousal. Jenss (2016) notes an increased interest in colour preferences and choices related to dress practice. Similarly, in *The Language of Fashion*, Picardie identifies colour as a key element of fashion discourse, detailing black as both a political and religious marker, 'from puritanical Calvinists to Italian fascists to Left Bank intellectuals' and red's links to 'Catholic cardinals, Russian revolutionaries, fairy-tale heroines' and 'scarlet women' (2015 p. 196). Fox (2018) highlights the dependability and versatility of the little black dress as a positive in women's wardrobes. The ambiguity of

black is emphasised by Eisman (2006), who describes black as having negative connotations linked to depression and positive connotations of strength, power and prestige. Solomon and Rabolt (2009) agree that black symbolises power and associate the colour with conservatism, convention and seriousness. According to Elliot and Nesta (2008), wearing the colour red makes women more attractive to men (Haigh 2018). Red signifies arousal, zest for life and daring, aggression and passion, with Solomon and Rabolt (2009) describing it as the colour of achievers, winners and competitive types. Thus, dependent on culture, both black and red colours could lead to increased psychological well-being, in the form of confidence.

2.5.9 Well-being: Confidence

'The fashion industry is often viewed as the main culprit in undermining women's self-esteem.'

(Corner 2014 p. 92)

Self-esteem relates to confidence and an individual's 'evaluation of their self-worth' (Cili and Stopa 2015 p. 235). Esteem needs are fourth in priority in Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs. Maslow defines esteem needs in two categories: those linked to achievement, confidence, independence and freedom, and those concerning recognition, reputation, prestige, attention and appreciation. Maslow noted that '[s]atisfaction of the self-esteem needs leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and adequacy' (1943 p. 382). In psychology, confidence is a characteristic related to positive affect (Lyubomirsky, King and Diener 2005), engendering well-being. One of the NHS measurements of well-being asks respondents to indicate response to 'I've been feeling confident' on a scale ranging from 'None of the time' to 'All of the time' (NHS 2015b). In a study of four hundred people, Pine (2014) found that 73% dress up to feel confident and that women felt more confident in tailored clothing. Miller (2010) equates the consistency of established rules and social conventions with confidence. In Miller's (2008) anthropological research, one participant describes how wearing a specific pair of sneakers provides confidence that she will 'get things right' (p. 171), due to having a role that requires careful matching tasks and therefore a need to employ a carefully matched dress practice. Corner (2014 p. 60) cites research from the United States that found black women 'have a more positive view of themselves than white women', concluding that black women see themselves less in the media, leading to less damaging images being encountered. This aligns with Festinger's (1954) view that social comparisons only occur among similar others, and Frisby's (2004) findings, which suggest the importance of similarity in the internalisation of ideals. Orbach's (1978) *Fat is a Feminist Issue* argues that female identity is linked to body image and that limited representation of women in mainstream media pressurizes women to conform to one standard (tall, thin, white, young). As this is unattainable for the majority to achieve, it results in widespread loss of self-esteem, leading to an inability to cope, vulnerability, depression, eating disorders and cosmetic surgery, all of which are linked to well-being (or

lack of). Pine (2014) describes how, due to constant evaluation of the female form, women start to internalize the male gaze and judge themselves as men would, evidencing self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). However, initiatives in the fashion world, such as All Walks Beyond the Catwalk (founded in London in 2009 by model Erin O'Connor, fashion broadcaster Caryn Franklin and fashion consultant Debra Bourne) work to promote greater diversity in the production and promotion of fashion (All Walks 2019).

Corner (2014) states that a 'perfect outfit' (p. 93) increases self-confidence, making the wearer feel more 'attractive and secure' (p. 94). Miller (2010) agrees that clothes can represent confidence. Maddux (2009) discusses self-efficacy, 'the belief in one's capability to produce desired effects or to achieve one's goals' (Baron 2013 p. 17), with Baron going on to state that how one feels about the clothes one wears and the feedback received from others can inhibit or bolster one's sense of efficacy. This in turn can influence physical health, engagement, resilience and perseverance in the face of obstacles. Baron theorises that having cross-over clothing (i.e. styles that are appropriate in multiple situations) simplifies life, allowing more thought to go into tasks and experiences, thus increasing confidence. Corner (2014) discusses the surprising success of online fashion retail, citing the traditional in-store changing room as having a negative impact on women's confidence, due to overheating, poor lighting, unforgiving mirrors, restricted space and intrusive sales assistants. Self-conscious shoppers can now buy online and try on in the comfort and privacy of their own home. Several researchers (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Pine 2014; Adam and Galinsky 2012) note scientific studies that suggest wearing certain items can improve or impede feelings of confidence (see the theory of Enclothed Cognition, in section 2.8.1). For example, wearing a bikini was found to reduce performance in mental-agility tests (Fredrickson *et al.* 1998). Pine (2014 np) concludes that,

'...it seems indisputable that simply putting on a piece of clothing which carries symbolic meaning can change a person's self-perception and even their thought processes. It can make them feel more or less attractive, confident, powerful or clever.'

In agreement, Crewe (2017) describes dress practice as transformative, and crucial to one's sense of self and creation of identity.

2.6 IDENTITY

'Fashion is an important component of the play with identity.'
(Smelik 2015 p. 156)

Identity is what and where a human actor is in social terms, and is established when the actor and the viewer agree on the placement of the actor as a social object, through both opposition and apposition (i.e. noting differences and similarities) (Stone 2006). Holliday states '[c]omfort... signifies the comfort one feels from the degree of fit between the outside of one's body and its

inside... the imagined or "true" self' (1999 p. 481). This is described as closing the gap between acting (performance) and being (ontology). Habermas and Paha (2002) assert that objects can be used to communicate and validate social identity via self-presentation, but also highlight that objects acting as reminders of the past and of significant others are of equal importance to identity. Clothing and makeup are examples of identity cues (Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017), enabling 'cognitive perspective' (p. 34), where information is gathered by viewing the configuration of clothing being worn (for example style and colour). This leads to 'appearance perception' (p. 34), either of the self or others, which in turn, assigns identity. Clothing and dress practices are recognised by many as important in the construction, promotion and affirmation of identity (Crewe 2017; Mida and Kim 2015; Baron 2013; Lynas 2010; Belk 1988; Craik 1984), with Simmel, as early as 1895 having commented that fashion stands, 'at the very periphery of the personality' (2003[1895] p. 242). Bauman (2012) described postmodern, lived identity as requiring fantasy, noting fashion's transient nature as being ideal for the creation of fantasy, without fixed commitment. Whitehead and Petrov (2018) note the duplicitous nature of clothing, as it enables the creation of a new identity or can be used to conceal the real identity of the wearer. Baron (2013 p. 23) uses the term 'identity crafting', regarding the creation of an identity as positive and healthy (thus linking to well-being) and goes on to discuss the evolution of identity through clothing choices as reinvention at 'micro level' over days, weeks and months and at 'macro level' (p. 47) over years, describing a balanced personal style as a type of wisdom, refined over time and involving a relationship with clothing that requires attention and investment to achieve positive well-being.

Von Busch discusses the 'paradox of autonomy in fashion, the question of how to be "oneself" with tools and signifiers that are inherently produced outside oneself' (2016 p. 188), alluding to the fashion industry's power to influence. This concurs with May (2002), who notes that, although fashion is increasingly diverse, the ownership and production of the clothing industry is not, resulting in a level of structural homogeneity that becomes an antecedent in identity created using fashion and dress. Crewe (2017) also agrees, noting the ambiguity of clothing artefacts in being personal to the individual and homogeneously global. As discussed in section 2.5.6 Individuality, there is broad agreement across fashion researchers that identity has a dual function of individual expression and group membership (Crewe 2017; Baron 2013; Stone 2006; Craik 1984). Simmel (2003[1895] p. 241) explained fashion as a means of supplementing,

'...a person's lack of importance, their inability to individualize their existence purely by their own unaided efforts, by enabling them to join a group characterized and singled out in the public consciousness by fashion alone.'

In a similar vein, Steele (2001) notes that subordinate groups creatively use goods to construct identity by appropriating more elite styles, linking with Han,

Nunes and Dreze's (2010) Parvenu and Poseur categories (see Figure 12). Conversely, Bauman's (2012 p. 31) more current view noted the shift from a communitarian ethos towards self-concerned individualisation, stating that,

“individualisation” consists of transforming human “identity” from a “given” (e.g. male or female, upper class or lower class) into a “task” and charging the actors with the responsibility for performing that task and for the consequences (also the side-effects) of their performance.’

Bauman (2012) went on to describe postmodern identity as ‘an unfulfilled project’ (p. 29), rendering the postmodern actor in a constant state of change, unable to stop. Individualisation enables freedom to experiment, however the individual must then learn to cope with the consequences of their experimentation, or ‘play’ (Smelik 2015 p. 156). In Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self, possessions can be used to functionally or symbolically extend the self, by creating, enhancing and preserving a sense of identity. Belk notes that in contemporary consumption, ‘the feeling of identity invested in material objects can be extraordinarily high (1988 p. 144). Similarly, in relation to identity, Hancock (2016 p. 3) states that ‘[w]e are what we buy’. Belk (1988 p. 143) notes the diminished sense of self when possessions are lost, and the ‘nostalgic regret’ when clothing becomes too worn to wear, especially when pleasant memories are associated with the item. McCracken (1987) agrees that special possessions have a role in maintaining self concept and easing life transitions. Habermas and Paha (2002) found that personal objects are more frequently used as reminders when separated from significant others and during role transitions. Consumer choice fuels the ability of human actors to change social selves, but with that choice comes risk of judgement from others or of having made the wrong choice, or even a better choice coming along. Beck (1992 p. 98) describes choice as ‘a learned ability’, dependent on upbringing and social influences. Entwistle describes the self as fragile and easily threatened by failure to conform in social situations, with dress being part of the ‘micro-order of social interaction’ (2003 p. 142), and Belk (1988) highlights the role of possessions in helping adults and adolescents to manage their identities. Dress therefore becomes a process, like language (Corner 2014; Craik 2009) that enables communication of the self to others (Crewe 2017; Eicher 2016; Barnard 2014; Crane 2000), described by Finkelstein (1991) as a fashioned self-image. Craik (2009) describes the performance of identity and social roles through clothing choice as ‘animating’ the body with a ‘social veneer’ (p. 3). A sub-category of storytelling emerges, with Spivack noting that, ‘[t]he clothes that protect us, that make us laugh, that serve as a uniform, that help us assert our identity or aspirations, that we wear to remember someone - in all of these are encoded the stories of our lives’ (2014 p. 7), and Baron (2013) similarly identifying stories as being relevant to self-presentation. This also links to Miller's (2008) anthropological research, which used narrative portraits to explore how people express themselves through possessions, including clothing.

Baron (2013) argues that little research has been conducted into how women use clothing. One study, by Tseelon (1995) posits that a women’s identity is established by presenting many selves and that clothing is a critical element of this. Women acquire clothing as an extension of the self (Crewe 2017), described by Barnard (2014 p. 27) as ‘prosthetic devices’, create meanings from the clothing artefacts and transfer these meanings to themselves to shape their identities. Miller (2010) argues that clothing does not represent people, but rather constitutes who they are by playing an active part in the experience of the self. Cili and Stopa (2015) posit that autobiographical memories can help individuals to construct a stable sense of self, providing continuity. However, Bauman (2012) described identity as a search for solidity, or form. People perceive others as fixed or solid and desire the same, not realising that those others conceal biographical experiences that render that perceived solid form as liquid on the inside. This links to Bandura’s (1989) Social Cognitive Theory and Solomon’s (1983) theory of Symbolic Interactionism whereby identity is recognised as non-stable, dynamic and constructionist, based on interactions with others. Similarly, Craik’s (1994) work discusses the fluidity in a woman’s relationship with clothing, whereby clothing offers the opportunity of diverse choices in identity. Multiple identities emerge as a category explored by a variety of authors (Guy and Banim 2000; Holliday 1999; Markus and Nurius 1986; Solomon 1983; Goffman 2002[1959]; Mead 1967[1934]). In Table 7, a further exploration of literature related to identity sees common themes emerge: that personal identity develops from individual reflection (Bandura 1989; Cooley 2009[1902]) and lived experience through performance and social interaction (Goffman 2002[1959]; Holliday 1999; Solomon 1983; Cooley 2009[1902]), confirmed by Crewe’s description of fashion as a ‘performative practice’ (2017 p. 4).

Table 7 Theories related to identity

Cooley (1902)	Mead (1934)	Goffman (1990[1959])	Solomon (1983)	Bandura (1989)	Holliday (1999)
Looking Glass Self	Mind, Self and Society	Presentation of Self in Everyday Life	Symbolic Interactionism	Social Cognitive Theory	The Comfort of Identity
Focuses on interaction with others (Social Transactions, Stone 1962) and an individual’s perception of what others might be thinking of them.	Mead posited the ‘me’, a separate and complex self for each role played, with the combination of those forming total self-conception, the ‘I’.	Likens humans to actors on a stage (dramaturgy), performing for various audiences (others) – meanings generated are dependent on interaction and influenced by the environment.	Identity can change and is constructionist, based on interactions with others.	Individuals are self-regulating and proactive – reactions are gained by how people look, before anything is said – these initial reactions affect the individual and others.	Emphasizes the performativity of identity, in different spaces.

Source: author’s own

Guy and Banim (2000) conducted a grounded theory research study into clothing as a lived experience. The findings identified three interdependent perspectives of self-identity through relationships with clothing: the 'woman one wants to be' (aspirational or strived for self), the 'woman one fears she could be' and the 'woman one is most of the time' (p. 316). These correspond with two of Markus and Nurius' (1986) three possible selves: the ideal self one would like to become and the self one fears becoming (the third being the self one could become). Guy and Banim's research established that using clothing to positively influence and shape identity was a primary goal of the subjects studied and identified the 'click' (2000 p. 316), where chosen clothing is correct in terms of quality, fit, occasion and audience, leading to positive self-image and well-being. More mature women were found to appreciate the importance of quality, thus spending more but on fewer garments. Subjects discussed balancing conformity/acceptability with more playful or deviant clothing choices, usually when dressing for special events in a more aspirational or fantasy manner. Individuals then, choose daily how to present themselves based on the situations and audiences they anticipate encountering (Baron 2013). Goffman (1990[1959] p. 14) posited that an individual 'gives' impressions by consciously verbalising and 'gives off' impressions through unconscious non-verbal actions. Thus, there appears to be a tension between using clothing to construct identity and being one's true self. Stone (2006) defines comments about an actor's clothing by others as 'reviews', and comments by the actor themselves as 'programs' (p. 142), noting that if there is disparity between programs and reviews, the self is challenged, requiring redefinition. In agreement, Baron (2013) describes identity as work-in-progress based on aspirations of the self and feedback from the outside world. Research by Boggiano and Ruble (1979) highlighted the role of positive feedback in enhancing intrinsic motivation, with Deci and Cascio (1972) positing that negative feedback decreases intrinsic motivation. This in turn links to a sense of competence, one of the needs linked to psychological well-being in Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory. Bauman (2012) argued that having a common identity offers security in postmodern society, aligning with another aspect of self-determination theory; relatedness (see section 2.5.1 Community). This aligns with Miller (2010), who links fashion with anxiety and highlights the drab conformity of those living in London, due to the stress of having too much freedom of choice in what to wear. Thus, using clothing and dress to construct, control and perform identities in social settings (Smelik 2015; Craik 2009) is a form of appearance management (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Rudd and Lennon 2000).

2.6.1 Appearance management

'All feelings of shame rests upon the conspicuousness of the individual.'

(Simmel 2003[1895] p. 242)

Maslow (1943) described cultural differences related to clothing and appearance management as both startling and superficial, identifying these as conscious needs. Maslow posited a level of commonality across cultures in terms of basic, or unconscious needs. Skov (2014 p. 121) notes the 'commercialisation of everyday life', with shopping regarded as a form of self-care, facilitating comfort for the body and personal appearance. Similarly, Finkelstein (1991) discusses the fusion of conspicuous consumption with the presentation of personality to enable actors to influence what others think of them. Kawamura (2011) continues this discussion on the social psychology of clothing, noting the multiple ways actors can modify the appearance of the body and both the psychological and social forces that influence, or are influenced by appearance management. Wodak and Meyer (2016) concur, noting that grooming and dress are important elements of social practice. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) posit that women's interest in appearance management, at times dismissed as vain, is the result of constant exposure to social and cultural norms that repeatedly emphasise the importance of physical attractiveness, leading to women feeling they are more likely to be looked at during interpersonal encounters. This leads to higher levels of self-consciousness and habitual monitoring of the body and appearance. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) identify women's fashions as contributors to anxieties around appearance, highlighting the tension between appearing relaxed and unworried while wearing skimpy, exposing styles. Simmel (2003[1895]) variously describes the use of fashion as a mask, veil and form of protection, enabling personal feelings to be kept private. Entwistle (2003) agrees, describing the dressed body as individual and private, as well as a social phenomenon.

Kaiser and Green highlight 'the thought involved in developing a personalized fashion statement (style)' (2016 p. 167), while Miller (2010 p. 121) describes style as 'the individual construction of an aesthetic based not just on what you wear, but how you wear it'. Similarly, Mida and Kim (2015 p. 21) discuss clothing as a 'reflection of personal identity and values', echoing the work of several other authors in linking clothing and dress practices to identity and emotional state in both public and private settings, as shown in Table 8 (see page 68). Key elements from Table 8 include the importance of mood and emotion to how one dresses (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Pine 2014); the intentional creation of self by using dress (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Wilcox, Hyeong and Sankar 2009; Rudd and Lennon 2000); and the impact of culture and society (Wilcox, Hyeong and Sankar 2009; Rudd and Lennon 2000). In sociology and philosophy, agency is the capacity of a person to act independently, with free choice. By contrast, structure is those factors of influence (such as social class, religion, gender, ethnicity and customs) that determine or limit an agent and his or her decisions. Rudd and Lennon (2000) established that appearance-management behaviours

are ways in which young women can exhibit agency or control over their lives, for example by using cosmetics, going to the gym or wearing shaping undergarments, and that these behaviours can become ritualised practices. Guy and Banim's (2000) research similarly found women (aged 21-54) using clothing to control how they felt in different social settings. Some participants mentioned the desire for differentiation, without standing out too much. Jenss (2016 p. 171) discusses Phelan's (1993) elaboration of what it means to be "unmarked", that is, to maintain hegemonic power by avoiding a certain kind of cultural visibility (standing out too much through style, fashion or dress) that "marks" an individual in an objectifying way'. In fashion terms, middle-class femininity avoids excess, whether that is flesh on display, frills or colour. Makeover programmes, traditionally deemed as 'women's television', often utilise taste, with participants taught about design, style and taste, defined by the programme producers and associated with middle-class culture (Wood and Skeggs 2008 p. 182).

Table 8 Appearance-management theories

Author	Rudd and Lennon (2000)	Wilcox, Hyeong and Sankar (2009)	Pine (2014)	Masuch and Hefferon (2014)
Theory	Appearance Management	Self-Presentation	Happy Clothes	Appearance Management
Similar Concepts	Women monitor and manage their appearance to meet cultural ideals/ normative expectations, with 'dress' being described as 'intentional behaviour' (p. 152).	Self-presentation is utilised by individuals to state their social image.	What one chooses to wear is dependent on one's emotions.	Clothing practices were utilised to negotiate selfhood, manage mood and befriend the body. These processes interact to enable the management of everyday well-being, with fashion found to be a source of positivity.

Source: author's own

A theme of categorisation emerges in the use of clothing for appearance management. Baron (2013) found that women tend to organise their clothing into four categories: duty-invisible (for running errands, working in isolation or caring for others, requiring functional unselfconsciousness); duty-visible (for formal work environments or interaction with others where influence is required, involving an element, but not an excess, of personal care); pleasure-invisible (where pleasure-inducing pampering or self-care is involved and appearance is not judged, for example being with friends and family, going for a walk or to see a movie) and pleasure-visible (hosting a dinner party, attending a wedding, being on holiday or attending an after-work event). Baron (2013 p. 41) also discusses applied psychologist Baumgartner's (2012) findings that women categorise clothing into four categories: formal, night out, office and weekend casual. Guy and Banim's (2000) participants perceived that the correct use of clothes led to increased confidence and power, described as cultural capital.

2.7 CULTURE

'a generalised set of customs and orders that pertain to particular people of a specific time and place'
(Miller 2008 p. 289)

Culture is one aspect of the UK Office for National Statistics' analysis in relation to well-being (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Bauman (2011) described culture as 'a set of preferences suggested, recommended and imposed on account of their correctness, goodness or beauty' (p. 5), thus saw culture as a positive aspect of life. Fredrickson and Roberts' view is more negative, describing the 'dominant (White male) culture that so clearly values thinness and beauty in women' (1997 p. 197) that leads to objectification and self-objectification of the female form. Rose (2001) states that culture is a set of practices that produce and exchange meanings, dependent on the interpretations of the participants. The world is constructed through individual, institutional, human and non-human practice that is constantly changing. Thus, the culture one lives and experiences has consequences for one's reality (Jenss 2016), with Cili and Stopa (2019) confirming that autobiographical memories are moulded by cultural context. Bauman (2011) discussed the democratisation of culture, positing that there is no longer a clear divide between high and low culture. The fragmented nature of contemporary society means people are less likely to belong to one culture and more likely to feel a sense of belonging to a wider range of cultures; a feeling of being at home everywhere and nowhere. Corner (2014) argues that globalization has contributed to bland homogeneity, that although there is more choice than ever before, one culturally acceptable look is encouraged (a collective cultural consciousness) that has led to a loss of national identity, personal style and individuality. Conversely Bauman (2011) posited that the homeostatic version of culture was abandoned due to globalization. Deci and Ryan (2000) note that chaotic and pressure-led cultures result in goals and values that are not well integrated, which in turn makes these cultures more fragmented and less stable, negatively impacting well-being. In *Liquid Modernity*, Bauman (2012) asserted that culture is no longer about paradigms or national norms. Instead, culture provides offers from which the individual can choose. Thus, Bauman argued that culture has moved from influencing societal progress to serving consumerism. Bauman's (2011 p. 15) description of '[a] liquid modern, consumer-orientated economy' epitomises the current fashion system, which relies on a surplus of products that quickly go out of date, becoming unfashionable. Bauman argued that today's culture requires people to be able to quickly change their public identities. In doing so, people succumb to consumerism, with Bauman describing this as a shift of focus from possession to disposal; a throw-away culture.

Table 9 provides definitions of culture related to clothing and dress. Culture can be described as a powerful and dominant element of everyday life (Thomson 2017) and, as shown in Table 8, clothing artefacts can exhibit cultural agency, influencing people’s attitudes and behaviours (Crane 2000). Barnard (2002 p. 36) confirms that fashion is a cultural phenomenon, citing William’s (1961) concept of ‘multilinear’ culture as being inclusive of fashion and dress as these are part of everyday ordinary experience. Ingrained in the everyday, the cultural significance of fashion is often overlooked (Mida and Kim 2015) and there is also a common view that fashion is superficial and fickle, driven by popular culture (Crewe 2017). Similarly, Solomon and Rabolt (2009 p. 30) describe fashion as ‘a major component of popular culture’. Whitehead and Petrov (2017) note that the link between dress and popular culture is currently a focus of academic attention.

Table 9 Cultural definitions related to clothing and dress

Author	Craik (1994)	Breward (1995)	Solomon & Rabolt (2009)	Barnard (2014)	Crewe (2017)
Definition	Codes of dress culturally prime, or civilise, the natural form of the body in all cultures.	Changing fashions can be described as ‘shorthand for late twentieth-century cultural experience or ‘lifestyle’’ (p.229).	Culture involves traditions, norms, rituals and shared meanings, combining to be a ‘society’s personality’ (p.41). Clothes can be described as material culture, whereas behaviours, thoughts and feelings are nonmaterial culture.	Studying fashion requires the cultural understanding of meanings and values. A garment ‘represents something else – oneself, the self, one’s emotions, identity and so on (p.27).	Fashion, as a cultural object, can hold multiple meanings, and is ‘largely driven by popular culture (p.104).

Source: author’s own

Crane (2000) describes contemporary culture as postmodern. This Comfort in Clothing study places fashion, clothing and dress, and well-being as part of postmodern culture, described by Smelik as ‘the network society... where the subject, the self, always stands in relation to an other’ (2015 p. 155). Similarly, Bauman noted that people shop ‘for the kind of image it would be nice to wear and ways to make others believe that we are what we wear’ (2012 p. 74). However, Bauman also posited the carnival or ‘cloakroom community’ (2012 p. 200), requiring spectacle to bring together normally disparate individuals (somewhat at odds with Smelik’s (2015) concept of the network society). Those individuals temporarily conform, for example by adhering to a sartorial dress code specific to the spectacle, or occasion. These spectacles provide an opportunity for the individual to gain respite from the postmodern anxiety of solitary or individualistic choice. Linked to this, Touraine (1998) posits the end of human actors as social beings, where society determines behaviour. Instead, the individual is responsible for the specifics of both psychological and cultural elements. Miller (2008), however, argues that postmodernist thinkers are mistaken in their assertion that a decline in society and culture has led to disordered fragmentation. Miller’s research participants constructed their own

sense of order that was authentic to them as individuals, but within a network of relationships that provided a level of comfort previously gained from wider society, shared culture, or the grand narrative of religion. According to Holliday (1999), examples of order and relationship networks are prevalent in queer communities, where shared cultural codes of dress and adornment lead to specific items of clothing or jewellery having currency in specific queer sub-cultures. Holliday concludes that, within queer culture, comfort of identity is always social, even when expressed as individual choice.

Barnard (2014) states that clothes, bodies and experiences are all products of culture: culture that must be learned and expressed using language or non-verbal communication, and that there is no non-cultural way of doing this. In correlation, several researchers acknowledge the cultural complexity and cultural narratives of dress artefacts (Jenss 2016; Mida and Kim 2015). McCracken (1986) notes that fashion's ability to transfer meaning to items of clothing and accessories can be divided into three categories, as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14 McCracken's fashion meaning categories



Source: author's own, adapted from McCracken (1986)

McCracken refers to complex industrial societies, usually Western, that embrace change and use it to drive the economy as well as social and cultural factors. This contrasts with Flugel's concept of fixed clothing (1950[1930]), which remains constant over long periods of time and usually exists in non-Western cultures. Cultural ideas, beliefs and values make clothing and practices of dress meaningful to the performing members of that culture and to those outside of that culture. Similarly, Von Busch states that 'fashion can affect us on a deeper level' (2016 p. 181), that it 'cuts through emotional and social life: it frames and defines, includes and excludes... affects self-esteem and social standing'. The existence and intertwining of both social and psychological elements of fashion and clothing can therefore be identified as a key category throughout fashion theory (Von Busch 2016; Miller 2010; McCracken 1986). Throughout history, following fashion or engaging in certain dress practices has enabled people to fit in, thus avoiding feelings of anxiety, discomfort or shame from being conspicuous. As early as 1895, Simmel described fashion and dress as a 'remarkable social-psychological phenomena' (2003 p. 242).

2.8 PSYCHOLOGY

'...as a discipline, psychology has paid surprisingly little attention to the power of clothing to manifest and modify the human mind.'

(Pine 2014 np)

In 1899, Veblen described dress as a spiritual need, used as a means to fit in and be respectable (1994[1899]). Public self-consciousness, controlled by outside pressures, is linked to reduced well-being (Deci and Ryan 2000). In self-determination theory, Deci and Ryan (2000) argue that psychological well-being is linked to satisfaction of the innate needs for competence, relatedness (see section 2.5.1 Community) and autonomy, while noting that learned or acquired motives, such as achievement, wealth and image can be used to compensate for unmet needs. Davies (2015) lists psychological categories as intelligence, mood, personality, emotion, morality and attitude. More recently, Whitehead and Petrov (2018) note the psychological effects of dress, as a conduit to convey morality and set mood. Pine (2014) states that the impact clothing has on the wearer is diverse and dynamic, sending internal messages, which can alter capability, thought processes, judgements and mood. This relationship between mind and body is labelled by Pine as 'body cognition... the power of clothes to alter the psychological state of the wearer' (2014 np). In agreement, Jenss (2016) describes fashion as an unsurpassed aid to understanding psychological complexities. Lennon, Johnson and Rudd (2017) cite Horn and Gurel's (1981) research into the social psychology of dress, which identified five functions, (see Table 10), all with clear links to previous sections in this literature review.

Table 10 The social psychology of dress

Function	1. Identification	2. Modesty 3. Immodesty	4. Adornment	5. Protection
Examples relevant to Psychological Comfort	This could relate to role and status of the wearer, for example, Kimle and Damhorst (1997, cited in Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017) suggest that wearing very fashionable clothing in the workplace leads to negative judgement by professionals. Identification is linked to protection, for example by communicating group membership.	It should be noted that modesty and immodesty are cultural and social constructs, learned behaviour of place and time. In studies by Gueguen (2012, cited in Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017), women wearing red were perceived to have greater sexual intent than when wearing any other colour. Pine (2014) describes how, due to constant evaluation of the female form, women start to internalize the male gaze and judge themselves as men would.	Adornment enables expression of creativity and demonstration of knowledge of aesthetic ideals within a culture (Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017). Pine (2014) states that wearing clothing that has symbolic meaning can trigger memories and stimulate feelings.	While protection is relevant to physiological comfort (for example to keep warm or shield from the sun), it can also refer to psychological comfort in the form of protection from supernatural forces (Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017), realised through the wearing of amulets or talismans, or even lucky pants.

Source: author's own, adapted from Horn and Gurel (1981)

Confidence, comfort and expression are all internal motivations related to psychological comfort which women in Pine's (2014) research sought. External motivations such as projecting a professional, sexy or fashionable look, were less sought after. This correlates with Bauman's (2012) discussion of the individualistic nature of the postmodern actor, more concerned with the self than the wider community, and with research that suggests a rise in narcissism (Marche 2013). Cili and Stopa (2019 p. xii) highlight the 'worldwide rise in individualism' identified in Santos, Varnum and Grossmann's (2017) research, suggesting individuals rely less on social groups. The move towards individualism has health implications, as Davies notes that 'a deficit of social relations... is not only a cause of unhappiness, but a serious psychological health risk' as the human brain has 'evolved in such a way as to depend on social relationships' (2015 p. 193). Bauman noted that, '[I]iving among a multitude of competing values, norms and life-styles, without a firm and reliable guarantee of being in the right, is hazardous and commands a high psychological price' (2012 p. 214). The rise in psychological problems recorded in contemporary Western societies (The Global Council for Happiness and Wellbeing 2019; Davies 2015) brings focus to the development of the positive psychology movement.

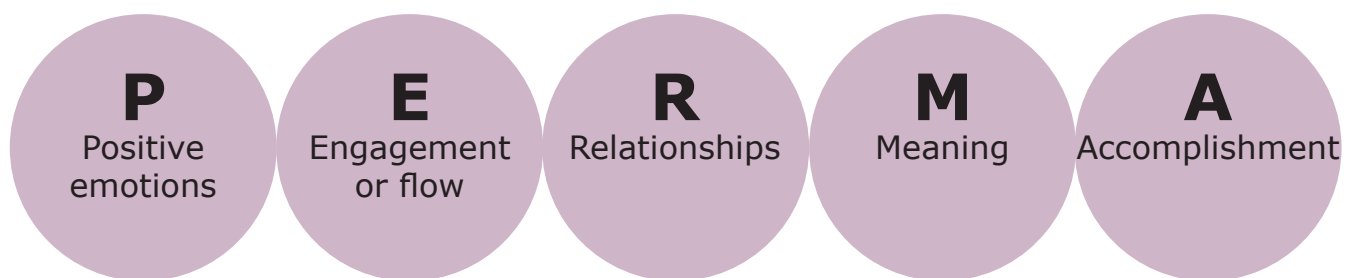
2.8.1 Positive Psychology

'the scientific study of optimal human functioning'
(Linley *et al.* 2006 p. 8)

The Positive Psychology movement was conceptualised by Seligman in 1998 (Lomas, Heffernon and Ivztan 2014; Linley *et al.* 2006), and focuses on psychology as a means to increase well-being for individuals, groups and organisations (Baron 2013). Positive Psychology studies behaviours, thoughts and emotions of those experiencing higher levels of well-being, with a view to replicating feelings of well-being through the design of evidence-based activities, described as positive interventions, to change the client's mind-set. For example, Baron (2013) developed the Flourishing Style Crafting concept, an appearance-management strategy, as a form of positive intervention. Fredrickson (2009) identifies the ten most common positive emotions as: joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe and love. These positive emotions can be linked with fashion and clothing; people show interest in fashion; people may experience joy in wearing an item of clothing; may experience awe at how others dress; can take pride in how they dress; may be inspired by fashion magazines and may hope to create a certain identity or impression through their dress. However, Davies (2015 p. 75) is critical, questioning 'what precisely is an emotion anyway?' and goes on to note the paradoxical nature of the positive psychology movement: that it posits that one should stop thinking so much about oneself while suggesting a self-centred focus on one's own happiness.

Applied psychologist Seligman (2011) posits the PERMA model, with five core elements of psychological well-being: Positive emotions, Engagement or flow in experience, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment, as shown in Figure 15. Flow relates to the final tier of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, the need for self-actualisation. Maslow asserts that 'the desire for self-fulfilment' (1943 p. 382), arises when all the other needs have been met, noting that satisfied people, whose physiological, safety, love and esteem needs are fully met, are the exception.

Figure 15 Seligman's PERMA model



Source: author's own, adapted from Seligman (2011)

All elements of the PERMA framework can be linked to fashion and clothing. Fashion and clothing can be sources of comfort (physical, physiological and psychological, as established in sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4), happiness (see section 2.4) and in turn, life satisfaction, which contribute to positive emotions (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Pine 2014). Fashion and clothing also offer a level of engagement, with clothes shopping regarded by many (especially women) as a hedonic leisure activity (Corner 2014), a hobby or a lifestyle, rather than a utilitarian task. The clothes one wears can facilitate positive relationships (Baron 2013; Wilcox, Hyeong and Sankar 2009; Rudd and Lennon 2000), as can the social aspect of going shopping with friends, with research by Guy, Banim and Greene (2001) establishing that women trust the opinions of other women when purchasing new clothes. Human actors can imbue clothing artefacts with meaning (Spivak 2014; Savas 2004; Belk 1988) and can gain a sense of accomplishment from purchasing, collecting and wearing (Baron 2013) certain items, as discussed in section 2.6.1 Appearance Management.

Lomas, Hefferon and Ivztan (2014) state that Positive Psychology can be applied to increase people's well-being, referring to Applied Positive Psychology as 'the science and practice of improving wellbeing' (p. ix). They posit the Layered Integrated Framework Example (LIFE) as a conceptual model of well-being. A person is considered as comprising of four distinct ontological dimensions, detailed in Table 11.

Table 11 LIFE (Layered Integrated Framework Example)

Ontological Dimension	Individual-subjective (the mind)	Individual-objective (the body-brain)	Collective-subjective (culture)	Collective-objective (society)
Explanation	Positive interventions can be used to work with/ on the mind to make life better, thus enhancing well-being at an individual, psychological level, using consciousness, awareness and attention, with techniques such as meditation and mindfulness.	Utilising body and brain to make life better can be achieved through manipulation of physiological functions and behaviours including genetics, neural networks, neuropharmacology (psychoactive drugs), exercise and use of the body for artistic self-expression such as through music, dance and art.	Positive interventions can be applied at various socio-cultural levels: 1. The microsystem, consisting of one's immediate social situation, includes family or the home environment. 2. The exosystem, consisting of the wider community, could include interventions at community level. 3. The macrosystem, consisting of wider social structure, could include interventions at government policy level. 4. The ecosystem, the total environment, is also considered important to well-being. This is pertinent to the fashion and clothing industry due to an increased focus on issues related to sustainability (Lynas 2010).	
Links to fashion, clothing and dress practice	Fashion as individual perception (Cooley 2009[1902]) and self-regulation (Bandura 1989).	Fashion as a functional tool, or prosthesis, e.g. offering warmth, or physiological comfort (Barnard 2014; Kamalha <i>et al.</i> 2013).	Fashion as a cultural practice (Jenss 2016; Barnard 2014; Craik 2009), and many others.	Fashion as a social practice (Jenss 2016; Kawamura 2011; Craik 2009; Entwistle 2003), and many others.

Source: author's own, adapted from Lomas, Hefferon and Ivrtzan (2014)

The influence of the individual-subjective (the mind) is relevant to Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura 1989), which states that an individual is self-organising, self-regulating, self-reflective and proactive, which in turn links with the 'V' (actions within voluntary control) element of Seligman's (2002) Happiness Formula (see Table 5, section 2.4 Happiness). Cooley's (2009[1902]) Looking Glass Theory (see Section 2.6 Identity) also focuses on the power of the mind, with individuals making decisions about their identities based on perceptions of how others view them.

The power of the individual-subjective (the mind) and collective-subjective (culture) is evident in Adam and Galinsky's (2012) widely cited theory of Enclothed Cognition, whereby wearing an item of clothing with a specifically understood meaning can influence the behaviour and cognitive performance of the wearer. Enclothed Cognition proposes the co-occurrence of two independent variables; the symbolism or meaning an individual creates for an item of clothing and the physical experience of wearing it. Tests were conducted using a white lab coat, ascribed with attributes of attentiveness and carefulness by participants

in the study. Four groups were introduced to the coat: group one wore it but were told nothing about it, group two wore it and believed it was a doctor's coat, group three wore it and believed it was a painter's coat and group four had access to it but were not told anything about it, and did not wear it. Those who believed it was a doctor's coat had increased sustained attention to tasks given. There was no effect on those who did not wear the coat, suggesting that, through wearing, the perceived attributes of the coat were transferred to the wearer. This suggests that any symbolic meaning ascribed to a garment can impact the emotions and the cognition of the wearer, suggesting what people choose or are required to wear could have positive and/or negative effects on their thoughts, feelings and motivations (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Pine 2014; Adam and Galinsky 2012). It is worth noting, however, that meanings associated with clothes are unstable, evolving through the influence of fashion and trend, culture, context and the perceptions of both the wearer and the audience (Baron 2013). As Davies (2015) notes, clothes are physical, tangible artefacts, but their meanings are not. In agreement, Crewe (2017 p. 125) states that '[c]lothes tell stories and store corporeal traces of presence and intimacy', reinforcing the idea that clothes have value gained from circumstance, from a moment in time, representing an intimate connection between object and agent, and again highlighting the 'affective power of material things' (p. 126) in establishing the self. Pine (2014 np) describes 'Associated Learning Theory', linking the ability of previously worn clothes associated with positive experiences to trigger positive memories. However, people may continue to wear certain styles out of habit, which could signify an inability to move on, or being stuck in a psychological rut. Pine goes on to note that breaking free from habits can improve mood, as the mind reacts positively to novelty.

Fashion, clothing and dress practice are unanimously recognised as a part of the collective-subjective (culture) worldwide, influencing, and influenced by the collective-objective (society) (Bauman 2012; Miller 2010; Solomon and Rabolt 2009; Crane 2000; see section 2.7 Culture). Baron (2013) posits that positive emotions lead to altruism and argues that the process of dressing could generate positive emotions that continue to spiral throughout the day, impacting positively on the wearer and on those with whom the wearer then interacts, thus proposing appearance management, as a positive intervention, can be of benefit to the collective-objective (society). Conversely, Jenks explores the negative aspects of fashion in society, stating, '[f]ashion is a conflict in human being's souls as well as in the social settings of the public realm, and our clothes are the conflict-ridden interface between the two' (2016 p. 194).

2.9 SUMMARY

This literature review sought to explore the concept of comfort in clothing, with a focus on how clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice can contribute to well-being in contemporary society, utilising Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity as a critical lens. A map of key words and topics from the literature review was produced (see Figure 16 on page 78) to highlight relationships and important concepts. Well-being was found to encompass community, work, time, place, safety, the body, confidence and identity. Clothing can offer physical and psychological protection, from the outside elements and in social situations (Lennon, Johnston and Rudd 2017; Carroll and Gross 2010). Home was found to be a safe space associated with comfort-orientated dress practices (Holliday 1999). The increased focus on leisure activities and leisure time in contemporary society has influenced fashion trends and dress practices, with sustained growth in the athleisure wear market evident and dress norms becoming more casual (De Klerk 2020; WGSN 2016). There is tension regarding time, with people described as being time-poor (Bauman 2012), leading to heuristic and ritualised dress practices that seek to relieve the stress and anxieties of the time-poor, choice-overloaded contemporary consumer (Baron 2013). The body was present in many of the well-being discourses, with clothing used to cover and camouflage bodies (Picardie 2015; Craik 2009; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), whether concealing perceived physical flaws or complying with religious laws, and the recent trend for modest fashion was noted (Independent 2019). Athleisure wear, fitness and diet were identified as modern means of body constriction (Corner 2014; Rudd and Lennon 2000), with the binary of thin body internalisation and the body positivity movement evident.

Entwistle's (2003) home-appropriate and work appropriate bodies encompass the key category of the social versus the individual, prevalent throughout the literature review. The social/individual binary is an important element of Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity, where Bauman identified the rise of individualism and demise of community as a cause of anxiety in contemporary times, thus impacting on well-being. Fashion, clothing and dress are firmly rooted in society, described by positive psychologists as the collective-objective (Lomas, Hefferon and Ivtzan 2014), with social interaction, relationships and group membership a key influence on dress practice (Barnard 2002). Clothing choices drive judgements, engender or avoid embarrassment and are used for re-creation of the self (Crewe 2017; Von Busch 2016). The individual was found to perform multiple identities in different social settings (Markus and Nurius 1986), described by Goffman (1990[1959]) as dramaturgy; managing appearance with the tension of balancing need to fit in and stand out. For some, clothing, fashion and dress practices are a source of anxiety; for others, appearance management is a positive (Masuch and Hefferon 2014; Pine 2014; Guy and Banim 2000), used to enhance well-being.

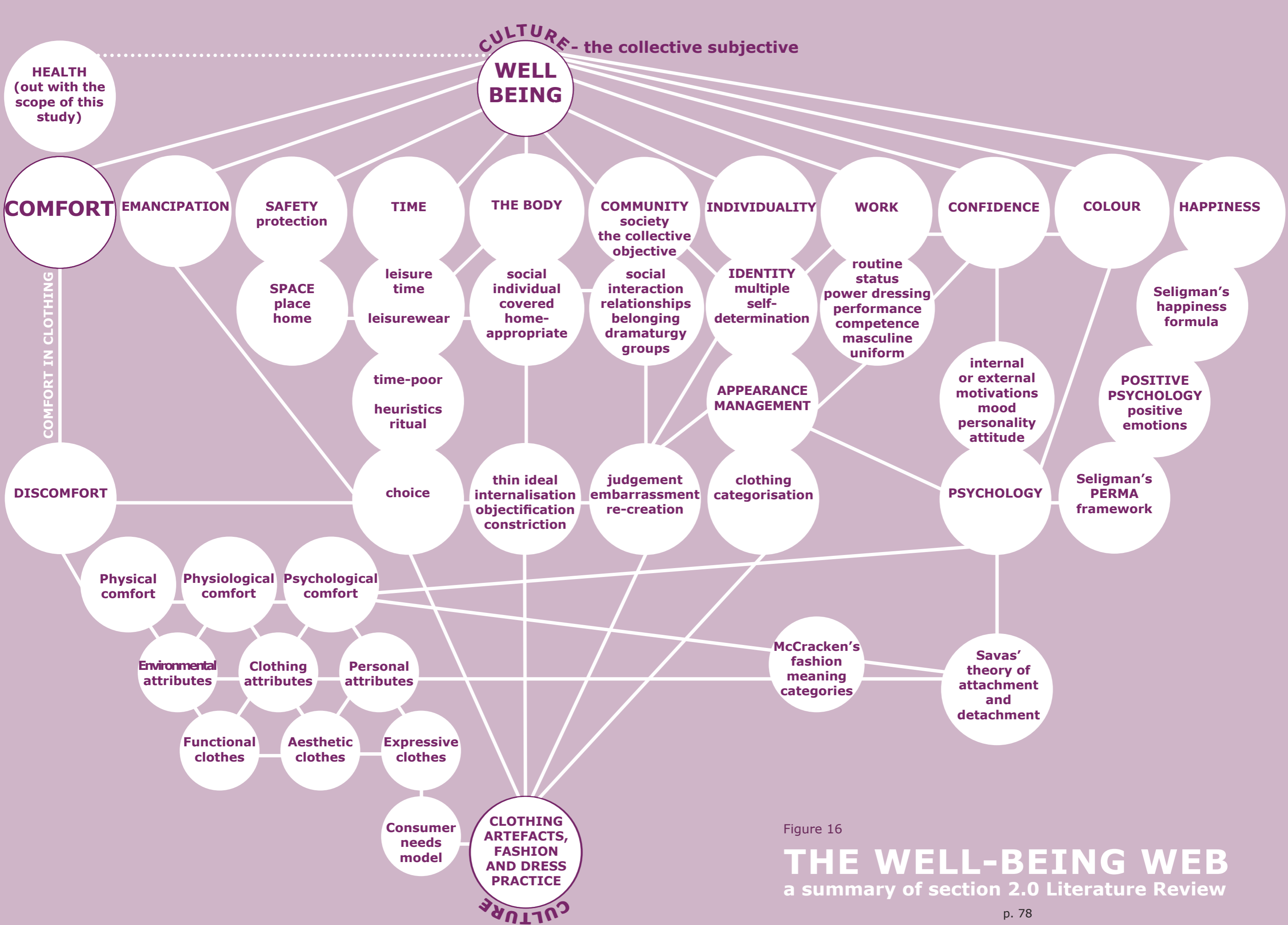


Figure 16

THE WELL-BEING WEB

a summary of section 2.0 Literature Review

Clothes are categorised by the wearer as being appropriate for different social settings, such as Baron's (2013) duty-visible, duty-invisible, pleasure-visible and pleasure-invisible clothing categories. The duty-visible category relates to the workplace, with work regarded as a form of structure linked to well-being (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Clothing and dress practices are used to convey competence, status and power in the workplace, aiding performance and providing confidence (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997; Peluchette, Karl and Rust 2006). This is due to cultural understandings of meaning associated with dress practices, clothing artefacts and design elements such as colour. Savas' (2004) theory of attachment and detachment and Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self highlight how meanings and memories are generated by material possessions such as clothing. Meanings are always cultural, therefore the understanding of clothing, dress practices, and well-being are culturally created, described as the collective-subjective by Lomas, Hefferon and Ivtzan (2014). Meanings, understandings and their affects see clothing, dress and well-being also rooted in the psychological discipline (Mair 2018; Lennon, Johnston and Rudd 2017; Ruggerone 2016), involving mood, personality and attitude. Confidence and comfort were found to be internal psychological motivations, and found to be more prevalent than external motivations such as conveying a professional or fashionable look (Pine 2014). Increasing levels of anxiety and depression (Bauman 2012; Burnham 2012), coupled with static levels of happiness, have driven development of the Positive Psychology discipline, where the key protagonist is Martin Seligman. Seligman has developed a Happiness formula (2002) and the PERMA framework (2011) of well-being, both of which could use clothing and dress practices as positive interventions in enhancing well-being (Baron 2013).

2.9.1 Research questions

In summary, an early review of relevant literature (Dunne 2011) was conducted to establish a rationale (McGhee, Marland and Atkinson 2007) and gain familiarity with the well-being topic, which was out with the researcher's knowledge base. This is in line with Strauss and Corbin's (1988) evolved and Charmaz's (2006) constructivist grounded theory approaches. The definition of well-being was stated in section 2.5 as 'the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy' (Cambridge Dictionary 2018c). Health is a well-researched and vast topic, out with the scope of this study. Happiness was also found to be well-researched, but has been briefly addressed in relation to clothing and well-being in section 2.4. The wider concept of comfort was found to be under-represented in literature, and Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity highlighted the anxieties associated with contemporary times, suggesting society needs comfort, leading to the following research questions:

RQ1: Which aspects of well-being are present in UK females' associations with comfort?

RQ2: Which aspects of well-being are present in UK females' associations with comfort or discomfort in clothing?

RQ3: What do UK females associate with comfort?

Figure 17 Research question mapping



As seen in section 2.2, the concept of comfort is well-researched in terms of clothing performance from an objective and scientific perspective, with the categories of physical, physiological and psychological comfort in clothing identified (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). However, comfort in clothing was found to be under-researched in terms of subjective views and much of the existing comfort in clothing research refers to sports or safety (i.e. performance) clothing, rather than everyday wear. This leads to research questions 4 and 5:

RQ4: Of which aspects of physical, physiological and psychological comfort in clothing are UK females aware?

RQ5: What subjective associations and lived experiences do UK females have with comfort or discomfort in clothing?

Kamalha *et al.* (2013) stated that the psychological comfort of clothing is under-researched (see section 2.2.4). Psychology was further explored in section 2.8 and positive psychology is established as a facilitator of well-being, related to individual and social identities. This leads to research question 6:

RQ6: How do UK females gain psychological comfort from clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practices?

The research questions were mapped to the original objectives of this Comfort in Clothing study to ensure relevance (see Figure 17). Appropriate methods for answering the research questions and fulfilling the objectives were developed, and are presented in section 3.0 Methodology.

2.9.2 Reflexivity

After the initial coding (Charmaz 2006) of the primary data gathered, and given the psychosocial focus of the research aim, Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework of well-being and Masuch and Hefferon's (2014) fashion-related findings on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being were identified as useful, and influenced the focused coding phase and discussion. Initial coding of primary data also identified the body as a key category, necessitating the addition of literature sections on the body, with literature on self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) proving valuable. The importance of time, place and people emerged strongly in initial coding. While these were sections established in the early literature review, these were further expanded to explore the importance of memory and belongingness, with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment, Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self and Baumeister and Leary's (1995) belongingness motivations research providing key underpinning to much of the analysis and discussion in this Comfort in Clothing study. Finally, although identity was explored in the early review of literature from a fashion-specific perspective, further literature exploring multiple identities was added, with Goffman's (1990[1959]) and Markus and Nurius' (1986) work on multiple/possible selves, and Baron's (2013) clothing categories proving useful.

3.0
COMFORT
IN
CLOTHING:
METHODOLOGY

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this Comfort in Clothing study is presented in this section detailing the research paradigm, the researcher's worldview and frame of reference (Carson *et al.* 2001), the methodologies broadly associated with the fashion discipline and the research design employed for this study. The research design includes the sample, the data-gathering instruments and methods of analysis (Flynn and Foster 2009), to provide a step-by-step guide to the research conducted.

3.1 Research paradigm

'Theory is a human construct'

(Richards 2009 p. 74)

Theories provide a framework for the systemic exploration of reality (Silverman 2005). Establishing a philosophical viewpoint for research helps to clarify both the purpose and the perspective (Carson *et al.* 2001). Kawamura (2011) describes theories as explanations of 'how and why something happens' (p. 20), stating that all research requires a theoretical perspective to provide empirical grounding. Theories can be grand, exemplified by Bourdieu's (1977) work on habitus, or middle-range, for example focusing on sub-sections of society such as politics or the economy or specific social phenomena (Wodak and Meyer 2016). Micro-sociological theories explain and try to make sense of social interaction, which could apply to this Comfort in Clothing study since dress practice, identity and well-being are closely related to social interaction. Sociopsychological theories 'focus on the social conditions of emotion and cognition' (Wodak and Meyer 2016 p. 17), which is also relevant to this study, as well-being is linked to emotion (Baron 2013; Seligman 2011; Baumeister and Leary 1995). Mida and Kim describe theory as speculation, a framework or set of ideas used 'to explain a particular phenomenon' (2015 p. 78), usually based on one learned person's opinion which has been accepted by other scholars. There is agreement among fashion scholars (Barnard 2014; Craik 2009) that theoretical underpinning is key to understanding fashion, with Barnard stating that 'all fashion is fashion theory' (2014 p. 9). Kawamura advises the use of the Symbolic Interactionist theoretical framework for fashion research. Symbolic Interactionism is a social-science theory involving 'a set of related propositions that describes and explains certain aspects of human behaviour' (2011 p. 26), thus emphasizing the importance of external factors, social forces and learning on human behaviour. By attaching meaning to symbols (verbal, such as language, or non-verbal, such as wearing clothing), Symbolic Interactionists can build theories. Goffman (1990[1959]), Stone (1962) and Davis (1992) are examples of Symbolic Interactionists that have produced research involving fashion, clothing and dress practice. Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher (2013) assert that grounded theory is rooted in symbolic interactionist sociology. Table 12 provides details on research theories and paradigms relevant to this Comfort in Clothing study.

Table 12 Research theories and paradigms

Critical Theory	Interpretivism/ Constructivism	Grounded Theory	Symbolic Interactionism
<p>Critical Theory aims to critique society or a group (Carson <i>et al.</i> 2001) and regards reality as being shaped by political, economic, cultural and historical structures and values, with a focus on social change (Brennen 2017). While this Comfort in Clothing study sought to research females within UK culture and utilized Bauman's Liquid Modernity as a critical lens, it is not a Critical Theory study.</p>	<p>Constructivists and interpretivists focus on the processes by which meanings are created, negotiated, sustained and modified (Schwandt 1998). They accept multiple realities which are socially and empirically based but are the mental construct of the individual (in contrast to Critical Theory's focus on society or a group) (Carson <i>et al.</i> 2001). Constructivism rejects the notion of a permanent truth, positing relativism rather than realism (Brennen 2017). This is relevant to this Comfort in Clothing study, as people's understanding and experiences of comfort, fashion, clothing and dress practices are individual and may change over time.</p>	<p>Grounded theory is a comparative methodology with systemic procedures for the analysis of qualitative data (Charmaz 2001), enabling rigorous qualitative research (Haig 2010). Data gathered is subject to initial coding, line by line, then focused coding, to identify categories (Charmaz 2006). Memo writing, diagramming and theoretical sampling are key elements of grounded theory. This study does not use theoretical sampling nor achieve theoretical saturation, therefore only uses elements of grounded theory in its data analysis.</p>	<p>Symbolic Interactionism is an interpretive social science theory that focuses on how humans attach symbolic meanings to interpersonal relationships (Silverman 2005). By attaching meaning to symbols, symbolic interactionists can build theories, e.g. Goffman's Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, which examines the social significance of physical appearance (Kawamura 2011). This is relevant to this Comfort in Clothing study as it investigated the meanings participants associated with clothing artefacts and dress practices in social settings.</p>

Source: author's own

To analyse the contribution of clothing, fashion and dress to the psychosocial comfort and well-being of women in the UK, this Comfort in Clothing study adopted an interpretive paradigm, recognising the research participants and their experiences as individual. Some elements of grounded theory are adopted, in line with Charmaz's (2006 p. 9) assertion that researchers can 'adopt and adapt' grounded theory guidelines as flexible principles rather than prescriptive rules. Charmaz also highlights the symbolic interactionist perspectives inherent in grounded theory. Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity provides a theoretical framework for the study, acting as a critical lens to both the extant literature and the data analysis. As stated in section 1.4, Zygmunt Bauman was a social theorist, considered a leading intellectual in the tradition of Critical Theory (Social Theory 2018). Bauman used the notion of liquidity or fluidity as a metaphor for contemporary society (i.e. late modern or what some might call postmodern society), with those living in Liquid Modernity facing 'an infinity of improvement' (2012 p. ix). The definition of improvement as 'becoming better' and its related words of healing, perk up and self-improvement (Cambridge Dictionary 2018d) suggests a link between Bauman and the well-being focus (see section 2.5 Well-being) of this Comfort in Clothing study. Bauman evolved the concept of postmodernism into Liquid Modernity to illustrate the constant state

of change in contemporary society, spanning economies, relationships and identities. Bauman's focus on the multiplicity and ephemeral nature of contemporary self-identity, with all its associated anxieties, also aligns with well-being and provides a framework for the critique of dress practice in relation to the creation and communication of identity, which emerged as an important category in the literature review (see section 2.6 Identity). Thus, Bauman's (2012) *Liquid Modernity* was considered an appropriate theory to provide a critical lens for this *Comfort in Clothing* study, adding insight to the analysis and conclusions and helping the researcher to view the data beyond her own limited worldview.

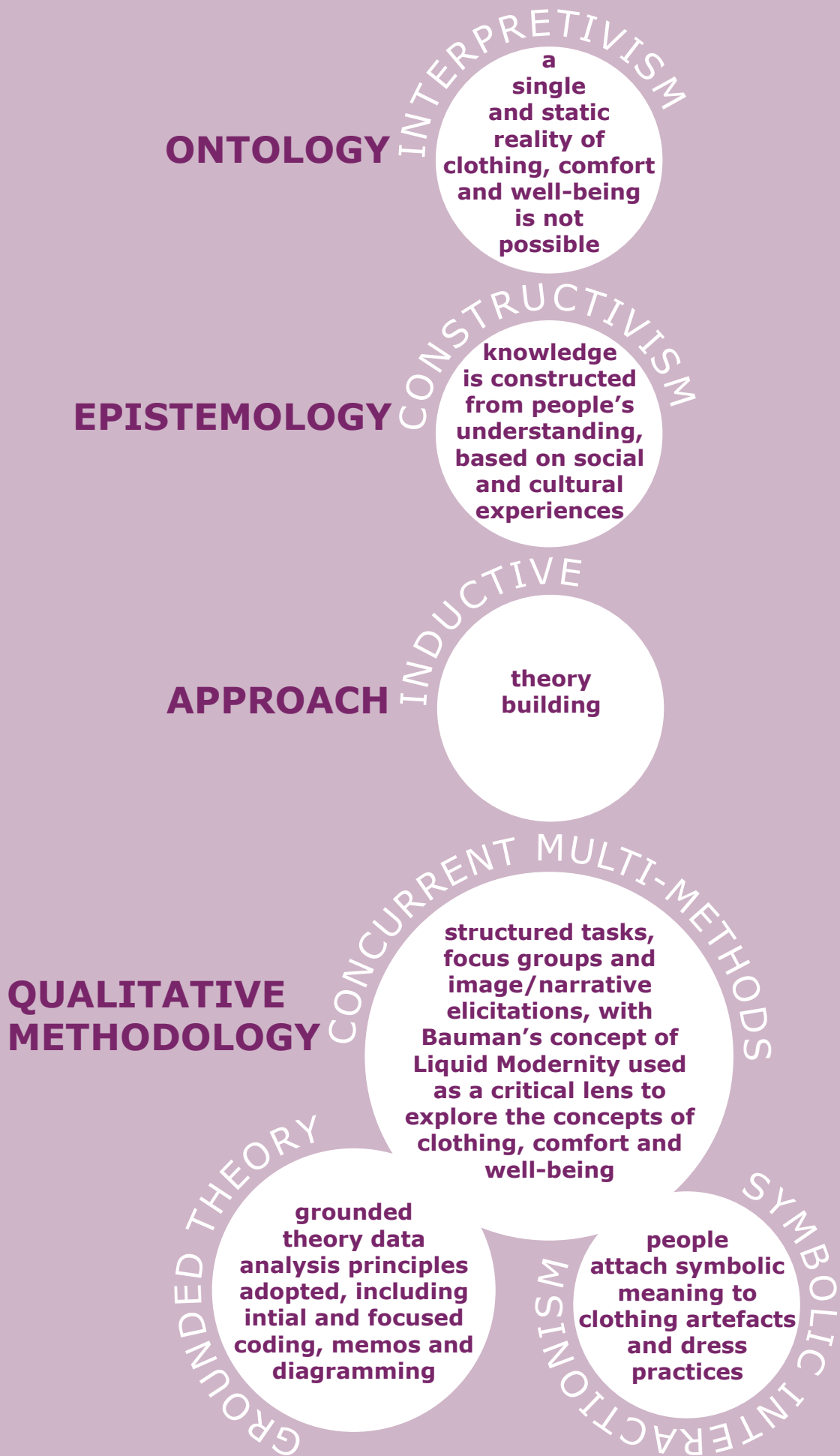
3.1.1 The researcher's worldview

'What matters is the researcher's ability to think reflectively, historically, comparatively, and biographically.'

(Huberman and Miles 2002 p. 351)

Positivism is dominant in social sciences, with a focus on scientific truth, rigorous testing and freedom from human bias (Brennen 2017). The researcher of this *Comfort in Clothing* study is naturally inclined towards a positivist ontological worldview, where a single reality based on objective knowledge is assumed (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight 2010). This in turn suggested a positivist epistemological stance (Carson *et al.* 2001), focusing on facts and explicitly stated theories, and conducting objective research requiring quantitative data processing and statistics. Creswell (2014) states that quantitative design originated in psychology studies, suggesting suitability for this research as it explores some psychological concepts (see section 2.8 Psychology). However, this research has a central focus on clothing and fashion, and Barnard (2014) argues that all fashion objects are the products of cultural values, therefore objectivity is not possible. Barnard notes that the study of fashion predominantly concerns the understanding of meanings and values, rather than explaining facts or observing repeatable phenomena. Jenss (2016) advises an interpretive approach, describing fashion research as an embodied practice, located in specific time(s) and place(s), inseparable from the researcher's feelings and emotions. Given fashion's 'transnational flows, ongoing change, diverse webs of meaning, and material consequences for people and the planet' (Kaiser and Green 2016 p. 161), it can be described epistemologically as a socially constructed phenomenon (Carson *et al.* 2001). This suggested an interpretivist ontological worldview and constructivist epistemology was more relevant to this study, exploring subjective meanings based on actors' individual perspectives and contexts, with the researcher gaining understanding and knowledge of complex psychosocial issues through an inductive, theory-building approach and qualitative methodology (Creswell 2014; Marshall 1996) as shown in Figure 18. Inductive research commences with data collection, aiming to develop or build theory at a micro level, limited to small numbers of people, focusing on the individual and using qualitative research methods (Salmons 2019; Kawamura 2011).

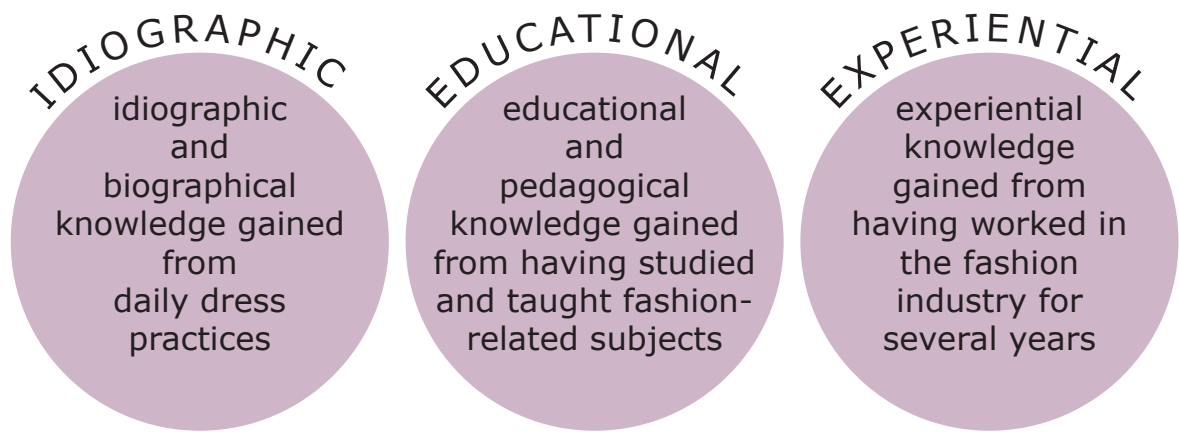
Figure 18 Research paradigm



Brennen notes that qualitative research can be ambiguous and contradictory, as well as enlightening, and that it can be used to understand people's experiences and in turn, human relationships, describing it as 'interdisciplinary, interpretive, political and theoretical in nature' (2017 p. 4). Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006) note the influence of culture and personal history in a constructivist view of reality, stating that both researchers and participants are co-creators of meaning. Silverman (2005) states that qualitative research can be an appropriate method for exploring everyday behaviour, providing a rationale for the use of qualitative methods in this Comfort in Clothing study as dress practice is an ordinary, everyday occurrence in contemporary Western society. Richards (2009) notes that qualitative research can be flexible and fluid, aligning well with Bauman's (2012) theory of Liquid Modernity. As this Comfort in Clothing study utilises Liquid Modernity as a critical lens, the fluidity offered by a constructivist, inductive, qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate. Given the researcher's naturally positivist outlook, Silverman's (2005) assertion that qualitative research can involve some simple quantitative features, and Blaxter, Hughes and Tight's statement that qualitative data can include quantification using statements such as 'more than, less than, most' (2010 p. 66) and the use of specific numbers, were welcomed. The underlying systemic nature of grounded theory, having evolved to address concerns related to the rigour of qualitative research (Dunne 2011), appealed to the researcher's innately positivist worldview, thus data analysis and coding elements of Charmaz's (2006) grounded theory were used to systemically and rigorously analyse the data. In addition, thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun 2016) was undertaken specifically to address research question 2, using key well-being foci that were identified in the early review of literature as building blocks for themes. Clarke and Braun (2016) assert that thematic analysis can be applied across a range of research paradigms and theoretical frameworks, confirming suitability for this study.

The researcher takes an active role and is a subject of interpretive research (Brennen 2017; Carson *et al.* 2001), necessitating explanation of the researcher's background and previous experience. This is explained in grounded theory terms by Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher as theoretical sensitivity, 'the researcher's insight into themselves, others and the area they are researching' (2013 p. 7) For this study, the researcher's 'frame of reference' (Carson *et al.* 2001 p. 7) includes involvement with fashion on multiple levels, as shown in Figure 19. This knowledge is a posteriori, or empirical, gained through experience and experimentation, using sense organs like seeing, touching and listening (Wodak and Meyer 2016; Mida and Kim 2015). Thus, the researcher's fashion knowledge aligns with Silverman's advice to conduct research in 'familiar territory' (2005 p. 41). Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010) agree, stating that there is a requirement for the researcher to have a familiarity and understanding of the background, history, issues and existing studies in the discipline, to provide context to the research. Interpretive validity (May 2002), concerned with the authenticity of contextual understanding, was therefore an aspiration of this

Figure 19 The researcher's frame of reference



Comfort in Clothing study. Kawamura describes C Wright Mills' (2000[1959]) 'sociological imagination' (2011 p. 36) concept to recognize the connection between complex, wider society (history) and personal, individual experience (biography). Applying sociological imagination to this study, the researcher acknowledges the impact of age leading to a personal interest in well-being, while also acknowledging the increased emphasis on well-being in Western culture (The Global Council for Happiness and Wellbeing 2019; Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015; Krom 2014; Burnham 2012) and the impact of that on fashion (UAL 2015a; WGSN 2015; Masuch and Hefferon 2014). Charmaz (2019 p. 751) notes the necessity of examining positionality in grounded theory studies, as 'a crucial aspect of developing methodological self-consciousness'. The researcher was the same gender as the research participants and living in the same country and culture. The researcher's language is English, as was the case for most the research participants. As a lecturer and module coordinator, the researcher was in a position of power in relation to the key informant sample of student participants, which necessitated careful consideration of the research design, participation procedures, data gathering and analysis (as detailed in sections 3.2.4 Key informant focus groups and 3.4 Ethics).

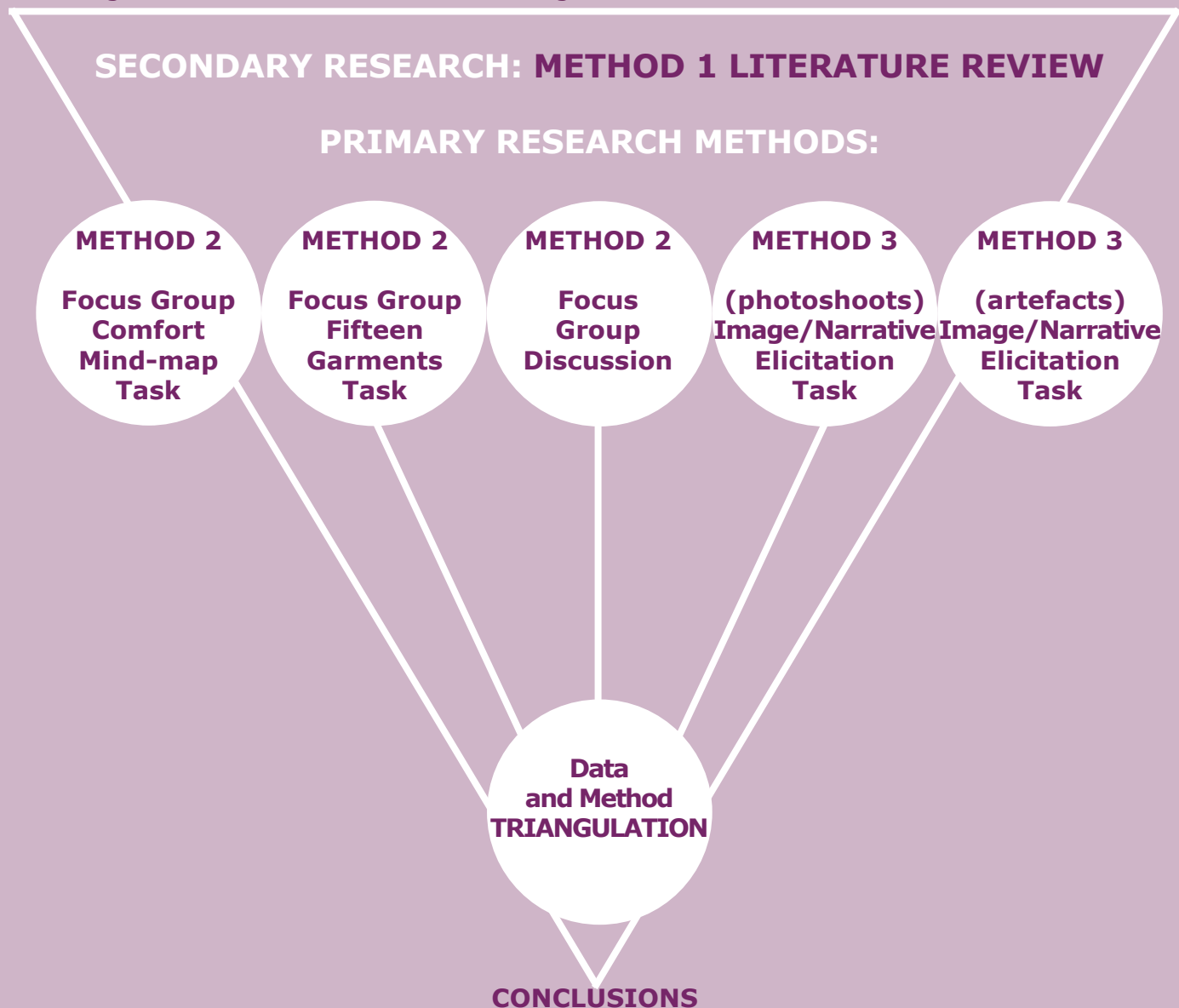
3.1.2 Researching fashion

There is broad agreement among fashion scholars (Jenss 2016; Mida and Kim 2015; Smelik 2015; Barnard 2014; Kawamura 2011; Craik 2009) that fashion is interdisciplinary, encompassing cultural, social and situated practices. Fashion research is described as intersubjective, interpretive, and multi-methodological, with Jenss (2016) stating it is essential for fashion research to use multiple methods due to its 'diverse forms and practices' (p. 11) and that '[f]or the exploration of fashion in its multifaceted dimensions, research methods are most productive when used in combination' (p. 137). In terms of grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin (1998) acknowledge the importance of multiple perspectives, which this Comfort in Clothing study sought to gather through both key informant sampling and expanded samples, and via different data sets (focus group discussions, image/narrative elicitations and structured tasks), providing justification for use of multiple research methods.

3.2 Research methods

Given the complexity of the fashion field, the use of textual analysis (Brennen 2017), with a focus on both image and discourse (written and spoken), was identified as suitable for this Comfort in Clothing study, to enable explanation and contextualized understanding of social phenomena. Charmaz (2006) agrees that textual analysis is a suitable data gathering tool within grounded theory research. Brennen (2017) notes that qualitative researchers can use triangulation, using multiple methods to increase the rigour and depth of understanding in the research. Multiple triangulation (Jenss 2016; Wodak and Meyer 2016) was utilised as a methodological strategy, including different methods (triangulation of methods) and different types of data (data triangulation), as shown in Figure 20. By evaluating a variety of perspectives, the researcher hoped to establish 'convergence' (Kaiser and Green 2016 p. 161), thus gaining confidence that results avoided one-dimensional understanding (Craik 2009). Qualtrics NVivo software was utilized for data organization and interpretation, to ensure 'valid and defensible conclusions and recommendations' (QSR 2016). The longitudinal multi-method research design (Creswell 2014) commenced in July 2015 with the early review of literature, followed by implementation of the multi-methods from October to December in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Figure 20 Multi-method research design



3.2.1 Method one: literature review

'Writing a logical, informative review of literature, after gathering essential information, is critical in conducting a good research study.'

(Flynn and Foster 2009 p. 86)

A review of literature was required as part of the RGU doctoral studies progression module assessments. Creswell (2014) lists several purposes for conducting a review of literature: it is useful for the researcher to have knowledge of the results of any similar studies, to be aware of on-going dialogue in the field and to use wider information to narrow into the specific research problem. Kawamura describes the literature review as 'homework' (2011 p. 37), a form of preliminary research that allows the researcher to become more knowledgeable about the topic by learning from previous studies and to avoid duplication. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010) describe this as the pre-empirical stage, which includes the identification of the research area, review and contextualisation of literature, refining the topic and developing research questions. The later, evolved approaches to grounded theory (Mills, Bonner and Francis 2006; Strauss and Corbin 1998) utilise an 'early review of relevant literature' (Dunne 2011 p. 114) to establish a rationale for the topic (McGhee, Marland and Atkinson (2007) but are mindful of allowing categories to emerge from the primary data without constraint from themes in the literature review.

To frame this Comfort in Clothing study, it was useful to establish links between the topics of fashion/clothing/dress, comfort and well-being in the early literature review, exploring how they might be related. To commence a literature review, Creswell (2014) recommends establishing key search words. A Boolean search strategy, using 'and' and 'or' (Flynn and Foster 2009) and utilising synonyms for the key words (as shown in Table 13) provided the initial search strategy for the scoping review.

Table 13 Literature search strategy

Key word: COMFORT	Key word: CLOTHING (and, or)	Key word: WELL-BEING
Carefree	Apparel	Advantage
Easy	Attire	Comfort
Free	Clothes	Good
Harmonious	Costume	Happiness
Leisure	Dress	Health
Relaxed	Dressing	Protection
Self-possession	Ensemble	Safety
Serene	Fashion	Security
Stable	Garments	Self-confidence
'without a care in the world'	Habiliment	Well being
	Sportswear	Wellbeing
	Wear	Wellness

Source: author's own, adapted from *Cambridge Dictionary* (2015) and Krom (2014)

As reading progressed, the psychological effects of comfort in clothing emerged from the concepts of self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem (Baron 2013), leading in turn to an exploration of identity and encompassing an element of psychology. The early review of literature led to the development of research questions (see Figure 17, section 2.9) and was used to design the empirical stage of the research, including the data collection (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight 2010). Data was collected via a series of focus groups (Method two, section 3.2.2) and image/narrative elicitations (Method three, section 3.2.11). Initial coding of the primary data led to further reading (see section 2.9.2 Reflexivity). The finalised review of literature is presented as a conceptual literature review (Grant and Booth 2009) in section 2.0.

3.2.2 Method two: focus groups

'Focus groups are routinely used to identify participants' preferences, attitudes, motivations and beliefs.'

(Brennen 2017 p. 61)

Brennen (2017) describes focus groups as a form of directed conversation. The aim is to stimulate discussion on a specific topic, to determine how people think and act. Focus groups are often used to understand aspects of consumer behaviour (Brennen 2017) and as fashion and clothing are a part of consumer culture, it was deemed appropriate to use focus groups for this Comfort in Clothing study. Brennen (2017) describes the role of the focus-group moderator as a facilitator of the group session, managing the group dynamics and prompting discussion. As an experienced moderator, the researcher designed the focus group based on the research objectives and early literature reviewed. Semi-structured focus groups were conducted in October, November and December of 2015, 2016 and 2017 to explore the attitudes of human actors to the concept of comfort in general, and in relation to the psychological aspects of comfort related to clothing and dress practice.

3.2.3 Focus group sample

It is important to frame an appropriate research study population (Wilmot 2016; Kawamura 2011; Marshall 1996). Brennen (2017) states that qualitative research should be narrowed to a specific geographic region, period of time and to a particular group of people, to ensure the research topic is not too large for a single study. As the research concerned meanings, conventional implicature (Jaworski and Coupland 1999), requiring contextual knowledge of the meanings, references and identities discussed, suggested the research be constrained to participants currently living in the United Kingdom. This reflected the researcher's own cultural background, therefore minimized ambiguity and enabled interpretation based on cultural consistency (May 2002), such as shared language and norms. Charmaz (2014 p. 1078) confirms that 'the degree of familiarity with a language matters'.

Focus-group participants are often selected due to having similar demographics, backgrounds or behaviours (Brennen 2017), as 'focus groups tend to be more productive and manageable if participants have some commonality' (Wilmot 2016 p. 4). A homogeneous group should feel more comfortable with one another, thus providing a safe space for participants to discuss the topic. The study was limited to females, as the researcher is female, females tend to prioritise clothing purchases compared to males (Mintel 2015) and womenswear accounts for the largest clothing market share in the UK (Mak 2020; Keynote 2015).

Simmel (2003[1895]) noted that women have stronger involvement in fashion compared to men, due to their traditionally weaker social position and requirements to conform, and described fashion as one of the few areas where women can express some level of individuality. Although Simmel's work originates from 1895, the researcher notes Simmel's opinions, to some extent, remain valid today. For example, Almond (2015) distinguishes between male and female, questioning whether women suffer more through fashion and citing male designers such as Christian Dior encasing and restricting the female form, whereas female designers such as Jean Muir design clothing that is physically comfortable to wear. This is related to the 'male gaze', as discussed by Wilson (2005 p. 1), Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) and Kawamura, who states that '[f]ashion emerges out of a desire to be beautiful, the norm for which is created by men in a male dominated society' (2018 p. 11). Adam and Galinsky's (2012) theory of Enclothed Cognition, where symbolic meanings associated with dress were found to improve or impede cognitive performance (see section 2.8.1 Positive psychology), found that women were more likely to be negatively affected than men. In correlation, Ruggerone (2016 p. 583) notes that 'women are more affected by clothes than men' with the United Kingdom's current cultural and societal values leading to anxiety around appearance. Additionally, Weede states '[w]omen are more in tune with how clothes make them feel' (1997 p. 97). Habermas and Paha (2002) note that women use personal objects as reminders of others and as a form of psychological comfort more frequently than men. Therefore, an all-female sample was deemed appropriate for this Comfort in Clothing study and provided a level of internal validity through being a constant factor (Flynn and Foster 2009). As it was impossible to involve the whole UK female population in the research, two sampling strategies were employed; non-probability purposive sampling in the key informant focus groups (Flynn and Foster 2009) and non-probability convenience sampling in the expanded sample focus groups.

3.2.4 Key informant focus groups

15 focus groups (5 in 2015, 2016 and 2017), were conducted with stage-4 BA(Hons) Fashion Management students. This enabled comparison between cohorts to enhance the reliability of the research. This use of purposive, key informant sampling (Marshall 1996) was deemed appropriate given the centrality

of fashion and clothing to the research; the fashion management students are relevant as they have an interest in fashion and clothing. They are also relevant to the critical lens for the research, Bauman's (2012) *Liquid Modernity*; as students, these participants are at a transitional life-stage (Habermas and Paha 2002) where their identities are multiple (usually encompassing university study, part-time work, family and friends, partners and often multiple locations) and fluid (as they evolve from full-time student to employees about to enter the ever-changing world of work). They epitomise Bauman's description of the anxious and insecure (Bunting 2003), with *The Guardian* reporting that a large-scale poll found nine out of ten students struggle with anxiety, 42% experience high levels of anxiety and a third often feel lonely (Weale 2019). The sample was, however, recognized as limited demographically in terms of age and potentially biased, due to the students having specific fashion knowledge and knowing one another (Wilmot 2016). Richards (2009 p. 22) usefully provides a fashion-related explanation of bias:

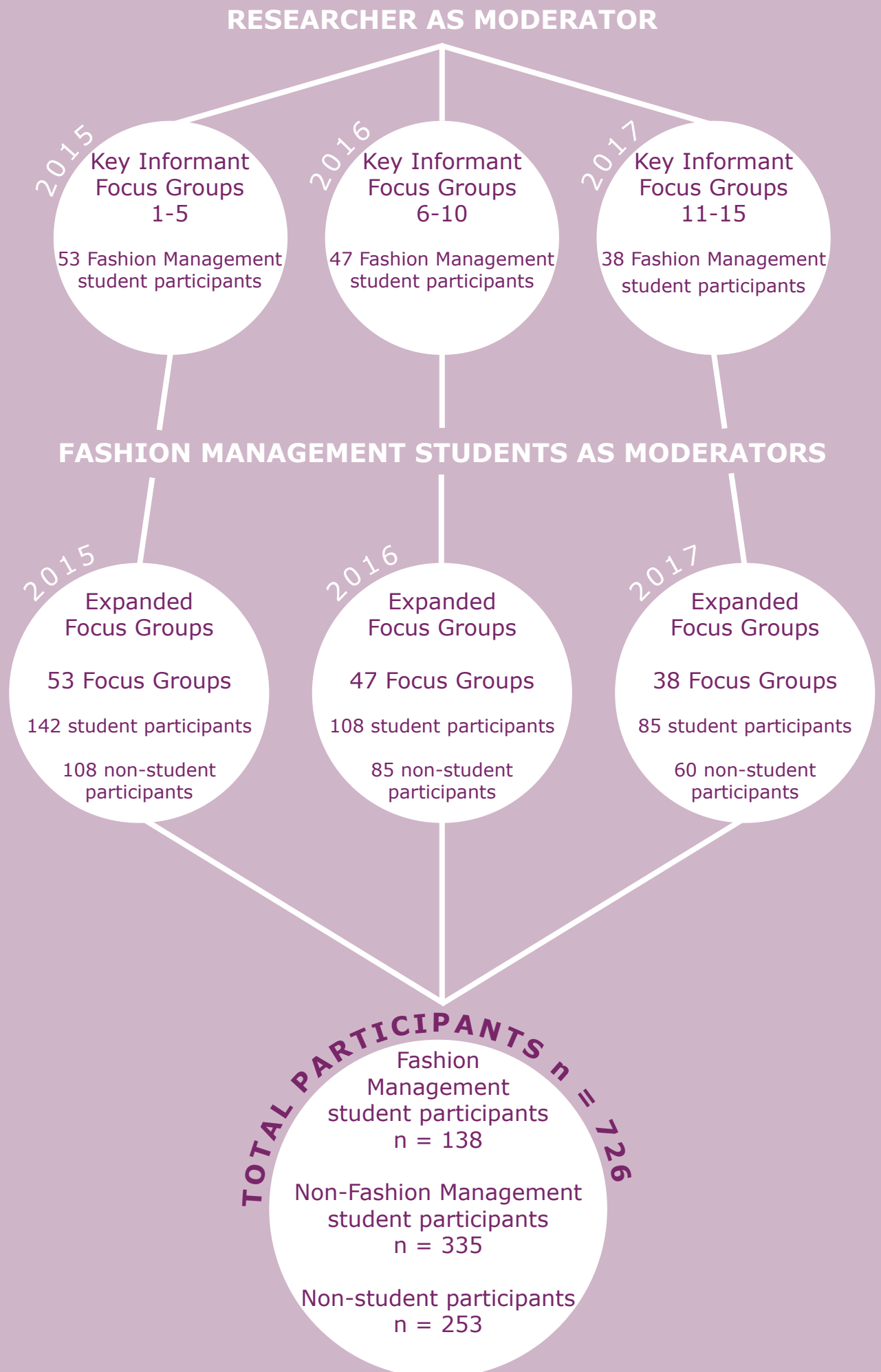
'The noun means a diagonal line or stretch across woven cloth. Cut or hung on bias, the cloth will be slanting. A badly cut garment will hang awkwardly, pulled by an unrecognisable bias. But *haute couture* uses skilful bias-cut all the time, to achieve a perfect drape. All cloth has bias – you can either control for it by cutting straight, or you can use it well, by careful design. The same choice is there in all social research.'

Thus, the focus groups were carefully designed to enable expansion of the sample to overcome bias and widen the participant demographics. Brennen (2017) confirms that qualitative research allows flexibility in changing the sample size during the research. The fashion management students (comprising 19% of the total participant sample) provided the opportunity for exploration, with their key informant, fashion-specific knowledge and interest ensuring engagement with the Comfort in Clothing topic, and provided a useful opportunity for comparison of the findings to a wider participant sample with less specialised knowledge. This aligns with Silverman's (2005) description of the constant comparison method, whereby the qualitative researcher should attempt to find ways to enhance validity by comparing different groups.

3.2.5 Expanded sample focus groups

138 focus groups were conducted with an expanded participant population (comprising 81% of the total participant sample), utilizing a snowballing technique (see Figure 21). This should not be confused with snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy where a small sample of participants (in this situation, the fashion management students) are asked to identify further participants like themselves (Wilmot 2016; Kawamura 2011). However, the purpose of conducting the snowball focus groups was to gain views from those of a wider age range and without such a specific interest in fashion, thus involved the recruitment of a non-probability convenience sample to

Figure 21 Semi-structured focus group process




encompass a wider demographic (May 2002). This aligns with Bauman's (2012) assertion that the era of pre-allocated reference groups has moved on to that of 'universal comparison' (p. 8), which leads to contemporary society being highly individualised. The expanded focus-group participants were therefore more heterogeneous than the key informant focus groups, enabling comparison of the two data sets. This did present risk, as heterogeneous groups may have diverse experiences and views and if discussion becomes heated, some participants may be inhibited or become withdrawn. However, as the topic mainly focused on clothing and dress practice, the researcher did not consider the snowball focus group discussions were at risk of becoming overly political or threatening. Brennen (2017) offers some support for heterogeneous sampling, noting that some diversity may be beneficial and encourage depth of discussion.

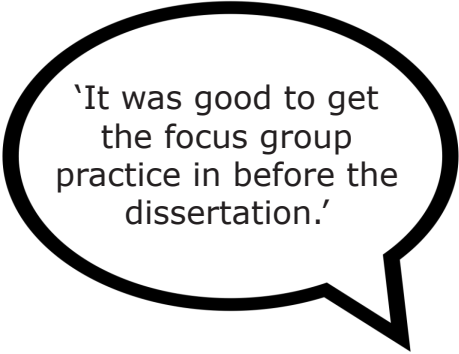
To implement the expanded sample focus groups, each fashion management student who had participated in a focus group became a moderator, going on to organise, manage, record and transcribe a focus group. Brennen (2017) advocates taking part in a focus group as a participant before attempting to moderate one, therefore the fashion management students' participation in the key informant focus groups provided relevant experience. The researcher provided all the required information, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation of visuals and instructions (See Appendix I), structured task handouts (See Appendix II), a focus group script with detailed guidance on the moderation process, additional questions and prompts (See Appendix III), a transcription guide (See Appendix IV) and participant consent forms (See Appendix V). Briefing sessions were also held to provide advice to the fashion management student moderators, as for many of them, this was the first time they had managed a focus group. Thus, the fashion management students evolved from research participants to co-creators in the research process. The effort in running and transcribing the focus group was designed into the assessment for the stage 4 Fashion Project module, contributing towards the students' module grade and affording a practicum experience of being a focus-group moderator before embarking on their own research projects. Ultimately this proved to be a valuable learning experience for the students, with anonymous and unsolicited positive comments emerging in the independently organised IPSIS Mori National Student Survey results (see Figure 22).

The researcher acknowledges that the data gathering element of the expanded sample focus groups does not constitute her own effort. However, the researcher did wholly conduct a total of 15 focus groups (see section 3.2.4), and the image narrative elicitations (see section 3.2.11) which was deemed sufficient to meet the requirements for a qualitative doctoral study. In terms of the expanded sample focus groups, having multiple focus group moderators presented risk to the consistency of the data gathering, but was deemed worthwhile as an innovative way to expand the sample in terms of age, life-stage, location and fashion attitude. The fashion management students recruited participants from


Figure 22 Fashion management student feedback




'The focus group was good practice for our own research projects.'



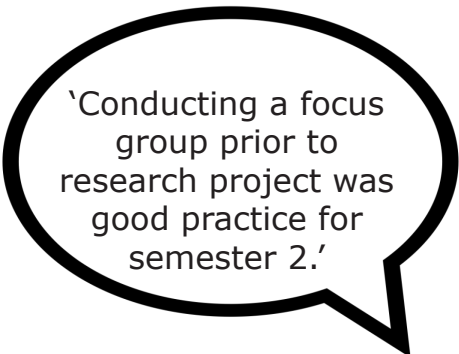
'It was good to get the focus group practice in before the dissertation.'



'Good experience of doing focus groups.'



'Learning how to conduct a focus group was very useful for research project.'



'Conducting a focus group prior to research project was good practice for semester 2.'

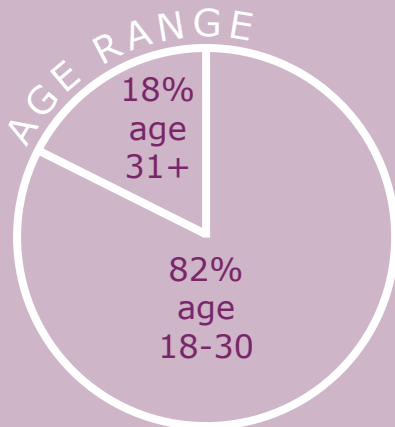
their workplaces, their friendship groups in home locations and their families. Focus groups were conducted across Scotland, with some in England and Ireland. In evaluating the impact of the expanded sample focus groups, they facilitated significantly more qualitative data gathering to be carried out than the researcher could have solely achieved, making this Comfort in Clothing study unique in terms of the breadth of qualitative data gathered. The inclusion of structured tasks (see sections 3.2.8 Structured task one and 3.2.9 Structured task two) and standardised forms (see Appendices I-V) within the focus group design aimed to mitigate against lack of consistency, introducing a level of control and rigour. This is in line with Kawamura's (2011) opinion that qualitative research should be carefully controlled and documented rigorously to ensure validity and enable objective replication if necessary. The quality of the students' focus group discussions varied. Some were very short with minimal discussion, while others added rich and thick data. The analysis and coding of this raw data from all 138 was an enormous task, which significantly increased the researcher's workload but was worthwhile in terms of achieving data saturation.

3.2.6 Focus group participant overview

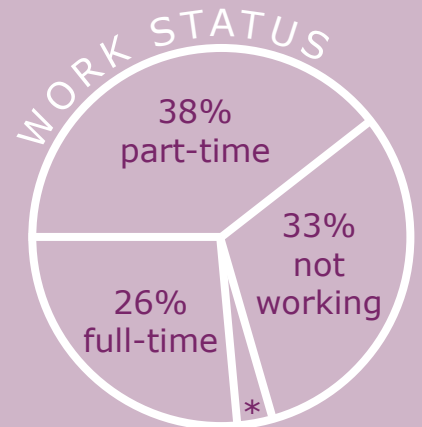
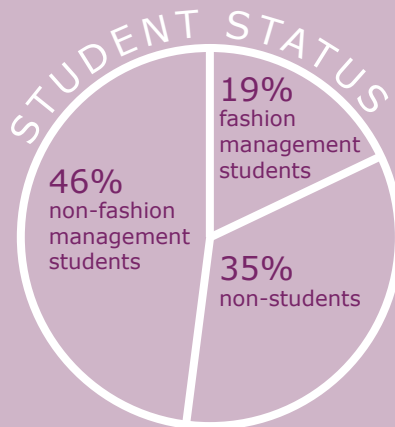
In total, 726 females, based in the UK, participated in the focus groups (see Figure 23). 82% of the participants were in the 18-30 age range, an age group reported as experiencing high levels of stress and identifying comparison to others as a source of stress (Mental Health Foundation 2018). 5% were age 31-44, 11% were age 45-64 and 2% were age 65 or older, providing limited but valuable perspectives from more mature clothing consumers. 19% of the sample were stage-4 fashion management students, undertaking a module called Fashion Project, coordinated by the researcher. The fashion management students gained credits towards their module grade for their involvement in the focus groups (see section 3.4 Ethics). 46% of the sample were students on a variety of other courses and 35% were not students. 26% of the sample were in full-time work, 38% were in part-time work and 33% were not working. 3% of the sample indicated they were retired. 75% of the fashion management students were 'very interested' in fashion, confirming their key informant status. In comparison, just 27% of the other participants were 'very interested' in Fashion. The remaining 25% of the fashion management students were 'interested' in fashion, compared with 62% of the other participants. In total, 91% of the overall sample indicated they were 'interested' or 'very interested' in fashion. Of the 8% 'not very interested' in fashion, 69% were age 18-30, 7% were age 31-44, 14% were age 45-64 and 10% were age 65 or older, suggesting that age does not diminish interest in fashion. Just 1% of the sample indicated they were 'not interested at all' in fashion. Just over half of the participants (56%) were living in a city, with 26% living in towns and 18% living in rural locations. In keeping with the aim of analysing how clothing, fashion and dress contribute to the comfort and well-being of women in the UK, all participants were based in the UK at the time of taking part, with 87% of the sample identifying as British, Scottish, Irish or Welsh. 10% of the sample were from other European countries and 3% were from countries out with Europe.

Figure 23 Focus Group Participant Overview

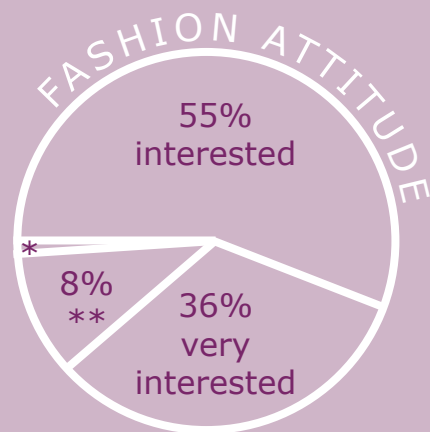
TOTAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS: n = 726 FEMALES



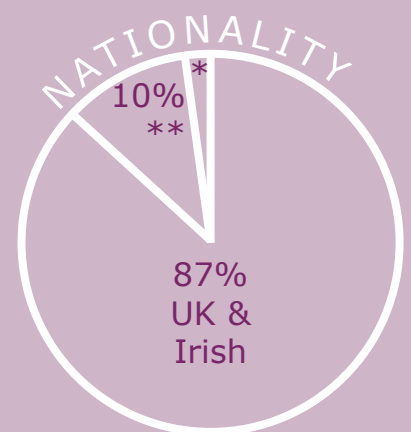
5% age 31-44
11% age 45-64
2% age 65+



*3% retired



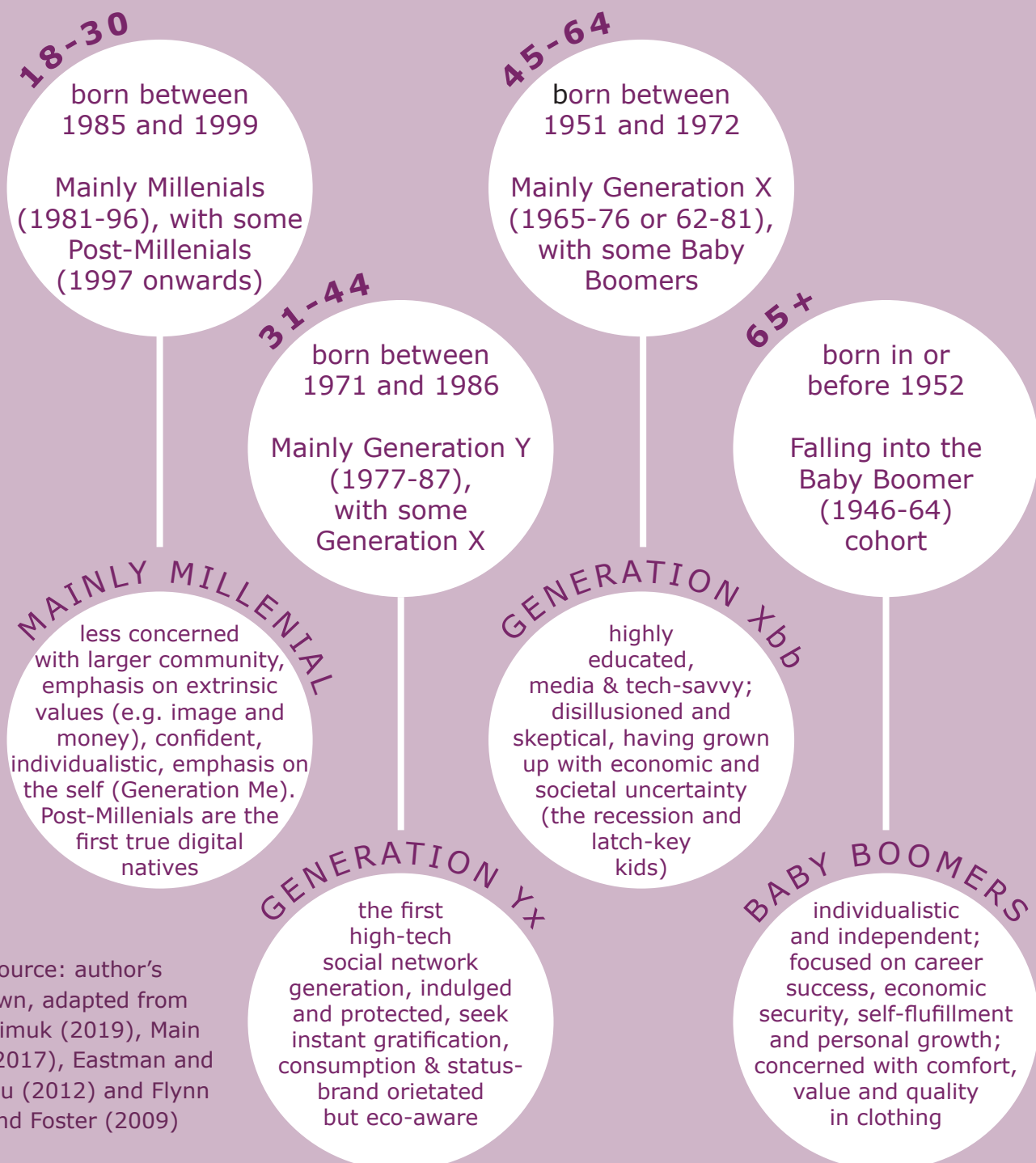
**8% not very interested
*1% not interested at all



**10% other European
*3% international

For structured tasks one (15 garments task) and two (Comfort mind-maps task), the sample was divided into generational or life-stage cohorts of age 18-30 (aligning with the student participants' age range), 31-44, 45-64 and over 65s, to enable more in-depth analysis of the data gathered. Age was included in individual participant codes to enable identification of generational differences in the focus group discussions (see section 3.3 Participant coding). Consumer research (including the fashion industry) commonly segments generational cohorts into Baby Boomer, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z nomenclature, however beyond broad agreement about Baby Boomers, there is not an accepted, standardised age range for the other cohorts. Figure 24 shows how the participants from this Comfort in Clothing study relate to selected generational cohorts, resulting in the following terms: Mainly Millennial, Generation Yx, Generation Xbb and Baby Boomers.

Figure 24 Generational cohorts



Source: author's own, adapted from Dimuk (2019), Main (2017), Eastman and Liu (2012) and Flynn and Foster (2009)

3.2.7 Focus group design

Positives associated with focus groups include convenience and fast results, with the distinguishing feature of social interaction (Boateng 2012). This social interaction feature was deemed important for this research, given the social context of fashion, clothing and dress practice. The use of focus groups added a praxeomorphic (Bauman 2012) currency to this Comfort in Clothing study, providing details of the experiences and day-to-day dress practices of the participants. Brennen (2017) notes that focus groups can be enjoyable and stimulating for participants and can lead to the participants opening up about sensitive issues. However, Boateng's (2012) research into the efficacy of focus group discussion in qualitative social research established the presence of groupthink, leading to the recommendation that focus group discussion should be part of a mixed-methodological approach to ensure quality of data. This correlates with section 3.1.2 Researching fashion, which identified that fashion research should involve more than one method due to its 'diverse forms and practices' (Jenss 2016 p. 11). To mitigate the opportunity for groupthink, the focus group consisted of two introductory structured tasks followed by an open discussion, as shown in Table 14.

Table 14 Focus group design

Structured Task 1	Structured Task 2	Open Discussion
Individual response to non-elite dress images: Fifteen garments task	Individual mind-map generation: Comfort mind-maps task	Psychological comfort in clothing: Focus group discussion

Source: author's own

The structured tasks gathered information from the focus-group participants without the influence of the group. The structured tasks also introduced the focus-group participants to the key subjects of comfort and clothing, prior to the open discussion, acting as a warm up to facilitate the discussion.

3.2.8 Focus group structured task one: 15 garments task

Rose (2001) notes that in contemporary Western societies, visuals have become increasingly prevalent, positing the occularcentricity of modernity. In keeping with fashion's place within postmodern visual culture (Smelik 2015), images were used to gather opinion. Structured task one required participants to view a set of 15 photographic images of dress artefacts and to write the first three words thought of for each one. The dress artefacts were photographed on hangers to avoid any influence of human appearance on the participants' responses. A plain, high-contrast background and professional photographic lighting were used to

optimise image clarity. The photographic images were organised into a PowerPoint presentation for ease of use in the focus groups (see Appendix I). Each dress artefact was chosen to represent elements of physiological, physical and/or psychological comfort that emerged from the early literature review (see sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4), however participants were not aware of the comfort category when completing the task. Thus, the task sought to gain opinions and attitudes from the participants, to test the criteria that had emerged from the early review of literature and to ascertain if those criteria were applicable in the context and time of this Comfort in Clothing study. This was deemed useful, as attitudes towards fashion and clothing can change over time, as discussed by Baron (2013) and are culturally dependent (Crewe 2017; Barnard 2014; Solomon and Rabolt 2009). Richards (2009) notes that, in qualitative research, reliability emerges from consistency. The selection of the 15 dress artefacts was based on the researcher’s interpretation of both the literature reviewed and of the dress artefacts themselves. Thus, gaining the views of participants about each dress artefact enabled comparison of the participants’ interpretations with that of the researcher. Initial coding of the data confirmed a high level of consistency between the researcher’s and participants’ interpretations, confirming the reliability and appropriateness of the researcher’s interpretations and decisions in the context of this Comfort in Clothing study. Criteria for the selection of each garment is presented in Table 15. In addition, a balance of garment styles (tops, bottoms and dresses) and of plain and patterned pieces was sought. Justification for each dress artefact is provided on pages 103-117.

Table 15 Criteria informing dress artefact choice

Physical Comfort	Physiological Comfort	Psychological Comfort
<p>Softness: characterised by fabrics such as fleece, brush-backed jersey and knitted cotton jersey structures</p> <p>Unrestricted: characterised by elastic waists, loose shapes, stretch knit structures, lightweight fabrics (e.g. silk)</p>	<p>Warmth: characterised by wool knits, fleece dressing gown, brush-backed joggers, red colours (red is the psychologically-dominant colour associated with warmth)</p>	<p>Structured workwear: e.g. a suit jacket (linked to dressing the part)</p> <p>Classic design: e.g. tartan and tweed fabrics, jeans, white shirt and plain colours, reflecting safe and familiar styles</p> <p>Home-made: e.g. hand knit (linking with heritage and memory)</p> <p>Smart/casual: e.g. dress (linked to occasions but not eveningwear, still everyday)</p>

Source: author’s own, adapted from Kamalha *et al.* (2013), and sections 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4

Figure 25 **Garment 1**



Garment 1 is a dressing gown, purchased from high street brand Marks and Spencer.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The dressing gown is a garment associated with home, which Holliday (1999) identified as a safe haven for comfort dressing. Wearing it signifies that the day's work is complete and that it is time to relax, representing Baron's (2013) pleasure-invisible category of dress, where pleasure-inducing pampering or self-care is involved and appearance is not judged. The dressing gown has been worn for many years, providing an element of attachment (Savas 2004).

Physiological Comfort: The long, enveloping wrap style of the garment ensures warmth, as does the lofty fleece fabric, by trapping air close to the body (Dusek 2007). Regulation of body temperature is an important aspect of physiological comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The softness of the fabric is comfortable against the skin (Kamalha *et al.* 2013), with the fleecy fabric producing positive haptic qualities (Peck and Childers 2003).

Figure 26 **Garment 2**



Garment 2 is a floral dress, purchased from high street brand Oasis.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The fit and flare style allows curves on the upper body to be enhanced, while so-called problem areas of the stomach and hips are concealed (Picardie 2015). The style represents Baron's (2013) pleasure-visible category of dress, representing occasion wear, where the wearer would dress up for an informal wedding, dinner party or being on holiday. The floral print and soft colours represent traditional feminine attributes.

Physiological Comfort: The cotton fabric is cool and naturally breathable (Swicofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The flared, skater-style skirt provides unrestricted movement (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 27 **Garment 3**



Garment 3 is a striped jersey top, purchased from high street brand Jack Wills.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The strong colours used in this style represent Pine's (2014) concept of 'happy clothes', which tend to be bright. The loose, boxy fit of the garment hides the body shape, providing a camouflaging or concealing function (Picardie 2015). The elbow length sleeves hide bingo wings, often considered as a body issue for older women.

Physiological Comfort: The cotton fabric is cool and naturally breathable (Swicofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The jersey-knit structure is stretchy in nature, providing a non-restrictive wearing experience (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 28 **Garment 4**



Garment 4 is a tailored suit jacket, purchased from high street brand Laura Ashley.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The tailored style and conservative colour represent the traditional workwear power suit, encompassing the psychological comfort of dressing for success, with Damhorst and McLeod (2005) noting that work-appropriate clothing can have a positive impact on self-confidence and self-esteem. The style represents Baron's (2013) duty-visible category of dress, suitable for a formal work environment or interaction with others where influence is required (Miller-Spillman 2005).

Physiological Comfort: The jacket, being made of wool and fully lined, would provide some level of warmth, providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The garment is likely to offer little physical comfort, as the fitted styling and woven cloth will be restrictive to wear (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 29 **Garment 5**



Garment 5 is a tiger print silk shirt, purchased from high-end high street brand The Kooples. It represents non-elite fashion, but at a higher price point than most of the other garments.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The silk fabric represents Baron's (2013) pleasure-visible category of dress, suitable for being on holiday or at an after-work event. The strong colour and pattern makes a bold statement, suggesting a level of confidence would be required to wear it.

Physiological Comfort: Silk is a natural fibre with insulating properties, making it physiologically comfortable to wear (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The loose fit is unrestrictive, making it physically comfortable to wear (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). In addition, silk is a lightweight fibre, with soft and smooth haptic qualities, so it feels pleasant against the skin.

Figure 30 **Garment 6**



Garment 6 is a pair of skinny jeans, purchased from high street brand Uniqlo.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: Jeans are recognised as casual in style, worn by a wide range of people and to a wide range of situations, complying with Baron's (2013) duty-invisible, duty-visible and pleasure-visible categories. The cross-over use (Baron 2013) of the skinny jean in a wide variety of social settings provides an easy and safe choice for the choice-overloaded consumer (Damhorst 2005).

Physiological Comfort: Cotton provides a comfortable and breathable wearing experience (Swicofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The Lycra content in the denim fabric provides stretch, making the skinny style unrestrictive, therefore physically comfortable to wear (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). The jeans are pre-worn to enhance softness against the skin, improving the haptic qualities.

Figure 31 **Garment 7**



Garment 7 is an embroidered white shirt, purchased from high-end high street brand Temperley from John Lewis. It represents non-elite fashion, but at a higher price point than most of the other garments.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The crisp white shirt alludes to traditional workwear, providing a level of psychological comfort within a formal work setting, with Damhorst and McLeod (2005) noting that work appropriate clothing can have a positive impact on self-confidence and self-esteem. The label indicates a high-quality brand, which may provide the wearer with reassurance and status. The style represents Baron's (2013) duty-visible category of dress, suitable for a formal work environment or interaction with others where influence is required (Miller-Spillman 2005). The loose, unfitted shape hides the body shape, providing a level of psychological comfort to those who prefer to camouflage their shape (Picardie 2015).

Physiological Comfort: The cotton fabric is cool and naturally breathable (Swicofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The loose unfitted shape offers unrestricted movement, making the garment physically comfortable (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 32 **Garment 8**



Garment 8 is a handknit cable jumper, knitted by a relative of the researcher.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The bright red colour of this style represents Pine's (2014) concept of happy clothes, which tend to be bright. The loose, boxy fit of the garment hides the body shape, providing a camouflaging or concealing function (Picardie 2015). The cable handknit represents nostalgia; a precious and unique garment made by hand, with skill, providing an element of attachment (Savas 2004). Pine (2014) asserts that a natural fibre such as wool provides more happiness to the wearer by exploiting human affinity with nature.

Physiological Comfort: The wool fibre and knit construction provide physiological comfort, keeping the wearer warm by trapping air close to the body (Woolmark 2017). Regulation of body temperature is an important aspect of physiological comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The knit construction offers stretch, providing unrestricted movement and therefore a physically comfortable wearing experience (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Wool can be perceived as itchy by some, therefore may be associated with negative haptic experiences (Peck and Childers 2003).

Figure 33 **Garment 9**



Garment 9 is an elasticated-waist midi skirt, purchased from high street brand Cos.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The long, loose fit and dark, conservative colour provides camouflage (Picardie 2015) for the hips and thighs, providing psychological comfort to those who are unhappy with those areas of the body. The dark, conservative colour and simple shape also suggests suitability for the workplace, although the elastic waist may be deemed too casual. The garment may therefore fall into Baron's (2013) duty-visible category, where dress requires an element, but not an excess of personal care.

Physiological Comfort: The lightweight fabric would provide little in the way of warmth, but would be cool for wear on hot days.

Physical Comfort: The elastic waist offers stretch, to provide a physically comfortable wearing experience. The lightweight fabric would be physically comfortable to wear, and the shape of the garment enables unrestricted movement (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 34 **Garment 10**



Garment 10 is a pair of jersey joggers, purchased from high street brand Abercrombie and Fitch.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The clearly identifiable branding may provide psychological comfort to those who admire the brand. The long, loose fit and dark, conservative colour provides camouflage (Picardie 2015) for the hips and thighs, providing psychological comfort to those who are unhappy with those areas of the body. The garment falls into Baron's (2013) duty-invisible category, where appearance is not judged.

Physiological Comfort: The thick cotton fabric and knit construction (Swicofil 2015; Majumdar, Mukhopadhyay and Yadav 2010) would provide warmth, providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The elastic waist and jersey-knit construction offers stretch and the shape of the garment enables unrestricted movement, combining to provide a physically comfortable wearing experience (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 35 **Garment 11**



Garment 11 is a pair of printed floral trousers, purchased from high street brand Marks and Spencer.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The monochrome colourway is considered safe; less challenging to wear than a brightly coloured print. The busy pattern will camouflage (Picardie 2015) lumpy thighs or cellulite, affording a level of psychological comfort. The style could represent Baron's (2013) pleasure-visible category of dress, where the wearer could be on holiday, or could represent pleasure-invisible, where the wearer is with friends and family and appearance is not judged. The floral print represents traditional feminine attributes.

Physiological Comfort: The cotton fabric is cool and naturally breathable (Swicofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The cotton fabric would feel pleasant against the skin (Kamalha *et al.* 2013), providing pleasant haptic qualities (Peck and Childers 2003).

Figure 36 **Garment 12**



Garment 12 is a pair of tailored checked trousers, purchased from high street brand Esprit.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The tailored style and heritage check pattern represent traditional workwear, with Damhorst and McLeod (2005) noting that work appropriate clothing can have a positive impact on self-confidence and self-esteem. Check patterns are said to offer an element of order and tradition (Faiers 2008), with symmetry being attractive to the human eye, thus providing a level of psychological comfort (Lightman 2013). The style represents Baron's (2013) duty-visible category of dress, suitable for a formal work environment or interaction with others where influence is required (Miller-Spillman 2005).

Physiological Comfort: The trousers would provide some level of warmth, providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The garment is likely to offer little physical comfort, as the fitted styling and woven cloth will be restrictive to wear (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 37 **Garment 13**



Garment 13 is a grey sweatshirt, purchased from high street brand Uniqlo.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The loose, boxy fit of the garment hides the body shape, providing a camouflaging or concealing function (Picardie 2015), providing psychological comfort to those who are unhappy with their body shape. The garment falls into Baron's (2013) duty-invisible category, where appearance is not judged.

Physiological Comfort: The thick cotton fabric and knit construction (Swicofil 2015; Majumdar, Mukhopadhyay and Yadav 2010) would provide warmth, providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The jersey-knit construction offers stretch and the shape of the garment enables unrestricted movement, combining to provide a physically comfortable wearing experience (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Figure 38 **Garment 14**



Garment 14 is a tartan check shirt, purchased from high-street brand Jack Wills.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The strong colours used in this style represent Pine's (2014) concept of happy clothes, which tend to be bright. The tartan check may offer an element of tradition, belonging (Savas 2004) or nostalgia to those with Scottish heritage. Checks are said to offer an element of order and tradition (Faiers 2008), with symmetry being attractive to the human eye, thus providing a level of psychological comfort (Lightman 2013). The style represents Baron's (2013) pleasure-invisible category of dress, where the wearer is with friends and family and appearance is not judged. The loose, unfitted shape hides the body shape, providing a level of psychological comfort to those who prefer to camouflage their shape (Picardie 2015).

Physiological Comfort: The woven cotton fabric is cool and naturally breathable (Swicofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The loose, unfitted shape offers unrestricted movement, making the garment physically comfortable (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). The cotton fabric provides positive haptic qualities (Peck and Childers 2003).

Figure 39 **Garment 15**



Garment 15 is a striped shift dress, purchased from high street brand Marks and Spencer.

Justification for garment choice:

Psychological Comfort: The tailored style represents workwear, with the stripes conveying an organised and ordered persona. This encompasses the psychological comfort of dressing for success, with Damhorst and McLeod (2005) noting that work-appropriate clothing can have a positive impact on self-confidence and self-esteem. The style represents Baron's (2013) duty-visible category of dress, suitable for a formal work environment or interaction with others where influence is required (Miller-Spillman 2005), although the bold stripes may lead to psychological discomfort for some less confident wearers. The elbow-length sleeves and boxy shape offer camouflage (Picardie 2015) to the wearer.

Physiological Comfort: The stretch cotton fabric is cool and naturally breathable (Swiccofil 2015), providing thermal regulation for the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Physical Comfort: The boxy shape and stretch qualities of the fabric would offer a physically comfortable non-restrictive wearer experience (Kamalha *et al.* 2013).

Execution of structured task one

The participants were shown a photograph of each dress artefact via projector or computer screen, and given a short period of time to write the first three words thought of onto the handout provided (see Appendix II). The completed paper handout was gathered in, the data was input into Excel spreadsheets and these were imported into the NVivo qualitative data analysis software programme. NVivo was used to generate word clouds visualising the participants' responses to each dress artefact (see Figure 40), with Lohmann *et al.* (2015) confirming that word clouds are an effective way to simply and effectively show the frequency of all participant responses

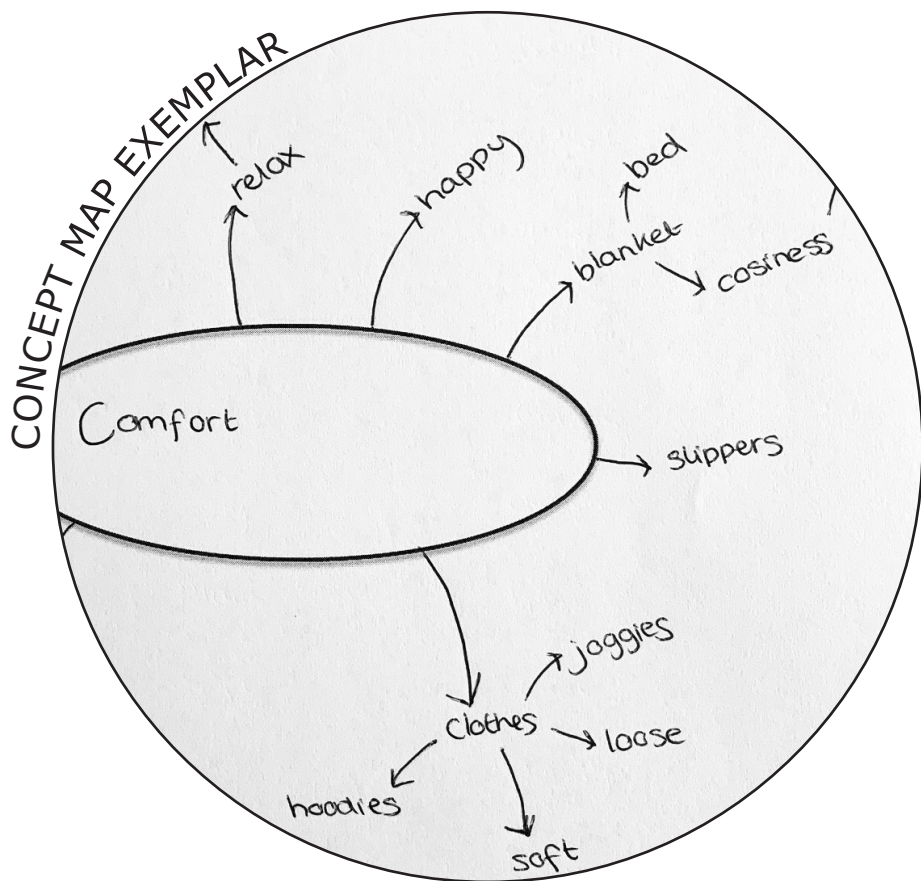
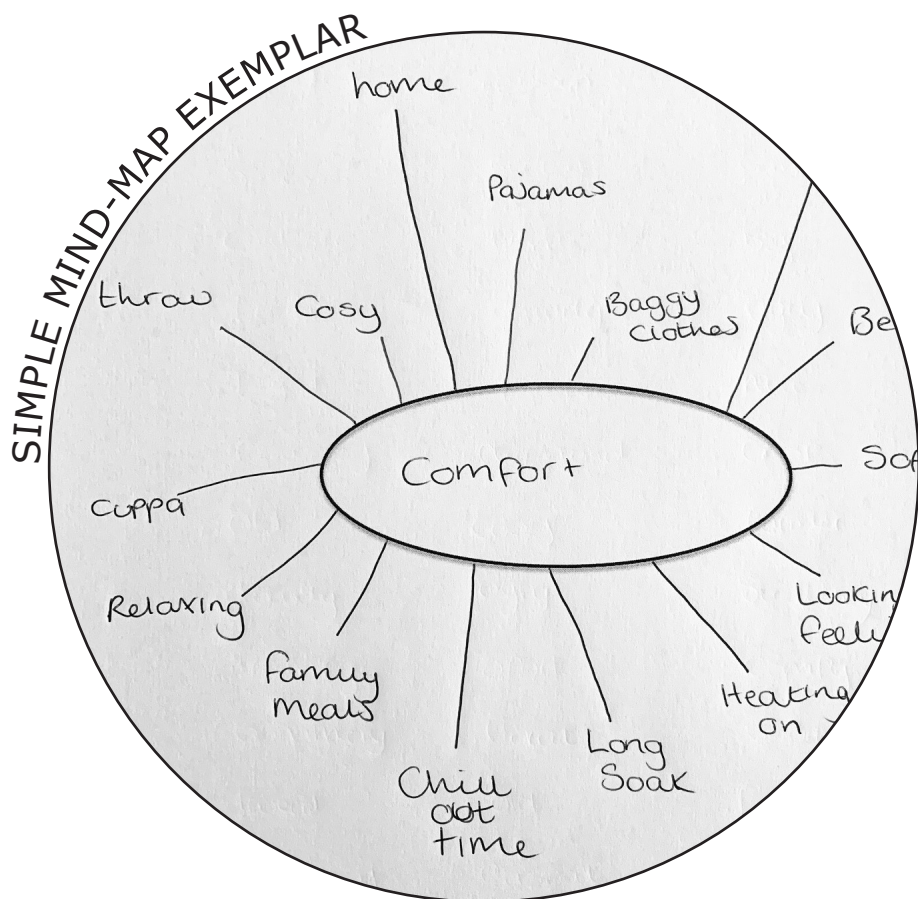
Responses from 726 participants were collected over three years: 303 in 2015, 240 in 2016 and 183 in 2017. A few participants were unable to provide three words for each dress artefact, however the data from the incomplete forms was still deemed valid. Most responses were simple in format, consisting of one word, as per the original task instruction. A few participants chose to include multi-word and short-phrase responses. Single words and two-word phrases were included in the word clouds. Short-phrase responses were placed in tables and analysed in conjunction with the word clouds, adding unexpected richness to the data. In total, 405 word clouds were created, to enable 'constant comparative analysis' (Silverman 2005 p. 214). Separate word clouds were produced for 2015, 2016 and 2017 participants, to establish whether opinions on comfort might be influenced by any short-term trends. Separate word clouds were also produced for fashion management student participants, non-fashion management student participants and for non-student participants, with non-student participants being further segmented into generational cohorts (Flynn and Foster 2009) of 18-30 (aligning with the student participants' age range), 31-44, 45-64 and over 65s, to establish whether life-stage (Flynn and Foster 2009) influenced the participants' opinions and attitudes. The word clouds are presented in Appendix VI. The initial coding, emergent categories, analysis, discussion and focused coding of structured task one are presented in section 4.2.

Limitations of structured task one

['It is not possible to conceive the garment without the body...'](#)
(Barthes 1967, cited in Crewe 2017 p. 33).

When analysing participant responses, it was clear that a few participants found it difficult to judge the scale and fit of the dress artefacts, resulting in some misinterpretation. As Solomon and Rabolt note, 'in real life, we seldom see clothes divorced from social context... [i]solating one part of an ensemble results in a loss of meaning' (2009 p. 335). Should this research be repeated, either photographing the dress artefacts on a body or taking the dress artefacts to the focus groups (instead of using photographs) should be considered. Some

Figure 41 Mind-map exemplars



participants were also unable to correctly ascertain the colour of the garments from the computer or projection screen; again, taking the dress artefacts to the focus group could mitigate this limitation.

3.2.9 Focus group structured task two: comfort mind-maps task

Greenbaum (2000) suggests the use of written tasks to encourage all focus-group participants to share personal feelings without fear of judgement and to ensure a dominant person does not monopolise the session, ensuring all participants actively contribute. As comfort is personal and subjective (Kamalha *et al.* 2013), it was deemed important to allow participants to record their thoughts privately. Structured task two required participants to create a mind-map (Gaimster 2011), or spider diagram detailing their personal associations with the word comfort, enabling relationships to this key word to be captured (Flynn and Foster 2009). Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010) describe the production of a spider diagram as a standard technique to help identify areas for further research, thus this task was deemed appropriate to establish the participants' views on the wider concept of comfort before narrowing into the clothing and dress foci.

Execution of structured task two

Participants were shown an exemplar mind-map (see Appendix II), then given a sheet of paper with a blank circle in the middle, asked to write the word 'comfort' in the circle and given approximately five minutes to write down everything that they associated with comfort in a mind-map format. 726 mind-maps were collected over three years: 303 in 2015, 240 in 2016 and 183 in 2017. Some mind-maps were simple in format, while others formed more complex concept maps with relationships established between contents. Examples of both are shown in Figure 41.

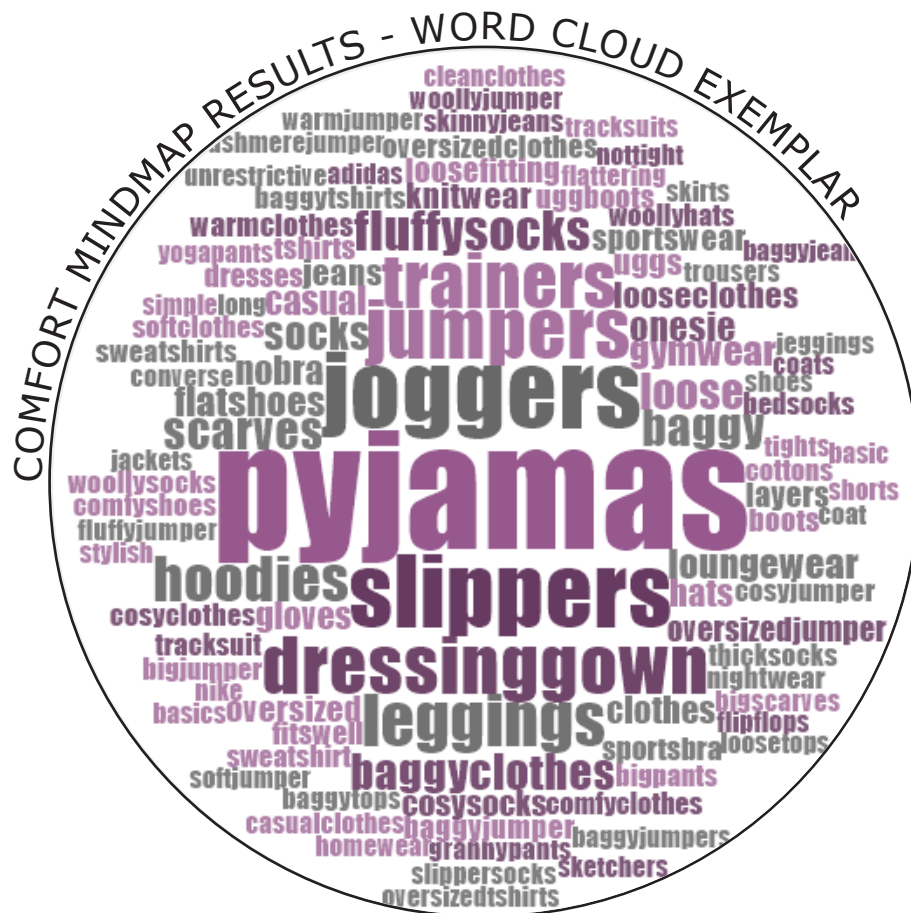
The first part of the data processing involved the words from each mind-map being input into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, along with participant details. Next, the words were subject to initial coding, described by Saldana (2016) as the first stage of a grounded-theory approach (as discussed in Table 12, section 3.1). This resulted in sixteen categories being identified. Some words were coded to two categories, a form of simultaneous coding (Saldana 2016) appropriate for use when data can have multiple meanings. During the initial coding, the data underwent minimal cleaning to enable clear categories to emerge. An example of data cleaning, where multiple similar words were coded to one key word, is shown in Figure 42.

Figure 42 Data cleaning exemplar



The categories were input into NVivo qualitative data analysis software, to generate word clouds visualising the key elements of each comfort category that emerged (see Figure 43). In total, 380 word clouds were created, to enable 'constant comparative analysis' (Silverman 2005 p. 214). Separate word clouds were produced for 2015, 2016 and 2017 participants, to establish whether opinions on comfort might be influenced by any short-term trends. Separate word clouds were also produced for fashion management student participants, non-fashion management student participants and for non-student participants, with non-student participants being further segmented into generational cohorts (Flynn and Foster 2009) of 18-30, 31-44, 45-64 and over 65s, to establish whether life-stage (Flynn and Foster 2009) influenced perceptions of comfort. The word clouds are presented in Appendix VII. The initial coding, emergent categories, analysis, discussion and focused coding of structured task two are presented in section 4.1.

Figure 43 Word cloud exemplar



Limitations of structured task two

The Comfort mind-maps task was designed to allow participants to record their thoughts privately, mitigating the opportunity for groupthink that can arise in focus group design (Boateng 2012). However, when inputting the data from the mind-maps, it became clear that an element of copying was present. Clusters

of words and categories occurred that were specific to one focus group and not seen in any others, suggesting that some participants could see their neighbours' work. Should this research be repeated, arranging the room so that participants cannot see one another's mind-maps being created should be considered.

3.2.10 Focus group open discussion

When the two structured tasks were completed, participants were invited to participate in open discussion. This part of the focus group utilised two concise, open-ended questions to elicit discussion and avoid yes/no answers. The questions and the focus-group script, with its additional prompts (see Appendix III), were designed to avoid the imposition of the moderators' personal perspectives and to encourage the flow of conversation. Participants were initially asked to discuss clothing regarded as being physically comfortable to wear as an easy introduction to the discussion topic. The second question asked the participants to consider clothing that offers psychological comfort; this being the key question for the study.

Execution of open discussion

Each question was displayed on a PowerPoint slide, so that participants could see the question throughout the discussion. Participants were asked to discuss clothing they regarded as being physically comfortable first, as this was deemed by the researcher to be a more straightforward discussion. This allowed the group to get talking and relax, before the question regarding the potentially more intrusive question on clothing that offered psychological comfort. The focus-group script contained additional prompts, based on findings from the literature review. These prompts were utilised if discussion faltered or went completely off-topic, enabling the moderator to ensure discussions were useful to the research. Approximately 15 minutes of discussion for each question was planned; in reality, timings varied from as little as five minutes to as much as one hour in length. This variation reflects the use of multiple moderators and the different sizes of the focus groups, which ranged from 3 to 12 participants. The mean number of participants per focus group was 5. The open discussions were recorded, and transcribed verbatim, using a transcription guide (see Appendix IV). The researcher conducted qualitative analysis of the resultant focus-group transcriptions to identify key codes and categories, through three passes of the data (Hanson, Balmer and Giardino 2011). In keeping with grounded theory principles, initial, line by line coding (Saldana 2016; Charmaz 2006) was established during pass one. In pass two, focused coding (Charmaz 2006) was used to cluster or reduce the emergent codes into categories and each category was discussed with relevant literature. The third pass of the data interpreted the analysis and discussion, building towards theoretical explanations grounded in the data. A summary of the initial coding, emergent categories, analysis, discussion and focused coding of the focus groups are presented in section 4.5.

Limitations of open discussion

Some participants were hesitant to contribute, requiring the moderator to attempt intervention. At times, one or two participants dominated the discussion, also requiring moderator intervention. These are standard occurrences in focus groups and can be mitigated with skilled moderator intervention. However, as there were multiple and inexperienced moderators across the expanded focus group implementation, the quality of moderation inevitably varied. Control measures (see section 3.2.5 Expanded sample focus groups) aimed to minimise the impact of having multiple moderators.

3.2.11 Method three: image and narrative elicitations

'The aim of carrying out research on photographs, in social semiotic terms, is to find out what ideas, values and identities they represent, and therefore ultimately how they represent the world.'

(Ledin and Machin 2018 p. 39)

Method three involved photographic images created specifically for this Comfort in Clothing study by the same stage-4 fashion management students that took part in and conducted the focus groups, as part of the assessment for the Fashion Project module. The images were submitted with accompanying narratives to reduce ambiguity or misinterpretation during analysis. Wodak and Meyer (2016) describe research involving a mix of image and text as multi-modal. The mix of image and narrative aligns with Rose's (2001) assertion that, while visuals can be powerful on their own, they are more often presented alongside some form of text. This echoes Barthes' Fashion System of image-clothing and written-clothing, where he noted that, in fashion magazines, images of clothing are always accompanied by written text. Barthes posited that images could be interpreted in multiple ways, but that the written element provided 'a single certainty' (1990[1967] p. 13).

Multimodal textual analysis (Wodak and Meyer 2016) was conducted on two data sets. The first data set consists of image and narrative elicitations, featuring fashion photoshoots to combine dress artefacts with location and context. 139 photoshoot images and narratives were gathered; 58 from the 2015 stage-4 fashion management cohort, 47 from the 2016 cohort and 34 from the 2017 cohort. The second data set also includes image and narrative elicitations, but features simple photographs of dress artefacts owned by the participants, described in the participants' own words. This data-gathering method provides a visual record of current dress artefacts; a useful snapshot in time. 111 artefact images and narratives were gathered: 46 from the 2015 cohort, 39 from the 2016 cohort and 26 from the 2017 cohort. The longitudinal time-period enabled comparison between cohorts to enhance the reliability of the research, described as the 'constant comparative method' by Silverman (2005 p. 214). As the students from each cohort knew each other, gathering the data across three years also aimed to overcome elements of groupthink (Boateng 2012) and to mitigate the influence of any short-term fashion trends.

3.2.12 Image and narrative elicitation (*photoshoots*)

'Photographic images play a key role in defining global fashion culture... They are seen by many as the driving force behind the system, with cultural pundits and industry creatives heralding the photograph as fashion's ultimate signifier.'

(Shinkle 2008 p. 1)

The creation of fashion photographs as a data set provides an element of creativity to this Comfort in Clothing study, in keeping with the aspirational values (Davies 2015) of fashion. This innovative data-gathering method provided images with a strong storytelling element and reflects the widespread dissemination of photographic fashion imagery in contemporary Western society (Shinkle 2008).

Execution of Image and Narrative Elicitation (*photoshoots*)

The photoshoot image and narrative elicitation task utilised the fashion management students' styling skills to provide unique and visually rich data. In keeping with fashion's location within visual culture (Smelik 2015), participant-produced photoshoots, a form of photo elicitation, were collected accompanied by 100-word narratives. The fashion management students, as a key informant sample (Marshall 1996), were briefed to create photographic fashion images styled on a 'Comfort in Clothing' or 'Discomfort: Fashion Victim' category (see Figure 44 on page 126).

From the photoshoot image and narrative elicitation, words, sentences or paragraphs from the narratives were subject to initial, line-by-line coding, followed by focused coding, establishing relationships and allowing categories to emerge. Initially, these categories were in vivo (Saldana 2016; Richards, 2009; Charmaz 2006), named using words from within the narratives and preserving the participant voice, as per grounded theory principles. Concurrently, textual analysis of each image was conducted to explore the categories and meanings embedded in the visuals, using Saussurian semiotic principles of sign and signified (Smelik 2015). The signifier has a physical form, for example colour, clothing style, location, props, model pose and facial expression. The signified is the culturally accepted understanding of the signifier. On its own, a signifier has a denotative or literal meaning. When combined with the signified, connotative or associated meanings emerge. The researcher's own cultural knowledge was used, in conjunction with literature review findings (e.g. section 2.5.8 Colour) and codes that emerged from the comfort mind-maps (see section 3.2.9), evidencing the grounded theory principle of comparing data with data (Charmaz 2006). Meanings tend to be static, fixed to a specific place and time, but may change over time. Appadurai notes that '[t]hings have no meanings apart from those that human transactions, attributions and motivations endow them with' (1986 p. 5). Applying a textual analysis concept, it can be argued that a dress artefact is created with a specific meaning intended by the designer or brand. This can be




IMAGE AND NARRATIVE EXEMPLAR - photoshoot

FASHION VICTIM IN A COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT

'Elements of psychological and physical comfort and discomfort have been combined in order to accomplish the image. Comfort is synonymous with relaxation, which has been translated into the location of this photoshoot where it was found that people find deep relaxation when having a bath. In contrast, great physical discomfort whilst wearing padded and wired bras equated to the 'fashion victim' element of the photoshoot whereby the model wore purple, lace lingerie. The model's angled pose contributed to the discomfort aspect. Flowers are received as a comforting gift for uncomfortable situations throughout life, which allows the flowers as props to illustrate a final comforting aspect.' (KCP5822)

described as the dominant meaning (Brennen 2017). However, people’s interpretation and experience may lead to a negotiated meaning, where the dominant meaning is understood but the person’s own feelings are also incorporated. Similarly, Crewe (2017) notes that ‘[t]here is no meaning inherent in things themselves – things derive meaning from human relationships’ (p. 116). The photoshoot images provided a rich source of additional data that demonstrated depth of feelings, lived experiences, priorities and concerns, with the tone and mood of the image and any models enabling emotion coding (Saldana 2016), through the analysis of ‘facial expressions, body language, dress, spatial relationships with others and the environment’ (p. 59). Sample connotative meanings for the analysis of the photographic images are shown in Table 16, however it should be noted that each image in its entirety needed to be considered, as the same sign could have a very different connotation depending on the overall context and content of the image.

Table 16 Analysis of photographic images

Sign	Signified
Body language/position/pose: Curled up on sofa or lying in bed Arms crossed or hugging self Awkward or unnatural	Comfortable, at ease Defensive, feeling insecure Discomfort (physical), unease (psychological)
Facial expression/visibility: Eye contact and smiling or laughing No eye contact or eyes cast downwards	Happy or content, confidence, boldness, curiosity (positive) Sadness, lacking confidence (negative)
Dress/appearance: Pyjamas Leisure wear Occasion wear	Comfortable, relaxed, private Comfortable, relaxed Confidence (positive), pressure, on display (negative)
Colour: Natural or neutral colours and textures Black	Calmness, well-being, relaxation Power, confidence, safety
Location: Outdoors (e.g. natural spaces) Indoors (e.g. home) Indoors (e.g. social spaces)	Connotations of health and well-being Connotations of safety, comfort and family support (e.g. from family or friends), or threat (e.g. not fitting in or feeling judged)
People: Alone With others	Loneliness (negative), not on display (positive) Friends, family, support (positive), pressure, on display (negative)
Props: Hot drink High heels	Comfort, relaxation, warmth Confidence, appearance management (positive), pain (negative)
Lived experience: Real-life settings, e.g. at home, out with friends	Experiences that constitute usual practices and everyday life

Thus, the grounded theory technique of memo writing (Charmaz 2006) was an important element of the analysis. This involved keeping a narrative record of thoughts, questions and ideas during interaction with the data, using visual strategies such as bold text and colour coding to highlight emergent categories and relationships. There is agreement in methodological literature that the use of memos within grounded theory research evidences reflective thinking (Charmaz 2014; Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher 2013; Dunne 2011). The emergent categories, analysis, discussion and focused coding of the photoshoot elicitations are presented in section 4.3.

3.2.13 Image and narrative elicitation (*artefacts*)

'Because intellectuals live by the word, many scholars tend to ignore the important role that objects can play in the creation of knowledge.'

(Steele 1998 p. 327)

Bauman states that '[i]n a consumer society, people wallow in things, fascinating, enjoyable things' (Bunting 2003 np). A variety of object and narrative research projects, including Miller's *The Comfort of Things* (2008) and Spivack's *Worn Stories* (2014), were explored as inspiration for the image/ narrative artefact elicitations. This method was designed to encompass ordinary, non-elite dress practice, identified in section 1.5 by Craik (1994) and Jenss (2016) as under-researched. Sheridan and Chamberlain (2011) tested the use of things in social science research; in studies where interviewees were asked to bring an object with them, the object prompted previously forgotten experiences, offered proof of the past and enhanced both memory and narrative. In a study of first year university students, Habermas and Paha (2002) found that objects were used as a reminder of people and places, for self-presentation as a symbol of either individuality or membership of a group, for aesthetic reasons, as a charm, as a form familiarity and thus, of security, and for soothing, to regulate mood, evidencing relevance of the use of objects in this *Comfort in Clothing* study. Mida and Kim (2015) note that objects can be primary evidence of cultural views and society, and that beliefs can be presented less self-consciously in objects. Spivack's (2014) *Worn Stories* research started as a project about the author's own clothes, extending to that of friends and family then those the author admired. The *Worn Stories* website helped to capture images and narratives about clothing with a compelling story, with Spivack describing clothes as 'a rich and universal storytelling device' (2014 p. 7). Linked to this, Brennen discusses a cultural materialist view, which posits that all artefacts of material culture, including current fashions, 'are produced under specific political and economic conditions' (2017 p. 2), and that cultural artefacts can be used in textual analysis to provide insights about society at a specific time and place in history. Brennen goes on to describe language as a basic element of human interaction and a medium of meaning creation which is socially shared. The narrative element aligns with narrative research, a form of qualitative research which involves participants providing stories about their lives (Creswell 2014). Thus,

these multi-modal image and narrative elicitations provided personal and individual data, linking to Bauman's (2012) description of society being highly individualised, with the combination of image and text designed to reduce ambiguity during analysis (Barthes 1990[1967]).

Execution of image/narrative Elicitation Task (*artefacts*)

The 2015, 2016 and 2017 stage-4 fashion management students were asked to identify a dress artefact that represented psychological comfort to them, recognising them as millennial choice-overloaded (Crewe 2017; Jenss 2016; Corner 2014) fashion consumers. The dress artefacts (see Figure 45) were brought into a studio to be photographed, and the photographs were submitted on a standardised form (see Appendix VIII), capturing variables (Flynn and Foster 2009) including material composition and colour information, length of time owned and three key words, as well as an accompanying narrative of approximately 100 words. The same narrative analysis process as discussed in section 3.2.12 above was employed in this method. Frequencies and patterns across the variables, including the artefact images, were input into NVivo software for analysis. A summary of the initial coding, emergent categories, analysis, discussion and focused coding of the artefact elicitations are presented in section 4.4.

Figure 45 Image and narrative exemplar – *artefact*



ITEM: VINTAGE CAPE

COMPOSITION: Mink with silk lining

COLOUR/PATTERN: Brown

3 KEY WORDS: Warm, soft, special

LENGTH OF TIME OWNED: 7 years

NARRATIVE (100 words):

This was given to my great-granny as a gift for the first society ball she attended, and then when I was 16 she gave it to me before my first proper ball. She was a socialite in London and the stories she told me about wearing the cape means that whenever I wear it I am thinking of her, and always feel that I need to be showing it a good time, but I just can't compete. She died just before her 101st birthday and she has always been a huge inspiration to me, so being given the cape that she wore to countless balls - one of which being, as she said, the most important nights of her life as she was wearing it when she first met my great-grandfather, makes it the most special thing that I own.

Limitations of image/narrative elicitations

Both image and narrative elicitation tasks involved stage-4 fashion management students as the only participants. Given their fashion-specific knowledge, it could be argued that they are a biased sample. Longitudinal control measures (gathering data over a three-year time span) were utilised to minimise the impact of using participants who knew each other. The photoshoot elicitations are dependent on a specific skill-set, which would require the input of fashion stylists and photographers if a wider sample were required; this is unrealistic in an unfunded research project as it would involve significant costs. The artefact elicitations could be replicated with a wider sample; this is recommended if the research is repeated.

3.3 Participant coding

Descriptive coding (Richards, 2009) was used to anonymise participants, while indicating which focus group they took part in, whether the participant was a fashion management student or a member of the expanded sample, and the age variable, as shown in Table 17. When discussing participants in section 4.0 Analysis and Discussion, participants are referred to as fashion management student participants (FM), non-fashion management student participants (NFM) or non-student participants (NS).

Table 17 Descriptive coding of participants

Researcher as Moderator	Fashion Management Students as Moderators
<p>Codes</p> <p>KC (Moderator initials) Pn (Participant number) nn (Participant age)</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p>?? (Moderator initials) Pn (Participant number) nn (Participant age)</p>
<p>Examples</p> <p>KCP121 (Participant 1, age 21) KCP5025 (Participant 50, age 25)</p>	<p>Examples</p> <p>ZFP121 (Participant 1, age 21) PKP520 (Participant 5, age 20)</p>
<p>Notes</p> <p>There were 138 participants moderated by the Researcher, thus the participant coding spans KCP1nn – KCP138nn KC always indicates the participant was a Fashion Management student</p>	<p>Notes</p> <p>The maximum number of focus group participants in a focus group moderated by a Fashion Management student was 12, thus the participant coding spans ??P1nn - ??P12nn The final two numbers always indicate participant age</p>

3.4 Ethical issues

Ethical approval for this Comfort in Clothing study was gained via Robert Gordon University's Research Ethics Committee, via the Research Ethics: Research Student and Supervisor Assessment (RESSA) form. Social-science research involves human subjects and therefore needs to avoid physical or psychological risk to those involved (Kawamura 2011). Brennen (2017) emphasises the importance of voluntary participation and informed consent in qualitative-research participants. It was appropriate in this study to offer privacy and confidentiality to the research participants, to elicit contributions from the participants that were as true and unguarded as possible. Participant consent for participation and use of data collected was sought for the research, and participants were anonymised. Data collected was stored securely and password protected.

A key ethical issue relates to the lecturer-student relationship between the researcher and the key informant (fashion management student) participants. The focus groups conducted by researcher, with the students as participants, were organised during existing timetabled tutorial sessions, ensuring students did not have to give additional time above the module's standard attendance expectations. As this is post-compulsory education, attendance at any session was not mandatory, meaning students could elect not to attend their allocated focus group session. Participation in the focus group did not encompass a grading element, so those who did not attend were not disadvantaged in terms of their final module grade. Students were made aware that their participation in the focus group did not mean automatic consent for the use of their data in the researcher's PhD study. They were asked to indicate consent by signing a consent form, assured of the anonymization of all data used and it was made clear that they could withdraw their data from the study at any time. The students were given module credit for conducting the expanded sample focus groups (see section 3.2.5), worth 10% of their final module grade. Grading for this element of the module was objective; full adherence to the instructions resulted in the full 10/10 of the available marks being allocated, minor errors in formatting resulted in 7/10, some missing elements gained 5/10. Students who provided no evidence of having conducted a focus group received 0/10. Students were not graded subjectively on the quality of the data gathered. The students were also asked to bring in possessions during scheduled tutorial sessions for the image/narrative artefact elicitation tasks (see section 3.2.13). A photography studio and photographer were provided for image capture and the tutorial session was used as a learning session exploring textual analysis of primary data. As a tutorial activity, this was not graded and again, attendance was not compulsory. The students were informed they could choose not to have their image/narrative elicitations included in the study. For the image/narrative photoshoot elicitation task (see section 3.2.12), consent was sought via a Photographer Consent form, requesting permission to use the photographs in this Comfort in Clothing study, and noting requirements for any photographer credit. One student across the

three years of data gathering requested their final photoshoot images be excluded from the study. The students used the findings from their own focus groups and the class image/narrative data set as part of the assessment submission for the Fashion Project module. The module was graded by the researcher, with robust internal and external second marking conducted, in line with University policy, to ensure fairness in the grading process. None of the students' final assessment submissions were used to inform any part of this Comfort in Clothing study; only the raw data, in the form of focus group transcriptions and image/narrative submissions were used. Module grading took place in December and researcher analysis of the raw data took place the following July/August each year, providing separation between the two processes to ensure reading student submissions did not influence the researcher's own data analysis. As the study sample was female (see section 3.2.3), male students within each cohort (totalling seven males over the three-year data gathering period) were given the option of participation but were informed that their data would be excluded from the key informant focus group data set.

3.5 Summary

This methodology section sought to clarify the researcher's worldview and detail the interpretivist research paradigm, constructivist epistemology, inductive approach, and qualitative, concurrent multi-method methodology employed to analyse how clothing, fashion and dress contribute to the psychosocial comfort and well-being of women in the UK. A rationale for the application of Bauman's concept of Liquid Modernity as a critical lens is also provided. Multiple methods, including structured tasks, focus group discussions and image/narrative elicitations were employed, in keeping with Jenss' (2016) assertion that fashion research should use multiple methods. Data was analysed using grounded theory principles of initial coding, researcher memos, diagramming and focused coding (Charmaz 2006). In addition, thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun 2016) was used to address research question 2. The findings from the multi-methods were triangulated to 'locate common findings' (Kaiser and Green 2016 p. 161) and provide in-depth understanding of the participants' concepts of comfort in clothing, in line with Brennen's (2017) assertion that concepts can emerge from qualitative research. While the purpose of interpretive research is not generalization (Wilmot 2016; Marshall 1996), May (2002 p. 131) describes 'moderatum generalisations' of interpretive research as being legitimate, when evolving from a pluralistic approach and cultural consistency, which this Comfort in Clothing research methodology aspired to. In-depth analysis of the data gathered is presented in section 4.0 Analysis and Discussion.

4.0

COMFORT

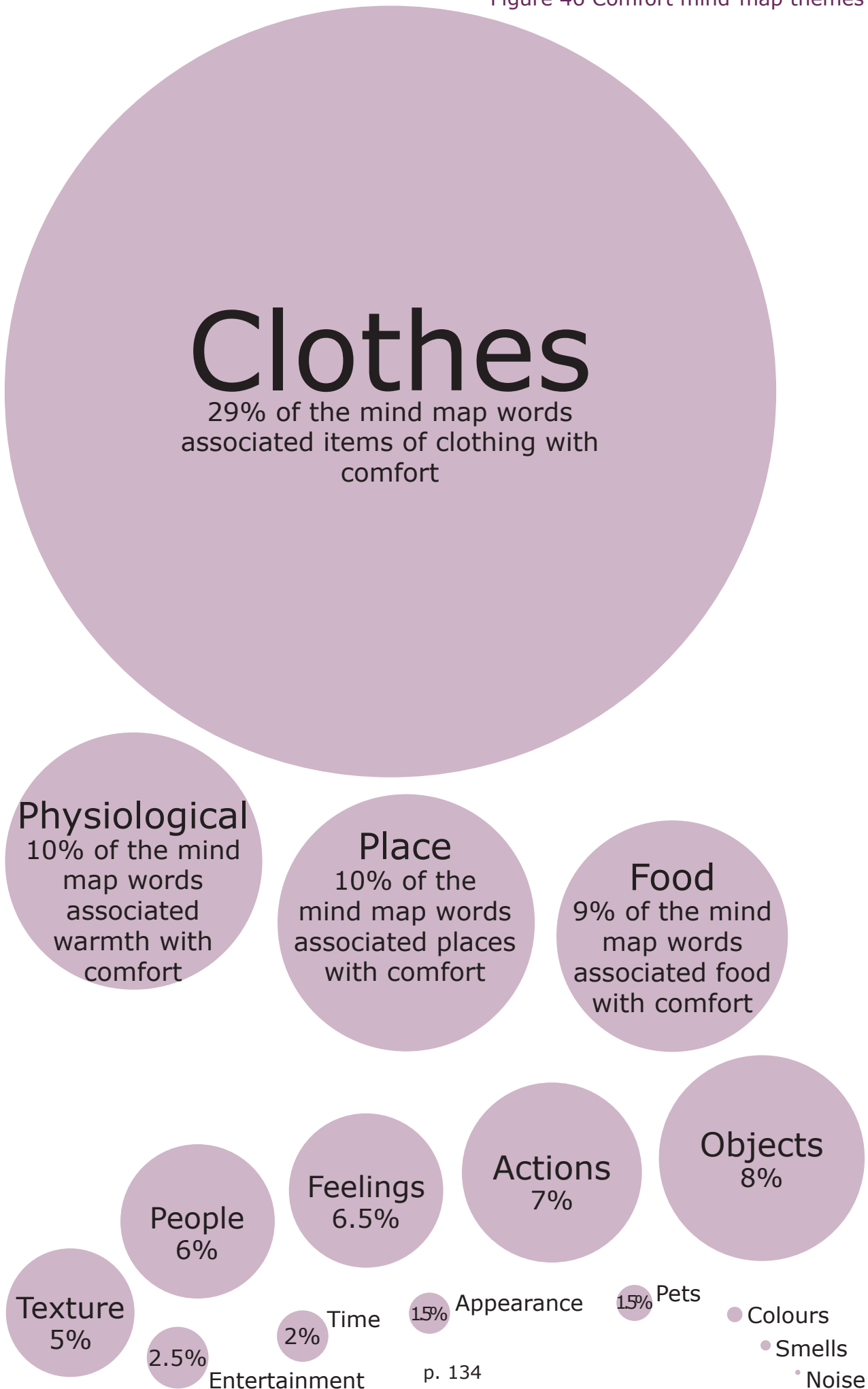
IN

CLOTHING:

ANALYSIS and

DISCUSSION

Figure 46 Comfort mind-map themes



4.1

A CONCEPT OF COMFORT

Focus group structured task: Comfort mind-maps

4.1.1 Method overview

The task required participants to create a mind-map detailing their personal associations with the word **comfort**. This task sought to contribute to the analysis of well-being for RQ1: which aspects of well-being are present in UK females' associations with comfort? It also contributes to the proposition of a subjective concept of comfort by addressing RQ3: what do UK females associate with comfort?

726 mind-maps were collected over three years, totalling 10,467 words. Words from the mind-maps were subject to initial coding (Charmaz 2006), resulting in 16 categories fully representative of the participants' words, visualised through the creation of word cloud diagrams using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. In total, 380 word clouds were created, to enable constant comparative analysis (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher; 2013; Dunne 2011; Silverman 2005). The separate word clouds can be seen in Appendix VII.

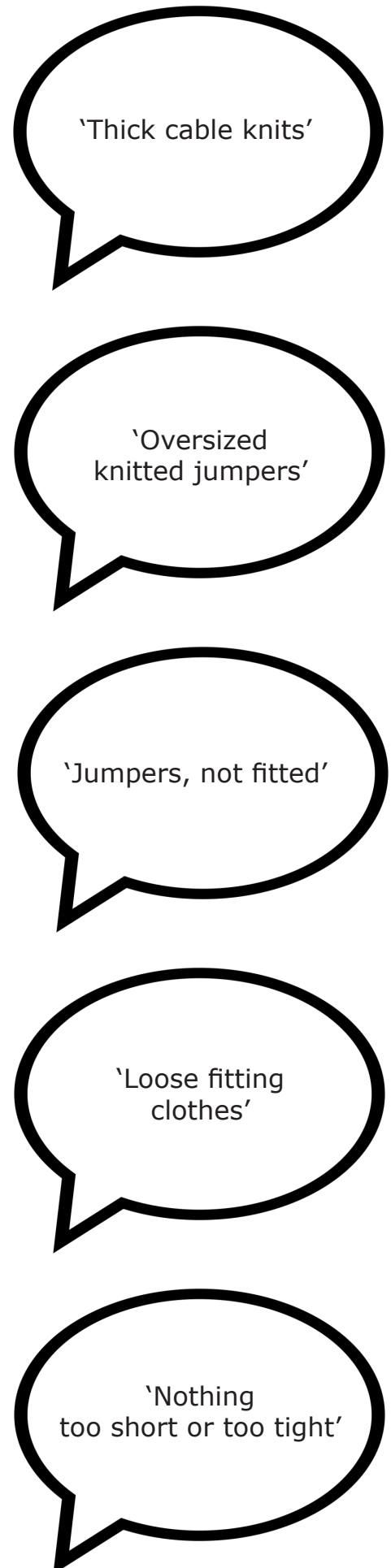
Overall, the results of the comfort mind-map task suggest a universality to the concept of comfort among the participants that should be widely applicable to women in the UK. The 16 categories identified during the initial coding are shown, proportionally represented in diagrammatic form (see Figure 46). A summary of the initial coding of the comfort mind-map task is presented in section 4.1.2, using word clouds for emergent categories to simply and effectively show the frequency of all participant responses (Lohmann *et al.* 2015), and an accompanying narrative with the participants' *in vivo* wording (Saldana 2016; Charmaz 2006) shown in **bold**. Section 4.1.3 contains the results of the focused coding, accompanied by a relational diagram and discussion of the findings in conjunction with relevant literature.

4.1.2 Initial coding

Figure 49 Knits and oversized clothes

Clothing was the most frequent code to emerge from the mind maps, representing 29% of the words gathered. This may be due to the wide variety of clothing products available to consumers, leading to many words fitting into this category. It may also be due to the participants having first completed the 15 garments task (see section 4.2), which may have directed their thoughts towards clothing. Clothing links the concept of comfort with the body, as in Western society clothes are worn on the body both at home and in social settings. The body is represented by haptic (Mida and Kim 2015; Peck and Childers 2013) modifiers, with participants mentioning **soft clothes, soft jumpers, fluffy jumpers** and **fluffy socks**, emphasising the importance of physical comfort. **Pyjamas, knits (jumpers, joggers and leggings), loose** and **oversized** clothes were prevalent in the participant responses, as was physiological comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013), indicated by the modifiers **warm** and **cosy** (see Figures 48 and 49).

Figure 48 Warm and cosy



Place was another frequent code, accounting for 10% of the words gathered. Participants associated a variety of places with comfort, with **home** being a key focus. Connection and familiarity are suggested, with participants mentioning **known surroundings, familiar surroundings** and the homes of significant others, such as **grandad's house** and **nan's home**, suggesting psychological comfort gained from being in a safe haven, in line with Holliday's (1999) findings and Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self. Participants used phrases such as **being home** and the preposition 'at' (**at home**) to highlight the importance of spending time at home. The determiner 'my' was also used; **my home, my bed, my bedroom**, emphasising the comfort associated with being in one's own space, aligning with Bauman's (2012) notion of individualisation, or the person. Specific places within the home are mentioned, with **bed** being the most frequently mentioned word. Bed could have been coded as an object, however given the strong category of sleeping, naps and relaxation, bed was coded as a place, rather than a possession, as was **bath**. These are places that the participants find comfort spending time in, rather than possessions. The prevalence of bed and bath indicate the importance of comfort to the body, suggesting physical comfort. There was broad agreement among most participants on the comfort of bed and home, as seen in Figure 50. Objects associated with the home were frequently mentioned; **blankets, cushions, duvets** and **hot-water bottles**.

A few participants mentioned specific places as a source of comfort, such as their home country or town, underpinning Belk's (1988) assertions on the importance of place to the extended self. Non-specific places were also mentioned, with a focus on the outdoors, including **nature, countryside, woods, mountains, lakes, parks**, the **ocean** and the **garden**. Thus, some participants find comfort in outdoor places, generally associated with physical leisure activities (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015) and Seligman's Pleasant Life (2016). Linked to this, space (identified by Bauman as an orthodox narrative of the human condition) was highlighted by some participants, mentioning the comfort of having **enough space, isolation, a calm environment** and a **peaceful environment**, again suggesting the importance of psychological comfort, or well-being. This links to Bauman's (2012) description of the besieged body, seeking refuge from fast-paced and ever-changing Liquid Modernity.

The participants listed a wide variety of **food** and beverages as a source of comfort on their mind maps (see Figure 51), especially **chocolate, mum's cooking** and **home-cooking**. There was no indication of comfort from dads' cooking, locating the participants in a traditional culture of cooking being a stereotypically female role. Thus, it could be said that the participants are using a form of complementary stereotyping (Di Bella and Crisp 2015) that elevates the role of the mother in providing comfort. Tradition, and an element of nostalgia is also evident in some of the foods mentioned, e.g. **roast dinners**.

Several gerunds, considered important in grounded theory coding (Charmaz 2006), were identified during the initial coding. Actions such as **reading**, **shopping** and **running** were mentioned, although **chilling**, cuddles and **relaxing** were more frequently mentioned (see Figure 52), along with words related to feelings. Participants associated **being loved** with psychological comfort, mentioning **affection**, **loyalty** and **emotional comfort**, in line with the higher levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Hagerty 1999; Maslow 1970). Finding comfort from being **happy** emerged strongly from all participant groups (see Figure 53). This is an important finding as being happy is part of the definition of well-being (*Cambridge Dictionary* 2018c). Bauman (2012) noted that many people are unhappy, without being able to articulate why, or what might be causing their unhappiness. Levels of happiness continue to be scrutinised in contemporary culture (Haybron 2013; Burnham 2012), with Davies (2015) describing the commoditisation of happiness by businesses. It is unclear from the scope of this research whether the participants are seeking happiness as a direct response to the levels of anxiety, uncertainty and stress discussed by Bauman, or if they have bought into the concept of happiness as a consumer product to aspire to and acquire, as posited by Davies. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs emerged again in the findings, with participants indicating comfort in **feeling safe**, a basic human need (Mair 2018; Maslow 1970). Here the gerund feeling is being used in an emotional capacity, evidenced by a variety of words, including **trust**, **protected**, **supportive**, **stability**, **secure**, **accepted** and **reassurance**.

Participants also associated the concept of comfort with confidence. This emerged through phrases such as **feeling good** and **feeling yourself**. Participants mentioned **feeling confident**, **being confident** and **self-confident**, linking to psychological comfort. Confidence was also linked to the body, with participants mentioning **body comfort**, **body image** and being **body confident**. This highlights the participants' place in contemporary society, where females have been under pressure to conform to a narrow set of body image standards (Mair 2018; Davies 2015; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). There was a greater emphasis on appearance from the student and age 18-30 NS participants, although overall this was not a prominent category. This finding could suggest that the younger participants are using primary control strategies that are more active or behavioural, linked to appearance management and aligned to sociocultural influences such as the thin ideal. Appearance was hardly mentioned by NS participants aged over 30 and not mentioned at all by those over 65. This could suggest the more mature participants are able to reject or 'distance themselves from negative sociocultural influences' and employ secondary cognitive control strategies such as lowered expectations or acceptance, in line with Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp's (2008 p. 353) and Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore's (1985) findings, thus reducing the impact of body dissatisfaction.

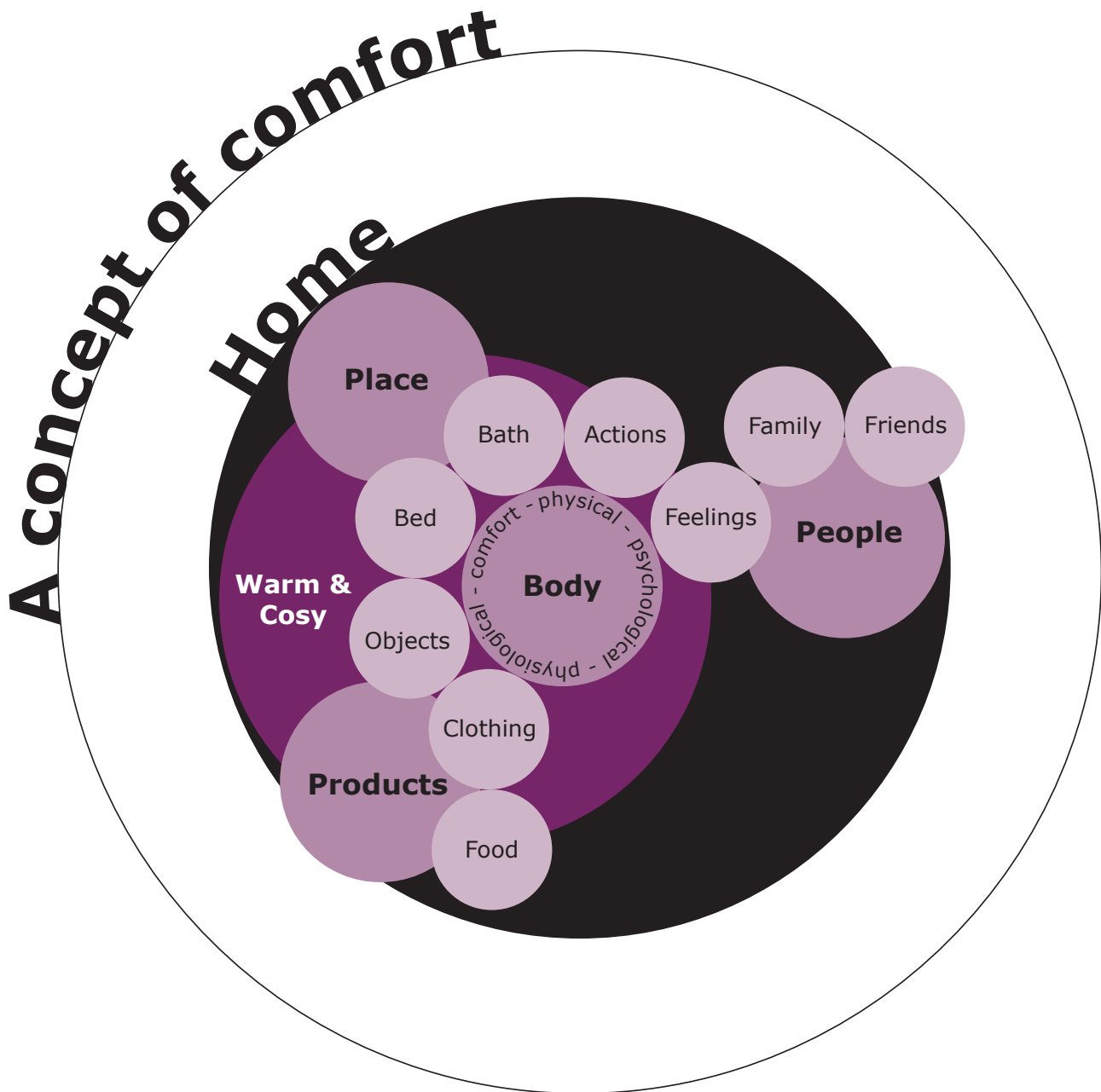
Figure 56 Family and friends

People relates to community, an orthodox narrative of the human condition (Bauman 2012). People emerged as a category, with participants mentioning **company** and **relationships** and using phrases such as **loved ones** and having **people around**. This correlates with Seligman's (2011) PERMA model category of R: relationships and Seligman's (2016) assertion that companionship is required for a 'Pleasant Life' (Mair 2018 p. 21); as well as with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, where **love, friends, family** (see Figures 54 and 56) and community are part of the higher levels of Maslow's model (Hagerty 1999; Maslow 1970). However, it is interesting to note that the people category represents just 6% of the total words gathered, with products and possessions such as clothing, food and objects being more strongly associated with comfort. This aligns with Bauman's (2012) assertions on the prevalence of consumer culture, where shops are described as places where 'the comforting feeling of belonging' or community can be found (p. 100). Having poor relationships can lead to loneliness, with lack of social relationships having the same level of influence as other mortality factors such as smoking and alcohol consumption (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015), so it is worrying that the participants did not mention the comfort of people more frequently.

Time is identified by Bauman (2012) as one of the orthodox narratives of the human condition, however limited and specific mention of time was found in the data. The student participants and NS participants aged 18-30 were the main contributors to the time category. Time is specifically mentioned, in **night time, bed time, bath time, Christmas time** and **time off** (see Figure 55). **Days off, weekends** and **Sundays**, linked with **duvet days, sofa days, lazy days** and **spa days**, suggest relaxation and down-time. There is a sense of the body and the home in these findings, linking to the stronger categories of clothing, place and feelings.



Figure 57 A Concept of comfort



4.1.3 Focused coding

The overarching category to emerge was the comfort of home, with all the key sub-categories having some relationship to the home environment. This is shown in Figure 57 as a relational diagram (Charmaz 2006), where home encircles all the other categories. The importance of comfort to the body is central to many of the categories, therefore the body is placed at the centre of the diagram. The body experiences physical comfort, physiological comfort and psychological comfort, demonstrating the applicability of Kamalha *et al.*'s (2013) clothing comfort categories to the wider concept of comfort. Comfort is experienced through place, people and products, strongly aligning the findings with Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self. Some products (mainly items of clothing such as trainers, gym wear, coats, jackets, boots, hats and gloves) will be used out with the home, hence the product circle edges beyond the boundary of the home circle. However, most clothing, food and objects that the participants associated with comfort are located within the home environment (e.g. dressing gown, cup of tea and blankets). Places of comfort also relate to the home, such as being in bed or in the bath. Actions (e.g. cuddling) and feelings (e.g. relaxed) relate to the body, and link to people, with equal emphasis on family and friends. Some activities with friends could be out with the home (e.g. going to the cinema, coded to the entertainment category), so the friends' circle also edges beyond the boundary of the home circle. However, most actions and entertainment mentioned were home-focused (such as watching Netflix or having homemade food). Underpinning most categories is the participants' association of comfort with being warm and cosy, evidenced by the frequency of those words and their use as modifiers for other categories (e.g. warm drinks, warm fires, cosy socks and cosy blankets). The importance of the warm and cosy category will have been impacted by the time and place of the research, given that data was gathered between October and December each year and took place in Scotland, which has a temperate but cool climate. Were this research to be repeated in a country with a warmer environment, or during warmer months, different results could be expected. Finally, the all-female sample could also have influenced these results as women, on average have a lower ratio of lean body mass compared to men, meaning that they tend to get colder (Bye and Hakala 2005).

Discussion: A Concept of Comfort in Liquid Modernity

Bauman (2012) listed the five orthodox narratives of the human condition: community, work, time/space, individuality and emancipation. In Bauman's concept of Liquid Modernity, community and work have become fragmented in a time of rapid and frequent change and there is a rise in individualism. Freedom, in the form of overwhelming choice, brings discomfort, or anxiety. Bauman's Liquid Modernity is discussed in relation to the Concept of Comfort diagram under the sub-categories of People, Place and Product on pages 147-152.

Figure 58 Home/people

'Being at home with family'

'The smell of mum's house'

'With mum and dad and Dexter'

'Comfort in a person'

'Getting a hug'

People: There is some element of community in these findings, relating to family and friends, **hugs** and **feeling loved**, however it is very much community with a small 'c'. The category was not prominent in a quantitative sense (accounting for just over 6% of the words collected), and there is little in the findings that suggests social activities or wider engagement with non-significant others, i.e. little mention of the grand narrative of religion, or of participative hobbies or volunteering. This aligns with Bauman's description of the person, individualistic in nature, rather than the more community-minded citizen. There was no association of work with comfort, in line with Bauman's assertions that work is no longer a form of stability in people's lives. There was also no mention of university, which is surprising, given the number of university student participants, the time and commitment that university study involves and the effort universities put into pastoral care and creating a sense of community. Family can be associated with the overarching category of home, suggested by phrases such as **grandad's house** and **mum's cooking**. The importance of friends is notable, especially among the age 18-30 participants, who placed almost equal emphasis on friends and family, aligning with Bauman's assertion that the solution to 'the life problems of the contemporary world is friendship' (2011 p. 85). Friends could be out with the home, although the **homemade food** and **Netflix** categories suggest social activities within the home. Going out does not seem to be associated with comfort. Family and friends are central to the actions and feelings categories, represented by **cuddles**, **hugs** and **feeling loved**. Thus, the body receives physical comfort and the mind receives psychological comfort from people who are significant others in the immediate community of the home environment (see Figure 58).

Figure 59 Home time and place

'Cosy home
and snowing outside'

'Going home
after a long day'

'My own space'
'Friday night in'

'A hot bath with
bubbles'
'Snuggled up in bed'

'Being in an
environment you are
used to'

Place: The participants find comfort in their own space, their home, their bed, their bath, using the determiner 'my' to emphasise a sense of belonging and again indicating Bauman's individualistic person. Time was not a prominent category within the findings, however, when combined with the feelings and actions categories, and bed and bath, a strong sense of down-time, or relaxation emerged. The participants mentioned **naps, lounging, doing nothing, days off** or watching **TV**, activities within the home that focus on the self, suggesting physical and psychological comfort. These activities also suggest routine, acknowledged by Bauman as boring but offering safety from the discomfort of change. There is a sense that both body and mind are exhausted and seeking refuge from the outside world and all its challenges, in line with Bauman's description of the body as 'besieged' (2012 p. 81). Thus, the place of home is also associated with security, feeling **safe**. Places such as bed and bath tend to be fixed and solid within the home, offering constancy in Bauman's contemporary, changeable world. The participants find comfort in **down time, alone time, bath time, bed time, night time** and **time** itself. Although a few participants mention **family time**, spending time alone seems to offer comfort to more of the participants, aligning with Bauman's individualistic person. The fast past of Bauman's Liquid Modernity is hinted at through the participants' use of words such as **sufficient time, slow, quality time** and **time stops**, while the words **no deadlines** and **time off** indicate a need for freedom from work responsibilities. Although doctors are now prescribing time and exercise outside in natural spaces as an antidote to anxiety and stress, few participants related being outdoors in the natural world with comfort. They were much more inclined to seek comfort inside, static, cuddled up and cocooned, meaning home is also associated with **warmth**, or physiological comfort. Participants specifically mentioned the comfort of warm environments and traditional real fires. The focus on warmth relates to the central category of the body, and may be specific to the participants' location in Scotland's cool climate, however the nostalgic notion of a **real fire** suggests warmth is associated with psychological comfort, as well as physiological. Psychological comfort is also underpinned by the frequency of the word **cosy** in the findings. Although cosy is used to refer to warmth, it also refers to relaxation, underpinning the discussion on down-time (see Figure 59).

Figure 60 Home/products

'All homely belongings'
'Sitting with a cosy blanket on the sofa'

'A cup of hot chocolate, watching TV while outside is dull weather or raining'

'My bedtime slippers'
'Casual attire at home'

'Room scent diffusers'
'Candle lit room'

'Home-made soup'
'Custard and bananas'

Products: The participants find comfort in being surrounded by **soft** and warm possessions. The **blanket** is the main product associated with comfort, providing the physiological comfort of warmth and the haptic, physical comfort of softness to the body. Other key products mentioned, **pillows, duvets** and the **sofa**, also link to the comfort of the body and relaxation or down-time, again within the home environment. While a sofa is a static and major purchase, **candles** and **cushions** could provide a less expensive and more frequently purchasable product for those seeking comfort in consumerism. It is clear from the findings that the participants are consumers of clothing, given the extensive sartorial vocabulary used. Clothing was the largest category to emerge from the findings; products that are easily purchased and placed directly onto the body. A range of modifiers were used, demonstrating the importance of warm clothes to physiological comfort, and soft clothes to physical comfort. There was some mention of functional outdoors clothing (**hats, coats, gloves**), providing the participants with physiological comfort outdoors in a cold environment. However, the more frequently mentioned **pyjamas, slippers** and the **dressing gown** combine to evoke a sense of comfort in clothing within the home; these are not products associated with outdoors. Again, there is a link with relaxation, down-time and Bauman's (2012) individualistic person, seeking sanctuary from society. Another key clothing category was the comfort of **stretchy** and **oversized**, suggesting the participants find comfort in freedom of movement and in camouflaging the body. There is security, or psychological comfort in being covered or cocooned by clothes, as well as the functional, physiological comfort of keeping warm. Camouflage was also apparent in the smaller appearance category, with younger (age 18-30) participants using products such as **makeup** and **fake tan** to manage their appearance in front of others. There is an element of falseness in camouflage, which links to Bauman's (2012) discussion on the carnival community, whereby individuals use sartorial dress codes to temporarily conform and fit in with those around them; to engender a sense of community, albeit temporarily. Appearance, through makeup and clothes is easy to change. Indeed, these products could be said to contribute to the fast-paced change of Liquid Modernity, given their temporality and affordability. Finally, food products have a role in warming the body, providing physiological comfort via **hot chocolate**. The participants find comfort indulging in food products that do not sound particularly good for their health or well-being, such as **pizzas** and **ice cream**. Comfort foods were linked with the home; **takeaways, a cup of tea** and **mum's cooking**. These are reassuring, with elements of nostalgia evident through **Sunday roasts, stews, casseroles** and **custard**, providing a sense of solidity and tradition in Bauman's changeable Liquid Modernity and thus psychological comfort. It is clear then, from the participant responses, that there is comfort in consumption, associated with simple and traditional products (see Figure 60).

Overall, the findings align with Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity, suggesting positives associated with the wider community and work orthodox narratives are somewhat diminished. There is a strong sense of individualism, in correlation with Bauman's person rather than the more community-minded citizen. However, there is also evidence of conformity to societal norms in the participants' responses, through issues around body confidence and use of appearance-management techniques, demonstrating that community still influences the person. The person seems to seek refuge from the wider community of contemporary society, through the comfort of time spent relaxing at home. The broad agreement between students and non-students, and participants of all ages, suggests the overall concept of comfort defies Liquid Modernity in that it is not fragmented nor constantly changing; for these participants, the concept of comfort is static and solid. It is the comfort of home.

home

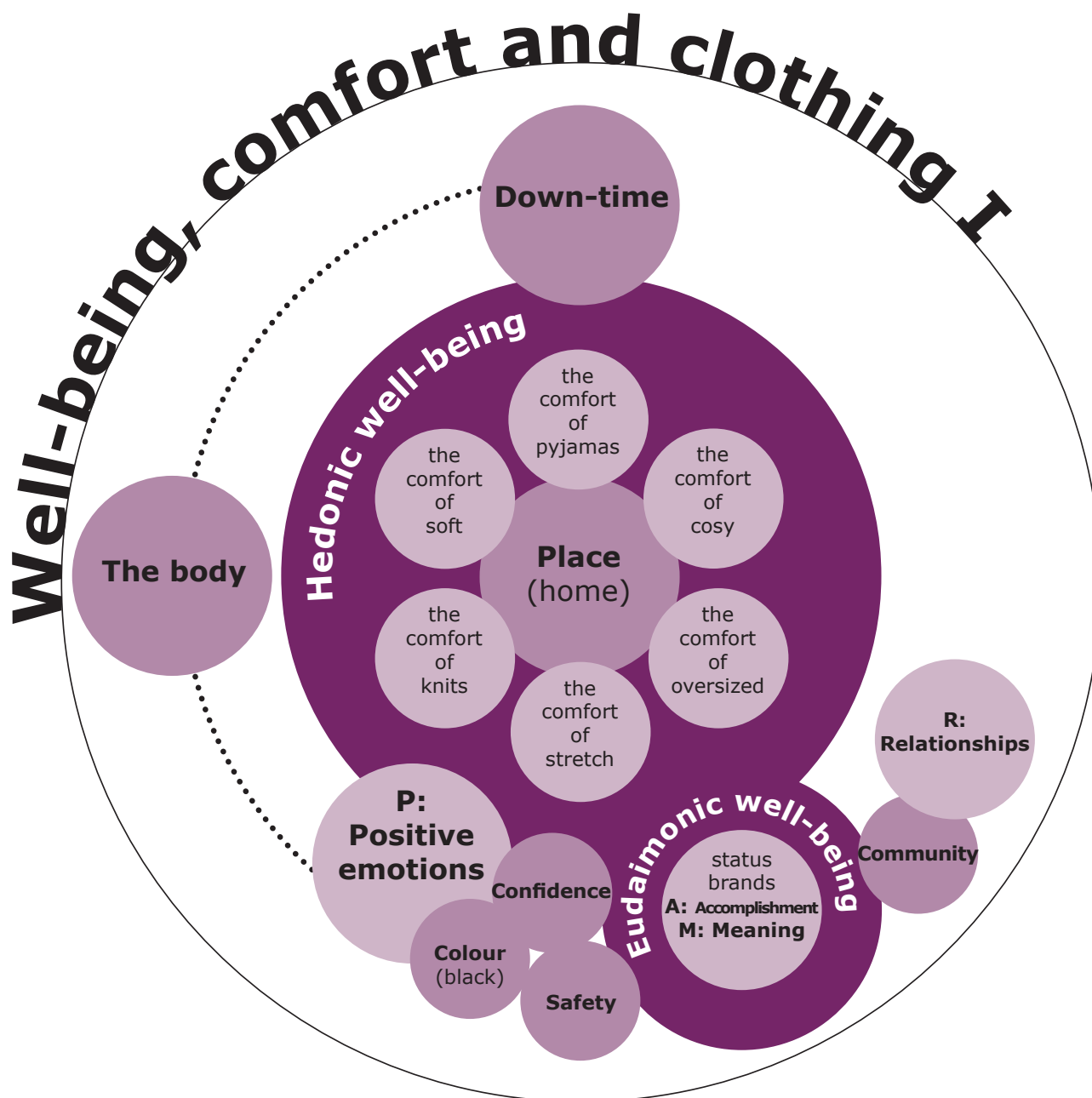
4.1.4 Well-being themes identified in the Comfort mind map task

The clothing- and dress-related data in the participants' mind maps sought to contribute to the thematic analysis of well-being for RQ2, as comfort is included in the definition of well-being (*Cambridge Dictionary* 2018c), aligning with Pineau's (2008 p. 271) statement that 'comfort corresponds to everything contributing to the well-being and convenience of the material aspects of life'.

The importance of clothing in providing physical, physiological and psychological comfort to the body was established; clothing was the largest category to emerge from the participants' mind map associations with comfort, perhaps due to the variety of clothing products available and the norm of wearing clothing daily. The comfort of pyjamas, knitted clothing, oversized clothing and cosy clothing suggests the significance of comfortable house-wear (V&A 2019) to well-being, linking comfortable clothing with the place of home and specific space within the home such as the bed or sofa for down-time. Products such as pyjamas, slippers and dressing gowns provide P: Positive emotions (Seligman 2011) of relaxation and cosiness and encompass all three of Kamalha *et al.*'s (2013) comfort categories: the physical comfort of soft handle, the physiological comfort of warmth and the psychological comfort of cosiness and association with down-time, providing a sense of hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). Thus, the connection between well-being and dress practices in the place of home is evident, in line with Holliday's (1999) assertions that home is a place of safety, engendering well-being. In addition to nightwear, house-wear encompasses stretchy, non-restrictive clothing such as jumpers, joggers and leggings, aligning with Entwistle's (2003) concept of the home-appropriate body. House-wear, whether jumpers, joggers or pyjamas is often oversized or loose. Oversized, unrestrictive clothing suggests psychological comfort, with the wearing of loose-fitting clothes described by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997 p. 19) as a conscious strategy to avoid objectification; a means of enhancing well-being in a culture of objectification of the female form. House-wear camouflages or envelops the besieged body (Bauman 2012) in a soft clothing hug for a sense of safety, away from the complicated and cold outside world. P: Positive emotions (Seligman 2011) related to the haptic qualities (Peck and Childers 2003) of clothes and fabrics, including soft and fluffy textures, also add to a feel-good sense of hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014).

The participants also made frequent mention of gymwear and activewear. Bauman (2012) described the actions of consumers in pursuit of health and fitness as expensive, linking the consumption of costly fitness clothing with the pursuit of body confidence and safety from insecurity. Specific sportswear brand names were associated with comfort by some participants, suggesting some alignment with Bauman's assertions given that branded clothing is generally more expensive and can provide confidence through commodity fetishism and the perception of enhanced social status (Crewe 2017; Thompson 2017; Hameide 2011; Savas 2004; Belk 1988). These well-known clothing and accessory brands act as social identifiers, facilitating well-being through a sense of belonging

Figure 61 Well-being, comfort and clothing I



(Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) or community, which Bauman described as an orthodox narrative of the human condition, stressing the utopia of togetherness through likeness. Non-sportswear brands mentioned by the participants tended to be in the high-end or luxury category. This finding links with Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of well-being categories of M: Meaning and the A: Accomplishment of being able to wear these status brands, providing a sense of eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). The participants' focus on activewear also highlights the continued casualization of dress practices within Western contemporary culture (WGSN 2016; Keynote 2015; Smith 2015), suggesting the importance of down-time, or me-time to well-being.

The participants highlighted body concerns, suggesting ingrained 'normative discontent' with body weight (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1985 p. 267) and seeking the comfort of body confidence, which certain styles of clothing can engender. This suggests self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and a focus on the self, epitomising Bauman's concept of the individualistic person. Confidence is gained through specific clothing colour, mainly black and occasionally red. Hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) was gained through dress-related appearance-management behaviours, with younger participants using camouflage techniques including makeup and fake tan to manage their appearance in front of others. There is an element of falseness in camouflage, which links to Bauman's (2012) discussion on the cloakroom or carnival community, whereby individuals use sartorial dress codes to temporarily conform and fit in with those around them; to engender a sense of community, albeit temporarily. Appearance, through makeup and clothes is easy to change. Indeed, these products could be said to contribute to the fast-paced change of Liquid Modernity, given their temporality and affordability. Binary to this, there is also a sense of routine in these findings, for example a weekly facemask or the daily ritual of applying eyeliner, with Bauman acknowledging the safety of routine in times of uncertainty.

In summary, and as shown on the relational diagram (see Figure 61), the following aspects of well-being were found in the participants' associations with comfort in clothing: the body, confidence, colour, community, safety, space/place and time. Both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) from clothing and dress practices are confirmed, with feel-good, hedonic well-being more prevalent. This emerges from clothing worn in the place of home, with specific clothing attributes (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) and haptic qualities (Peck and Childers 2003) associated with relaxation or down-time of both body and mind. P: Positive emotions, such as feelings of body confidence and safety are gained from wearing the colour black and oversized, loose clothing. To a lesser extent, M: Meaning, A: Accomplishment and R: Relationships (Seligman 2011) are alluded to, through the use of status brand clothing which can act as a social identifier, highlighting the importance of dress to a sense of belonging and community (Bauman 2012), leading to well-being.

4.2

15 COMFORTABLE GARMENTS

Focus group structured task: 3 words

4.2.1 Method overview

This structured task required participants to view a set of 15 photographic images of non-elite, everyday garment artefacts, and to write down the first 3 words thought of for each garment. Each garment artefact was chosen to represent elements of psychological, physiological and physical comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013), however participants were not aware of the comfort theme when completing the task. The task sought to gain opinions and attitudes from the participants to contribute to the proposal of a subjective concept of comfort in clothing by addressing RQ4: of which aspects of physical, physiological and psychological comfort in clothing are UK females aware?

In total 405 word clouds were created, enabling constant comparative analysis (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher; 2013; Dunne 2011; Silverman 2005) between each separate year of data gathering and between generational cohorts (see Appendix VI). The combined participant responses to the 15 garments are presented as word cloud diagrams (see Figures 62-76). Analysis of this data followed grounded theory principles, with narrative memos created for each garment and word cloud during the initial coding stage (Charmaz 2006). Although the participants were not aware of the comfort category, elements of physical, physiological and psychological comfort were evident in their responses to each garment, suggesting agreement with the researcher's initial interpretations of the garments. This confirms the researcher's interpretations are culturally accurate, providing a level of validity to the interpretive nature of this study (May 2002) in line with Richard's (2009) assertion that, in qualitative research, reliability emerges from consistency. Completion of the task was individual and non-discursive, allowing participants to put forward true feelings that they may have kept hidden during the open discussion parts of the focus groups. Judgement was an unexpected category that emerged strongly from the participants' responses, perhaps enabled by the private and non-discursive nature of the task.

4.2.2 Initial coding

The words comfort, comfortable and comfy were evident in all 15 garments' final word clouds. Garment 1, the dressing gown, garment 10, the joggers and garment 13, the sweatshirt were most strongly associated with comfort by the participants. Other garments that the participants explicitly described as comfortable also tended to be stretchy and oversized. Garment 4, the tailored jacket had very few mentions of comfort, with more indication of discomfort evident. The check trousers were also more frequently described as uncomfortable. Both garments were associated with workwear and were structured, tailored styles. Jeans were a subject of ambiguity, more frequently described as comfortable, but with some evidence of association with discomfort also evident. Thus, the findings suggest that participants' foremost association with the words comfort, comfortable and comfy is the physical comfort of non-restrictive fit. The physiological, physical and psychological aspects of comfort in clothing have been used in the focused coding (Saldana 2016; Charmaz 2006) of the participant responses to the 15 garments task, resulting in findings grounded in the data, presented in section 4.2.3, with the participants' words shown in **bold**.

4.2.3 Focused coding

Physiological comfort: Physiological comfort relates to the thermal regulation of the body (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) and has been well-researched using scientific perspectives (through measuring body response to hot and cold conditions, body shape, gender and age). The main words used by the participants to convey physiological comfort, or thermal regulation (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) were **cosy** and **warm**. Some garments were described as **cool**; however, it is not clear whether the participants' use of the word cool referred to physiological comfort or the informal meaning of cool that indicates something is fashionable. The fleece dressing gown and handknit jumper were most strongly associated with warmth and cosiness by the participants, followed by the sweatshirt. This suggests that soft, fleecy and dense fabrics signify warmth to the participants, combined with garment shapes that offer a good level of volume, to cover or cocoon the body.

Overall, the participants show a good level of awareness of physiological comfort in clothing, but with concern for being warm enough, rather keeping cool (in terms of temperature). This finding could be attributed to place; the research took place in Scotland, which has a temperate but cool climate, making it likely that the participants had a greater focus on keeping warm. Were this research to be repeated in a country with a warmer environment, different results could be expected. The focus on keeping warm could also be attributed to time, as data was collected between October and December, when the weather in Scotland is getting colder and the days darker. Were the research to be repeated in warmer months, different results could be expected. Finally, the all-female sample could also have influenced these results as women, on average have a lower ratio of lean body mass compared to men, meaning that they tend to get colder (Bye and Hakala 2005). The prevalence of the word **cosy** is interesting, as its meaning is defined as a feeling of comfort, warmth and relaxation, suggesting something that combines physiological, physical and psychological comfort.

Physical comfort: Physical comfort concerns tactile sensations and haptic qualities such as touch and feel, as well as acoustic and scent qualities (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Several types of physical comfort were evident in the participant responses. Haptic qualities, or tactile sensations (Mida and Kim 2015; Peck and Childers 2003) such as **soft**, **fluffy**, **silky** and **itchy** were indicated. The fleece dressing gown, cotton jersey stripe top, handknit jumper, elasticated skirt, floral trousers, sweatshirt and tartan shirt were all described as soft. As elastic, knit, jersey and fleece constructions have stretch qualities, there is some correlation between softness and stretch in the participants' responses. The sweatshirt and dressing gown were the only garments regarded as fluffy. The tiger print silk shirt was correctly identified as silky. The wool handknit jumper and checked trousers were both described as itchy, suggesting wool was associated with negative haptic qualities by some participants, which would result in physical discomfort. Physical comfort was also indicated through non-restriction, with participants using words such as **loose**, **oversized**, **boxy**, **large**, **big** and **slouchy**. A few

garments were described as **floaty** and **light**; the floral dress, tiger print silk shirt, white shirt and elastic waist skirt. This suggests the participants associate comfort with **lightweight** woven fabrics.

Overall, the participants show some awareness of physical comfort in clothing, using a limited range of words to describe fabric handle (haptic sensations) and non-restrictive garment fit (pressure sensations) (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Acoustic and scent properties were not evident in the participant responses, probably due to them viewing photographs rather than having the real garments present. However, it is interesting that the participants made judgements related to handle and fit from the photographs, suggesting their 'experience attributes' (Peck and Childers 2003 p. 438) of wearing clothes led them to make assumptions about the photographs, and that handle and fit are more prominent aspects of comfort in the participants' experiences, compared with acoustics and scent. This finding could be influenced by the all-female sample, as females display a more sensitive response to fabric feel compared to men (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). The participants' focus on perceived haptic sensations is an important finding for clothing designers to consider when developing garments, and for brands in their marketing messages, especially as Crewe (2017) notes that the importance of tactility and surface is often ignored.

Psychological comfort: Psychological comfort relates to personal attributes, such as body image, socially-constructed roles and values and previous experiences; environmental attributes such as social-cultural settings and norms, location and climate; and clothing attributes, such as fashion, style, aesthetics, design, colour and texture (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). In comparison with words associated with physiological and physical comfort, there were many more words associated with psychological comfort in the participant responses.

Some responses were role-related (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997), an environmental attribute associated with location, social-cultural settings and norms (Branson and Sweeney 1991). These included words such as **work, uniform, power, corporate, professional, office, business, smart, structured** and **formal**. These words emerged in relation to garments selected by the researcher to signify the psychological comfort and well-being that workwear and uniform can provide (the suit jacket, white shirt, checked trouser and shift dress), evidencing correlation between the researcher and the research participants, and demonstrating that findings from section 2.5.2 Well-being: Work are relevant to the participant sample. As there was little mention of physiological or physical comfort associated with these garments, the participants' views correlate with Moran and Skeggs (2004) views that (physical) comfort relates to domestic or home settings. The participants showed alignment with Entwistle's (2003) work-appropriate body, which is dressed in formal, tailored and structured styles, and with Crane's (2000) assertions that the workplace is a location for status

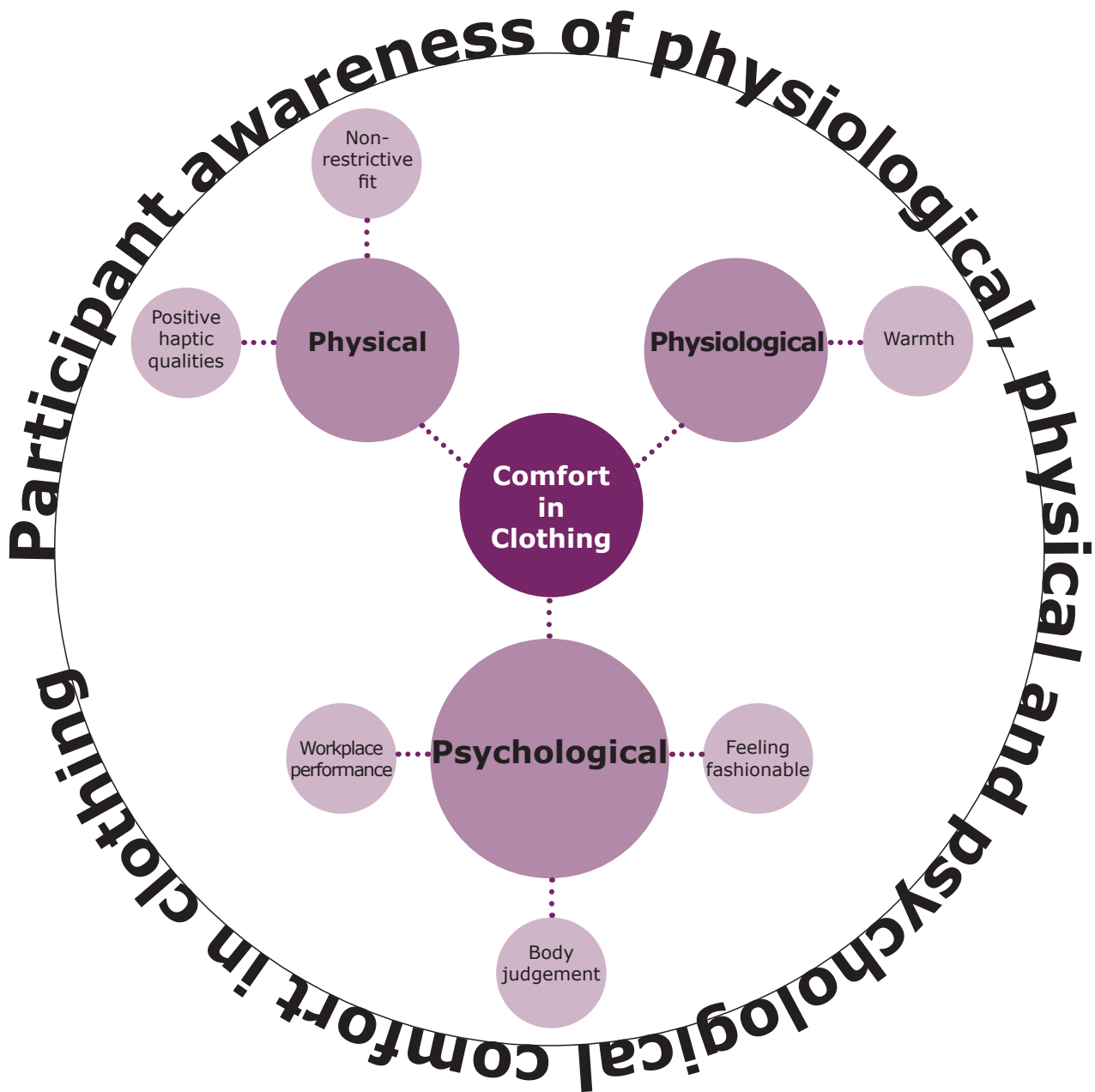
hierarchy. Thus, the hegemonic discourse of “proper” behaviour and attire’ (Holliday 1999 p. 481) applies to these participants, associated with political and media-propagated middle-class values of being normal, appropriate and good (Savage 2003). This finding may be influenced by the all-female sample, in line with Guy and Banim’s (2000) research, which established that women were more likely to conform to dress norms in work settings, aspiring to feelings of control and confidence, closely related to psychological comfort and well-being. This can be linked to the individual’s need to work to provide for themselves in Bauman’s era of Liquid Modernity, where support from society, community or family may be diminished. ‘Uncertainty of prospects’ (Bauman 2012 p. 92) due to the increasing temporality of the workplace puts greater strain on the individual’s self-confidence, described by Maslow (1943) as an esteem need. The semiotic power (Wodak and Meyer 2016) and ‘informative role symbol’ (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997 p. 10) of ‘work clothes’ (Guy and Banim 2000 p. 316) was clearly recognised by the participants. The participants’ responses also show that gender norms prevail, with several of the workwear-related garments being described as **masculine** or **manly**, in line with Craik’s (2009) assertions.

Participants used descriptive words to indicate colour, another clothing attribute (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Two garments, both red-coloured (the handknit jumper and tartan shirt), were associated with the social-cultural setting of **Christmas**. This suggests the participants’ life-story schema (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004) is connected to the UK cultural norm of relating red to **Santa**. Both garments were described by the participants as **traditional**, suggesting the psychological comfort and eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) associated with the traditions and nostalgia (Savas 2004; Belk 1988) of the **festive** season. The garment that gained the most favourable responses from the participants was the pair of jeans, strongly associated with the colour **blue**. In colour psychology, blue is associated with dependability (Eisman 2006), suggesting the psychological comfort of familiarity and clothing that is unchallenging and **easy**. This aligns with Habermas and Paha’s (2002) findings that link familiarity with security; a safety need as identified by Maslow (1943). Some responses were related to other clothing attributes (Branson and Sweeney 1991). For example, psychological comfort was indicated by the participants’ reference to the functionality of several of the garments, using words such as **practical, useful, functional, versatile, essential** and **everyday**, again suggesting familiarity. These utilitarian aspects of clothing can also create attachment according to Savas (2004). **Fashion** and **style** clothing attributes included words such as **fashionable, stylish, classic, trendy, traditional** and **heritage**, suggesting some participants had awareness of on-trend styles or stable stylistic norms, sociocultural clothing influences that can communicate identity and provide the psychological comfort of belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943).

Positive words related to clothing aesthetics included **pretty, elegant, nice, jazzy, cute, sophisticated, chic, fun** and **lovely**, all of which could engender feelings of psychological comfort. Overall, these findings align with Savas' (2004) theory that people can form attachments to possessions (such as clothing), based on aesthetic considerations such as style and colour. However, the binaries that emerged from the participant responses (e.g. **boring/fashionable, dull/stylish, ugly/sophisticated**) demonstrate the complexity of the now democratised fashion system (Jenss 2016), which leads to confusion and increased anxiety associated with making individual clothing choices, with choices in contemporary society described as 'too wide for comfort' by Bauman (2012 p. 73). Given the strength of some of the negative words used, such as **horrible, eyesore** and **hideous**, the risk of cruel aesthetic judgement (Von Busch 2016), or psychological discomfort, is suggested in the participant responses.

Personal attributes can involve body image (Branson and Sweeney 1991). Some participants indicated concern with body image (as discussed in The body is omnipresent category on p. 169). Psychological comfort was indicated by the participants' use of words such as **flattering** and **fitted**. However, references to these positive words were limited. Psychological discomfort related to body image was more frequently indicated, through words such as **unflattering, shapeless, ill-fitting, not flattering, bulky, un-shapely** and **no shape**. This finding aligns with Pine's (2014) assertions that women find psychological comfort from well-fitted clothing styles. The participants' negative judgement towards styles perceived as unflattering aligns with previous research demonstrating the inextricable link between clothing and the body (Jenss 2016; Ruggerone 2016; Pine 2014; Baron 2013; Entwistle 2003). It also suggests that the participants have internalised societal norms (Mida and Kim 2015) driven by media exposure to perfect bodies (Davies 2015) and the thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Brown and Dittmar 2005; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), related to the male gaze (Pine 2014), and that they view clothes as a Foucauldian self-management tool (Entwistle 2003). This relates to Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory, suggesting the participants exist in a culture where they are aware that their bodies are on display and evaluated, resulting in anxiety and habitual monitoring of the body and appearance.

Figure 77 Participant awareness of physiological, physical and psychological comfort in clothing



In summary, the participants responded to the 15 garments with a range of words that related to all three comfort in clothing categories identified in the early literature review. The specific aspects of physiological, physical and psychological comfort that emerged from the participant data are illustrated in a relational diagram (see Figure 77). The categories are grounded in the participants' in vivo responses, contributing new knowledge regarding the under-researched topic of psychological comfort in clothing (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Some participant responses focused on physiological warmth, attributed in part to the location and time of year of the data gathering. In terms of physical comfort, the participants focused on haptic and fit qualities, with softness and non-restrictive shapes and styles associated explicitly with comfort. However, psychological aspects of comfort in clothing were the prevailing focus of the participants (shown by the larger scale of the psychological sphere on Figure 77). Social-psychological considerations were evident, related to performance in the workplace, feeling fashionable or stylish, and related to judgement of the body. These key categories highlight elements of being on display, linked to social status, confidence, self-esteem (Corner 2014; Pine 2014; Miller 2010), self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and acceptance within a group (Baron 2013; Entwistle 2003; Baumeister and Leary 1995; Craik 1994). This underpins clothing as a system of signification (Barnard 2002) that leads to appearance perception, which assigns identity (Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017). Identity is further explored in section 4.3 Comfortable Clothed Identities.

4.2.4 Well-being themes identified in the 15 Garments task

The participant responses to the 15 Garments task also sought to contribute to the analysis of well-being for RQ2. Applying the well-being themes identified in the literature to the 15 Garments' data resulted in the identification of 6 themes: the boredom of work; the body is omnipresent; the comfort of home; the problem with pattern; the judgement of status; and the emotion of colour. Words used by the participants are shown in **bold**.

Theme: The boredom of work

Well-being is found through work, a defining element of self-identity that engenders a sense of order, value and self-improvement (Lomas, Hefferon and Ivtzan 2014; Bauman 2012). Entwistle (2003) described the work-appropriate body as formal and tailored, underpinned by Foucault's assertions that structured dress practices discipline the body in the workplace. Crewe (2017) posits the suit as professional, a sign of formality, efficiency, hard work, authority and expertise. The participants described garment 4, the tailored, dark grey suit jacket as **smart** and **formal**, associating it with **work**, the **office** and **business**. Some positives related to the workwear category were evident in words such as **practical** and **professional**, aligning with Peluchette, Karl and Rust's (2006) findings that people can see value in workplace dress. Interestingly, although not frequently occurring, the word **safe** was used, relating to psychological comfort and suggesting a need to fit in within the workplace, linked to Seligman's (2011) PERMA model; the R: Relationships element of well-being. Words related to work-appropriate fashion were used, including **stylish**, **classic** (emerging more frequently from the FM students), **elegant** and **sophisticated**. However, overall, more negative words were evident, such as **horrible**, **drab**, **ugly**, **unattractive** and **boring**. This data suggests some negativity towards traditional **workwear**. The suit is associated with a masculine aesthetic, traditionally symbolising power (Craik 2009), with Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggesting a need for power may be driven by the need for belongingness. Hefferon (2015) established that women who wore more masculine styles to interviews were more likely to secure the post. Garment 4, the suit jacket is gendered as a **masculine**, **male** style by the participants, evidencing traditional views and agreement with Craik. A focus on **power** is evident in the participant responses, through words such as **strict**, **structure**, **uniform** and **manager**, suggesting agreement with Peluchette, Karl and Rust's (2006) assertions that workplace dress can afford power and opportunity for advancement.

Garment 9, the elasticated skirt, was described very negatively, including words such as **dull**, **boring** and **frumpy**, with participants associating this style with a **binbag** or **potato sack** in a derogatory manner. A variety of emotional and judgemental words were used, including **hideous**, **nasty**, **drab**, **awful**, **dreary** and **horrible**. Linked to this, some participants associated the style with **work**, **office** and **business**. A popular culture association was evident; the character **Miss Trunchable** [Trunchbull], the formidable headmistress from Roald Dahl's

children's book, *Matilda*. Similarly, some participants associated garment 9 with being a **teacher**. In combination with the other words used, a dreary conservatism to the work role of a teacher is suggested. Garment 12, the checked trouser, also evidenced connotations of **workwear**, with words such as **smart, work, business** and **office** being used. Similarly, garment 7, the white shirt was regarded as a **smart, classic, formal, business, work** wear style, linked with being **professional**. Some recognised the versatility of a plain white shirt, describing it as a **staple**. Again, a few work-appropriate fashion references, such as **classic, stylish** and **chic** were used. The participants' recognition of traditional workwear norms suggests that although Bauman's (2012) theory of Liquid Modernity implied a temporality to careers, this temporality has not fully influenced dress practice in the work environment; the pace of change in terms of workwear is more static.

There was some ambiguity in the participants' views on garment 15, the striped shift dress. Binaries of **bold** and **boring**, and **casual** versus **workwear** were evident in the participant responses, suggesting the bold stripe pattern was at odds with the perceived formality required in a formal workplace. The level of ambiguity in the participant responses is important, as how one feels about the clothes one wears and the feedback received from others can inhibit or bolster one's sense of efficacy, affecting well-being in terms of physical health, engagement and resilience (Baron 2013). This links to Rafaeli *et al.*'s (1997) recognition of the casualisation of workplace dress norms as an increased opportunity for the psychological discomfort of making inappropriate choices, especially important given that women conform to dress norms in the workplace to gain feelings of confidence and control (Baron 2013). Confidence is closely linked to feelings of self-efficacy (Bandura 1995), 'the belief in one's capability to produce desired effects or to achieve one's goals' (Baron 2013 p. 17), and psychological well-being, and is described by Pine (2014) as an internal motivation, whereas looking professional is an external motivation. From the participant responses, both internal and external motivations related to workplace dress are evident, demonstrating the importance of the individual and the social. Words such as **drab, dull** and **boring** suggest negativity associated with the workplace dress, indicating that the participants view dressing in the workplace as uninspiring and stylistically restrictive; the antithesis of Pine's (2014) happy clothes or hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) gained from clothes that make the wearer feel good or give feelings of pleasure.

Theme: The body is omnipresent

As established in section 2.5.4, well-being relates to the body. Douglas' two-bodies concept (1973) describes the individual, physical body and the social body, with Mida and Kim (2015) noting that agency is limited by the internalisation of societal norms. Well-being is also gained through confidence (see section 2.5.9). Miller (2008) relates confidence to having established

rules to follow. Orbach (1978) notes that limited representation of body shapes in mainstream media leads to a lack of self-esteem for those who do not conform to the represented norms. The participants displayed internalisation of a thin body ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) by providing negative and judgemental words about garments they considered **unflattering**, **baggy** and **shapeless**, such as garment 3, the boxy stripe top and garment 5, the tiger print silk shirt. It is interesting that judgements about fit were made, even though the garments were not shown on a body. The absence of a person in the photographs was designed to remove judgement about looks and size; on reflection, it may have empowered the participants to be more judgemental about the garments, due to the lack of human representation in the images. The negativity towards the hanging garment forms is an important consideration for brands and retailers, in terms of how they chose to show garments photographically. Photographing the garments on hangers led to some misinterpretation; for example, garment 4, the tailored suit jacket is a very fitted style, however the participants interpreted the photograph of it as **unflattering**, **shapeless**, **saggy** and **ill-fitting**.

Some of the younger, student participants seemed to be more accepting of non-restrictive styles, describing them as **oversized** and **loose**, compared to the more negative terms of **baggy** and **shapeless** used by the more mature NS participants. Garment 8, the handknit jumper was described by some participants as **bulky**, having a **bad shape**; again, evidencing the participants' concerns that the garment may be unflattering to the body. Garment 10, the joggers, reinforces the participants' body concerns, through the participants' association of this garment with **fat clothes**, **fat day** and being **overweight**. It may be that the more mature NS participants have stronger internalisation of thin ideals (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Brown and Dittmar 2005) and concepts of controlling the body that have been a feature of the self-help movement since the era of Jane Fonda in the 1980s (Bauman 2012), or it may be that the more mature participants have age-related socially-observable (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) body concerns (e.g. menopausal weight gain). Thus, these participants align with Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) suggestions that some older women continue to feel pressure to conform to youthful and slim ideals and Webster and Tiggemann's (2003) views that the normative nature of body dissatisfaction throughout a woman's lifespan is difficult to change. A few aged 45-64 participants indicated body concerns with garment 3, the stripe top, suggesting the style was **fattening**. On scrutiny of the participant responses to garment 15, the striped shift dress, the FM students were most accepting of it, the NFM students were a bit more judgemental and the NS participants were even more judgemental. It may be that the minimal shaping aesthetic is more accepted by those with fashion-specific knowledge, due to the success of Scandinavian minimalist brands (such as Cos and Arket) in recent years. The NS participants seemed more concerned with body shape issues, and less convinced

that the stripy shift dress would be flattering, describing it as having **no shape** or being **un-shapely**. Combined with the similar response to garment 3, the participant responses could reflect a popular notion that horizontal stripes are **not flattering**. The presence of body anxieties may well inhibit the P: Positive emotions element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, thus impacting on well-being.

Sub-theme: Camouflage continues

Several fashion researchers (Picardie 2015; Barnard 2002; Craik 1984) discuss the covered body, whereby loose-fitting clothes can be used to camouflage or disguise the body, while revealing insecurities and emotions. The findings from the 15 Garments task suggest that many of the participants utilise camouflage techniques. For example, one participant highlighted body anxiety about **bingo wings**, through negativity towards garment 2, a sleeveless floral dress. Several of the garments were described as **comfortable**, while also being described as **loose** and **oversized**, suggesting the physical comfort gained from non-restriction, as well as the psychological comfort of being able to cover or hide the body, described by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) as a conscious strategy to avoid objectification. There was no evidence of body positivity (i.e. having the confidence to wear revealing or tight-fitting garments if one is larger in size) (Kessel 2018) in the participant responses. The unstructured nature of camouflaging styles aligns with Entwistle's (2003) home-appropriate body.

Theme: The comfort of home

Well-being is associated with safety and space (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Holliday's (1999) research found that the home was a safe space, where one can wear physically comfortable clothing without the anxieties and fear of judgement that being in a public space can engender (Bauman 2012). Garment 13, the plain grey sweatshirt was located in the home environment by some of the participant responses, through their association of it with **sleepwear** and **bedtime**. This correlates with Holliday's (1999 p.489) discussion of comfort as a form of 'social detachment', a separation from others. Responses to this garment were largely benign; the participants were not overly positive or negative about it. It was linked with **leisure**, being **lazy**, **relaxed** and **chilled**, described as **loungewear** and associated with the weekend. In general, some of the younger participants (the students and age 18-30 non-students) seemed more focused on being at **home**, **lounging** and **chilling**, using those words more frequently. It may be that these participants feel more anxious due to being at a less settled, more transitional life-stage (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004), perhaps living away from the family home or not having a permanent home of their own. The NS participants associated garment 10, the joggers, with cleaning, which locates them in the home and aligns with Moran and Skeggs' (2004) association of comfort with the domestic. The student participants made no mention of cleaning! Words such as **home**, **relaxed**, **bath** and **bed** also place garment 1,

the dressing gown, in the home environment and suggest the P: Positive emotions element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, leading to well-being. Combined with the most prevalent word given for garment 1, cosy (a homely feeling of comfort, warmth and relaxation), the findings suggest the comfort of home.

Sub-theme: Slob shame

Well-being can relate to time, with leisure time an increasing focus of well-being in contemporary society (Buzasi 2018; Mintel 2017; Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015). Leisure clothing can be subject to judgement however, evidenced by the ridicule of joggers (Pine 2014) and Lagerfeld's description of joggers as a 'sign of defeat' (Hunt 2019 p. 42). Comfortable dress was indeed associated with shame by some participants, in line with Jayne and Ferencuhova's (2013) assertions that wearing comfortable clothes in public is regarded negatively in some cultures. However, the growth of the athleisure industry (WGSN 2015) suggests greater acceptance of casual, sportswear-inspired styles in a wider variety of social settings. A few participants associated garment 10, the joggers, and garment 13, the grey sweatshirt with their original function, mentioning **gymwear, sport, exercise, jogging**, the **gym** and **fitness**. However, **leisure** and **relaxation** were more prevalent associations with these two garments, through words such as **loungewear, chilling, slouchy, easy, homewear** and **Sundays**. Despite the clear comfort associations, there were a variety of negative and judgemental words used, with participants describing the joggers as **tacky, ugly** and **chavvy**, for **neds**. The sweatshirt was described as **frumpy, ugly, dull, boring** and **bland**. Binary to the gym and fitness associations, the joggers and sweatshirt were also associated with being **lazy**, which could be described as a negative moral value (Jayne and Ferencuhova 2013). Thus, despite being described as **convenient, practical, everyday** and **essential** by some, the shame of the sweatshirt, and especially the joggers, is suggested by the participants of this Comfort in Clothing study, in line with Jayne and Ferencuhova's (2013), Pine's (2014) and Hunt's (2019) assertions. This highlights the appearance anxieties associated with being on display in public spaces (Bauman 2012; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and the need for time out from the pressures of society, as well as the negative impact that the M: Meanings element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model can have on well-being. The participants' judgement of the sweatshirt and joggers suggest their internalisation of beauty and thin ideals, with these garments failing to support the need to look physically attractive in social settings (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997).

Theme: The problem with pattern

Well-being relates to individuality. Barnard (2002) describes how individuals ascribe meanings to garments, but notes that, because different interpretations exist, meanings are rarely individual; they are usually a product of history and culture. Accepted historical and cultural norms can be regarded as a form of censorship of the individual (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), especially in an

individualistic culture (Deci and Ryan 2000), or as providing a sense of belonging to a group (Mida and Kim 2015; Barnard 2014; Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943). Therefore, well-being is also engendered by a sense of community, meeting the need for social relationships with groups, friends and family; and clothing can facilitate group belonging and interaction. Conversely, Bauman (2012) noted the rise of individualism in contemporary society, linking this cultural nomadism to the rise in levels of anxiety as individuals lack the confidence and security of accepted norms to follow and cultures or groups to belong to. Several patterned garments were included in the 15 Garments task, and these clearly illustrated the different interpretations that people can have about the same item. The participant responses suggest that pattern and colour are the first design element that people react to. Eleven of the 15 garments had the colour or pattern identified within the three most frequently occurring words. However, it is the other words on the word clouds that reveal the participants' attitudes, emotions and cultural references towards pattern. There seems to be a strength of association with certain colours and patterns and some engender a strongly emotional response that aligns with Von Busch's (2016 p. 193) assertion that there can be 'inherent cruelty embedded in aesthetic judgements'. This again highlights the negative impact that the M: Meanings element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model can have on well-being, especially considering the wide choice of patterns available to consumers today and the anxiety that choice engenders (Bauman 2012). These judgements are expressed in four pattern-related sub-themes: Flowers are frumpy; Animals are awful; Stripes are strong; and Checks are country.

Sub-theme: Flowers are frumpy

There were two floral garments shown to the participants, garment 2, a sleeveless, short floral print skater-style dress and garment 11, an achromatic floral print pair of trousers. Both were from mass market high-street stores, aimed at late-adopters (Workman and Lee 2017) on the fashion adoption curve (i.e. those who wear styles that are perceived as the accepted norm), so these styles should have been unchallenging to maximise sales in this fashion consumer group. The participant responses though, were largely negative towards both garments. The floral dress was described as **ugly, old fashioned, frumpy, dull** and **boring**. Although some positive words were given (**nice, elegant**), they were less frequent and less emotional. Further scrutiny of the word cloud revealed a variety of strongly emotional and judgemental words used, including **horrible, yuk, disgusting, messy, awful** and **hideous**. Despite being described as frumpy, old fashioned, **mature** and **mumsy**, the dress style was also associated with youth, through words such as **childish, teenager, young** and **cute**. This suggests a design disconnect between the pattern, deemed old fashioned, and the garment shape, which has connotations of youth for participants, which leads to confusion and may have exacerbated the negative response.

Figure 78 Animal print cultural references



Some positive words were used to describe the floral trousers, including **stylish, vibrant, fun** and **cute**. These link to Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, the P: Positive emotions element of well-being. However, some binaries were evident in the participant responses, including **fashionable** versus **unfashionable** and **pretty** versus **ugly**, demonstrating the subjectivity of individual interpretation (Barnard 2002). Overall, a higher number and wider range of negative and judgemental words were evident, including **eyesore, garish, tacky, confusing** and **too much**. The participants' use of the words too much and confusing underpin Bauman's (2012) and Miller's (2008) assertions that contemporary society and its choices are overwhelming for consumers, leading to a state of hyper-arousal. The negative responses suggest that the participants are rejecting these **busy** floral patterns in preference of a simpler aesthetic. Some participants indicated that these busy floral trousers require a **confident** wearer, to be psychologically comfortable enough to be seen in this **wild, crazy, OTT** [Over The Top] style. The strength of negativity towards the two floral garments is surprising, as floral designs are a recurring trend, an enduring feature regarded as a design classic in the fashion industry and staple product category for womenswear and girls'wear in high-street fashion retailers.

Sub-theme: Animals are awful

There were two animal-print garments shown to the participants: garment 1, a leopard-print fleecy dressing gown, and garment 5, a tiger-print silk shirt. The negative reactions to the animal prints and the associations with cultural references of low social status indicate the participants' detachment from garments 1 and 5, highlighting the participants as social beings and the risk of judgement associated with class (Wood and Skeggs 2008; Savas 2004). The dressing gown was from a mass-market high street store, therefore should be an unchallenging style aimed at the late majority consumers on the fashion adoption curve. However, a strong negative theme was apparent in the participant responses towards the dressing gown, not through the key words that emerged, but through a variety of negative words associated with the **leopard** pattern, including **tacky** and **ugly**. The FM students were most accepting of the pattern, perhaps due to their fashion-specific knowledge and the status of leopard print as a design classic in the fashion industry. The NFM and NS participants were more critical, using a wide vocabulary of negative words, including **cluttered, horrible, eyesore, chav** and **brutal**. Cultural references were evident and differed between age cohorts, including loud, larger-than-life barmaids **Bet Lynch** and **Pat Butcher** for the NS participants and soap opera **EastEnders** for the younger student participants (see Figure 78); both seem to connote participants found the pattern uncomfortably **loud**, evidencing the participants' preference for less excessive, middle-class clothing styles (Wood and Skeggs 2008).

There was almost universal dislike for the tiger-print silk shirt. The participants reacted to the tiger pattern with extreme negativity. The aesthetics of the pattern were judged as **disgusting, awful, hideous, gaudy, gross, garish** and an

Figure 79 Stripe cultural references



eyesore, evidencing a wide vocabulary of judgemental words that aligns with Von Busch's (2016) description of the cruelty of aesthetic judgements. Again, the FM students were slightly less judgemental, perhaps due to their fashion-specific knowledge and the fact that animal prints are rarely out of fashion; indeed, animal prints are a design signature for several high-fashion designer brands. As high street fashion trends traditionally trickle down (Jones 2005) from high-fashion designer brands, the participant responses to this Comfort in Clothing study could suggest a disconnect between fashion designers, trends and what mass market consumers are willing to wear. Some positive words were used, such as **unique** and **fun**, however these were less prevalent and less emotional compared to the negative words used. Some participants, even those aged 65+, described the garment as **dated**, **old fashioned** and **mumsy**. The silk shirt was from a French high-end high-street brand, aimed at a youthful and edgy early adopter fashion consumer, so misunderstanding about the style might be expected from the older participants as the garment is not aimed at them. However, the dated perception was also evident in the younger participants' responses. This dated perception is reinforced by association with the past, namely the **1970s** (seen as a decade of bad taste), and words such as **tacky**, which in turn aligns with the **Austin Powers** popular cultural reference, a character of ridicule mentioned by a few participants across all the age ranges. The silk shirt was also associated with **African** culture, evidenced by words such as **safari** and **wild**. This association relates to the printed pattern, as the shirt style does not have any specific cultural relevance to Africa, suggesting that the strong print overrides the garment shape to imbue meaning. The culturally disparate references of Austin Powers and Africa align with Barnard's (2002) assertions on the different meanings that can be ascribed to products, based on different cultures and histories. M: Meanings can be linked to well-being, as shown in Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, however the ambiguity of meaning highlighted by the participants suggests anxiety and judgement continue to be inherent elements of dress practice.

Sub-theme: Stripes are strong

There were two stripe garments shown to the participants: garment 3, a jersey stripe top and garment 15, a stripe shift dress. The stripe top was from a mass-market high-street retailer aimed at a younger/ student demographic and the shift dress from a mass-market high street retailer aimed at a more mature customer. Connotative associations were evident in the participant responses towards the stripe top. The participants described the garment as **nautical**, linking the stripes with the traditional uniform of a **sailor**. Cultural associations were made, as some participants recognised this as a classic **French Breton** style. Some participants identified it as **American**, perhaps due to the red, white and blue colour combination and flag-like stripes. The **preppy** subculture was mentioned by a few participants and is also linked with America. Several participants made intertextual reference to **Where's Wally**, a children's book character who wears a red and white striped top. These culturally diverse references (see Figure 79) again align with Barnard's (2002) assertions that

Figure 80 Stripe cultural references 2

DENNIS THE MENACE



GARMENT 15



FREDDY KRUEGER



different meanings can be assigned to the same product, based on different cultural backgrounds and histories. Other positives included **easy, stylish, trendy** and **cute**. Some negatives were evident, with participants using words such as **boring, frumpy, mumsy** and **middle-aged**. These opinions evidence a disconnect related to the garment's intended audience, as it is from a brand that targets a younger, student-aged consumer.

The stripe pattern on garment 15, the shift dress, had several connotations for the participants, leading to some ambiguity in the results. The most frequently mentioned intertextual reference was **Dennis the Menace**, linking the stripes and colours with the cartoon character's stripy jumper. A few participants associated the stripes with **prison** and **convicts**. The horror character **Freddy Kruger** was also mentioned by a few participants, again due to the stripes and colours of his stripy jumper. These intertextual references (see Figure 80) are probably not what high-street retailer Marks and Spencer hoped for when designing the dress for their more mature, late-adopter fashion consumer, but do highlight the visual power of pattern and colour in the making of cultural associations, alluding to the occularcentricity (Rose 2001) of contemporary society. These examples suggest the meanings associated with this garment would not engender a sense of well-being, based on the M: Meaning element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model. However, binaries of **bold** and **boring**, and **casual** versus **workwear** are evident in the participant responses, demonstrating the subjectivity of individual interpretation (Barnard 2002). Some positivity is evident, through words such as **easy, elegant, classic** and **versatile**. Some negative words are also evident, with participants somewhat cruelly referring to the garment's aesthetics as **horrible, ugly, dull** and **bland** (Von Busch 2016). Overall, opinions towards the striped garments were reasonably neutral, especially compared to the strength of negativity shown towards the floral and animal print patterned garments. The description of both stripe garments as **bold** by the participants, suggests associations with confidence, esteem (Maslow 1943) and standing out through appearance, i.e. positive associations that demonstrate the cultural and commercial strength of stripe patterns. The cultural references to nationalities (French and American) and the intertextual references to the children's characters (Where's Wally and Dennis the Menace) can be linked to feelings of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995) or nostalgia (Belk 1988), which form eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). Links with nationality, a sense of belonging and the past also link with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment to products. Thus, the participant responses to the stripe garments in this Comfort in Clothing study suggest that stripe patterns have a variety of cultural meanings, some of which are regarded positively and may offer a sense of psychological comfort and well-being.

Figure 81 Tartan cultural references



Sub-theme: Checks are country

There were two checked garments shown to the participants: garment 12, a neutral coloured houndstooth check pair of trousers and garment 14, a bright red tartan check shirt. Both garments were from high-street retailers aimed towards late adoption fashion consumers; the tartan shirt aimed at a younger/student mass-market customer segment and the checked trousers towards a more mature customer. For some participants, the **countryside** association and **classic** look of the checked trousers had positive connotations of **heritage**, **vintage** and **Scottish**-ness. However, there was little excitement or enthusiasm for this garment evident in the participant responses; it was negatively described as **dull**, **boring**, **bland**, **ugly**, **horrible** and an **eyesore**, suggesting the **brown** colour abnegates some of the positivity associated with the check pattern.

Unsurprisingly, the tartan shirt evidenced connotations of place, related to **Scottish** culture, underpinned by reference to the **Highlands**. However, tartan on a shirt style also elicited **American** cultural references from some participants, such as **cowboy**, **country and western**, **hillbilly** and **lumberjack** (see Figure 81). Few negative words (**loud**, **garish** and **busy**) were associated with the tartan shirt. Positive words were more prevalent, including **fun**, **vibrant**, **eye-catching**, **cool** and **nice**. Overall, the participants viewed the tartan shirt positively, describing it as **casual**, **relaxed**, **easy** and an **everyday wearable** style, associated with the **weekend**. This shows the broad acceptance of tartan, perhaps due to the familiarity of this pattern, which is ever-present in autumn/winter fashion collections. For both checked garments, the cultural reference to nationality and heritage again links with Masuch and Hefferon's (2014) concept of eudaimonic well-being and Savas' (2004) theory of attachment, suggesting the psychological comfort of history and nostalgia. The use of place names connotes a sense of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) and home to the garments, with place identified by Belk (1988) as crucial category of the extended self, suggesting that check patterns offer a sense of solidity and community (Bauman 2012; Faiers 2008) that could engender well-being.

In summary, for the participants of this Comfort in Clothing study, there is a suggestion that wearing busy patterns risks the psychological discomfort or cruelty (Von Busch 2016) of judgement from others. There is a sense of aesthetic detachment, due to the participants' dislike of certain colours and patterns (Savas 2004), which could be attributed to the internalisation of a less-is-more middle-class aesthetic propagated by the media (Wood and Skeggs 2008). It also suggests hyper-arousal in their already busy lives (Bauman 2012; Miller 2008). Busier patterns such as florals and animal prints engender more negative reactions, while the greater simplicity and order of checks and stripes are more easily accepted, providing an element of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) and eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014).

Figure 82 Floral trouser cultural references



Theme: The judgement of status

Well-being is linked to emancipation, aligned with the need for autonomy (Deci and Ryan 2000), and income, with clothing signifying social status and wealth (Women Fashion Power 2015). The participant responses indicate judgement towards some of the styles presented in the 15 garments task, in terms of both social status and perceived value. For example, garment 11, the floral trousers, was perceived as **cheap** by some participants, and associated with the budget high street brand **Primark**. Two subculture references were present in the responses to the floral trousers, **gypsy** and **hippy** (see Figure 82), both of which are associated with floral patterns and with lack of money, suggesting that participants viewed the garment as cheap and of low social status. Garment 1, the leopard print dressing gown was also described as **cheap**, with cultural references to animal-print-wearing barmaids suggesting association with **chavs** of low social status. Garment 10, the joggers, was described as **common, cheap, unfashionable, dull** and **ugly**, linked with the undesirable, **tacky** social status of **chavs** and **neds** (Skeggs 2005). The participants feared judgement from wearing the joggers in public, aligning with Jayne and Ferencuhova's (2013) description of cultural associations with the wearing of comfortable clothes in public spaces as backward or uncultured. Thus, the participants demonstrate a level of internalisation of middle-class values, possibly propagated by mainstream media and political narratives (Wood and Skeggs 2008). Internalisation is a necessary aspect of social cohesion (Ryan, Connell and Deci 1985), linking the participants' opinions with a need for belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943).

Figure 83 Tweed cultural references

BURBERRY BRAND



GARMENT 12



POSH HERITAGE



Garment 12, the neutral checked trousers, was assigned a high social status by some of the participants, with the combination of neutral colour and check suggesting **heritage**, the **classic** look of the luxury brand **Burberry** and being **posh** (see Figure 83). This evidences commodity fetishism (Thompson 2017: Belk 1988), where luxury branding commands a higher price than the use-value of the product by connoting values beyond the rational use-value of the product. Corner (2014) notes the rise in interest in craft techniques such as handknits and tweed fabrics, as people find comfort in tradition during times of uncertainty. Some participants wrongly identified the checked trousers as being tweed, showing at least some awareness of tweed and its status as a classic, heritage fabric. The only handmade garment in the 15 garments task was garment 8, the handknit jumper. It was correctly identified as hand knitted by some of the age 31+ participants, but wrongly identified as crochet by one aged 18-30 participant. While some negativity was evident towards the shape of the handknit jumper, some participants associated it with **traditional** and **vintage** value, aligned with the past as discussed in Savas' (2004) theory of attachment. Overall, the younger participants showed some disconnect with traditional fabrics, heritage and craft techniques, which may link with the rise of fast fashion as discussed in section 2.1.3 of the literature review, whereby the fast disposal of cheap garments is linked with Bauman's (2012) fluid modernity; where long-term is replaced by short-term.

Figure 84 Colour connotations



Theme: The emotion of colour (see Figure 84)

Well-being is affected by colour, with Eisman (2006) noting that reaction to colour tends to be emotional, and some suggestion that bright colours can make one feel happy (Pine 2014; Solomon and Rabolt 2009). Garments 8, 10 and 13 were described as **happy** by a few participants, however happiness did not emerge as a key category. Garment 8 was the bright red handknit jumper, aligning with Pine and Solomon and Rabolt's assertions re bright colours. The **bright, red** colour of garment 8, combined with the traditional handknit construction, was associated with the happiness and nostalgia (Savas 2004) of the **festive, Christmas** season and **cosy, warm** comfort, evidencing a sense of eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) from psychological comfort, as well as the physiological comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) of warmth. Garment 10 was the dark grey joggers and garment 13 was the grey sweatshirt, thus the participants' association of these styles with happiness is at odds with Pine and Solomon and Rabolt. However, grey is regarded as a safe and secure colour (Solomon and Rabolt 2009), which may be a reason for the participants' positive responses to these grey garments. Grey and black are described by McDowell (1997) as the uniform of heteromascularity and this traditional, cultural norm was evident in the participant responses, with the dark grey garments (garment 4, the tailored jacket and garment 10, the joggers) variously described as **manly, masculine, male, boyish** and **unisex**.

Black has many connotations, including strength, power, prestige, conservatism, convention and seriousness (Eisman 2006). Some participant responses show agreement, with the tailored jacket (which some described as black) associated with being **bossy** and **formal**, with **business** and the **office**. Participants used words such as **strict, uniform, manager** and **structure** to highlight the suit jacket's connotations of **power**, aligning with Peluchette, Karl and Rust's (2006) assertions that workplace clothing can afford power to the wearer. The participants' association of the suit jacket with workplace performance and control, and the red jumper with happiness, aligns with previous research that suggests wearing black and red colours improves confidence (Eisman 2006). Miller (2008) notes the role of minimalist colours, such as black and white, in counteracting the hyper-arousal of contemporary times. There is some agreement with this in the participant responses, as the overall reactions towards the dark or white garments were largely benign; the participants were not overly positive or negative about them, in comparison with the highly emotional and judgemental responses (Von Busch 2016) seen towards the very busy, patterned or coloured garments.

In summary, analysis of the 15 garments' data for well-being themes identified in section 2.5 and Figure 16 revealed that comfort, safety, place, time, the body, social interaction, appearance management, work, confidence, colour and happiness were all evident in the participants' responses. Further analysis resulted in six key themes: the boredom of work; the body is omnipresent; the comfort of home; the problem with pattern; the judgement of status; and the emotion of colour. The themes and their associated sub-themes: camouflage continues, slob shame, flowers are frumpy, animals are awful, stripes are strong and checks are country, are presented as a relational diagram (see Figure 85). The boredom of work theme evidences the psychological well-being engendered by structure, defined roles and dressing the part, however this is countered by the lack of positive emotions associated with the narrow confines of work dress norms. The problem with pattern was the most prominent category, evidenced by the four sub-themes associated with it. Combined with the emotion of colour theme, the importance of garment aesthetics and cultural associations as shared consumption symbols (Belk 1988) to the participants' sense of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995) and psychological well-being is a key finding. The body is omni-present is also a key finding, evident in its named theme and the camouflage continues sub-theme, but also in narratives associated with the comfort of home (the home-appropriate body), the boredom of work (the work-appropriate body) and the problem with pattern, where some patterns were deemed to impact negatively on body image. Thus, the importance of clothing and dress practice in managing psychological well-being related to the participants' body image concerns is emphasised, anchored by a sense of normative discontent towards the body (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1984). The comfort of home theme and slob shame sub-theme emphasise the key finding of the participants' need for leisure time in the sanctuary and safety of the home space, a judgement-free place for comfortable dress practice; again, suggesting psychological well-being. Judgement is an unexpected key finding, evident in the judgement of status theme but inherent in all the other themes and sub-themes. Overall, the themes are underpinned by Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self, highlighting the interplay of clothing, people and place, and Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity, highlighting the pressure and responsibility that come with an individual's freedom of choice related to dress practice. The influence of belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943), or community is emphasised, in the form of 'a multitude of competing values, norms and lifestyles, without a firm and reliable guarantee of being in the right' (Bauman 2012 p. 214).

Figure 85 Well-being, comfort and clothing II



4.3

COMFORTABLE CLOTHED IDENTITIES *

Image/narrative task: Fashion photoshoot elicitation

4.3.1 Method overview

In keeping with fashion's location within visual culture (Smelik 2015), the fashion photoshoot image and narrative task involved the collection of participant-produced visuals, described as a form of photo elicitation. Three cohorts of stage-4 fashion management (FM) students were briefed to create photographic fashion images styled on a 'Comfort in Clothing' or 'Discomfort: Fashion Victim' category, accompanied by 100-word narratives. These multi-modal image and narrative elicitations provided personal and individual data, linking to Bauman's (2012) description of contemporary society as being highly individualised. This task sought to contribute to the analysis of the role and value of comfort in clothing to women in the UK by addressing RQ5: what subjective associations and lived experiences do UK females have with comfort or discomfort in clothing?

Analysis of the narrative data followed grounded theory principles; multimodal textual analysis was employed, with the narratives subject to line by line initial coding (Charmaz 2006), and the images coded using a semiotic system of sign and signified (see section 3.2.12 and Table 16). The images provided a rich source of additional data that demonstrated internalisation of media ideals, depth of feelings, lived experiences, priorities and concerns. Emergent codes were in vivo (Richards 2009), named using words from within the narratives. Each cohort of data was analysed separately, then codes and categories from all 3 years were compared.

Focused coding of the data led to categories being reduced and developed into overarching frameworks, where the formation and communication of identity emerged strongly within this sample of fashion-focused participants. Psychological theory was explored in section 2.8 Psychology, revealing that individuals perform multiple identities (as discussed in section 2.6 Identity), dependent on the reaction of others and filtered by previous, lived experience. Fashion was found to be a recognized method of communicating identity in the social space with Mair (2018) and Pine (2014) citing literature that suggests the physical response to psychological constructs or meanings associated with certain garments can be used to change or enhance mood. Four comfortable clothed identities emerged from the data: the private self, the unrestricted self, the body-conscious self and the confident self (see Figure 86). These are discussed in section 4.3.2, with words from the participants' narratives shown in **bold**.

* A double-peer reviewed version of Section 4.3 was published as a paper presentation at the 2019 IFFTI Conference in Manchester, titled *Comfort in Clothing: fashion actors and victims (Paper 168)*, available from: <http://fashioninstitute.mmu.ac.uk/iffiti2019/papers/>

COMFORTABLE CLOTHED IDENTITIES

The Private Self



The Unrestricted Self



The Body-conscious Self



The Confident Self

THE PRIVATE SELF

Figure A



Figure B



Figure C



Figure D

4.3.2 Focused coding

The largest clothing category to emerge from the data, across all three cohorts of participants, was knitwear. This was not unexpected, as the physical and physiological aspects of comfort related to knitwear are well documented. In addition, knitwear was on-trend for the duration of the data collection so should have been at the forefront of the fashion students' thoughts, given their knowledge of fashion forecasting. Finally, the data-collection period (October to December) is traditionally associated with knitwear in the fashion calendar. In line with Kamalha *et al.* (2013), some participants acknowledged the physiological comfort of knitwear, using words such as **warm** and **cosy** in the narratives. In contrast, many of the images showed the knitwear styled with bare skin. These images were either taken in a studio setting (see Figure A and Figure D), or at home, usually sitting on the bed (see Figure B). Thus, the private self emerges (Figure 87), an identity symbolised by models on their own, blinds shut and curtains drawn. Knitwear, despite its proven warmth credentials, is not for wearing outside or in social settings. For most of these participants, knitwear is a form of loungewear, associated with home and relaxation, described by several 2015 participants as **me-time**. The wearer is not on show, finding relaxation in the privacy of the home environment (see Figure C), described by KCP9721 as the **most genuine self** and by KCP6823 as a place **where I am not worried about how I look**. This agrees with Holliday's (1999) identification of home as a safe haven for comfort dressing and Entwistle's (2003) concept of the home-appropriate body. The private self was also clad in nightwear, again in all three cohorts but more so amongst the 2017 participants. KCP11221 states **Pyjamas... are garments rarely seen by the outside world; there is comfort in those moments of being our authentic selves**, and uses hyperbole to describe pyjamas as the **heroes of home comfort**. Several participants used emotional words (Saldana 2016) such as **joyful** (KCP9721) and **delight** (KCP11221) when describing arriving home and changing out of everyday clothes into pyjamas, with KCP11821 noting **there is no better feeling**. This aligns with Baron's (2013) pleasure-invisible category of dress, where pleasure-inducing pampering or self-care is involved and appearance is not judged.

THE UNRESTRICTED SELF

Figure E



Figure F

Many participants placed emphasis on loose, oversized knits, **being able to move without restriction** (KCP9021), establishing a second identity, the unrestricted self (Figures 88 and 89). Participants used words such as **freedom** (KCP14023) and **ease** (KCP10622). The unrestricted self is associated with simplicity, with KCP12021 stating **the outfit is uncomplicated**. KCP13022 styles her oversized knitted jumper with **minimal makeup** and **hair hanging naturally** (see Figure E). KCP9721 notes that **comfort is not extravagant or over-the-top, it is rather undemanding**. It is worth noting that the person attributes (Sontag 1985) of the student participants include busy and complicated lives; balancing study, part-time work, family, friends, relationships and social media, and the environmental attributes see them inhabiting multiple spaces (Crewe 2017). Thus, the unrestricted self seems to focus on uncomplicated dress practices, using clothing that can span both private and public settings, in line with Baron's (2013) duty-visible category, where dress requires an element, but not an excess of personal care. In terms of psychological comfort, the preference for oversized clothing could signify decreased mental well-being, as Pine's (2014) research found that people tend to wear baggy tops when feeling low. However, loose and oversized were often used in conjunction with words conveying softness against the skin, visualised via teddy bears, furry cushions and blankets, highlighting the importance of physical comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) and haptic qualities (Peck and Childers 2003) to the participants. The unrestricted self was represented by several other types of clothing including activewear, lingerie and nightwear; notably all tend to be in direct contact with the skin. For example, Figure F features yoga clothing and a model in a yoga pose, demonstrating how clothes can move with the body. Similarly, KCP2420 features activewear to signify **freedom of movement while working out**.

THE UNRESTRICTED SELF

Figure G



Figure H



Figure I



Figure J

Freedom of movement is a phrase used by several participants (KCP10022, KCP7421, KCP5621, KCP1920, KCP13722), mainly in relation to activewear or models in the images being active rather than static, as shown by Figure G's dancer. Interestingly, bare skin, prevalent in the private self, is also present in the unrestricted self. KCP1920 describes a pair of ripped, loose fitting jeans, chosen **to expose the skin** (see Figure H). Figure G's dancer has bare legs and feet and KCP14023's model has bare legs, binary to the accompanying narrative's emphasis on warmth and the chunky knit and blanket as signifiers of warmth in the image. In a more extreme narrative, KCP11321 describes the **instant relaxation the individual feels when escaping from the imprisonment clothing offers**, translated into an image where the model is loosely draped in a silky dressing gown (see Figure J), suggesting that bare equates to freedom for these participants. Using similar language in a completely different context, KCP2923 locates the unrestricted self on the street, stating **they wear loose clothes to signify a physical and psychological release from restraint or confinement** (see Figure I), rejecting the tradition of restrictive female fashion (Corner 2014).

THE BODY-CONSCIOUS SELF

Figure K



Figure L

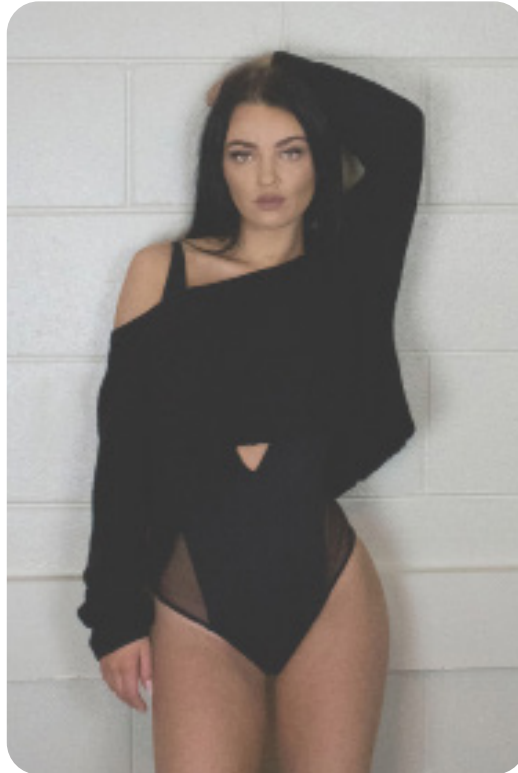


Figure M



Figure N

A further identity, initially related to oversized knits emerged: the body-conscious self (Figures 90 and 91). The body-conscious self focused on the psychological comfort gained from oversized tops worn when body confidence was low. For example, KCP1322 states that an oversized jacket **completely hides the model's figure**, noting that a **negative body image creates the need to mask the body with oversized clothing** (see Figure K). The body-conscious self was also present in narratives and images featuring the colour black as a slimming colour (Eisman 2006), and the classic little black dress (Fox 2018). KCP11221's narrative states that **women, particularly young women turn the body project into a full-time occupation with their focus being on the thin ideal**, rejecting the current body positive zeitgeist (Sastre 2014). This narrative is accompanied by an image epitomising the thin ideal (see Figure L). Several participants agreed with KCP10220's assertion that **the pressure to look perfect is felt more than ever**. KCP2324 states that **today's society is constantly exposed to advertisements and products that focus on an idealised image**. As the participants have studied marketing, advertising and women in the media subjects, their knowledge of idealised imagery is not unexpected and it is clear from the findings that it causes them anxiety. Their focus on the thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Fitzimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005) suggests the body positivity movement is still niche rather than the norm, aligning with Foucault's assertion that bodies are self-disciplined according to the time and space they find themselves in (1977, cited in Mida and Kim 2015).

The focus on the body moves from camouflage (Picardie 2015; Craik 1994) to control in KCP11321's narrative, describing the **fit and structure of a bra to make you feel safe**. KCP4120 contrasts the physical discomfort of wearing a corset with the psychological comfort gained from the changed body shape, described by KCP3524 as **unnatural body modification** linked to **unrealistic pressure laid on women's physical appearance**. KCP3922's narrative also focuses on control, stating **the restriction of movement which the waist trainer conveys is a reflection of today's celebrity culture, and how the media present body image in a constraining manner, emphasising the requirement to be slim, to conform**, again ignoring the body positivity movement prevalent in recent fashion media. In the accompanying image, the waist trainer is worn on top of a comfortable, loose white shirt, shaping both the shirt and the body underneath, a visible statement of control (see Figure M). KCP9220's image (see Figure N) shows the body uncomfortably controlled with Spanx shapewear and a waist trainer, the dark background, uncomfortable pose and strained facial expression signifying discomfort. This narrative describes the wearer as an actor, wearing a costume required to **play a role convincingly**, aligning with Entwistle's (2003) research that posits dress as a means of controlling and managing bodies in social settings.

THE BODY-CONSCIOUS SELF

Figure 0



KCP10220 visualises the body-conscious self as a **vulnerable woman, who has become a victim to the pressures of the fashion and beauty world; willing to put her body through pain and discomfort in order to make herself feel accepted and comfortable in the real world** (see Figure O). The image uses a jagged black crime scene outline to define the body as a fashion victim (Almond 2014); the model lies motionless and devoid of emotion as she is manipulated by external, faceless agents. Thus, the body-conscious self is a public persona, using fashion and clothing binaries to camouflage or control the body, with the goal of fitting in with a desired community identity. KCP4120 confirms the influence of the public, stating that people believe that **others judge them**, suggesting that Cooley's (2009[1902]) Looking Glass Theory remains pertinent today and correlating with Bauman's (2012) assertion that having a common identity offers security in contemporary society.

THE CONFIDENT SELF

Figure P



Figure Q

Another public persona emerged from the data through the theme of confidence, providing psychological comfort that KCP3121 describes as **exactly how she wants to feel when going on a night out**. This aligns with Guy and Banim's (2000 p. 316) aspirational or strived-for self, the 'woman I want to be' and Markus and Nurius' (1986) ideal self one would like to become. Many participants agreed that the confident self (Figures 92 and 93) prioritises psychological comfort, often enduring physical discomfort to do so. KCP3121's narrative states that **specific garments aid confidence and psychological comfort yet are uncomfortable to wear**. In the accompanying image the model wears a classic, fitted little black dress and high heels. Linked with high heels, the confident self is often described by the participants as sexy. KCP8921 asserts **magazines are particularly guilty of presenting the conformist ideology that women should be in heels, with accentuated legs, sexy poses, confident attitudes**. This narrative is accompanied by an image of high heels and a bruised foot on a grotty pavement, surrounded by darkness; the bruises and background signifying discomfort and the fashion victim theme (see Figure P). Similarly, KCP5323's **scene from the night before** (see Figure Q) shows the **extreme, contradictory emotions of adoration and resentment that a woman can have for high heeled shoes**. Cards and alcohol are used to signify addictive behaviour, red is used to connote both sexiness and danger with the skull emphasising the danger theme. The shiny glitter-ball and patent shoes signify the glamour and debauchery of a night out. The narrative continues the contradiction, noting positives that the heels **make the wearer walk taller and appear more confident**. KCP10421 agrees that heels are uncomfortable to wear but also notes their ability to boost self-esteem and confidence. Thus, this is intentional dress (Rudd and Lennon 2000), where the participants manage their appearance to meet cultural ideals and normative expectations, gaining respite from the anxiety of individualistic choice (Bauman 2012).

THE CONFIDENT SELF

Figure R



Figure S



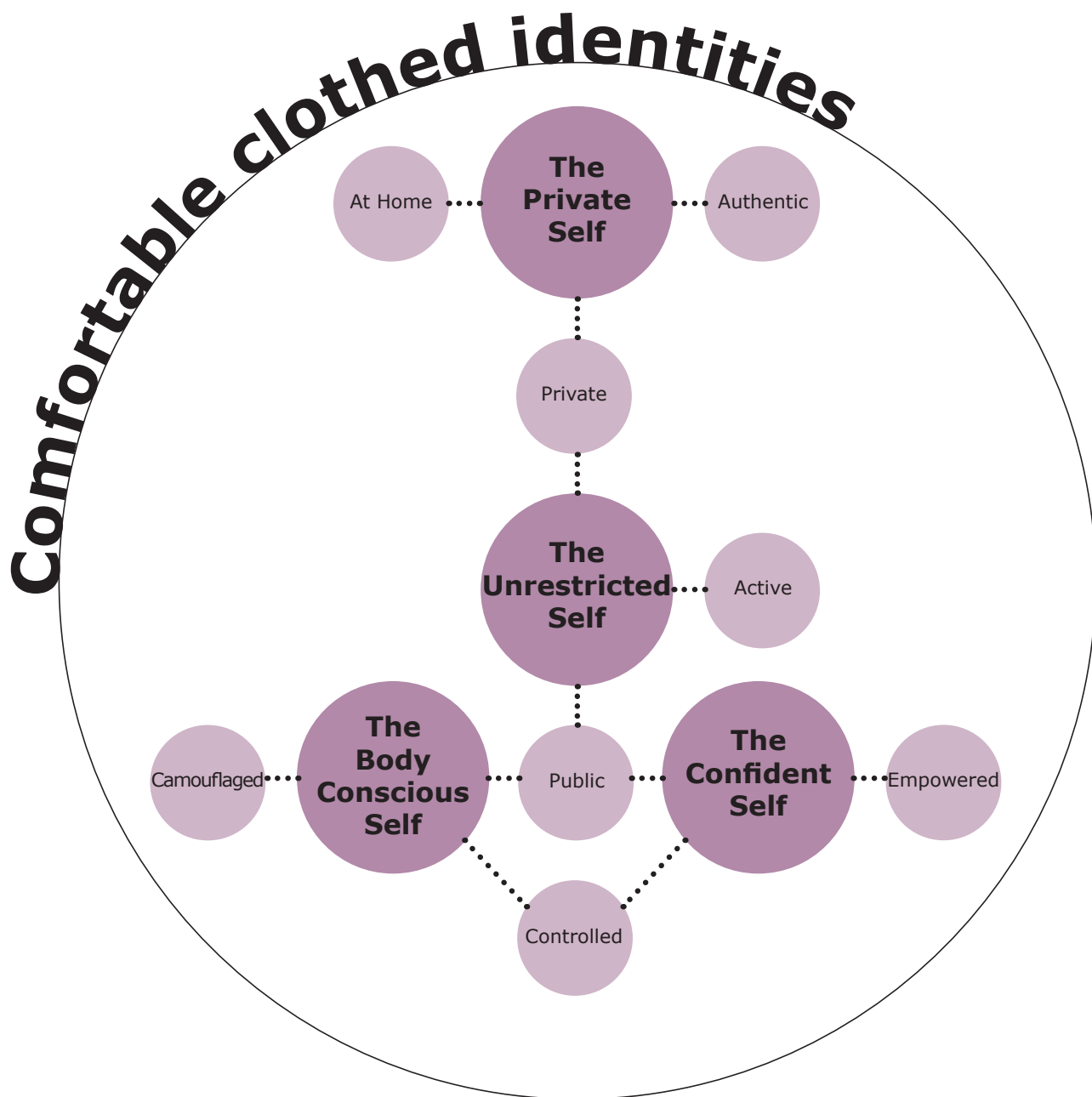
Figure T

Continuing the physical discomfort/psychological comfort binary, KCP10022 created an image with a little black dress and knee high boots, describing it as coordinated and very **put together**. The narrative states: **despite the physical discomfort, the attentively put-together look, portraying a completely different identity of myself, made me feel extremely confident** (see Figure R). Being elegant and fashionable, translated visually into smart and coordinated clothing, is also highlighted in Figure S, and aligns with Pine's (2014) findings that 73% of women dress up to feel confident. Confidence in coordination was also gained from lingerie, with KCP6322 stating: **when a woman is wearing matching underwear, she feels quietly confident and feels she has her life together**. KCP8222 agrees, stating **it's what's underneath that counts**, describing the bra as signifying the **foundation of the outfit**, adding to **inner confidence and a feeling of security**. This suggests internal motivations (Pine 2014), rather than external motivations such as looking sexy or fashionable. A few participants related confidence to activewear, with KCP12720 noting the **confidence and empowerment athleisure clothing can provide to the wearer**. This is evident in Figure T's powerfully-posed and almost intimidating group of girls, styled in a streetwear athleisure aesthetic, against an unsettling backdrop of rough seas and urban graffiti. This moves the confident self from mainly hedonic (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), put-together, making-an-effort looks to a more functional or utilitarian context. Similarly, KCP12720 locates her athleisure clothing in an industrial background to signify that **athleisurewear can be worn anywhere**, in line with Hancock's (2016) assertion that the growth in activewear sales is due to versatility, as well as fashionability and comfort. KCP2521's image shows a close up of hiking boots (see Figure U), accompanied by a narrative that explains she has problems with her feet, and that the boots **give her the support she needs and increase her confidence levels because she knows that they will prevent her from injuring herself**, another example of confidence gained via feeling safe.

Figure U

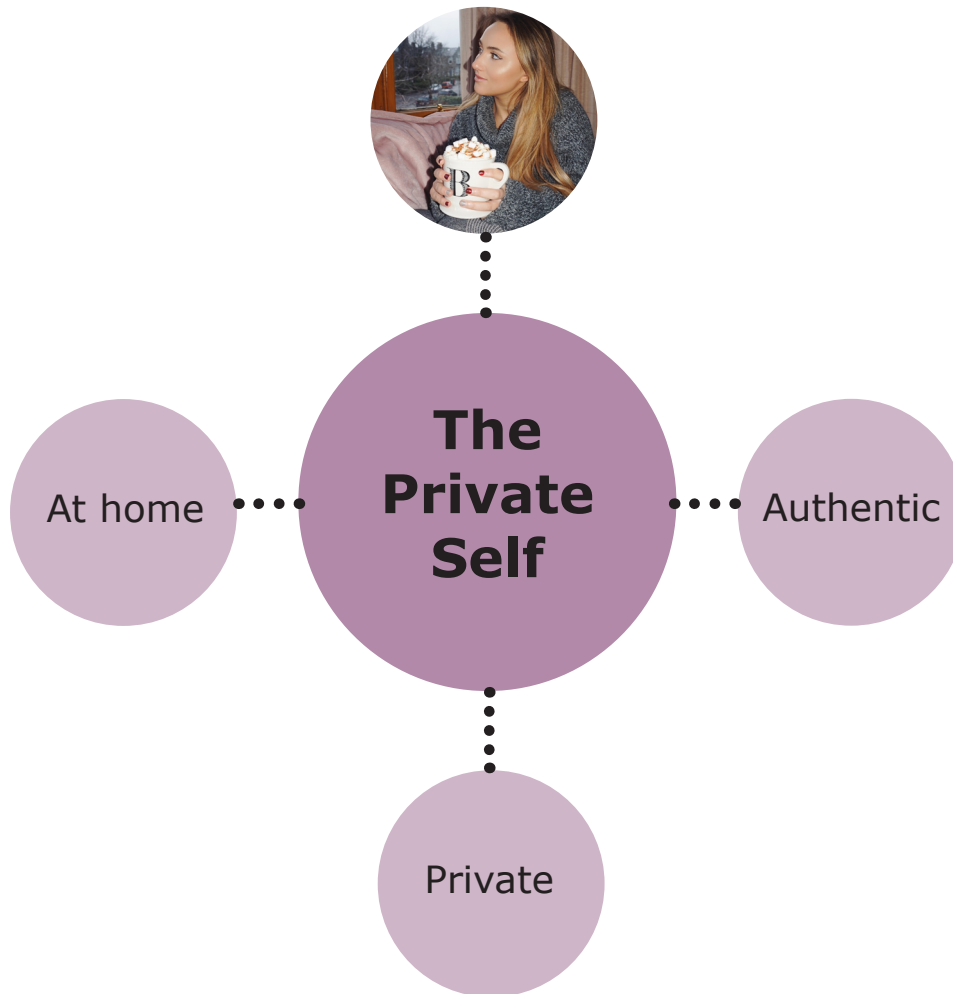


Figure 94 Comfortable clothed identities



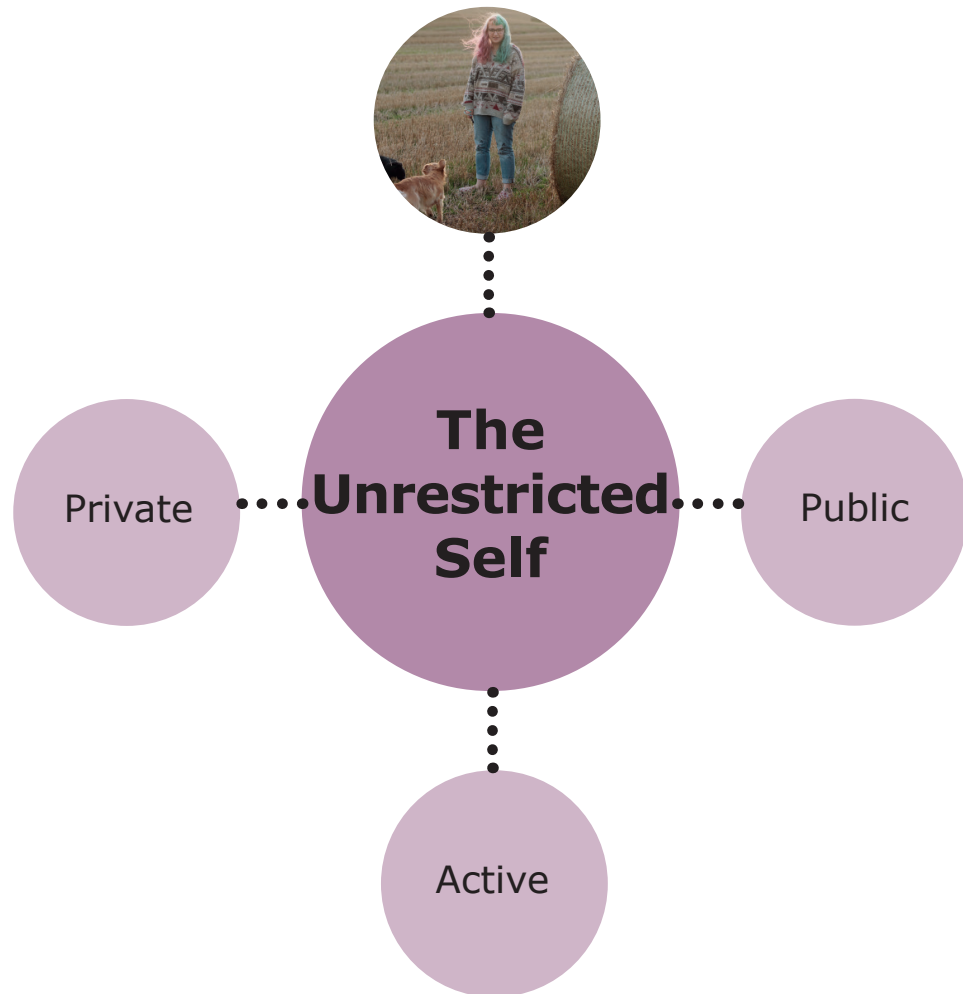
In summary, from participant responses to the fashion photoshoot elicitation task, four identities emerged; the private self, the unrestricted self, the body-conscious self and the confident self (see Figure 94). All four placed the most importance on environmental attributes (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) such as location, occasion, social-cultural settings and norms. Person attributes focused on the body: bare, camouflaged or controlled. Camouflaged and controlled aligns with the work of Picardie (2015), Corner (2014), Pine (2014), Entwistle (2003), Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) and many others. The participants' focus on bare skin was not reflected strongly in the literature reviewed but may be attributed to the FM students' exposure to and specialist knowledge of fashion-media imagery in Western culture, which often does feature bare skin. Surprisingly, given that the participants were FM students, clothing attributes such as fashion, style, colour and texture were given limited attention, and usually in relation to the body rather than current trends. Two fashion trends were evident, that of knitwear and athleisure wear (Hancock 2016).

Figure 95 The private self



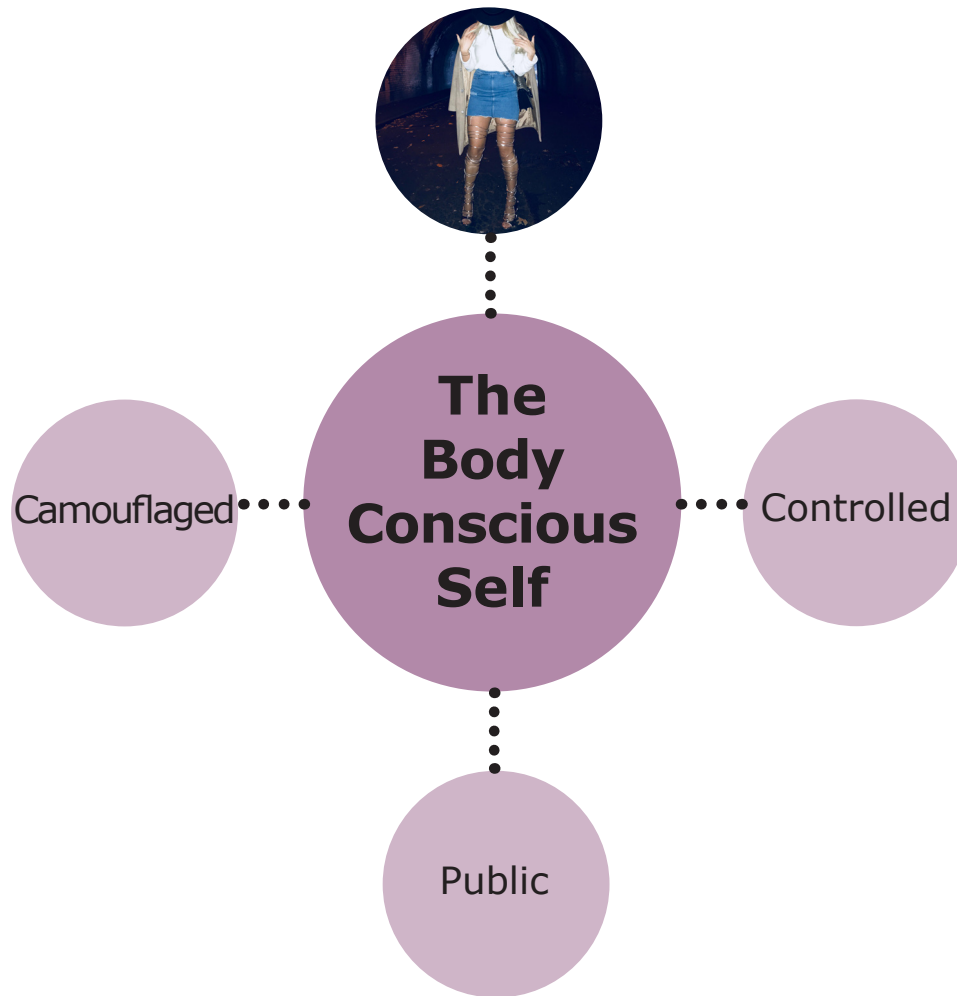
The private self (Figure 95) is an authentic identity, devoid of performance and linked to the security of home, aligning with Holliday (1999) and Baron's (2013) pleasure-invisible category of dress and Entwistle's (2003) home-appropriate body. This could be linked to the participants' student status, as many will be living away from their family home while studying, thus seeking security and comfort. A narrow range of clothing is utilised within this identity, comprising oversized knits, pyjamas and unstructured lingerie, physically and psychologically comforting. The focus on knits within the images could be attributed to the FM students' knowledge of knitwear trends, prevalent during the data-gathering period.

Figure 96 The unrestricted self



The unrestricted self (Figure 96) is both a private and public identity, linked to freedom, to move, to think, to be. The range of clothing employed is expanded to encompass activewear, streetwear and jeans as well as the oversized knits and nightwear, relevant to the variety of locations (Crewe 2017) and situations, but still simple and easy. While the private self is stationary, reading, drinking tea, lounging on sofas and beds, the unrestricted self is busy, moving and active. This identity focuses on the self, even when in public, seeming unconcerned with the judgement of others, happy to dress in an uncomplicated manner with loose hair and no makeup. It could be linked to the participants' student status, where study and part-time jobs perhaps negate the need for a more professional and put-together look.

Figure 97 The body-conscious self



The body-conscious self (Figure 97) also uses oversized clothing, but this time is firmly located in the public space, aware of others and their potential judgement. In this identity, oversized clothing provides camouflage and protection, both of which were identified in Section 2.5 as being important to well-being. The body-conscious self is more complex than the first two identities; as well as utilising oversized clothing, psychological comfort is gained from the binary opposite of restrictive styles such as structured lingerie, fitted dresses, belts and high heels, and the colour black is employed for its perceived slimming qualities. There is a suggestion of normative discontent with the female form (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1984) and self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), highlighting the participants' internalisation of a fashion culture that evaluates and objectifies women's bodies. This links with the work of previous researchers around the clothed body (Picardie 2015; Corner 2014; Entwistle 2003), suggesting this identity is applicable beyond the FM participants. However, this identity was visualised as a victim in the participants' images; poses were static, uncomfortable and unnatural and expressions were fixed or pained. It is likely that the focus on the fashion victim emerged due to the FM students' specialist knowledge of fashion history, media and semiotics.

Figure 98 The confident self



The confident self (Figure 98) is also in the public domain, an actor on display (Goffman 2002) using complex dress practices for hedonic or utilitarian purposes. For hedonic dress practice, physical comfort is relinquished and psychological comfort is prioritised; this identity requires effort, planning and coordination. This positive management of appearance is well established in female fashion consumers (Masuch and Hefferon, 2014) and is not specific to the FM participants. The confident self also emerged in activewear, offering utilitarian comfort that empowered the wearer in a variety of settings, confident in their ability to fit in and to perform as required. The focus on activewear reflects a cultural shift towards casual dress being acceptable in a wider range of settings (Hancock 2016), but it could be argued that the FM participants may be more likely to find confidence in this look due to both their mainly millennial age category and their trend awareness.

Identity in the contemporary world is increasingly complex and fragmented, leading to anxiety (Bauman 2011; 2012). The psychological aspects of comfort gained from dress practice are identified as of increasing importance in the search for positive interventions to enhance mental well-being (Baron 2013). Extant literature presented in section 2.0 suggests the four identities presented could be applicable beyond the limited participant sample; this is further tested in section 4.5 in discussions with an expanded focus group sample.

4.3.3 Well-being themes identified in the image and narrative photoshoot elicitations

The well-being themes identified in the literature were applied to the FM student participant photoshoot image and narrative task, to contribute to the analysis of well-being for RQ2. This thematic analysis of the photoshoot data is presented as follows, with the well-being themes highlighted in *italics*:

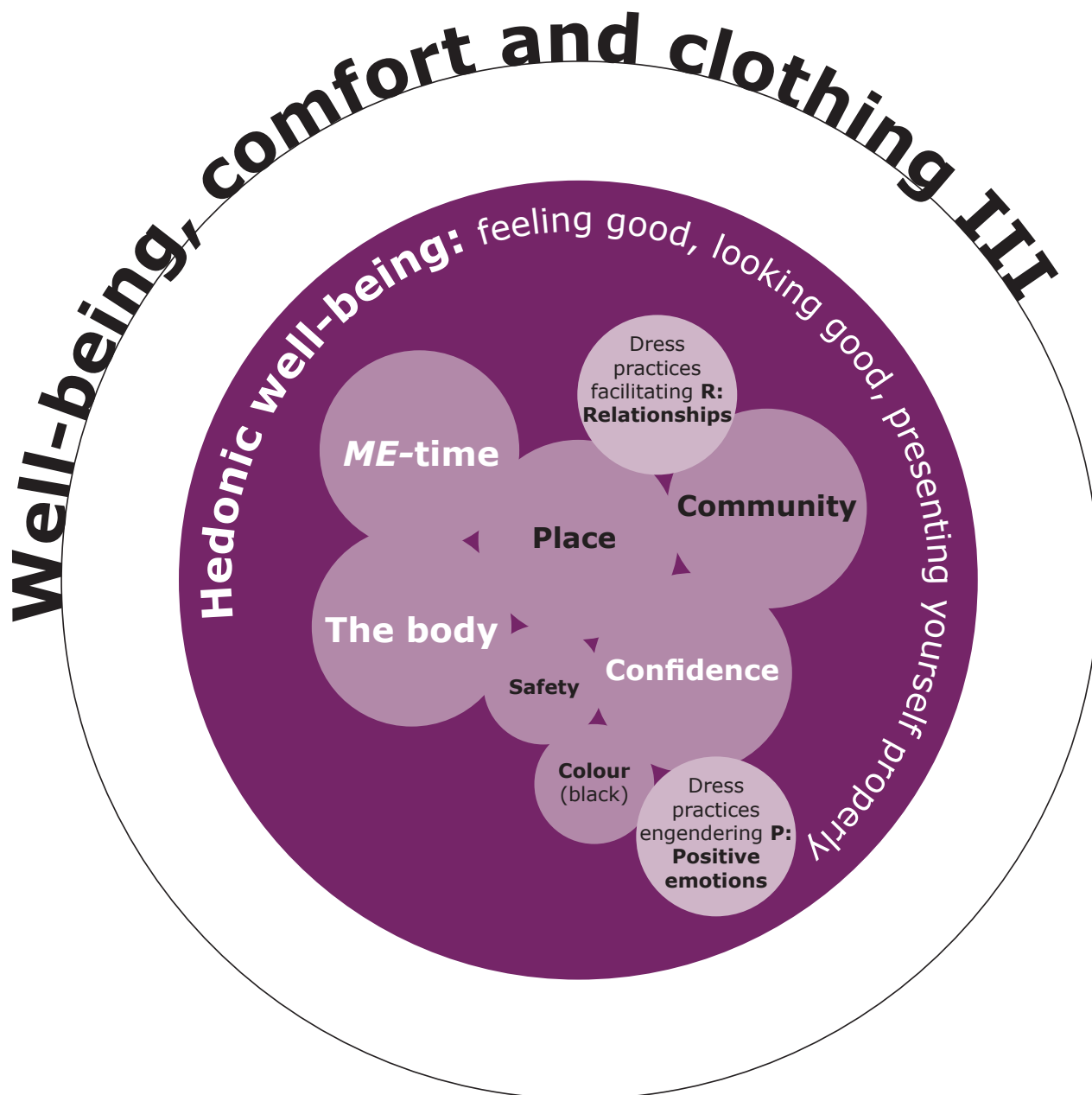
Many of the images presented by the student participants focused on the *body*. The private self identity, aligning with Entwistle's (2003) home-appropriate *body*, is shown relaxing on beds and sofas, in the *safety* of the home *space*, enveloped in cosy, soft, oversized knits or pyjamas. Some images are highly stylised, presenting a media-driven myth (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) of what well-being might involve, with several students mentioning the concept of me-time. This suggests the students are a part of a synoptical society (Mathiesen 1997), watching and following fashion and media sources that extoll and commoditise the well-being agenda (Davies 2015). Others employ a more casual snapshot aesthetic, providing a glimpse of how those student participants might realistically spend time relaxing in the home *space*. A sense of *hedonic well-being* is evident, with clothing used to support a feeling of relaxation or down-time. The images illustrate time spent reading, gazing out of a window and drinking cups of tea or hot chocolate; warming comfort foods identified in section 4.1.3 by the expanded participant sample. The need for me-time or down-time aligns with Bauman's (2012) description of modern society's quest for leisure time as both an expectation of progress and an escape from uncertainty and change. It hints at Seligman's (2011) concept of well-being through E: Engagement or flow, with the images suggesting engagement in relaxation and the narratives using words related to P: Positive emotions. Although there is a focus on warm and cosy clothing, indicating physiological comfort, legs, shoulders and décolletage are often bare, emphasising the participants' preoccupation with the body, perhaps again driven by fashion-media imagery and wider societal narratives related to the objectification and self-objectification of the female form (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997).

The unrestricted self identity shows the students befriending the *body* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), using low-maintenance dress practices, including stretchy and oversized clothing that provides ease of movement in a variety of *spaces*. This enables the *time*-poor individual (Baron 2013; Bauman 2012) to negotiate the complexities of contemporary life with *confidence*, without having to worry about the appropriateness of their sartorial style for the multiple *spaces* (Crewe 2017) they find themselves in. Images coded to the unrestricted self identity show individuals moving, stretching and dancing in a variety of places. Activewear is prominently featured, aligning with Bauman's (2012) assertions around people's pursuit of health and fitness products to engender *confidence* and confirming the on-going casualization of dress practices in contemporary society (De Klerk 2020; Hancock 2016; WGSN 2016). The oversized, loose

clothing styles also provide a sense of *safety* for the *body*, evident in the body-conscious self identity. The participant narratives confirm *body* anxiety issues, impacting well-being through reduced *confidence*. Oversized clothing and the *colour* black are used to camouflage or mask the *body* (Picardie 2015; Barnard 2002; Craik 1984), suggesting the participants' use of conscious strategies to either avoid judgement or objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). Several images and narratives reflect the thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005), further reinforcing the participants' focus on the *body* and aligning with Bauman's description of the *body* as 'a besieged fortress' (2012 p. 81). Anxieties about the *body* are also highlighted by clothing that controls the *body*, through images of waist trainers, Spanx pants and boned bras, coaxing the *body* into a hoped-for possible self that is thin and admired (Markus and Nurius 1986). The narratives evidence both criticism and internalisation of the thin ideal, with clothing seen positively as a means of *body* control and negatively as a source of physical discomfort.

Generally, the dress practices shown and described in the image/narrative elicitation do suggest the use of clothing to manage mood and befriend the *body*, aligning with Masuch and Hefferon's (2014) research. Camouflaging and controlling the *body* are ways the participants can confidently present themselves in public, thus the confident self identity relates to the *community* aspect of well-being and Seligman's (2011) R: Relationships. The images and narratives evidence conformist dress practices, with the participants using the *safety* of tried-and-tested, trusted sartorial norms, such as the wearing of high heels and the *colour* black to fit in with others, engendering *confidence* and evidencing the need for belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995). This aligns with Bauman's (2012) assertions that having a common identity offers security in postmodern society. There is little sense of *individuality* in the images and narratives; instead the participants practice self-censorship (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) to align with cultural ideals and normative expectations when in public, gaining respite from the anxiety of individualistic choice (Bauman 2012). There is little evidence of threat to autonomy in the data (Deci and Ryan 2000); internalisation and acceptance are conveyed. *Confidence* is also gained from externally-motivated or visible appearance management through put-together, coordinated outfits and internally-motivated, invisible appearance management (Pine 2014) through wearing matching underwear. The notion of feeling good through looking good relates to P: Positive emotions (Seligman 2011) and *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), although Deci and Ryan (2000) provide a cautionary note that goals related to image or external signs of worth are less likely to satisfy psychological needs.

Figure 99 Well-being, comfort and clothing III



In summary, thematic analysis of the photoshoots and their accompanying narratives revealed the well-being themes of *safety, space/place, time, the body, community, confidence* and *colour* were all evident in the participants' responses, with the prevalence of **me-time**, the relaxed *body* and the *confident body* being the key findings (highlighted in white text on Figure 99). Figure 99 illustrates that Masuch and Hefferon's (2014) concept of *hedonic well-being* gained through dress practice was the main type of well-being indicated in the image/narrative data, with the focus on feeling good epitomising me-time, the relaxed *body* and feelings of *confidence*. Feelings of *safety* (Maslow 1943) and *confidence* exemplify Seligman's (2011) concept of well-being gained from P: Positive emotions. Well-being engendered through R: Relationships relates to presenting oneself properly according to *place*, and conforming to *community*, emphasising the importance of belonging (Bauman 2012; Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943). There was little evidence of *eudaimonic well-being* in the images and narratives. This could be due to the student participants' life-stage, with younger demographics recognised as being more focused on appearance as a form of agency or control (Rudd and Lennon 2000), and less likely to have developed secondary cognitive control strategies such as lowered expectations or acceptance (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008). It could also be harder to visualise meaning and memory in the photoshoots, leading to the focus on appearance. Aside from a few participants relating *work* dress to *confidence*, the well-being category of *work* (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015; Bauman 2012) did not emerge with any significance, suggesting the participants do not associate *work* wear with well-being. This may reflect the limitation of using a student participant sample, who have yet to embark on their chosen career in a meaningful way. The remaining categories of well-being (*emancipation* and *income*) did not emerge from this data.

4.4

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT IN CLOTHING I Image/narrative task: Dress artefact elicitation

4.4.1 Method overview

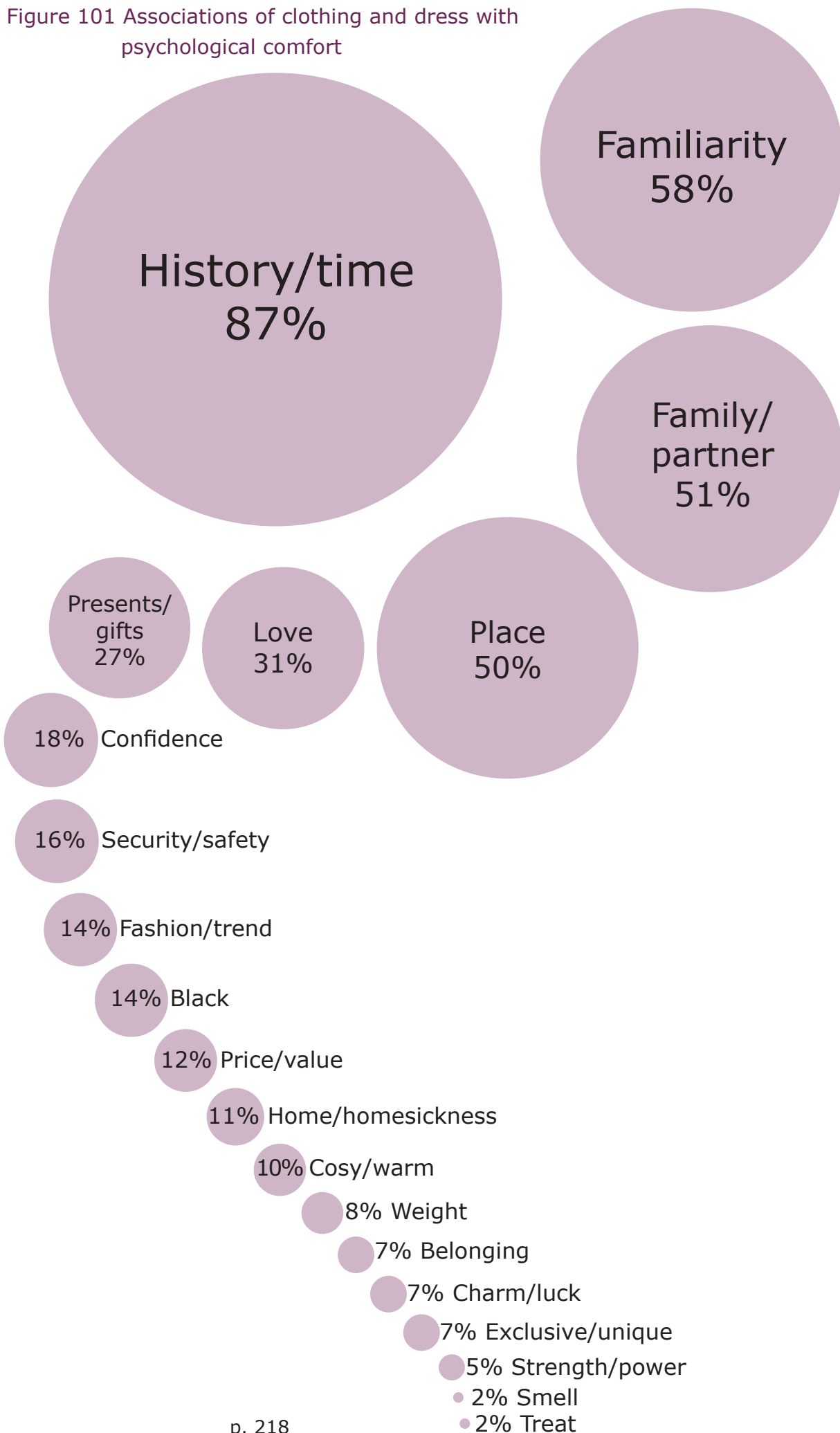
Like the method used for the fashion photoshoot image and narrative elicitation (see section 4.3), the artefact image and narrative elicitation task was multi-modal (Wodak and Meyer 2016), involving the collection of photographs accompanied by 100-word narratives, submitted on a standardised form with additional variables (see Appendix VIII). This task sought to contribute to the analysis of the role and value of comfort in clothing to women in the UK by addressing RQ6: how do UK females gain psychological comfort from clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice?

The artefact elicitations feature simple photographs of dress artefacts owned by the participants, described in the participants' own words. This data-gathering method provides a visual record of current dress artefacts; providing a unique data set that is a useful snapshot in time. Analysis of the narrative data followed grounded theory principles; multimodal textual analysis was employed, with the narratives subject to line by line initial coding (Charmaz 2006). Words, sentences or paragraphs from the narratives were labelled and collated into categories, using researcher memos. Initially, these categories were *in vivo* (Richards 2009), named using words from within the narratives. Concurrently, an analysis of each photograph was conducted, coding by artefact type, clothing attributes (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) including colour, pattern and clothing style, material composition and length of time owned. The artefact photographs were organised into image clouds, enabling additional categories to emerge.

4.4.2 Initial coding

Initial coding revealed 49 clothing artefacts, 15 accessories and 45 items of jewellery (see Figure 100). Rings were the most frequently mentioned jewellery artefact, scarves were the most prevalent accessory and outerwear (jackets, coats and blazers) was the most frequently mentioned clothing category. The findings show that rings are the artefact most associated with psychological comfort by the participants. Silver jewellery featured more frequently than gold. This could be due to the higher price of gold, but also suggests that monetary worth does not equate with value in terms of psychological comfort for these participants.

Figure 101 Associations of clothing and dress with psychological comfort



Coding of the clothing and accessories showed that plain and dark items featured more frequently than patterns, bright colours or light colours. Some of the patterned garments were neutral in tone, featuring classic black, grey and camel colours. Many of the patterned items were house-wear (V&A 2019) or nightwear; items of clothing not usually worn in social settings; or were small items, such as shoes, scarves and socks. Traditional checks were the most prevalent pattern, thought of as providing order (Faiers 2008). Most clothing artefacts could be categorised as casual (jackets, jumpers, leggings, jeans, t-shirts and sweatshirts), with few structured or formal styles presented. Semi-patterned styles, featuring brand logos, place names or text slogans were a feature of this prevalent clothing category, suggesting the participants find comfort in brand logos, evidencing commodity fetishism (Thompson 2017; Belk 1988) and clothing that reminds them of time and place, suggesting the role of these artefacts in the creation of an extended self (Belk 1988) to enhance, manage and preserve identity. The overall preference for simple, classic and restrained clothing aesthetics and neutral colours suggests the internalisation of middle-class taste and norms (Wood and Skeggs 2008) and a desire to avoid standing out too much, effectively dressing in an unmarked way in terms of cultural visibility (Jenss 2016).

Analysis of each in vivo code, in conjunction with the analysed images led to the identification of 20 categories, shown in order of frequency in Figure 101. The key initial categories are briefly summarised, with the categories shown in *italics*.

Figure 102 Firsts

Vest:
'I wore this to run my **first** ever 5K.'
(KCP9220)

Fur cape:
'This was given to my great-granny as a gift for the **first** society ball she attended, and then when I was 16 she gave it to me before my **first** proper ball.'
(KCP6623)

Cardigan:
'This is my mother's cardigan that I brought back with me the **first** time I went back home after moving here.'
(KCP3721)

Necklace:
'This is my Tiffany and Co necklace, which was the **first** piece of jewellery from the brand that I have been lucky enough to be given.'
(KCP9921)

Ring:
'When I left home for the first time... she wanted to give me something that would always remind me of her. The ring was actually the **first** gift she received from my dad.'
(KCP7022)

The strongest category to emerge from the participant responses was *time*, described by Haybron as 'the currency of life' (2013 p.8), and the most popular items in the *time* category were jewellery. A mix of clothing items was also present, including jackets, coats, jeans and scarves; all items with a level of longevity that tends to last beyond a typical fashion trend. From the many time-related narratives, three key sub-categories were identified: specific *time*, longevity and ritual. A few participants described an instantaneous reaction to their chosen item, describing how they instantly knew they needed the item or instantly knew it was perfect. The importance of firsts (see Figures 102 and 103) was identified by several participants, such as a first piece of jewellery bought.

Figure 103 First time



Figure 104 Recall

Rings:
'They are very sentimental to me as they were given to me on my **18th and 21st birthdays.**'
(KCP3321)

Dress:
'I will now always relate this dress to **New Year's Eve** [2014].'
(KCP5323)

Dress:
'I wore this shirt dress to hip hop artist PartyNextDoor's concert in **Stockholm** in **March 2015.**'
(KCP5122)

T-shirt:
'This is my **2017** camp t-shirt from my summer job in **America.**'
(KCP11221)

Scarf:
'This is my leopard print scarf that I got in **4th Year** of high school.'
(KCP6322)

Figure 105 Recent

Bracelet:
'I received this bracelet as a present from my gran on my 21st birthday **in June this year.**'
(KCP5421)

Dresssing Gown:
'I received this little red dressing gown for my birthday **a couple of weeks ago** and I've already fallen in love with it.'
(KCP422)

Jacket:
'I bought it on holiday **this year.**'
(KCP8222)

Jacket:
'Despite having it for **just 2 months**, it is already my most prized possession.'
(KCP5921)

Necklace:
'It was given to me on my 21st birthday in August, and although I have only had it a **few months**, it is already as important as items that I've owned for years.'
(KCP12921)

In addition to the first times, participants also expressed other, specific times, demonstrating strong recall of ages, dates, people and places associated with their chosen item (see Figure 104). Surprisingly, several participants expressed experiencing psychological comfort from items that had been in their possession for only a short period of *time* (see Figures 105 and 106), suggesting some agreement with Bauman's (2012) view that products are no longer valued for longevity. This could be related to the psychological concept of the recency effect (Jones and Goethals 1972), whereby more recent things are foremost in people's thoughts and are perceived as more important. It could also be because of the FM participants' relatively young age, with key milestones such as eighteenth and twenty-first birthdays part of their recent *history*.

Figure 106 Recent time



Figure 107 Longevity

Leggings:
'I have owned them for **about 4 years** and even though I have other pairs I don't want to throw them out yet as they have stood the test of time.'
(KCP13022)

Hat:
'It also seems to stand the test of time as **after 8 years** it still hasn't begun to wear or become damaged.'
(KCP8722)

Earrings:
'Not knowing I would then be passed down them **12 years on...** they remind me of my mum and family holiday long ago.'
(KCP9821)

Rings:
'I have been collecting sterling silver rings for the **last 6 years.**'
(KCP921)

Ring:
'Every time I look at my ring I think of him and how doing long distance for **2 years now** will be worth it in the end. It brings me comfort as I feel every day he is with me.'
(KCP3121)

Figure 108 Emotional

Bracelet:
'...and treasure it **forever** - I would never dream of throwing it away!'
(KCP7621)

Watch:
'I know I'll **never** get tired of the subtle colours or the memories it holds.'
(KCP10920)

Watch:
'I'm obsessed with Vivienne Westwood, so being gifted with one of her watches for my 21st birthday was the perfect present that I'll treasure **forever.**' (KCP10920)

Ring:
'...vowed to **never** have it off my finger for lengthy periods of time ever again.'
(KCP4120)

Ring:
'...it was lost for 3 days... I have **never** taken it off again. And I **never** will.'
(KCP11624)

The strongest *time* sub-category to emerge was that of longevity, with participants noting their involvement with their chosen items over specific periods of *time* that display greater longevity than a typical fashion trend, and rejecting the notion of fast fashion (Lynas 2010) as a source of psychological comfort (see Figure 107). The tone in some of these narratives could be described as dramatic and emotional (see Figure 108), with participants clearly finding comfort in having something they could keep forever (see Figure 109). Jewellery, often made of hard metal, does suggest durability, with the fixed, solid nature of jewellery clearly offering psychological comfort to the participants, while being binary to Bauman's (2012) concept of ever-changing Liquid Modernity and to the soft, tactile and more easily worn out qualities of clothing items such as coats and t-shirts.

Figure 109 Forever



Figure 110 Memories

Ring:
'It **reminds** me of the seashells I used to collect whenever I went to the beach at my grandmother's house.'
(KCP8422)

Coat:
'It also **reminds** me of the weekend spent in Glasgow so it is nice that the coat has a happy **memory** attached to it.'
(KCP11420)

Scarf:
'...it **reminds** me of my Dad most Saturdays.'
(KCP7720)

Dress:
'I wore this dress out when I was on holiday in Las Vegas so I have a lot of great **memories** associated with it.'
(KCP3022)

Yoga pants:
'I've got so many **memories** with them from exploring Canada, flying alone, wearing them for exams and even dates.'
(KCP5621)

The accumulation of memories over *time* was clearly important to the participants, for example by collecting charms on bracelets that represent autobiographical memories (Cili and Stopa 2019). Notions of longevity and *history* were identified by participants' use of words such as memory and remind. The narratives highlight the strong links between the participants' chosen items and holidays or travel to specific places, and family (see Figure 110), evidencing Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self. Memories were linked with items of jewellery but not restricted to them; a variety of clothing and dress items were also mentioned, including hoodies, scarves, coats, dresses and yoga pants. These items clearly hold 'personal memories' for the participants, 'symbolic qualities' (Mida and Kim 2015 p. 16) that add *value*, beyond monetary worth. Imbuing items of clothing or accessories with meaning correlates with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment, with participants describing psychological comfort gained from attachment due to memories of past events and people (see Figure 111). Bluck *et al.* (2005) confirm that autobiographical memories have a directive function, helping to manage emotions. Thus, past experiences, in this case linked to items of jewellery or clothing, provide on-going psychological comfort.

Figure 111 Memory



Figure 112 Ritual

Fur cape:
'Whenever I wear it I am thinking of her, and **always** feel that I need to be showing it a good time.'
(KCP6623)

Ring:
'It is a very sentimental gift which I will **always** treasure and be very protective of.'
(KCP8821)

Rings:
'These are my rings I wear **every single day**.'
(KCP3321)

Rings:
'I've worn each ring **every day** since...'
(KCP1920)

Socks:
'I enjoy buying new pairs **every year** and it's become a **tradition** of sort to buy cosy socks at Christmas.'
(KCP1322)

Figure 113 Lucky charms

Ring:
'It became a **good luck charm** during my exams.'
(KCP8422)

Earrings:
'I wear them every time I sit an exam or go for an interview as I feel they always **bring me luck**.'
(KCP7022)

Rings:
'I feel **strangely uncomfortable** and start my day off badly if I've forgotten to put these rings on.'
(KCP4621)

Rings:
'If I was to forget (for some horrendous reason!) to put all three on in the morning before embarking on the day, my day would be sadly **ruined**.'
(KCP1920)

Ring:
'I fancied a change a couple of years ago... but felt **unlucky** things were happening with it off so vowed to never have it off my finger for lengthy periods of time ever again.'
(KCP4120)

Closely linked to longevity, the importance of constancy and regularity is evident, with the participants' narratives indicating psychological comfort gained through the practice of rituals and habits in their use of clothing, accessories and jewellery (see Figure 112). This correlates with Rudd and Lennon's (2000) assertions on appearance-management behaviours, where ritualized practices were found to be a means of agency or control for young women. The participants used a variety of emotional words, related to feelings of hate, panic and regret (see Figure 114), to describe the emotional discomfort of breaking a ritual. Participants also discussed loss, continuing the strong theme of negativity associated with the breaking of habits or absence of constancy; if the ritual was broken (e.g. by forgetting to put on rings) the participant felt lost, with one participant likening her hard, metal rings to the *familiarity* of a comfort blanket. Thus, the *charm/luck* category emerged (see Figure 113), linking to the other, larger categories of *family, gifts, place* and *familiarity*, and to Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self. A strong category of autobiographical memory (Cili and Stopa 2019; Bluck *et al.* 2005) is evident within the participant narratives; participants recall clearly whether the items were *gifts*, who they were gifted by, how long they have owned the item or where they got the item from, possibly forming the solid foundations that enable them to validate their individual, talismanic meanings.

Figure 114 Regret



Figure 115 Familiar people and places

Cardigan:
'More than anyone I miss my **mother** and having an item that belongs to her reminds me of her.'
(KCP3721)

Scarf:
'It reminds me of my **Dad**.'
(KCP7720)

Scarf:
'Not only was it a gift from my **boyfriend** but he bought it from the vintage shop where I did my placement.'
(KCP13120)

Ring:
'My ring is always there, as are my **family**.'
(KCP2621)

Ring:
'It reminds me of the seashells I used to collect whenever I went to the beach at my **grandmother's** house.'
(KCP8422)

Key items in the *familiarity* category included jewellery, jackets, jeans and scarves, all of which could be regarded as dress items with an element of longevity, less subject to *fashion* fads or sudden changes in style. Some of the participants' items had been in their possession for a long period of *time*, five or six, or even twenty years, linking *familiarity* with the longevity sub-category. Previous knowledge and experience emerged as elements of *familiarity*, with participants gaining psychological comfort based on their past experiences with items, evidenced through statements such as 'I know how to style it' (KCP5122) and 'I know that I have that skirt that makes me feel good' (KCP11321). This links *familiarity* with trust (See Figure 116). Thus, the *familiarity* category also correlates with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment, with participants describing psychological comfort gained from attachment due to memories of past events and people (see Figure 115); experiencing confidence while wearing an item (a desirable feeling); and utilitarian aspects related to performance (evidenced by the tried and trusted jeans). This is further confirmed by participants' use of words such as staple (KCP2621, KCP3222, KCP9121, KCP10220), wardrobe essential (KCP4322) and my go-to (KCP2621, KCP9520).

Figure 116 Trusted



Figure 117 Family gift giver

Cardigan:
'This is an Aran knit
cardigan that my **mother**
gave to me as a
Christmas present.'
(KCP3121)

Ring:
'The emerald ring was
given to me on my **16th**
birthday by my **mum.**'
(KCP4724)

Ring:
'It was my **21st birthday**
present from my **mum.**'
(KCP8021)

Bracelet:
'My **father** gave me this
bracelet as a souvenir from
his business trip to **China.**'
(KCP11922)

Bracelet:
'My Pandora bracelet
was a surprise birthday
present from my **boyfriend**
when we were in **London**
for my **21st.**'
(KCP7621)

Within the *family/partner* category, parents were mentioned; however, mum was clearly the most significant other to the participants at this *time* in their lives, followed by, in order of significance, boyfriend (see Figure 118), grandmother and dad. This aligns with Almond's (2015) assertion that significant relationships are a basic human need, and demonstrates the importance of the R: relationships element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework to psychological comfort and well-being. The narratives mainly described *gifts* or inherited items, given for special birthdays such as sixteenth or twenty-firsts, or occasions such as Christmas or proms, evidencing attachment (Savas 2004; Belk 1988) to items associated with people and *gifts*. Participants clearly remembered who had given them *gifts* and associated those *gifts* with the gift-giver, the *time* and often the *place*, providing detailed memory-based narratives to accompany their chosen item of psychological comfort (see Figure 117), aligning with the relationship-building, social function of autobiographical memory (Bluck *et al.* 2005) and Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self, which includes places, *time* periods and people. Overall, these findings suggest the solidity of *family* or significant others, and confirm the role of clothing and accessories in acting as reminders or connections to loved ones (Savas 2004), especially when parted from them, as many students are.

Figure 118 Boyfriend



Figure 119 Reminders of home

Hat:
'It may seem odd but the hat **reminds** me of **my home** and and whenever I wear it I always feel more comfortable.'
(KCP8722)

Snood:
'It **reminds** me of **home** and comforts me.'
(KCP6322)

Watch:
'When I live in a different city, it's a little **reminder** of **home** to wear on my wrist.'
(KCP9821)

Ring:
'...and I continue to wear it on days when I want to be **reminded of home.**'
(KCP4724)

Scarf:
'This scarf also **reminds** me a lot of **my home**... Therefore it brings me comfort knowing I have a piece of **home** with me in Aberdeen.'
(KCP2223)

Figure 120 Event places

Coat:
'I was at the **Clothes Show Live** and spotted it for just £60!'
(KCP9220)

T-shirt:
'This t-shirt was awarded to me when I qualified for the finals of a **national dance competition.**'
(KCP8521)

T-shirt:
'I wore this to run my first ever 5K at the **Edinburgh Marathon Festival.**'
(KCP7921)

Shoes:
'...a pair of shoes I bought to wear to a **wedding.**'
(KCP8323)

Shirt:
'This shirt was my dad's that he wore to his **engagement party** to my mum over 29 years ago.'
(KCP6521)

Place was represented in some form in 50% of the participant narratives, in relation to climate, holidays, retail spaces, events, *family* and home. Home, and homesickness (see Figure 121), was represented in some form in an additional 11% of the participant responses. Again, this could be expected of the student participants, who are at a transitional life-stage that possibly involves being away from home long-term, perhaps for the first *time*. Reminders of home are evident in several of the participants' narratives, in a diverse range of items including clothing, accessories and jewellery (see Figure 119), with KCP11921 describing how a wooden bead bracelet makes her feel home whether she is studying in Aberdeen or interning in London. This aligns with Bauman's assertions that the fragmented nature of contemporary society means people are less likely to belong to one culture; this bracelet gives the participant a feeling of being at home in multiple places. Thus, product symbolises *place* and the *security* of home, no matter where the participants are, evidencing a need for belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Belk 1988; Maslow 1943) and solidity at a *time* of fluidity (Bauman 2012) and change in the participants' lives. Home seems idealised, an icon in the participants' minds, in line with Wood and Skeggs' (2008) description of home as the 'space of innocence' (p. 183).

Place also encompasses events and experiences, elements of Belk's (1988) extended self. The events described in the narratives offered a specific purchase opportunity (e.g. the Clothes Show retail event); created a specific purchase opportunity (e.g. an engagement party and wedding); or were mementos of an event (see Figure 120), demonstrating the importance of meaning, the M element of Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework, to psychological comfort and well-being.

Figure 121 Homesickness



Figure 122 Appearance management

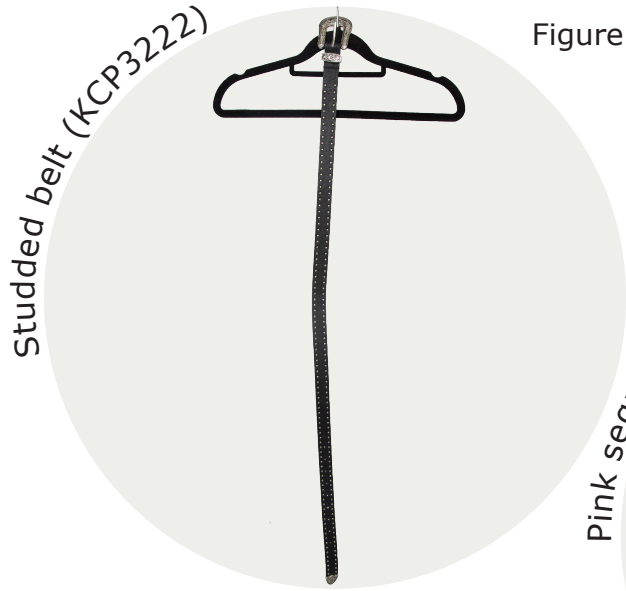


Figure 123 Weight consciousness



A final initial code worthy of mention is *confidence*, closely linked with body and *weight* issues. Participants indicated the *confidence* gained from the 'embodied practice' (Crewe 2017 p.4) of wearing clothes that were slimming (see Figure 123). Aligning with Craik (1984) and Picardie (2015), these items of clothing were often oversized, used to create an illusion of being smaller or to conceal or camouflage areas of the body, especially the stomach or waist (see Figure 122). The participants' need to hide on bad days provides a sense of how participants actively employ dress practices, or appearance-management strategies (Hefferon 2015; Kawamura 2011) to gain psychological comfort. This correlates with Pine's (2014 np) concept of 'body cognition', which asserts that clothing can 'alter the psychological state of the wearer'. Feelings were an important element of the *confidence* category. *Confidence* is a desirable feeling, with people who experience feelings of *confidence* from a product becoming attached to it (Savas 2004). Many participants directly mentioned feeling confident while wearing a variety of clothing items and accessories (see Figure 124).

Figure 124 Confidence in clothing image cloud



Black leather jacket (KCP2621)



Black jumper (KCP6924)



Black leather jacket (KCP9321)



Black yoga pants (KCP5621)



Black boots (KCP10622)



Black leather jacket (KCP9520)



Black blazer (KCP10022)



Figure 126 Colour confidence

Red, acknowledged in colour theory literature as a bold and powerful colour (Solomon and Rabolt 2009; Miller 2008), which can enhance attractiveness (Elliot and Niesta 2008), was the only colour specifically mentioned by participants (see Figure 126) aside from *black* and one mention of navy. *Black* was represented in some form in 14% of the participant responses (see Figure 125) and most of the *black* items were owned for a year or more. This suggests an element of Longevity in *black* clothing, in line with Crewe's description of *black* as 'timeless' (2017 p.21). Reinforcing this, some *black* items were described by participants as a classic (KCP10022) or staple (KCP10220). Black also relates to the *weight* category, with KCP3922 noting black's slimming effect and KCP6924 describing how her *black* garment gave a sleek look. The prevalence of *black* is interesting, as the colour can have negative connotations linked to depression (Eisman 2006); at odds with the *confidence* category. Overall however, the participants of this Comfort in Clothing study convey positive emotions about *black* and clearly wear the colour across a variety of clothing items and accessories. It may be that the FM students have internalised *fashion* industry and media messages about the classic, timeless nature (Fox 2018; Crewe 2017) and slimming qualities of *black*, therefore it would be useful to explore the influence of *black* with a wider participant sample.

The remaining initial categories shown on Figure 101, when subject to more focused coding were subsumed into overarching categories, discussed in section 4.4.3.



Coat:
'I feel more alive and body **confident** when I wear something bright and full of print.'
(KCP5822)

Skirt:
'Whenever I wear red I instantly feel **confident**.'
(KCP11321)

Jumper:
'The shocking red tone of the knit makes me feel **confident**.'
(KCP12222)



Figure 127 Psychological comfort: seeking solidity



4.4.3 Focused coding

Focused coding (Charmaz 2006) led to the identification of the overarching category of solidity. Bauman (2012) noted the complexity, fast pace and fragmented nature of contemporary Western society in his concept of Liquid Modernity. These young, female student participants, at a transitional life-stage (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004; Habermas and Paha 2002; McCracken 1987), use clothing, accessories and dress practices to seek solidity, a respite from Liquid Modernity, engendered mainly through familiarity and belonging, as illustrated in Figure 127.

Clothes, solidity and belonging

The participants found psychological comfort from clothes with M: Meaning (Seligman 2011), or sentimental value, often linked to people and place, suggesting these clothing artefacts become indexical signs (Habermas and Paha 2002). Clothes that had belonged to significant others, especially mothers, were mentioned most frequently. Value was ascribed through temporal-spatial contiguity, with time, history and memory ascribing beyond market-value worth (Crewe 2017; Savas 2004), linked to familiarity, interpersonal bonds and the extended self (Belk 1988). The participants used these artefacts to remind them of significant others, especially when parted from them, suggesting the anxiety that is a 'natural consequence of being separated from important others' (Baumeister and Leary 1995 p. 506). These items of clothing provide solidity, often related to home, while the participants encounter fluidity of place; a situation many of them are in while living away from home to undertake their studies. This aligns with previous research by Habermas and Paha (2002) that found students who relocated for their studies were more likely to use objects as reminders of those no longer physically close.

Figure 128 Belonging

Dress:
'...it makes me **feel** like
**a part of the
hip hop culture.'**
(KCP5122)

T-shirt:
'...for me it embodies
a definite **sense of
community.'**
(KCP11221)

Blazer:
'...wearing this piece of
clothing makes me **feel** like
part of the team.'
(KCP10125)

Jacket:
'...can **fit in with others.'**
(KCP8621)

Blazer:
'...a sense of **security that
I fitted in.'**
(KCP10125)

Coats and jackets were the most frequently mentioned clothing styles; items of clothing that tend to be more expensive to buy, and are perhaps seen as less trend-led so can be used over a longer period. Coats and jackets, along with jumpers, cardigans and scarves, offer security, meeting safety needs (Maslow 1943) by cocooning or covering the person, wrapping around them as a solid, safe mediating layer (Crewe 2017) between them and their environment. This finding could be location-dependent, as the research took place in Scotland, during the darker, colder month of October. These are clothes that provide cover; clothing as a form of camouflage is a theme in many previous studies (Picardie 2015; Barnard 2002; Craik 1984) and is underpinned by Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory, where women use clothing to cover the body as a conscious strategy to avoid objectification.

Despite their high interest in fashion, the participants found psychological comfort from clothing that enabled them to fit in, rather than to convey their fashion status (see Figure 128). The narratives discussed clothes that engendered belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) to certain sub-cultures, affording the participants with a sense of solidity that transcends short-term fashion trends. Other narratives described clothing that enabled the participant to fit in with others in the workplace, echoing Rafaeli *et al.*'s (1997 p. 30) findings that women used workplace dress as an 'emotional wrapping' to improve interpersonal relations and gain self-confidence. Thus, clothing offers psychological comfort by affording the participants an element of control in social settings (Guy and Banim 2000), aligning with Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp's (2008) assertions that perceived control enables self-efficacy and provides psychological well-being. These are active, behavioural, primary control strategies. There is, however, a tension between individual agency and the internalisation of cultural or societal norms (Rudd and Lennon 2000), given the participants' focus on fitting in, rather than standing out. This suggests these participants have not reached a life-stage where they can distance themselves from sociocultural influences and have not employed secondary cognitive control strategies such as acceptance or lowered expectations (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008).

Figure 129 Black

Black leather jacket:
'It... gives me the **strength**
to face the day... for me
wearing this piece makes me
feel **strong** and
independent.'
(KCP9321)

Black biker jacket:
'...in the instant I slip it on
my normally reserved
personality is **toughened up**
a little.'
(KCP9721)

Black blazer:
'I... chose this blazer.. for the
power statement that it
makes.'
(KCP10022)



Black was a prevalent colour in the images submitted and was the most-mentioned colour in the narratives. Participants mentioned the classic nature of black (Fox 2018; Crewe 2017), acknowledging the colour as a fashion staple and showing preference for the familiarity, history and longevity of this colour. Participants indicated that black gave them confidence, an esteem need (Maslow 1943) through fitting in with cultural norms. They also found body security in the perceived slimming qualities of black, suggesting normative discontent with body weight (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1985) and internalisation of a thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005). The participants discussed classic, recognised and trusted clothing styles, such as the black blazer or black leather jacket (see Figure 129). Solid, dark colours were mentioned more frequently in the narratives and were more evident in the photographs, suggesting the internalisation of middle-class tastes and culture (Wood and Skeggs 2008). Although not a strong category, some participants mentioned specific brands, suggesting the internalisation of consumerist principles (Bauman 2012) and commodity fetishism (Thompson 2017; Belk 1988). The brand offers a sense of solidity, through familiarity with the brand name and product offer, and acts as a social identifier (Savas 2004) or judgement device (Crewe 2017) that in turn, can offer a sense of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) in social settings. In terms of clothing attributes (Kamalha *et al.* 2013), the findings suggest that solid, dark colours are more associated with psychological comfort than bright or patterned clothes. This finding may be influenced by the timing of the data collection, and different results may have been gained if data had been collected during warm summer months.

Overall, clothing styles that are familiar, classic and that cover the body are more associated with psychological comfort. Clothes that enable the wearer to fit in, or belong provide psychological comfort, as do clothes that belonged to significant others. The findings confirm that these participants are actively using items of clothing to gain psychological comfort.

Figure 130 Heirlooms

Ring:
'The gold one was a **gift**
from my Granda to my Mum
when she was 19. She passed
it on to me for my 19th
birthday.'
(KCP1121)

Ring:
'When I left home for the
first time she wanted to **give**
me something that would
always remind me of her. The
ring was actually the first gift
she received from
my dad.'
(KCP7022)

Earrings:
'I was admiring them as I
didn't own a pair of hoop
earrings and so she **gave** them
to me as a gift... I like them
more because they
once belonged to
my mum.'
(KCP9821)

Ring:
'The emerald ring was
given to me on my 16th
birthday by my mum, which
had been given to her by my
dad when we were born, he
would get her a ring when
each of my siblings
were born.'
(KCP4724)

Ring:
This is the ring I received
as a **gift** for my 21st birthday
from my parents... Initially
gifted to my mother by my
father as an eternity ring.'
(KCP321)

Jewellery, solidity and belonging

Jewellery is naturally more solid and durable than items of clothing, and featured frequently in the participants' narratives and photographs. Participants acknowledged the longevity of jewellery, indicating intention to wear and treasure items forever. Rings were the most frequently mentioned item of jewellery, perhaps reflective of the all-female participants. It is a cultural norm (Solomon and Rabolt 2009) in contemporary Western society for women to wear rings and to receive rings as gifts from significant others. Gifts can gain elevated moral and sentimental status through relationships with the gift-giver (Crewe 2017; Savas 2004; Habermas and Paha 2002; Belk 1988), which was evident in the participant responses. Some of the jewellery artefacts had been in the participants' possession for long periods of time, passed down from significant others, especially mothers and grandmothers, as heirloom gifts (see Figure 130), demonstrating the psychological comfort of familiarity and the importance of jewellery as a mnemonic (Habermas and Paha 2002). Many of the jewellery artefacts were given as birthday gifts, with participants showing detailed recollection of time and place associated with the item. There is a sense of community (Bauman 2012) in these findings; the community of family, history and home, demonstrating the importance of R: Relationships (Seligman 2011) and a sense of belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995); perhaps of heightened significance emotionally due to these stage-4 students' imminent life-stage transition from study to employment (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004). Some of the artefacts were holiday purchases, souvenirs associated with place (Habermas and Paha 2002) that authenticate memories of now-distant places. Participants therefore indicated their attachment (Savas 2004) to items of jewellery due to their association with people and place, through history and memory, demonstrating the importance of M: Meaning (Seligman 2011; Miller 2008) and evidencing the extended self, the experiences, people, places and things a person feels attached to (Belk 1988). Although jewellery may be regarded as being of higher monetary worth than clothing, the personal, autobiographical memories (Cili and Stopa 2019; Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004) and symbolic qualities (Mida and Kim 2015) of these artefacts are clearly more important than monetary value. The data suggests that, while many of the participants' jewellery artefacts could be used to communicate social identity, their function as reminders of the past and significant others is equally as important to the creation and maintenance of identity (Habermas and Paha 2002), supporting self-coherence (the need to maintain a coherent and stable record of the self's interaction with the world that extends beyond the present moment) (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004).

Figure 131 Meaning and memory

Ring:
'It has **sentimental value**
to me.'
(KCP11123)

Rings:
'These silver rings hold a lot
of **sentimental value** and are
something I feel very
attached to.'
(KCP12021)

Earrings:
'My **Great Grandma**
had a really tough life and
it's as though she is
watching over me when
I wear these.'
(KCP11521)

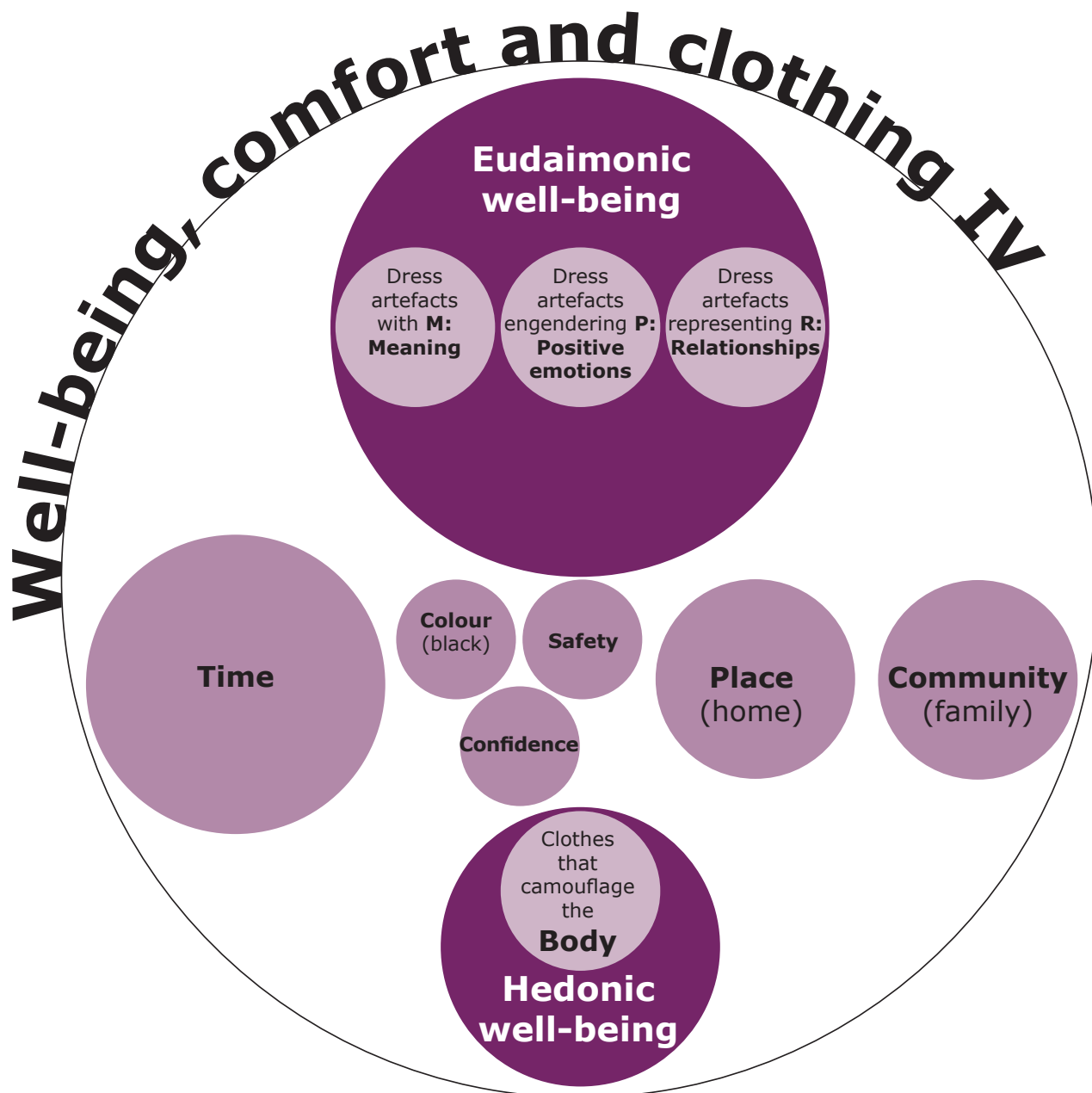
Ring:
'When I look at my hand I
am filled with love and the
happiest **memories**.'
(KCP12522)

Rings:
'The rings both have
been given to me by
important people in my
life and psychologically I feel
comfort and **security**
when I wear them.'
(KCP4724)

The wearing of jewellery was linked with ritual by some participants. Ritual, or following established routines (Spivak 2014; Rudd and Lennon 2000) seems to provide psychological comfort to these participants, resulting in a sense of solidity or constancy that perhaps offers respite from Bauman's changeable Liquid Modernity (2012). Belk (1988) describes this as habituation, arising from knowledge and familiarity with an item through its associated memories. The participants indicated psychological discomfort through breaking ritualised practice, such as forgetting to wear their rings, or losing them, evidenced through feelings of panic, loss and regret. Some imbued their artefact with talismanic power (Savas 2004), gaining psychological comfort through regarding it as a lucky charm (Habermas and Paha 2002) or as a form of psychological protection (Lennon, Johnson and Rudd 2017). From a sociological view, the ritualised appearance-management practice of wearing meaningful items of jewellery acts as a form of control, giving the participants agency in a world where much is out with their control (Rudd and Lennon 2000). From a psychology perspective, perceived control over oneself links to self-efficacy and the ritualised wearing of an item could be described as an active or behavioural primary control strategy (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008) that provides psychological well-being. It is worth noting that rings are a small element of dress practice (in terms of size and visibility), so can be used as a constant across different social settings and dress practices, providing familiarity.

Overall, the findings suggest that items of jewellery are associated with psychological comfort through their solidity. Rings are a durable and long-lasting product that can be worn across time, through or despite fashion and trends. They provide constancy and security through ritual, and offer temporal-spatial contiguity, carrying meanings and memories associated with family, time and place. These participants are actively using items of jewellery to gain psychological comfort (see Figure 131).

Figure 132 Well-being, comfort and clothing IV



4.4.4 Well-being themes identified in the image and narrative artefact elicitation

The well-being themes identified in section 4.2 were applied to the FM student participant dress artefact elicitation task (Image/narrative task two), to contribute to the analysis of well-being for RQ2. This thematic analysis of the data is presented as follows, with the well-being themes highlighted in *italics*.

The well-being category of *time* was prevalent in the dress artefact elicitation. The FM student participants gain a sense of *eudaimonic well-being* through dress artefacts associated with specific times, such as birthdays, or first times. These are autobiographical memories (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004), contributing to a sense of self beyond the present moment. *Eudaimonic well-being* is also gained from dress artefacts with longevity, such as timeless styles, often black in *colour*, and durable items, such as jewellery, especially those given as gifts, passed down as family heirlooms or acting as reminders of significant others, aligning with Belk's (1988) assertions that gifts received from loved ones are viewed as positive extensions of the self. *Time* is also represented through ritual, with routine dress practices such as wearing a certain item of jewellery or clothing every day providing familiarity, or constancy, aligning with Bauman's (2012) assertions that routine provides feelings of *safety*. These are active, behavioural, primary control strategies linked to self-efficacy and psychological well-being (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008). Thus, dress artefacts associated with *time* provide a sense of well-being through engendering P: Positive emotions, M: Meaning and R: Relationships, with E: Engagement and A: Accomplishment also present but represented to a much lesser extent, representing Seligman's (2011) entire PERMA model.

Some participants also described items that remind them of a specific *place*, such as holiday locations, fun runs and society balls. The *place* of home was significant in the participants' narratives, suggesting well-being can be engendered by dress artefacts that act as reminders of home, a *place* of *safety* (Holliday 1999) described by Belk (1988) as the symbolic *body* of family. This links closely with another key finding, family. Family represents the well-being category of *community*, with gifts from family, family heirlooms and dress artefacts that act as reminders of family all mentioned by the participants. These dress artefacts have M: Meaning, representing R: Relationships and P: Positive emotions (Seligman 2011), such as love, engendering a sense of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Belk 1988; Maslow 1943). Some participants also expressed using dress artefacts to signify belonging to certain fashion and dress communities, or sub-cultures. Others mention certain brands, suggesting a sense of belonging and feelings of *confidence* through the wearing of or possession of status brands (Crewe 2017; Hameide 2011), evidencing commodity fetishism (Thompson 2017; Belk 1988). Again, these examples represent *eudaimonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), based on meaning and attachment (Savas 2004; Belk 1988) (see Figure 132).

Dress artefacts provide *safety* from judgement for some participants, camouflaging the *body* (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), providing the well-being category of *confidence*, a P: Positive emotion (Seligman 2011) linked with the satisfaction of Maslow's (1943) esteem needs. Those participants described the *colour* black as *body* slimming, evidencing normative anxiety about weight (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1984). This represents a sense of *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), feeling good through looking good. A few participants highlighted *confidence* through dress artefacts associated with *workwear*, and a few through items that gave them a feeling of *individuality*; however, neither of these were key findings, suggesting *work* dress was not associated with well-being by these participants and that they have a stronger need for belonging than *individuality*. The remaining categories of well-being, namely *emancipation* and *income* were not present.

In summary, Figure 132 proportionally illustrates the key findings from the dress artefact elicitation (Image/narrative task two) that relate to the well-being categories. The student participants evidence gaining both *eudaimonic* and *hedonic well-being* from dress artefacts. *Eudaimonic well-being* is more prevalent in the findings, related to M: Meaning, memory and attachment, providing P: Positive emotions related to specific, historical or ritualised *time*, the *place* of home and the R: Relationships of *community*, specifically family. *Safety* is found through feelings of belonging, familiarity and ritual. The prominence of people and *place* embedded in these personal mnemonic artefacts (Habermas and Paha 2002) suggests the importance of Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self in anchoring the identities of these students during a transitional life-stage of significant change; thus the meanings and memories described in the narratives and the colours and styles evident in the photographed dress artefacts suggest an overarching need for solidity (Bauman 2012) or constancy. The self, as a tiny fragment with an unknown future in a complex culture seeks self-coherence via autobiographical memories and socially-constructed schemas (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004). *Hedonic well-being*, or feeling good through looking good, is less prevalent in the findings, however there was evidence of *hedonic well-being* gained through dress artefacts that engender *body confidence*, often involving the *colour* black to camouflage the *body*.

4.5

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT IN CLOTHING II Focus group discussion

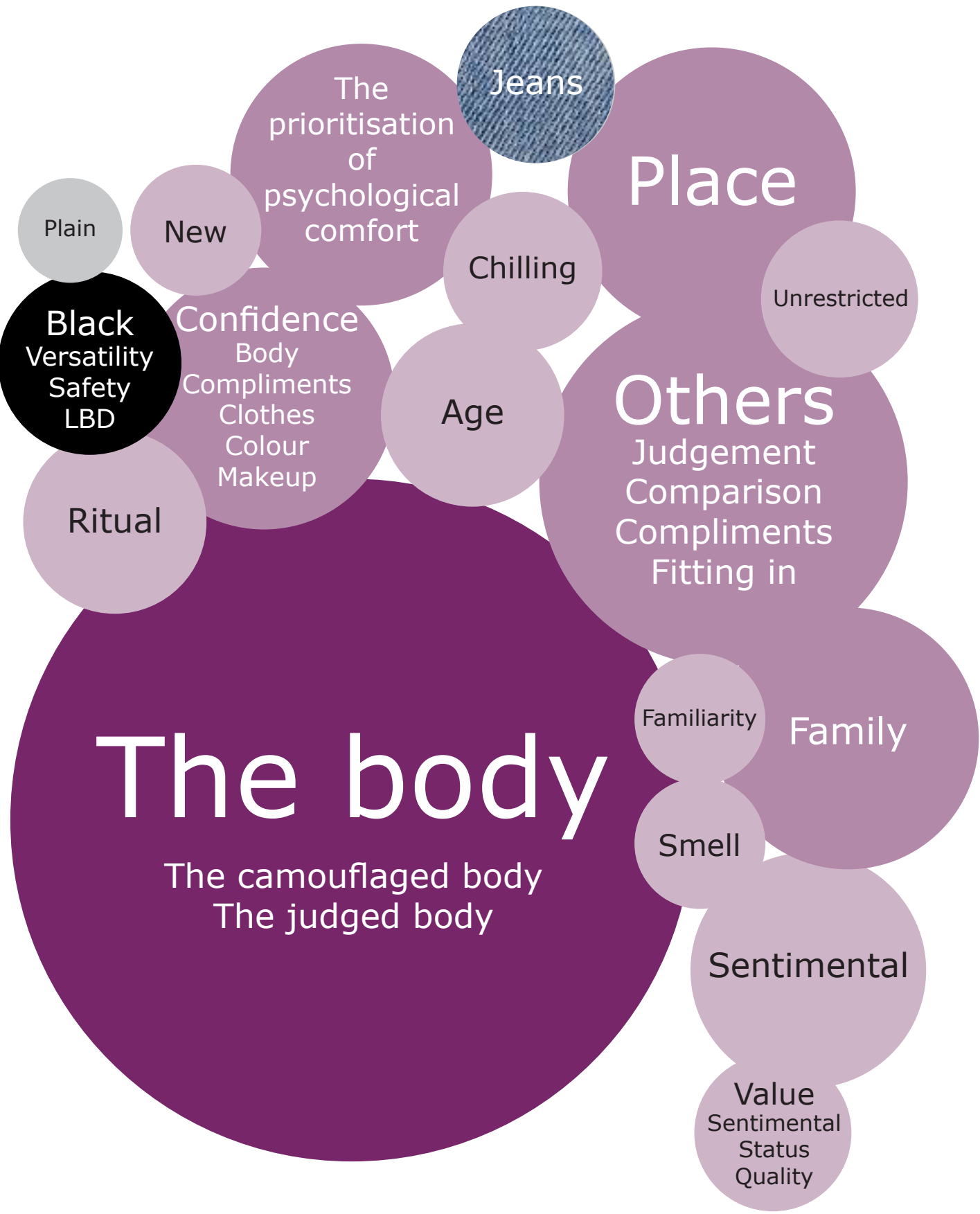
4.5.1 Method overview

The focus group were asked:

'Who has an item (or items) of clothing that makes them feel good?
What is it, and why do you feel that way about it?'

This task sought to address Objective 3, determining the role and value of psychological comfort to women in the UK. In total, 153 focus groups were conducted; 58 in 2015, 52 in 2016 and 43 in 2017. These were transcribed verbatim to produce text narratives for analysis. Analysis of this data followed grounded theory principles of initial coding, line by line, followed by focused coding, with use of memos and diagrams to establish categories and relationships (Charmaz 2006; Mills, Bonner and Francis 2006). Memos involve keeping a record of thoughts and ideas while interacting with the data, developing ideas in narrative form and using visual strategies such as colour coding. Memos started with data analysis only, allowing codes and categories to emerge from the data; literature was integrated after the focused coding stage. Each transcript was read through twice; firstly, to gain familiarity with the data and identify key codes, followed by the construction of memo tables to gather key quotes and examples from the participants' own words to create a narrative for emergent categories, while preserving the participant voice (Charmaz 2006).

Figure 133 Focus group discussion themes



4.5.2 Initial coding

Initial codes identified in the memo tables included: the body, the prioritisation of psychological comfort, place, others, the comfort of family, ritual, the psychological comfort of black, the ambiguity of jeans and confidence. Some lesser codes, still with relevance to the research, also emerged, including: unrestricted, value, sentimental, familiarity, chilling, the excitement of new, smell and plain. A third pass of the data (Hanson, Balmer and Giardino 2011) resulted in an 18,000-word narrative of the categories, making extensive use of participant quotes. This was subject to focused coding (Saldana 2016; Charmaz 2006), involving deeper analysis of the data to establish both the distinct and cross-thematic categories, with the key category of judgement emerging. Although many of the responses showed a high level of homogeneity, some specific age-related differences were evident. Overall, the findings from the focus-group discussion highlighted the participants' preoccupation with the body, and the intertwined nature of body/person, body/place and body/people, aligning with Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self, which includes the body, place and people. The initial coding categories are shown in diagrammatic form, proportionally represented, in Figure 133. A summary of the key categories to emerge from the initial coding of the focus group discussion is presented in section 4.5.2. The focused coding for RQ5 and RQ6 is presented in sections 4.5.3 and 4.5.4, with each section accompanied by a relational diagram. The focus group findings are illustrated with images gathered from method three, the photoshoot image and narrative elicitations, demonstrating constant comparative analysis (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher 2013; Dunne 2011; Mills, Bonner and Francis 2006) between the data sets and highlighting cohesion between the focus-group discussion data (the expanded, all-participant sample) and the visual data created by the key informant sample.

Figure 134 The psychological comfort of feeling unrestricted



The psychological comfort of feeling unrestricted

'Think you feel safer when you have like a big cuddly jumper on'
(CFP121)

The participants' discussions on unrestricted clothing largely centred around oversized clothes, with some examples of fitted-but-stretchy gym wear also included (see Figure 134). Participants linked loose clothing with lounging and relaxing, linked with the comfort and safety of their home environment and the end of the working day.

The comfort of chilling at home

'Joggers,
like I wear them all the time when I'm not going out'
(AFP218)

Some participants would not want to be seen in public wearing housewear (V & A 2019) such as hoodies and baggy, slouchy clothes; they are purely for being at home, in line with Jayne and Ferencuhova's (2013) assertions that wearing comfortable clothes in public spaces is regarded negatively. Some participants linked wearing these clothes around the house with laziness, which has negative connotations, but others used the more positive term of chilling. There was a sense that chilling in housewear is only psychologically comfortable when in the safety of a private place.

Place – does my outfit match this place?

'There's nothing worse than being somewhere and feeling uncomfortable,
like you don't match your surroundings'
(GAP326)

The focus group participants frequently mentioned place in relation to their dress practices. Places related to dress practices can be categorised as home, work, out and 'out out'. Home is free from judgement and expectations, a place of pyjamas, joggers, ugly clothes and Ugg boots. Work elicits a level of anxiety about appearance among some of the participants. Some participants use clothing to actively manage their appearance at work, to get themselves into a productive mindset, to dress the part in terms of career aspirations and to convey competency (Bandura 1995) and authority to others, in line with Guy and Banim's (2000) assertions that women conform to dress norms in work settings and evidencing adoption of power dressing strategies (Craik 2009; Peluchette, Karl and Rust 2006). Out, for the participants, represents Baron's (2013) duty-visible clothing category, where one can be dressed comfortably, but some effort is made with appearance. 'Out out' was a term frequently used by participants, mostly in relation to nights out and clubbing. Several participants describe the desire to look good and look nice for Saturday nights out, which for the younger

Figure 135 High heels

'I usually wear
a pair of shoes that are
quite high heeled.'
(RWP419)

'Ok is that just to
make yourself taller?'
(RWM)

'Yeah.'
(RWP419)
[laughter]

'Do you feel better
if you are taller?'
(RWM)

'Definitely yeah.'
(RWP419)

participants seems to involve wearing something short, tight and revealing. This aligns with Bauman's (2012) discussion on the carnival community, whereby being 'out out' in a club provides spectacle; an opportunity for normally disparate individuals to gain respite from the anxiety of individual choice and follow the crowd. However, the findings reveal what Bauman failed to acknowledge in relation to the carnival community; the individual's anxiety around judgement of the body. Thus, for the participants of this Comfort in Clothing study, the comfort of conforming with others is tempered by body insecurities.

The psychological comfort of clothing the body

'I think anybody tries to look slim'
(EDP229)

Concerns with the body emerged as the strongest category from the focus-group responses, with participants from all age groups expressing concern with body image and discussing how they use clothing to provide psychological comfort from body concerns. Participants expressed fear of judgement from others, while exhibiting judgement of others in their discussions and largely agreed that being taller (see Figure 135) and slimmer is desirable. High heels were regarded as facilitators of this look. Some participants regard being overweight as a sin, suggesting strength of feeling and inherent negativity towards the perceived bigger body. Dress practices discussed fall broadly into the categories of control and camouflage, with black confirmed as the colour for camouflage clothing.

Age

'I used to when in the younger days, but not now'
(LMP235)

Generally, more mature participants were more concerned with camouflaging the body. Participants in their twenties were concerned with holding in their stomach using high-waist jeans. A surprising number of participants in their early twenties mentioned wearing control underwear, to give them more confidence. A pattern emerged of relatively young participants (in their early twenties) discussing how they had moved on from age sixteen to eighteen, when they first started going out out and would wear much shorter and tighter clothes. Thus, it seems that young women quickly move from body confidence to body camouflage as they move past their teenage years.

The prioritisation of psychological comfort

'I'd rather look good'
(KCP419)

Some participants described putting on heels to take a photograph, then changing into flat shoes to go out; others described drinking to dull the pain of wearing heels. For many, feeling socially comfortable was deemed more important than feeling physically comfortable.

Figure 136 The safety of scarves



Ritual

'I wear my hair in a donut. All the time.'
(HAKP123)

In psychology, ritual refers to repetitive behaviour, often used to neutralise anxiety. Many participants mentioned appearance-management rituals (Rudd and Lennon 2000), often involving body modifications and body supplements (Jenss 2016) such as perfume, makeup and jewellery. Tension is evident whereby the use of perfume and makeup can be said to be acts of agency (independent acts) that engender psychological comfort and well-being, but that are a response to structure, in the form of social and cultural norms (Rudd and Lennon 2000), suggesting again the influence of judgement. Rituals around the wearing of jewellery and fears around losing important items were expressed. Ritual also refers to the psychological comfort of familiar clothing styles, a comfort zone of clothing. Several participants linked wearing scarves, wrapped around them, with safety and feeling secure (see Figure 136), aligning with the ONS research that links feelings of safety with well-being (Evans, MacRory and Randall 2015).

Figure 137 The perception of judgement



Others

'Yeah, sometimes we send each other pictures of what we are wearing'
(GAP123)

One of the strongest categories to emerge from the focus group participants was the influence of others on their dress practices. Participants described the need to fit in, a fear of judgement, the impact of receiving positive reviews (Stone 2006) or compliments, the need to make more of an effort when meeting new people and the need to be dressed appropriately in relation to others (see Figure 137). Thus, these participants convey an inhibited sense of agency and conform to normative expectations of dress (Rudd and Lennon 2000) in social settings, described by Craik (1994) and Bauman (2012) as a technology or mask of civility, allowing people to successfully interact with one another. The transition period from late teenage years to early twenties emerged as a period of change, whether becoming more independent or more willing to conform. However, the need to fit in was not restricted to the younger participants, with older participants also conforming to avoid judgement. It is worth noting that none of these participants gave specific examples of having received negative judgemental comments about their dress or how they look. This may be due to the somewhat public nature of the focus-group setting inhibiting such personal revelations, or may align with Cooley's (2009[1902]) Looking Glass theory, whereby it is a person's perception of what others might be thinking about them that drives behaviour. The focus on makeup, a largely female-orientated product, introduces an element of gendered judgement. Comparisons, compliments and meeting someone new were all evident as drivers of the participants' clothing and dress practices.

The excitement of new

'I think new clothes, just make you feel good'
(GAP321)

Although not a prevalent category, some participants did indicate gaining psychological comfort from new items of clothing, in providing excitement, gaining positive reviews and alleviating boredom, suggesting the transience of clothing in Western contemporary society; something to be worn once rather than cherished (Lynas 2010). This aligns with Bauman's (2012) assertions on throwaway culture, where products are no longer valued for longevity. It was interesting to note that participants from an age range of twenties to early fifties provided examples of psychological comfort gained from new items of clothing, highlighting that it is not just the younger demographic that purchases clothing with hedonic motivations or that regards clothing as transient items to be easily replaced rather than valued.

Figure 138 The comfort of black

'It's the kinda colour where like, you don't want to stand out... you're not gonna jump out the crowd.'
(NBP523)

'You'll always see me wearing black clothing... em, just because I don't like to stand out in colours.'
(SRCP424)

'you're a shadow, when you're all black.'
(SCP421)

'If you stick to what you constantly wear you feel more safe... black and grey are my colours.'
(HMP321)

'Even though I like prefer red' (STP221)
'You would always revert to black' (STP650)
'It's a safety colour'.
(STP221)

The comfort of black

'Black, all black, all black errthing [everything]'
(MTP420)

Participants of all ages repeatedly discussed the colour black in relation to psychological comfort. Many participants showed strong emotion, stating that they love black clothing and expressing the safety of black as a known, familiar, tried and tested colour for dressing; one that does not stand out or draw attention (see Figure 138), signifying comfort in conservatism (Solomon and Rabolt 2009).

The black dress, regarded as a design classic in fashion terms (Fox 2018), was a popular discussion point among the participants, linked with the psychological comfort of receiving compliments from others. The versatility of black was discussed by many participants, with black variously described as effortless, elegant, classic, convenient, smart, powerful, professional, understated, sexy, safe and a staple, and black items of clothing seen as appropriate for multiple places and situations. None of the participants linked black clothing with politics, religion or rebellion, all of which are mentioned in literature (Picardie 2015). Many participants described having black workwear or work uniforms, linking with Eisman's (2006) assertions on black as a signifier of power, however most participants associated black with being a safe and easy choice.

Figure 139 Status brands



Value

'If you've got a luxury item, you feel better'
(KMP260)

The concept of value, related to clothing and accessories was regarded as both a positive and a negative by participants, with some participants highlighting the psychological comfort gained from the perception of enhanced social status associated with certain brands. This confirms the value of brands as 'judgement devices' (Crewe 2017 p. 3), and emphasises the participants' focus on 'aspirational values' (Davies 2015 p. 143). Some participants confirm Hameide's (2011 p. 109) description of luxury items as 'emotional rewards', offering a feel-good factor. The data suggests that clothes are regarded as more transient or disposable compared with jewellery, unless the clothing item has meaning that imbues beyond-market value (Crewe 2017; Belk 1988).

Brands mentioned by the participants tended to be high end (Rolex, Chanel, Gucci, Coach, Michael Kors, George Jensen, Barbour, Lacoste, Polo Ralph Lauren), confirming the importance of status brands to these participants and identifying them as luxury consumers (see Figure 139). These participants can be described as Parvenus according to Han, Nunes and Dreze's (2010) Signal Preference and Taxonomy (see Figure 12 on page 54), as most of these brands use loud signals (such as brand logos and luxury, high-profile marketing campaigns) to convey wealth-related status.

Some participants experience anxiety, or psychological discomfort, about the value of some status items. Anxiety was not limited to monetary value however; several participants also expressed concern about losing items of sentimental value. Thus, the discomfort of value emerges, based on fear of loss. As a feeling of safety is important to well-being (Evans MacRory and Randall 2015), these findings illustrate how attachment (Savas 2004) to clothing and dress items can inhibit eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), and how dress practices can form rituals, used to mitigate feelings of fear and opportunity for loss. The value of these items is not just monetary, it is based on 'beyond-market explanations' (Crewe 2017 p. 3), such as history, love and social relations, or others. The participants' strong attachment to their valued items aligns with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment, and Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self, evidencing the importance of gifts from others and sentimental value.

Figure 140 Sentimental jewellery

SENTIMENTAL JEWELLERY by KCP10822



Generations: the comfort of family

'so it's my grandfather's shirts and when I wear them, it brings back the memories and takes me back in time'

(NSP243)

A key category to emerge from the focus groups was the psychological comfort of dress items from significant others. This largely involved jewellery given by family, with participants mentioning history and value associated with their loved ones. This category also links strongly with the sentimental category. Missing home and family emerges as a key category amongst participants in their twenties, who are likely to be studying or working away from the family home. Thus, clothing and jewellery provide psychological comfort through connection to significant others. Older participants were more likely to mention comfort associated with their wedding rings, highlighting their different life stage.

Sentimental

'I think sometimes clothes can have like, sentimental values... like you always feel comfortable putting it on and you're just like "aw yeah"'

(LWP221)

In correlation with Crewe (2017), Savas (2004) and Belk (1988), participants described gaining psychological comfort through products deemed to be of sentimental value. Sentimental value was ascribed to items with longevity, with place and time proving important. Participants mentioned school leavers' hoodies and gig t-shirts, examples of clothing that are associated with a specific time and place and highlighting the importance of memories. Memories of dress items associated with occasions or milestones, such as weddings, engagements, a sister's graduation and the birth of a child also highlight the psychological comfort of family to the participants. Participants find comfort in dress items given as gifts by family, friends and partners. Examples given exemplified Masuch and Hefferon's (2014) concept of eudaimonic well-being, whereby the participants' dress practices involved items of sentimental value, providing meaning or invoking nostalgia, emphasising the role of nostalgia in providing a psychological lens that helps to maintain identity (Belk 1988). Jewellery was a prominent category in terms of sentimental value (see Figure 140). As discussed in the value category, while many participants highlight that they regard items of jewellery as sentimental, fewer ascribe the same value to clothes.

The comfort of familiarity

'I wouldn't go anywhere without my rings'

(NBP621)

Participants indicated gaining psychological comfort from dress items that were familiar, as discussed in the ritual and sentimental categories. Familiarity is manifest in dress routines and rituals (Baron 2013).

Figure 141 Avoiding cultural visibility



The ambiguity of jeans

'I hate jeans' (KPP520)

'Jeans are my life' (RWP319)

Jeans were a key topic of discussion amongst the focus group participants. Some participants related jeans to their body, focusing on a thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Brown and Dittmar 2005; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), and confirming jeans as a modern means of body camouflage (Picardie 2015; Barnard 2002; Craik 1984). A tight/loose binary emerged, evidencing ambiguity in females' feelings towards jeans, with some agreement that skinny jeans are perceived as being for a younger demographic. Many of the participants, despite finding psychological comfort in how they look in jeans or in the versatility of jeans (Crewe 2017; Jenss 2016; David 2015), do not find jeans physically comfortable to wear. The versatility of jeans provides psychological comfort to many of the participants, forming a safe, trusted and socially acceptable clothing choice, described by participants as a wardrobe staple. Although there is broad agreement amongst the focus group participants that jeans offer psychological comfort, there is again ambiguity in opinions, with older participants less sure of jeans' versatility while younger participants see them as acceptable in all settings and plain enough to dress up or down.

The comfort of plain

'Just want to blend in more than stick out like a sore thumb'
(EPP121)

Plainness links with the everyday, staple nature of jeans, worn and accepted by many (David 2015). The comfort of plain was not a prominent category, but can be linked to the stronger categories of familiarity and fitting in with others. In addition to describing t-shirts and jeans as wardrobe staples, participants highlighted black clothing as a means to remain invisible amongst others (see Figure 141).

Figure 142 The psychological comfort of perfume



PERFUME by KCP9921

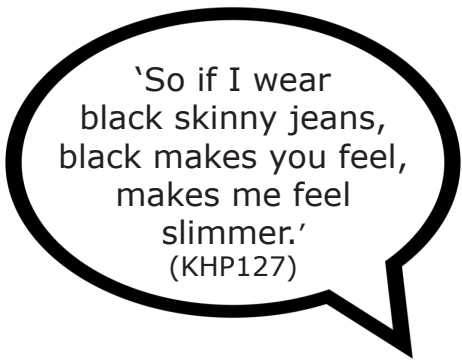
Smell

'My mum bought me a jumper when I went through a bad time a couple of years ago; she wore it round the house for like ages so when she gave it to me it smelled like her'

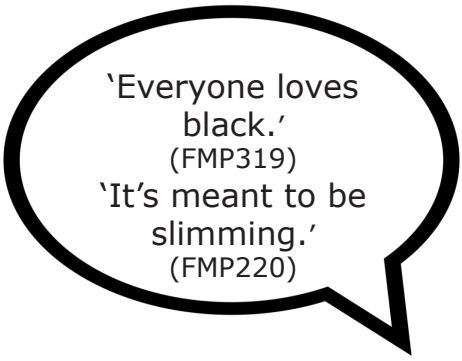
(JMP121)

Smell did not emerge as a strong category from the focus groups. However, the findings related to smell do link to some of the larger categories, those of home, significant others, familiarity and ritual, and scent or smell is another sensorial aspect that can contribute to psychological comfort (Kamalha *et al.* 2013) and well-being. Several participants associated the smell of their dressing gown with either their home or their mother. The participants' views align with Gaye's (2015) discussion on how smells can evoke feelings of familiarity, attraction and nostalgia and Solomon and Rabolt's (2009) assertions that smells stir emotions, invoke memories, can calm and relieve stress. This suggests the smell associated with certain items of clothing or with ritualised appearance-management behaviours (Rudd and Lennon 2000) such as the wearing of perfume (see Figure 142) can provide both hedonic (feel-good) and eudaimonic (nostalgic, sentimental) well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014).

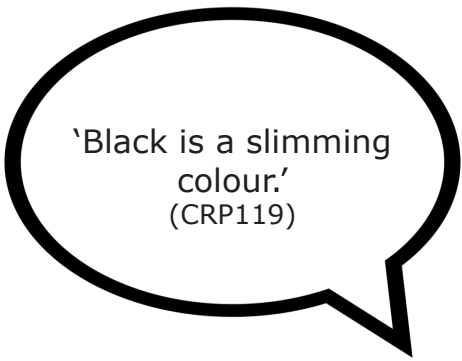
Figure 143 Black = thin




'So if I wear
black skinny jeans,
black makes you feel,
makes me feel
slimmer.'
(KHP127)



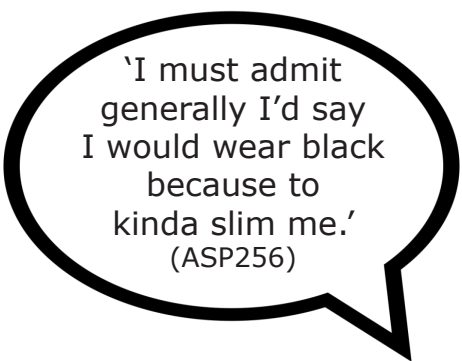
'Everyone loves
black.'
(FMP319)
'It's meant to be
slimming.'
(FMP220)



'Black is a slimming
colour.'
(CRP119)



'Yeah
black dresses
make you look
skinny.'
(KSP419)



'I must admit
generally I'd say
I would wear black
because to
kinda slim me.'
(ASP256)

Confidence

'I think it can actually give you confidence if you're dressed properly'
(EWP251)

Participant comments about looking good, feeling good, looking better and feeling better were coded to the confidence category, along with specific mentions of confidence (see Figure 144). The presence of this category in the participants' responses is significant, as confidence is important to well-being (NHS 2015b) and previous research suggests many women make an effort with dress to feel confident (Pine 2014). The participants discussed body confidence, highlighting their lack of body confidence, again emphasising preoccupation with the body. Clothing confidence, the confidence gained from matching underwear and high heels, from black (see Figure 143) and red colours, from wearing makeup and from gaining compliments from others also emerged from the data. These participants indicate the pressure of conforming to cultural norms (Wilcox, Hyeong and Sankar 2009) and recognise grooming as an element of social practice (Wodak and Meyer 2016).

Figure 144 The magic dress



Figure 145 Clothing as camouflage

'Any loose dress that em, that doesn't feel too tight and that plays over all my roly poly bits as well.'
(HAKP452)

'I am also trying to hide all the lumpy bits... so I would rather wear something that is not very clingy.'
(PKP328)

'I'm uncomfortable em showing off my midriff.'
(SCP229)

'I think shirts and dresses are very flattering. They hide the bits that you'd rather hide I think.'
(HFP348)

'I feel very uncomfortable if something doesn't cover my bottom, and cover my front tummy.'
(HMP150)

4.5.3 Focused coding for RQ5

To seek answers to RQ5, the detailed category narrative produced during the initial coding of the focus group transcripts was analysed for subjective associations, where the participants expressed personal feelings and opinions on comfort or discomfort related to clothing and dress practices. Descriptions of the participants' lived experiences (their choices and knowledge gained from those choices) of comfort or discomfort were also identified. The key findings from this focused coding (Saldana 2016; Charmaz 2006) are presented as follows:

Subjective associations

The participants' personal feelings were overwhelmingly related to the body. Mainly, the participants associated their dress practices with camouflage and control. The latter could be described as an active, behavioural or primary control strategy (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008; Webster and Tiggemann 2003), with the younger participants using clothing to minimise the body, finding comfort in control of their bodies using high waist jeans and Spanx. The more mature participants find comfort in camouflage, believing bodies need to be covered (see Figure 145). This suggests alignment with Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp's (2008) and Webster and Tiggemann's (2003) assertions that women continue to experience body dissatisfaction across the life-span, but that they employ secondary cognitive control strategies such as lowered expectations to minimise negative consequences. Thus, it may be harder to control the body to fit in with a thin ideal as one ages, but clothing is perceived as valuable for its ability to cover or camouflage. The participants largely associated leggings with relaxation, lounging and being at home, free from the responsibilities of work. These are positive associations. However, they also hold negative associations about wearing leggings in public, associating them with laziness and fearful of judgement from others, aligning with Jayne and Ferencuhova's (2013) findings that wearing comfortable clothes in public spaces can be regarded negatively. Some participants evidenced judgement against those with larger body sizes who wear leggings, suggesting leggings should be limited to those with slimmer body shapes. These personal feelings and opinions show strong internalisation of a thin ideal (Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), with these participants evidencing appearance-related social comparison tendencies (Vartanian and Dey 2013). For most participants, size matters.

Figure 146 Matching underwear



Younger participants associated jeans with versatility, suitable for multiple places and situations, while some of the more mature participants associated jeans with purely casual dress. Jeans were regarded by the participants as a norm, plain enough to enable the wearer to avoid attention, to fit in, again avoiding judgement from others. This partly links with Jenss' (2016 p. 171) discussion on being 'unmarked'; avoiding the cultural visibility of standing out through dress, although the participants' comments do not allude to maintaining hegemonic power, rather, to remaining invisible by distancing themselves from Bauman's (2012) carnival community of others. The participants do not associate jeans with physical comfort, with most participants choosing to take off their jeans while at home, thus the ambiguity of jeans emerges. Some participants associate wearing certain items of clothing, such as matching underwear (see Figure 146) or the little black dress with feeling good. This association tended to involve making an effort, being dressed up or smart; presenting yourself properly in public, which could be described as another primary cognitive control strategy (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008; Webster and Tiggemann 2003) that enhances self-esteem and offers protection from judgement. Binary to this, several participants indicated psychological discomfort in being dressed up as this was not their usual or familiar dress practice. A few participants highlighted gaining psychological comfort from the perception of enhanced social status associated with certain brands (see Figure 147), but brands were not widely discussed.

Figure 147 Brand value



Figure 148 The black dress



The colour black is strongly associated with the body, with the participants perceiving black as a slimming colour. Black was also associated with fashion, the classic little black dress (Fox 2018) and elegance. Black was perceived as offering protection against judgement; an understated colour of conservatism (Solomon and Rabolt 2009) and therefore, safety, enabling participants to avoid attracting attention. It is also a heuristic (Baron 2013), with some participants using staple items of clothing such as skinny black jeans and the little black dress (see Figure 148) to ease the cognitive load of deciding what to wear, epitomising Bauman's (2012) choice overloaded and anxious consumer. The participants provided a variety of opinions about the colour black, describing it as easy, effortless, convenient, smart, powerful, professional and understated, and black items of clothing were seen by the participants as versatile; being appropriate for multiple places and situations, suggesting the key role of black clothing in creating a socially-acceptable and safe extended self (Belk 1988). None of the participants associated black clothing with politics, religion or rebellion, all of which are mentioned in literature (Picardie 2015). Overall, the participants agreed on the comfort of black.

Figure 149 Makeup rituals



There was broad agreement that accessories such as shoes, bags and jewellery provide psychological comfort as they are not dependent on body size, that accessories always fit. The participants universally associate high heels with physical discomfort, however heels made the participants feel better; they associate heels with looking better, feelings of confidence, and presenting yourself properly in public, for going to work or going out out. Thus, heels hurt (but feel good). There was also agreement that makeup matters (see Figure 149); some participants believe females are judged if they go out without makeup on and some will not go out without makeup, evidencing ritual and concern to be presenting yourself properly in public. The use of makeup therefore relates to the control and camouflage of appearance, a conscious need (Maslow 1943) based on constant exposure to social and cultural norms that repeatedly emphasise the importance of physical attractiveness. This leads to self-consciousness and habitual monitoring of appearance (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), with Belk (1988) agreeing that grooming can be an expression of group belonging.

Some participants associate items (usually jewellery) with significant others, imbuing those items with beyond-market value (Crewe 2017). A few participants associated the smell of a garment with home and family. These findings evidence that family matters, through memories of (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004) and attachment to (Savas 2004; Belk 1988) these cherished dress items, and confirming the role of clothing and accessories as non-linguistic forms of mnemonic media (Habermas and Paha 2002). Some participants associated watches with work; their ritualised removal signifying the end of the working day. Overall, these subjective associations provide structure (Rudd and Lennon 2000) to the participants; safe and established codes and customs that compensate for the anxiety of choice in contemporary society (Bauman 2012); the fear of getting it wrong and being judged.

Figure 150 Clothing confidence



Lived experiences

The participants described prioritising psychological comfort over physical, wearing heels that hurt because they provide a psychological boost, and drinking alcohol to dull the pain on a night out. There is a different lived experience in the safety and privacy of the home environment, where participants prioritise physical comfort and use lazy clothes such as leggings, hoodies and joggers to signify the end of the working day and being able to relax. The participants described feeling good in clothes that make them look or feel thinner and gain psychological comfort in fitting into a smaller size of clothes. Thin equates with feeling good, or hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), with many participants describing a need to cover or camouflage parts of the body that they are unhappy with, confirming the continued relevance of previous research (Picardie 2015; Barnard 2002; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997; Craik 1984) that highlights the role of clothing as camouflage. The lived experience of feeling overweight is perceived as negative, which leads to heuristic dress practices (Baron 2013) that limit clothing choice. Participants described limiting colour choice, adhering to the same styles, and avoiding retailers and brands with sizing policies that cause the psychological discomfort of embarrassment. Younger participants favoured the high-waist skinny jean and used this style as a contemporary corset to control the body.

Some participants described feeling confident and happy when wearing a little black dress (see Figure 150), evidencing hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). Some participants described a black dress as a reliable choice and others could recall specific dates and times when wearing a black dress, imbuing it with meaning and engendering a sense of eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). The level of detail recalled suggests autobiographical memory (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004), whereby the long-term self is maintained via a knowledge base of autobiographical memories and socially-constructed categories drawn from culture., such as socialisation with family or peers, or media influence. This contributes to self-coherence (p. 492), the need to maintain a coherent and stable record of the self's interaction with the world that extends beyond the present moment, which is important for psychological well-being. Some participants evidence ritualistic behaviour, buying the same style of skinny black jeans repeatedly, again suggesting a heuristic approach to dress (Baron 2013) that alleviates anxiety of choice (Bauman 2012) and suggests the use of positive past memories (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004) to drive clothing decisions. Some participants avoid bright colours, such as red, to avoid standing out or attracting attention. Some participants described confusion, seeking the safety of a comfort zone of clothing, which, though boring, provides a level of anonymity and protection from undesirable cultural visibility (Jenss 2016). Other participants described texting friends to check what they would be wearing, anxious to fit in with them. Thus, using dress practices to fit in provides solidity and a sense of togetherness through likeness (Bauman 2012) or belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943).

Figure 151 Makeup confidence

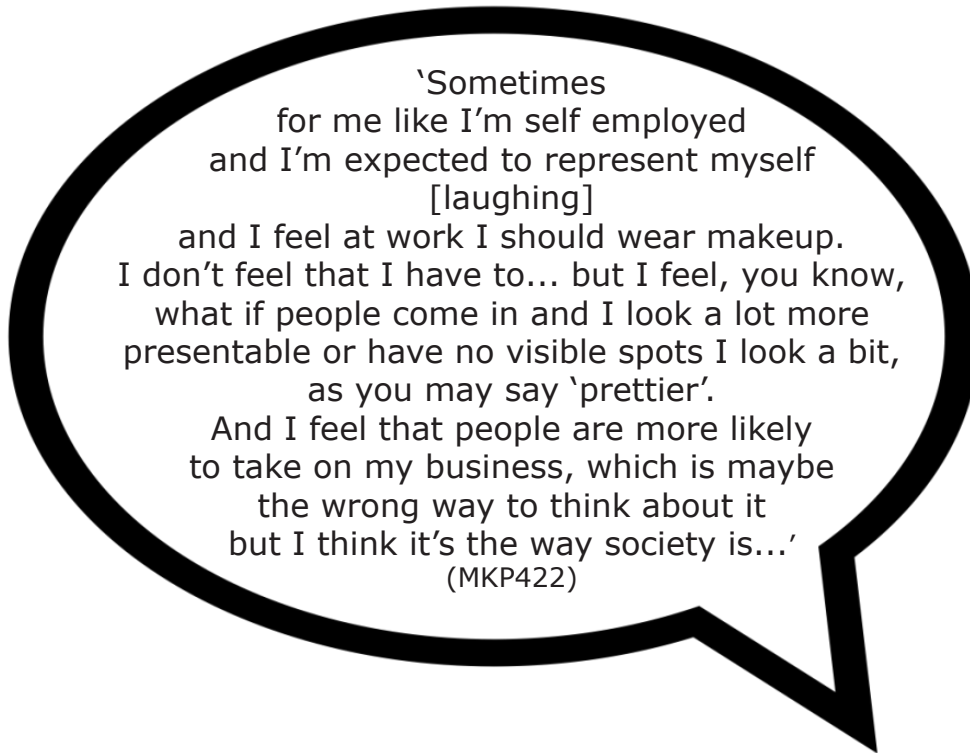
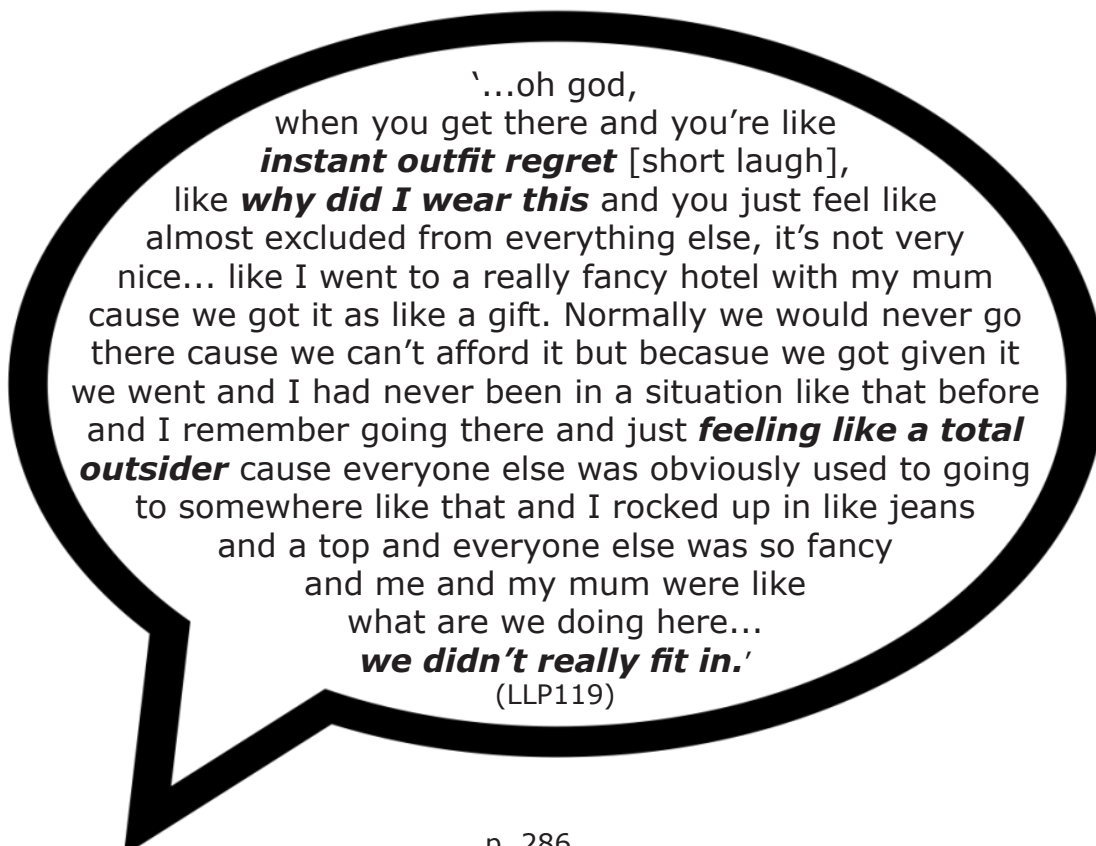


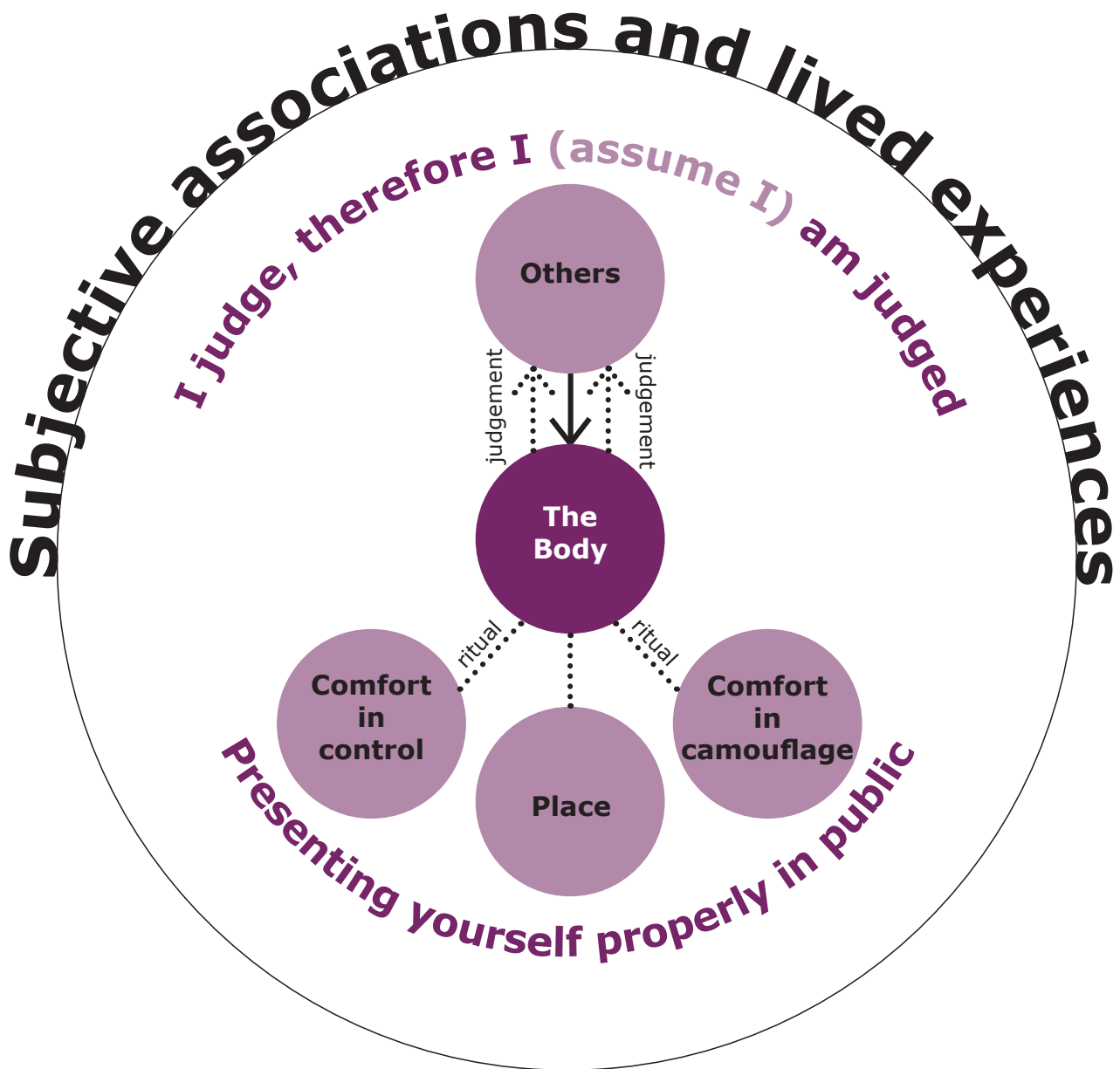
Figure 152 Outfit regret



Jeans were described by the participants as a versatile, everyday style choice that allowed them to safely and easily fit in with others and in a variety of places, suggesting that jeans (as a possession), combined with people and place, contribute to the extended self (Belk 1988), preserving and enhancing an internalised normative sense of identity (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004). More mature participants discussed experiencing anxiety about dressing too young; feeling self-conscious, while younger participants discussed the pressure to wear makeup in public (see Figure 151). These examples describe lived experiences of conforming to cultural and societal norms (Mid and Kim 2015; Wilcox, Hyeong and Sankar 2009; Entwistle 2003; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), described by Conway, Singer and Tagini as a 'life-story schema' (2004 p. 499). Some participants described appearance-related social-comparison behaviours (Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Markus and Nurius 1986) that led them to feel negatively about themselves in relation to how others look or are dressed. Thus, the participants evidence appearance-management rituals (Rudd and Lennon 2000) such as wearing perfume every day, applying makeup before leaving the house, buying and wearing the same type of clothes and changing into certain items of clothes while at home. These lived experiences demonstrate heuristic behaviour (Baron 2013), with the participants evidencing a need for easy, limited and safe clothing choices, and a strong need to fit with normative expectations of appearance (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and dress, to maintain a mask of civility (Bauman 2012). The need for dress norms seems to be a form of self-censorship (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997); an internalised value rather than a threat to autonomy (Deci and Ryan 200), which is surprising given the UK's culture of individualism.

Apart from an example of instant outfit regret (see Figure 152) and a dress-related memory of an unsuccessful job interview, the participants did not give many specific examples of negative lived experiences associated with clothing and dress practices. Rather, they feared the possibility and probability of being judged negatively by others for their sartorial choices. At the same time, the participants evidenced judgemental behaviour towards the clothing and dress practices of others, leading to the finding of 'I judge, therefore I (assume I) am judged'. Judgement is a subjective association with clothing choice, leading to the lived experience of fear of being judged. This aligns with Cooley's (1902) Looking Glass theory, where the perception of what others think drives anxiety, and evidences self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), where women internalise an observer's view of themselves. It is the participants' perceptions of what others might think about them that brings psychological discomfort and many examples were given of dress practices being used to prevent judgement. Conway, Singer and Tagini link this to the Aristotelian concept of judgement, where people 'apply feelings and preferences to the world' (2004 p. 502). The participants' fear of being judged, and their judgement of others aligns with Von Busch's (2016) description of fashion as a 'violent playground' (p. 181) and the 'violence of social competition' (p. 189). However, some participants discussed

Figure 153 Subjective associations and lived experiences



a positive side to judgement, through compliments. The lived experience of gaining compliments from others engenders feelings of confidence, and in turn, well-being, linked with the P: positive emotions and R: relationships elements of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of psychological well-being. Interestingly, none of the participants mentioned giving compliments to others, despite seeking and appreciating compliments themselves.

In summary, the participants' subjective associations of clothing are centred around heuristic dress practices, developed to provide comfort in camouflage and comfort in control of the body. The relational diagram, Figure 153, shows the body at the centre of the participants' sense of well-being related to clothing and dress practice. Associations are place-dependent and there is a focus on presenting yourself properly in public. The participants' lived experiences largely involve dressing to avoid judgement from others, while they actively judge others and judge themselves, summarised as I judge, therefore I (assume I) am judged. This partially alludes to Mathiesen's 'synoptical society' (Bauman 2012 p. 89) of those who watch (see Figure 2, page 6), while also alluding to a Foucauldian panopticism (see Figure 1, page 4), with the participants preferring to comply with the structure that 'collective, systemized and prescriptive' dress practices provide (Finkelstein 2007 p. 211), at the expense of individual agency, suggesting self-censorship (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and an overwhelming need for belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943). The key categories of place, people (others) and possessions in the form of clothing and jewellery, emphasise the importance of the extended self (Belk 1998), suggesting an un-extended self lacks solidity or form in Bauman's (2012) Liquid Modernity.

Figure 154 The prioritisation of psychological comfort



4.5.6 RQ6 Summary

To seek answers to RQ6, the detailed category narrative produced during the initial coding was further analysed for specific examples of psychological comfort, where the participants expressed ease, or freedom from worry related to their clothing artefacts and dress practices. The key findings from this focused coding (Saldana 2016; Charmaz 2006) are presented as follows:

A clothing artefact that provides the participants with a sense of psychological comfort is the high-heeled shoe, which many participants described wearing to feel good and look better, suggesting that hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) can be gained from specific clothing artefacts. Participants explained they felt good due to the slimming and leg-lengthening properties of high heels, thus these clothing artefacts provide body confidence. This suggests heels contribute to an ideal self (Markus and Nurius 1986), linked to the internalisation of a thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005). In addition, heels are associated with a smart, put-together look, providing a sense of confidence in the workplace, aligning with Rafaeli *et al.*'s (1997) assertions that being appropriately dressed for work leads to self-confidence and psychological comfort. Finally, the participants consider heels as a norm for social occasions, and put up with the physical pain of wearing them (see Figure 154) to gain the psychological comfort of fitting in with others. Again, this relates to the internalisation of dress norms, with internalisation described by Ryan, Connell and Deci (1985) as a necessary aspect of social cohesion. It also suggests a level of self-objectification, whereby the participants regard themselves as 'objects to be looked at and evaluated' (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997 p. 177). Markus and Nurius (1986 p. 955) posit that possible selves often arise from social comparison, stating that '[t]hrough the selection and construction of possible selves individuals can be viewed as active producers of their own development'. Possible selves can influence decision-making, motivating individuals to make choices that reflect a possible self they aspire to, such as being thin, successful or admired. Interestingly, a few younger participants described wearing heels for a photograph to upload to their social media (Instagram) but taking them off to go out, suggesting a new dress practice that separates the possible-self life presented on social media from real-life dress practices. This finding suggests an extension to Goffman's (1990[1959]) Presentation of Self in Everyday Life theory: Presentation of Self in Virtual Life, to encompass this contemporary practice of virtual dress dramaturgy. This epitomises Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity through dress practice that is so transient it is changed before even leaving the house.

Figure 155 The versatility of jeans



High heels are an element of the participants' presenting yourself properly in public dress practice, along with makeup rituals. The participants described a need to feel put together when in social situations such as nights out, clubbing and weddings; their ideal self (Markus and Nurius 1986). Clothing artefacts deemed suitable for this would be categorised by Baron (2013) as pleasure-visible, and some participants did describe feeling good through the effort made to look good, again suggesting that hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) can be gained through dress practice. However, some participants expressed anxiety around dressing-up, feeling uncomfortable wearing clothes that were out with their normal dress practice and feeling pressure to conform to societal norms of dressing to avoid judgement. This suggests Baron (2013) failed to acknowledge the pressure involved in the presentation of self in what Bauman (2012) named as the carnival community, where people adhere to a sartorial dress code specific to the spectacle, or occasion. While conforming to these sartorial dress codes provides an opportunity for the individual to gain respite from the postmodern anxiety of solitary or individualistic choice, it does not seem to engender psychological comfort as those participants are not comfortable dressing in this way; being socially comfortable does not always relieve individual anxieties, it merely masks them. Thus, this Comfort in Clothing research posits an addition to Baron's (2013) clothing categories: pressure-visible, encompassing clothing artefacts worn to conform to Bauman's carnival community, and engender a sense of belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) or relatedness (Deci and Ryan 2000), but not enjoyed.

Jeans provide psychological comfort through their versatility (see Figure 155) and commonality, spanning Baron's (2013) duty-invisible and pleasure-invisible clothing categories. Participants of all ages understand and accept jeans as a clothing artefact suitable to wear in a variety of places, although the oldest participants were more limited in their acceptance of jeans. As with heels, jeans were not considered physically comfortable and participants discussed taking them off as soon as they got home. However, they provide an easy and safe way to fit in with others, without attracting undue attention, linking to past research including Maslow's (1943) safety and belonging needs; Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory in terms of relatedness and Baumeister and Leary's (1995) belongingness. Black clothing artefacts also provide psychological comfort by enabling the participants to fit in with others while fading into the background, avoiding undue attention and thus providing safety. For these participants, there is psychological comfort in not standing out through their clothing and dress practices (Jenss 2016), with very few expressing desire to dress individually and most expressing a strong desire to conform (Deci and Ryan 2000), which black clothing enables them to do through its status as a design classic (Fox 2018) and wardrobe staple. Additionally, some participants use black clothing to gain confidence in the workplace (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997), feeling smart and professional when wearing this colour, which aligns with the need for competence in Deci

Figure 156 The comfort of chilling



and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory. Black workplace dress aligns with Baron's (2013) category of duty-visible clothing, for formal work environments or interaction with others where influence is required, involving an element, but not an excess, of personal care. Most participants also acknowledged black as a slimming colour, and actively use black clothing to camouflage the body (Picardie 2015; Barnard 2002; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997; Craik 1984). Younger participants discussed the use of high-waist jeans as a means of control, providing body confidence. Thus, the colour black, and jeans both evidence internalisation of the thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005), providing the psychological comfort of conforming to internalised norms. Wearing common clothing artefacts such as jeans or black clothes seems to have become a heuristic (Baron 2013) that relieves the participants from the anxiety of abundant clothing choice (Crewe 2017; Jenss 2016; Corner 2014) available in Bauman's (2012) Liquid Modern times. While Deci and Ryan (2000) posit the positive, intrinsic motivation of choice (and its association with well-being), the participants of this Comfort in Clothing study evidence a desire to reduce choice and avoid novelty, confirming comfort is found in constancy.

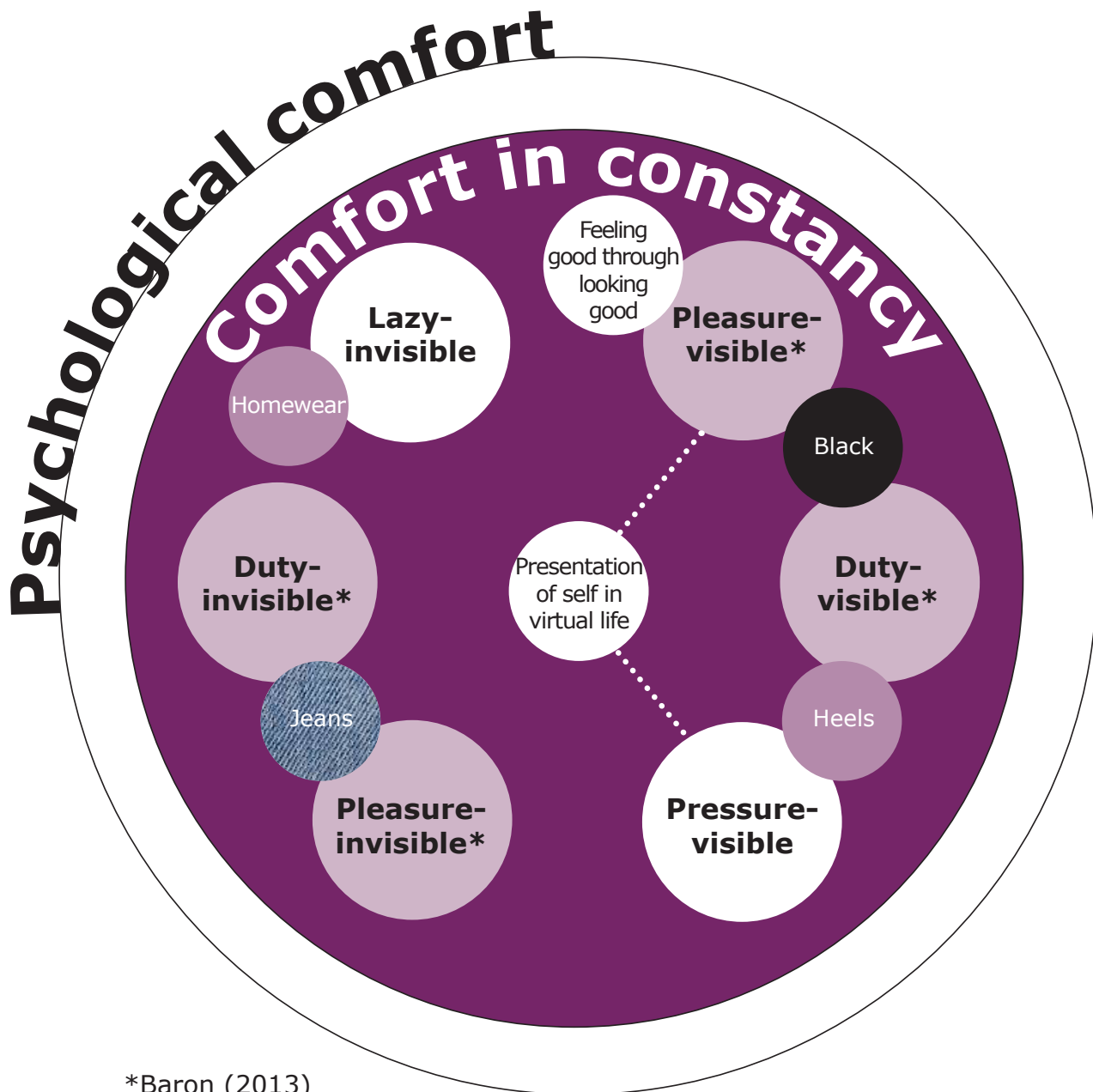
House-wear (V&A 2019), or lazy clothes, defined by the participants as joggers, hoodies, leggings and pyjamas (see Figure 156) provides the psychological comfort of relaxation, or chilling; a sense of feel-good, hedonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). The participants use these clothing artefacts to gain physical comfort while in the privacy of their home environment, thus linking these items psychologically with a feeling of safety (Holliday 1999; Maslow 1943), and to distance themselves from the anxieties and responsibilities of the working day. Baron (2013) would categorise these items as duty-invisible, for running errands and involving functional unselfconsciousness. However, this clothing category does not fully address the participants' preoccupation with relaxation, or chilling, or their anxieties about not being seen in these lazy clothing styles. This suggests another addition to Baron's existing four clothing categories is required: lazy-invisible, encompassing clothing that would not be worn in public and that represents the escape from duty, responsibility and productivity that was central to the participants' descriptions of at-home dress practices. The participants' strong need to feel relaxed, invisible and unjudged at home reflects the pressures people feel in the high-pressure, fast-moving, ever-changing environment of Liquid Modernity (Bauman 2012), with public self-consciousness, controlled by outside pressures, linked by Deci and Ryan (2000) to reduced well-being.

Figure 157 Hierarchy of attachment



Perfume, for some participants is a sensory modification (Jenss 2016) dress practice that provides psychological comfort. Thus, the participants' views correlate with Gaye's (2015) discussion on how smells can evoke feelings of familiarity, attraction and nostalgia and Solomon and Rabolt's (2009) assertions that smells stir emotions, invoke memories, can calm and relieve stress. This suggests the smell associated with certain items of clothing or with ritualised appearance-management behaviours (Rudd and Lennon 2000), such as the wearing of perfume, can provide both hedonic (feel-good) and eudaimonic (nostalgic, sentimental) well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). Eudaimonic well-being was also gained through valued dress artefacts such as items of clothing or jewellery that had belonged to family or significant others, that had been gifted or that were associated with specific memories of time and place (Habermas and Paha 2002). These are dress items imbued with longevity due to nostalgia and meaning (Savas 2004), becoming part of the extended self (Belk 1988) and helping to create and preserve a sense of identity, with Habermas and Paha (2002) highlighting the use of personal objects as reminders of others and as a form of psychological comfort, especially by women. However, the pursuit of hedonic well-being was far more prevalent in the participants' discussions, and clothing artefacts were generally not valued. Jewellery did attract a higher status of sentimentality amongst the participants, perhaps due to its solidity of form, longevity and tendency to be bought with thought, given as a gift or passed down through generations. Clothing, softer and more easily worn out, attracts less value. Clothing can also become dated more quickly than jewellery, especially in an era of fast fashion (Crewe 2017; Lynas 2010). One item of clothing that does attract sentimental value is the t-shirt, with many participants mentioning personalised t-shirts, band or gig t-shirts, and t-shirts from summer camps or sporting events that represent being part of a group, or as holiday items that are associated with fun and happy times. These examples all align with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment and Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self, with items linked to past events and enjoyable experiences. The t-shirt, it seems, although flimsy in form, provides solidity in the participants' lives, through familiarity or self-continuity imbued by autobiographical memory (Bluck and Alea 2008). Thus, a hierarchy of attachment emerges (see Figure 157), with jewellery deemed more meaningful and clothing less valued, apart from the elevated status of the sentimental t-shirt.

Figure 158 Psychological comfort



*Baron (2013)

The lack of focus on eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) suggests that clothing artefacts and dress practices could be further used to increase people's feelings of psychological comfort. Clothing is worn on the body every day; if people were encouraged to invest in clothing with more meaning, longevity and beyond-market value (Crewe 2017), moving away from fast and disposable fashion (Lynas 2010), the opportunity for enhanced eudaimonic well-being through clothing artefacts and dress practices could be facilitated. The move to a slower, more meaningful dress practice could afford one way to relieve the anxiety of fast-paced Liquid Modernity, providing a sense of solidity (Bauman 2012), or comfort in constancy, underpinned by family, familiarity and value (Habermas and Paha 2002) in an ever-changing world.

In summary, the participants discussed the psychological comfort of a limited range of specific clothing artefacts including homewear (leggings, joggers, hoodies and pyjamas), jeans, black clothes and high heels, all of which are classic and widely adopted styles, suggesting comfort in constancy or solidity (Bauman 2012). Outside the home, the participants' predominantly gain psychological comfort from dress practices that engender hedonic well-being: focusing on feeling good through looking good in public places. This suggests an opportunity to increase feelings of eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) through encouraging the concept of beyond-market value (Crewe 2017; Habermas and Paha 2002) in clothing artefacts, moving away from disposable, fast-fashion purchasing (Lynas 2010) to meaningful consumption, providing comfort in constancy, and moving away from the preoccupation with the body and appearance-based, socially-conformative judgement (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). A contribution to knowledge emerged from the participant narratives: the Hierarchy of attachment model (see Figure 157), which highlights the lack of value ascribed to everyday clothing. Two further contributions to knowledge are also suggested. Firstly, additions are suggested to Baron's (2013) clothing categories (see Figure 158). Lazy-invisible evolves from the participants' dress practices in the privacy of the home environment that provide psychological comfort. Pressure-visible acknowledges the psychological discomfort of being visible to others and feeling forced to conform to sartorial dress codes out with one's comfort zone. Secondly, an extension to Goffman's (1990[1959]) Presentation of Self in Everyday Life theory is posited: Presentation of Self in Virtual Life, to encompass the contemporary practice of virtual dress dramaturgy. This is linked to both the pleasure-visible and pressure-visible clothing categories, recognising the pleasure and pressure that documenting sartorial style on social media can bring.

4.5.5 Well-being themes identified in the focus group discussions

The well-being themes identified in the literature review were applied to the focus group discussion, to contribute to the analysis of well-being for RQ2. This thematic analysis of all participants' discussions is presented using each of the identified well-being themes as a sub-heading, with the well-being themes highlighted in *italics*, as follows:

Hedonic well-being

Some participants wear heels or certain pieces of jewellery, do their nails or wear fake tan to feel good, evidencing a culturally-driven conscious need for appearance management (Rudd and Lennon 2000; Maslow 1943) that suggests exposure to social and cultural norms that emphasise the importance of attractiveness (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). Some have familiar items of clothing that they always feel good wearing and some feel good in status brands (Hameide 2011; Savas 2004). Feeling good and feeling better were frequently-occurring phrases throughout the focus-group discussion, suggesting the participants were focused on feeling good, and actively using a variety of dress practices to do so, which can be described as primary, behavioural control strategies (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008) that engender a sense of self-efficacy. This facilitates well-being through the experience of P: positive emotions (Seligman 2011). Thus, *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) was a prominent finding.

Eudaimonic well-being

Some participants gain a sense of well-being from wearing items of jewellery (especially rings) associated with significant others, mainly family. These items are mnemonics, enabling memory retrieval of the people who gifted them (Habermas and Paha 2002). Extreme behaviours emerge as a category related to dress items associated with family; participants either always wear the item, or never wear it to avoid loss, aligning with Belk's (1988) suggestions that unintentional loss of a valued item can lead to a diminished sense of self. Ultimately, these items provide a sense of *eudaimonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). The value of these items is not just monetary, it is based on 'beyond-market explanations' (Crewe 2017 p. 3), such as history, love and social relations, or others. The participants' strong bond with their valued items aligns with Savas' (2004) theory of attachment, evidencing the importance of gifts from others and sentimental value, evidencing the extended self (Belk 1988) that includes people, places and things. This facilitates well-being through the experience of P: positive emotions and M: meaning (Seligman 2011). Examples of *eudaimonic well-being* were less prevalent than *hedonic well-being* in the participants' discussions, suggesting a prioritisation of feeling good through looking good, rather than through attachment or meaning. It is worth noting that while many participants regard items of jewellery as sentimental, fewer ascribe the same value to clothes.

Income

Income was not specifically referred to in the focus groups, but is referenced through discussions on value. The concept of value, related to clothing and accessories was regarded as both a positive and a negative by participants. Some participants highlighted gaining psychological comfort from the perception of enhanced social status associated with wearing certain brands. This confirms the value of brands as 'judgement devices' (Crewe 2017 p. 3), and emphasises the participants' focus on 'aspirational values' (Davies 2015 p. 143). However, Deci and Ryan (2000) note that such extrinsic aspirations (goals related to image or external signs of worth) are less likely to satisfy needs. Brands mentioned by the participants tended to be high end, confirming the importance of status brands to these participants and identifying them as luxury consumers. Research has shown that luxury consumers are concerned with both looking and feeling good (Hameide 2011), which can be linked with *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). These participants can be described as Parvenus according to Han, Nunes and Dreze's (2010) Signal Preference and Taxonomy (see Figure 12, p. 54), as most of the brands mentioned use loud signals to convey wealth-related status to others, evidencing commodity fetishism (Thompson 2017) and placing these participants in Bauman's (2012) consumer-orientated economy, where products become part of the extended self (Belk 1988).



Community

The opinion of others seems to matter and to influence dress practice, suggesting these participants' sense of agency is controlled by societal norms (Mida and Kim 2015; Entwistle 2003), with psychological comfort prioritised over physical comfort, and internalisation of middle class conservative feminine norms (Wood and Skeggs 2008) and the thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Brown and Dittmar 2005). The participants evidenced a strong need to fit in, to dress like those around them, and discussed societal pressure to wear makeup. The focus on makeup, a largely female-orientated product, emphasises the gendered nature of judgement and evidences self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). Thus, these participants convey a censored or inhibited sense of agency and conform to normative expectations of dress (Rudd and Lennon 2000) in social settings, described by Bauman (2012) as a mask of civility that allows people to successfully interact with one another. This facilitates well-being through the forming or maintaining of R: relationships (Seligman 2011), engendering a sense of togetherness through likeness (Bauman 2012) that satisfies belongingness needs (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943). Family is an important aspect of *community*, with participants using items that previously belonged to a family member or that had been gifted by a family member to remind them of that person or of home, aligning with Habermas and Paha's (2002) assertions that objects acting as reminders of the past and of significant others are important to identity. Some participants feel they do not need to present themselves properly in front of family, thus family and the home environment are micro-level *community*, associated with more relaxed dress practices and a private self. At macro-level *community*, the participants' sense of well-being through dress practice can be defined as presenting yourself properly in public.

Time

Time was not specifically referred to in the focus groups, but is referenced through discussions on age. Some participants feel that fashion affects the young and with age comes a clothing wisdom or heuristic (Baron 2013) that engenders well-being through knowing how to dress in a way that looks and feels good. There seems to be a rapid change between late teens and early twenties, where the participants move away from very short, very tight, attention-grabbing clothes. These findings suggest that young women quickly transition from *body confidence* to *body camouflage* as they move past their teenage years, and adopt more conservative middle-class feminine norms (Wood and Skeggs 2008). Age made it less likely that the participants would subject themselves to the pain of high heels, evidencing willingness to forgo the *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014) of feeling good through looking good for physical comfort. This suggests the more mature participants employ secondary cognitive control strategies such as lowered expectations and acceptance to manage their self-concept and self-esteem (Webster and Tiggemann 2003), distancing themselves from 'negative sociocultural influences' (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008 p. 353). Thus, a sense of generational dress comfort emerges.

The body

The *body* underpinned much of the focus-group discussions. Some participants indicated the psychological comfort of feeling unrestricted, associating loose clothes with lounging or chilling and being in the *safety* of home, free from judgement. Many participants mentioned using loose clothes to cover and camouflage the *body* (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), again providing safety from judgement. Jeans were mentioned by the participants, with younger participants using tight, high-waist jeans to control the *body*, seeking to conform to a thin ideal (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Brown and Dittmar 2005). There was some ambiguity around jeans however, with many participants finding them physically uncomfortable and unflattering. The preoccupation of the participants, of all ages, with controlling and camouflaging the *body* suggests normative discontent (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1985) related to body weight, and self-conscious and habitual monitoring of the *body* and appearance, aligning with Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997 p. 177) objectification theory where women are socialised to 'treat themselves as objects to be looked at and evaluated'. This emphasises role and value of appearance management (Pine 2014) in providing P: positive emotions (Seligman 2011) and *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), aligning with Bauman's (2012 p. 81) description of the body as 'a besieged fortress'.

Safety

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) assert that being female in a culture that objectifies the female body leads to both *safety* and appearance anxieties and identify women's fashions as contributors to anxieties around appearance. Some participants described heuristic dress practices (Baron 2013), a comfort zone of clothes where prior knowledge and experience of having worn an item or outfit meant it became a familiar and safe choice, linking with Maslow's (1943) description of *safety* as a common preference for that which is known or familiar. For most participants, there is danger in standing out and *safety* in conforming. Some participants felt safe in dress items associated with family members, feeling protected by wearing the item or having it in their possession (Habermas and Paha 2002), evidencing *eudaimonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), as discussed in the *community* theme. The psychological comfort of feeling unrestricted in loose clothes was associated with lounging, chilling and being in the *safety* of home. Loose clothes are being used cover and hide the *body*, and tight clothes to control and minimise the *body*; both practices provide *safety* from the judgement of others, as discussed in the body theme. The participants' preoccupation with *safety* suggests a sense of anxiety (Bauman 2012) around dress choices and practices that strongly aligns with Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory.

Work

Workplace dress practices were mentioned by some participants, in relation to the wearing of heels, providing a put-together appearance, which engenders *confidence*. This evidences Foucauldian disciplining of the *body* through structured dress practices (Entwistle 2003), with mentions of suits and smart clothing suggesting a power-dressing (Barnard 2014; Craik 2009; Peluchette, Karl and Rust 2006) appearance-management strategy. Linked to this, black clothing is associated with the workplace, with the participants expressing a desire to look both smart and powerful (Eisman 2006), and using the cultural associations of the *colour* black to gain those feelings. Wearing a watch is linked with work by both younger and older participants, with the ritual of removing the watch signifying the transition from work to relaxation. Overall, *work* elicits a level of anxiety, with the participants agreeing that they need to present themselves properly in front of others at work. Importantly, some participants use clothing to get themselves into a productive mindset, facilitating well-being through gaining feelings of A: accomplishment (Seligman 2011).

Place

The participants described having different dress practices for different places, evidencing concern to present themselves properly in public. This aligns with Goffman's (1990[1959]) *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, with the participants engaging in dramaturgy, dressing the part as required by societal norms to engender belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Belk 1988). Four key places emerged from the findings: home, *work*, out and out out (see Figure 159 and the previous theme for the discussion on *work*). Home is free from judgement, a *place of safety* and family, a *place* for chilling. Participants described clothing that is purely for wearing in the home; not for public view. However, this loungewear category of dress may not engender P: positive emotions or a sense of A: accomplishment, with the M: meaning associated with these leading to feelings of shame (Seligman 2011). It seems that chilling in loungewear is only psychologically comfortable when in the *safety* of a private *place*. Out is where one can be dressed comfortably, with functional unselfconsciousness involving minimal makeup and some physically comfortable clothing, with participants clearly aware that they were visible to others. Some younger participants would go out in leggings, but jeans were deemed universally acceptable for going out, combining functionality with public acceptability. Out out involves presenting yourself properly in public to the extreme, prioritising psychological comfort over physical. For younger participants, this equates to clothing that is short, tight and revealing, evidencing self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). By conforming to out out dress norms, participants indicated some sense of well-being through the maintenance of R: relationships (Seligman 2011), by fitting in.

Figure 159 Home, work, out and out out



Individuality

Surprisingly, the participants barely mentioned *individuality*, despite its status as one of the orthodox narratives of the human condition (Bauman 2012). Those that did linked dressing in an individual way with age, describing finding the *confidence* to dress as they please as they have got older. This again suggests these older participants employ secondary cognitive control strategies such as acceptance or lowered expectations, developing the ability to distance themselves from negative cultural norms (Peat, Peyerl and Muehlenkamp 2008). Most participants however, evidenced dress practices that were centred around fitting in with others, showing little of the tension between *individuality* and conformity in their dress practice that many researchers discuss (Crewe 2017; Marino 2017; Shusterman 2017; Von Busch 2016; Baron 2013; Stone 2006; Entwistle 2000; Craik 1984). Some participants were focused on using dress to fade into the background, to remain unnoticed, or unmarked (Jenss 2016) by wearing neutral plain clothing, black clothing and everyday clothing such as jeans. Thus, the participants largely align with Bauman's (2012) assertions around the anxiety of choice in liquid modernity, and gain a sense of well-being through belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943) rather than *individuality*.

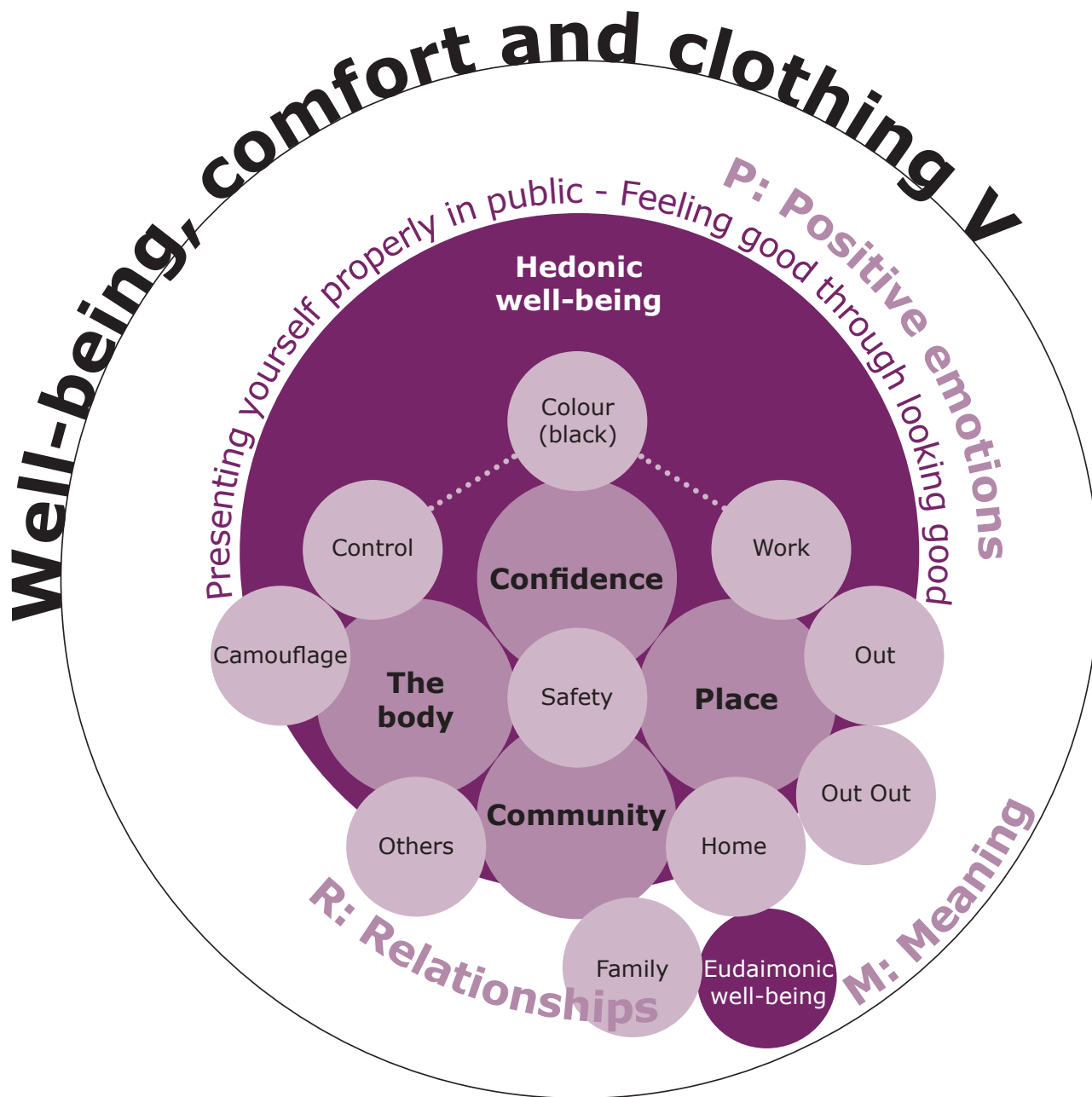
Colour

Very few colours were mentioned in the focus-group discussions. Some participants bypass bright colours, such as red, to avoid standing out or attracting attention. Binary to this, a few participants indicated gaining *confidence* from wearing red clothing or makeup (lipstick), aligning with Western cultural associations of the *colour* red with attractiveness, achievement and daring (Haigh 2018; Solomon and Rabolt 2009; Elliot and Niesta 2008). Many more participants linked *confidence* with safe and plain colours, especially black. Participants of all ages repeatedly discussed the *colour* black in relation to psychological comfort; for the majority, black clothing makes up a substantial percentage of their wardrobe, providing well-being through its subjective associations with slimness, camouflage, conservatism (Solomon and Rabolt 2009) and professionalism. The findings strongly suggest that wearing black can engender well-being from associations with A: accomplishment and feelings of P: positive emotions (Seligman 2011), rejecting Pine's (2014) assertions on positive feelings being engendered by wearing brightly coloured clothes.

Confidence

Confidence is important to well-being (NHS 2015b) and esteem needs (Maslow 1943), with literature suggesting many women make an effort with dress to feel confident (Pine 2014). The participants discussed *confidence* in depth, in relation to several categories: the *body*, clothing, matching underwear, *colour*, high heels, makeup and the *confidence* gained from receiving compliments. Some participants feel more confident when wearing heels, especially in the workplace (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997) or when going out, linking to the presenting yourself properly in public theme. Several participants felt more confident in trying different dress practices when on holiday, feeling less pressure to conform to their usual norms. A few participants indicated gaining *confidence* from wearing red, however, many more participants linked *confidence* with safe and plain colours, especially black. Some participants evidenced a lack of *confidence* around their dress choices, expressing anxieties about their outfits before they leave the home. Participants describe the reassurance; a feeling of *confidence* gained from gaining compliments from others. This highlights the importance of reviews (Stone 2006) from others in engendering feelings of *confidence*, and in turn, well-being, linked with the P: positive emotions and R: relationships elements of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of psychological well-being. A few participants described gaining *confidence* from wearing status brands, feeling that others would respect them more and enjoying being able to afford such items. Thus, some participants confirm Hameide's (2011 p. 109) description of luxury items as 'emotional rewards', which can be linked with feel-good *hedonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014).

Figure 160 Well-being, comfort and clothing V



In summary, the following aspects of well-being are most prevalent in the focus-group participants' associations with comfort or discomfort in clothing: the *body*, *confidence*, *place* and *community* (see Figure 160). The *body* is camouflaged and controlled, seeking *safety* from the judgement of others in a variety of places, while at *work*, *out*, or *out out*. A sense of well-being is engendered by dressing in the *colour* black, linked to formal workwear and the opportunity to camouflage or control the *body*. *Hedonic well-being* is facilitated by *confidence* gained from presenting yourself properly in public, ensuring *safety* from avoiding judgement while in the *community*, a sense of belonging and feeling good through looking good. Thus, the well-being category of *safety* sits in the middle of *confidence*, *community*, *place* and the *body*, central to combating the anxieties associated with dress practice in contemporary Western society. The participants also use dress to engender *eudaimonic well-being* through clothing and dress practices associated with memories and reminders of home and family, however *hedonic well-being* was significantly more prevalent, linking to most of the well-being themes. In addition, the participants' dress practices evidence elements of Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework, including the P: Positive emotions of *confidence*, *safety* and feeling good, and the M: Meaning and R: Relationships associated with *eudaimonic well-being*.

5.0

COMFORT

IN

CLOTHING:

CONCLUSION

5.0 CONCLUSION

'...fashion is not a physical fact: it is a social phenomenon'
(Bauman 2011 p. 19)

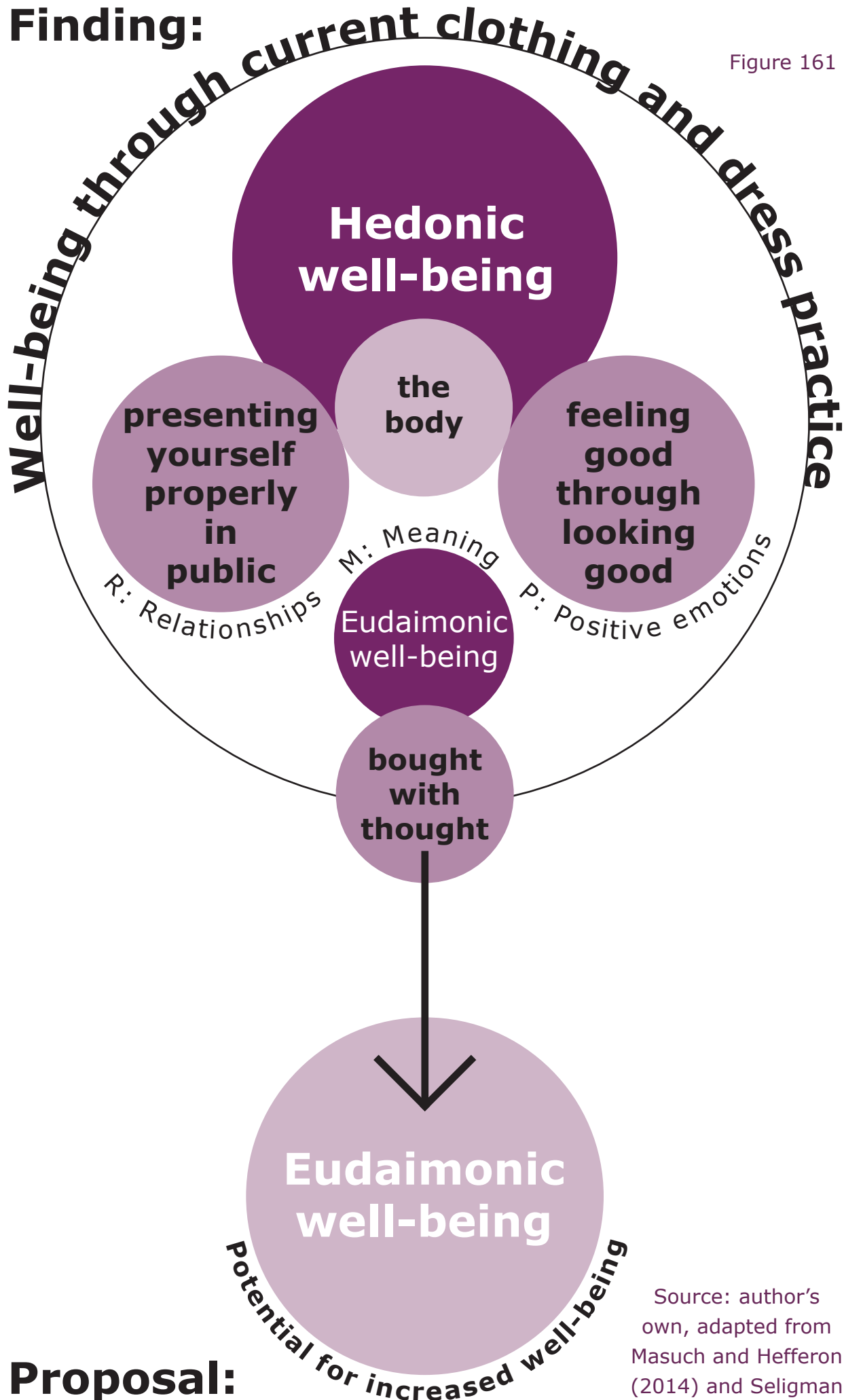
The aim of this research was to analyse how clothing, fashion and dress contribute to the psychosocial comfort and well-being of women in the UK, applying Bauman's concept of Liquid Modernity as a critical lens. The obvious parallels between the fast-changing nature of Liquid Modernity and the fast-fashion industry demonstrate the currently under-utilised applicability of Bauman's work to fashion and clothing research, providing a new perspective and opportunity for contribution to knowledge in this discipline. In addition to adopting Bauman's theoretical perspectives, the study utilised specific elements of grounded theory, including coding, memo-writing and diagramming (Charmaz 2014; Charmaz 2006) to provide rigour to the data analysis. Utilising Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity in some respects altered the researcher's position in relation to the analysis of the data; in effect, the researcher asked, 'how does this data relate to Liquid Modernity?', rather than analysing purely through her own values and assumptions. On reflection, had Bauman's perspectives on liquid and solid not been applied to the emergent codes and categories, the central category of constancy may not have emerged so strongly.

Data was concurrently generated, collected and analysed with the first participants in 2015. Data saturation was achieved in the first round of data, however in acknowledging the external conditions (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher 2013), fashion and clothing are subject to built-in obsolescence of short-term trends (Grose 2012; Jones 2005), therefore the concurrent data generation, collection and analyses were repeated in 2016 with a second cohort of participants, and again in 2017 with a third. A high level of homogeneity in the responses was apparent across the wide age range and between the student and non-student (NS) participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. Also, over the three-year data-gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants, irrespective of age and despite the 91% of the participants' indicating they were 'interested' or 'very interested' in fashion. The absence of new categories emerging in years two and three of the data collection confirms data saturation (Hancock et al. 2016; Fusch and Ness 2015) was achieved. However, as Charmaz (2006 p. 213) notes, 'you are likely to hear similar stories if you engage in a repetitive process of data-gathering, rather than progressing to more focused data gathering'. On reflection, while this research has strengths in terms of sample size and data saturation, the adoption of a more focused theoretical sampling strategy would have been beneficial to further develop the emergent concepts. Opportunities for further research are therefore detailed in section 5.5.

To conclude the research and address the aim, the key findings for each objective are presented in this section, followed by contributions to knowledge.

Finding:

Figure 161



Proposal:

Source: author's own, adapted from Masuch and Hefferon (2014) and Seligman (2011)

5.1.3 Objective 1

To analyse critically the phenomenon and origin of well-being, with a focus on clothing artefacts and dress practice.

To address Objective 1, an early review of literature (see section 2.5) identified categories that influence a sense of well-being related to clothing and dress practice: *hedonic* and *eudaimonic well-being* (Masuch and Hefferon 2014), *community, work, time, the body, safety, space/place, individuality, emancipation, income, colour* and *confidence*. In addition, Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework was identified as a means for increasing well-being from a psychological perspective (see section 2.8.1 and Figure 15). These findings enabled the thematic analysis of data from all other methods using those identified categories. Research questions 1 and 2 were identified to support the fulfilment of objective 1.

The findings from the triangulated data (see Figures 61, 85, 99, 132 and 160) are illustrated in Figure 161, demonstrating that clothing and dress is more commonly associated with a sense of *hedonic well-being*; strongly linked to **the body** and linked to **feeling good through looking good** and **presenting yourself properly in public**; representing Seligman's PERMA categories of P: Positive emotions and R: Relationships. Normative discontent with the *body* (Rodin, Silberstein and Stiegel-Moore 1984), evidenced through self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), internalisation of a thin ideal (Fitzsimmons-Craft *et al.* 2011; Brown and Dittmar 2005) and appearance-related social comparison (Vartanian and Dey 2013; Markus and Nurius 1986) drives much of the focus on the *hedonic well-being*, presenting yourself properly in public and feeling good through looking good categories, with the participants employing clothing styles and appearance management strategies (Wodak and Meyer 2016; Hefferon 2015; Baron 2013; Kawamura 2011) as a response to structure, in the form of social and cultural norms (Rudd and Lennon 2000), to compensate for their perceived *body* issues and engender feelings of *confidence*.

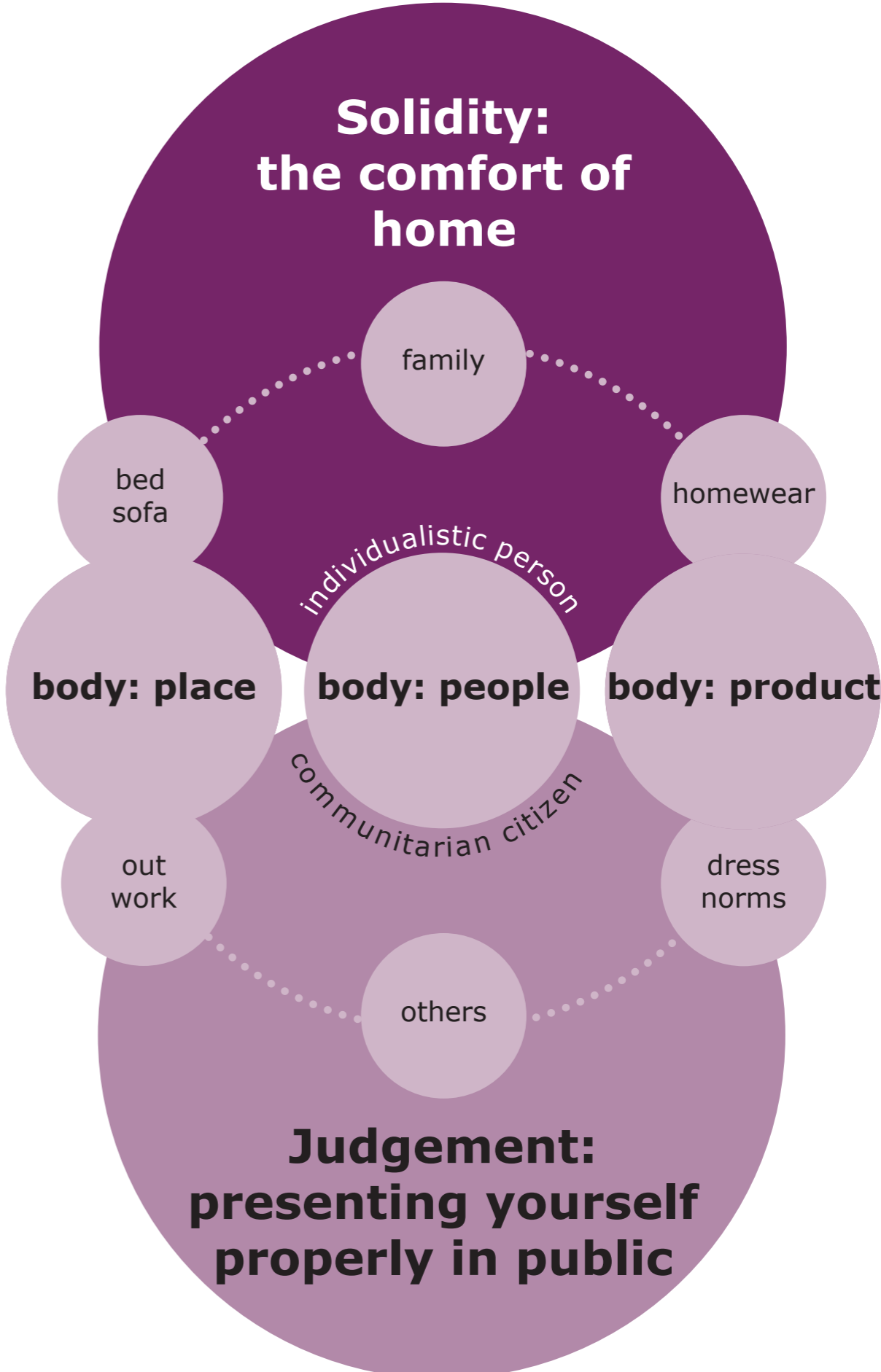
Considering the triangulated data gathered from all methods, the strong links between dress artefacts and *eudaimonic well-being* seen in the image/narrative artefact findings (section 4.4) are an anomaly, hence *eudaimonic well-being* appears as a smaller element than *hedonic well-being* on Figure 161. Liminality to the section 4.4 findings is suggested due to the transitional life-stage (Habermas and Paha 2002) of the final year FM student sample. Alternatively, the image/narrative artefact elicitation, as privately submitted documents, may have facilitated the sharing of more personal and emotional experiences compared to the more public focus-group discussions. Thus, if this research were to be repeated, conducting image/narrative artefact elicitation with a wider sample is recommended.

However, a strong theme emerged related to the under-valued nature of clothing artefacts. Based on the emergence of a Hierarchy of attachment (see Figure 157, page 296) and Bauman's assertions that products are no longer valued for longevity, this Comfort in Clothing study proposes that an opportunity for increased *eudaimonic well-being* could be facilitated through a re-valuing of clothing artefacts. A move away from the 'creative destruction' (2012 p. 28) of fast, disposable fashion, stopping the 'unstoppable hunt for novelty' (p. xii) in this 'liquid modern, consumer-orientated economy' (p. 15) could encourage the contemporary consumer to invest in clothing with longevity that can accrue M: Meaning and provide a sense of solidity. A move to a slow fashion system (Lynas 2010) could mitigate the anxieties around abundant sartorial choice and perpetual change that the clothing consumer currently faces, described by Bauman as unsustainable, and 'too wide for comfort' (2012 p. 73). Bauman noted that people shop for 'the kind of image it would be nice to wear and ways to make others believe we are what we wear' (2012 p. 74). A move to more meaningful purchases might shift some of the focus from Bauman's 'besieged' body (2012 p. 81), making females less reliant on **feeling good through looking good**. If investment in ethical and sustainable clothing purchases, **bought with thought**, becomes a part of **presenting yourself properly in public**, rather than purchases based on purely hedonic, appearance-based and limited norms, Bauman's *community-minded* citizen might be able to emerge, finding freedom to indulge in individual dress practices without fear of judgement.

Figure 162 A model of psychological comfort gained through dress



UNFOLD HERE



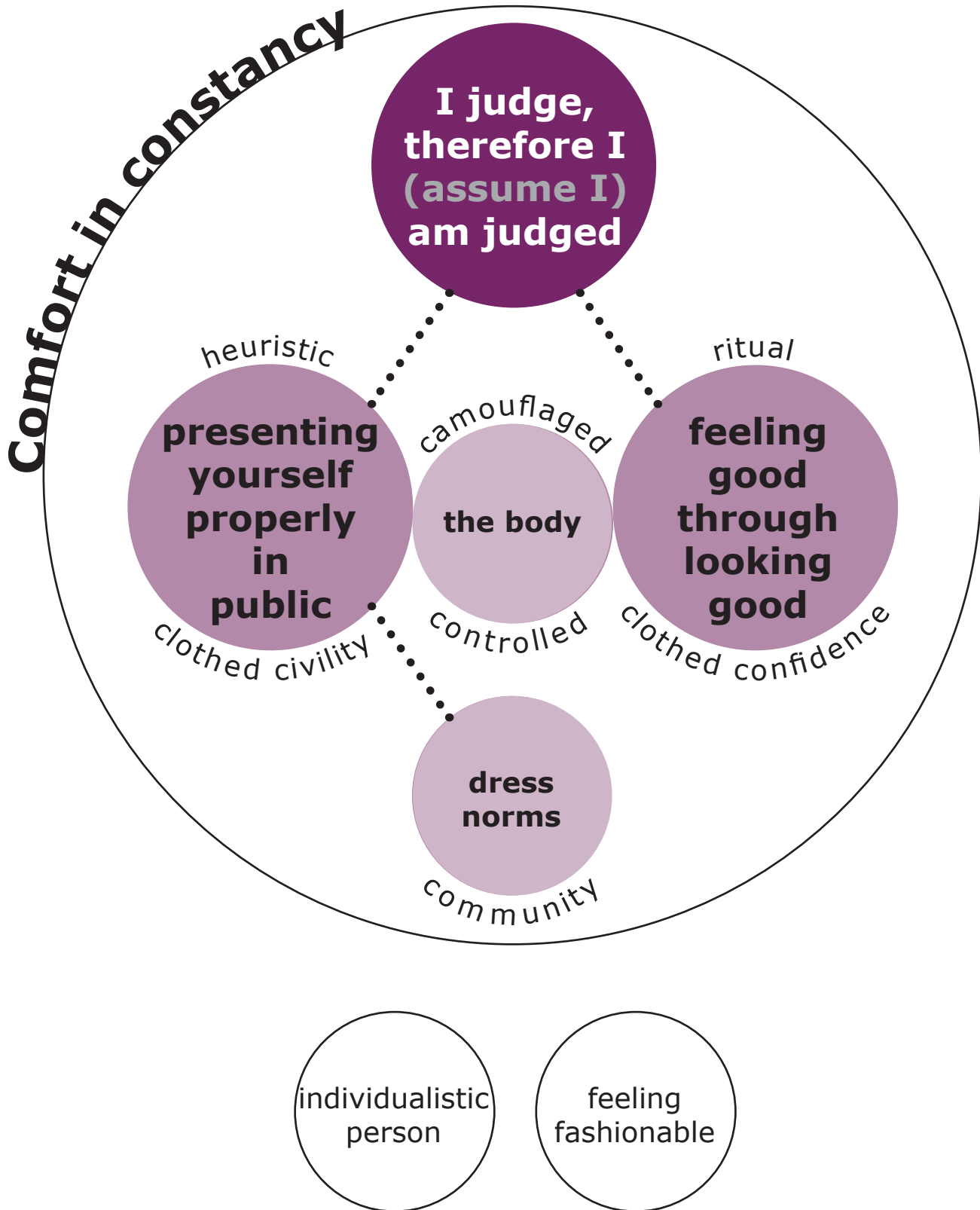
5.2 Objective 2

To propose a psychological concept of comfort,
with a focus on clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice.

Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity highlighted the anxieties associated with contemporary life, suggesting society needs and aspires to comfort. Objective 2 was fulfilled through two data-gathering methods: the 15 garments task (see section 3.2.8) and comfort mind-maps task (see section 3.2.9). The wider concept of comfort and the psychological comfort gained from clothing were found to be under-represented in literature, with much of the existing comfort in clothing research referring to performance clothing rather than everyday dress (Kamalha *et al.* 2013). Research questions 3 and 4 were identified to support the fulfilment of objective 2.

The findings from the triangulated data are presented in Figure 162, illustrating the importance of **place** to psychological comfort in clothing and dress practices, and the centrality of the **body** to dress decisions. A clear concept of comfort, **the comfort of home**, emerged from the findings, suggesting that the participants see home as a solid refuge from Bauman's (2012) descriptions of a fragmented society, which lacks stability and solidarity. Home is a place of comfort associated with family and **homewear**, cosy, soft pyjamas and stretchy, oversized knits; emphasising clothing's role in much-desired down-time. The most frequently mentioned items of clothing, pyjamas, slippers and the dressing gown, combine to evoke a sense of comfort in clothing within the home, and a sense of security, or psychological comfort in being covered or cocooned by clothes. This suggests relaxation and me-time, individuals seeking sanctuary. The focus on home confirms Bauman's assertions on the move towards individualisation; the demise of the community-minded citizen and the rise of the individually-focused person. Clothing is a product that is easily purchased and placed directly onto the **body**, with warm clothing providing physiological comfort and soft clothing providing physical comfort. Beyond utilitarian requirements, the complexity of psychological comfort in clothing is evident; choice of clothing **product** is vast but the cultural **norms** of what people deem acceptable in terms of the female **body** and **presenting yourself properly in public** are narrow. The participants judged brightly coloured and patterned clothes particularly harshly (see section 4.2.3) and were much more accepting of solid, dark and plain styles, indicating the comfort of being unmarked (Jenss 2016) in trusted colours like black and everyday garments like jeans. The findings suggest dress practices reject Bauman's rise of individualism in terms of clothing and dress out with the **place** of home, with participants instead using dress to engender togetherness through likeness in public places, emphasising the importance of belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1997; Maslow 1943). Bauman's assertions that the choices available to contemporary society are 'too wide for comfort' (2012 p. 73) see the participants adhering to sartorial **norms**; individuals dressing as communitarians to mitigate the anxiety of making the wrong choice, ultimately to avoid **judgement**.

Figure 163 A model of Comfort in constancy through dress practice



5.3 Objective 3

To determine the role and value of comfort to women in the UK, with a focus on clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice.

Objective 3 was fulfilled through two data-gathering methods: the image/narrative elicitations (see section 3.2.12), involving the FM student participants and the focus-group discussions (see section 3.2.10), involving all participants to expand the demographics of the participant sample (see section 3.2.5). Research questions 5 and 6 were identified to support the fulfilment of objective 3.

The findings from the triangulated data are illustrated in Figure 163, confirming that clothing and dress play a key role in providing a sense of solidity or constancy in Bauman's Liquid Modernity. **Comfort in constancy** is gained through heuristic and ritualised dress practices, aligning with Bauman's assertions that human agents search for clear direction and stable routines (Bauman 2012) as a form of protection from uncertainty and too much choice. These may be utilitarian rituals, such as the wearing of everyday jeans or the repeated purchase of black jeans. They may include hedonic motivations, including **feeling good through looking good** and **presenting yourself properly in public**, involving the camouflage and control of **the body** and the adoption of classic and safe **dress norms** such as the little black dress. This is clothed civility, described by Bauman as a mask-wearing activity that allows people to enjoy interaction with one another and be protected from one another in social settings; a 'longing for a sense of belonging' (Bauman 2011 p. 20). The participants seek protection from the perception of judgement, seemingly based on the fact they themselves judge harshly, leading to the finding of **I judge, therefore I (assume I) am judged**. The perceived value of belonging is so strong that these rituals and norms often prioritise psychological comfort over physical comfort, for example the wearing of high heels. To a lesser extent, psychological comfort is also gained from sentimental rituals associated with clothing artefacts that have acquired beyond-market meaning (Crewe 2017), such as always wearing a cherished ring. Psychological comfort in clothing is not concerned with individuality or fashionability (as illustrated by their position out with the central focus on Figure 163); the role and value of heuristic and ritualised dress practices is to relieve the stress and anxiety of the time-poor, choice-overloaded contemporary clothing consumer (Baron 2013; Bauman 2012) who seeks solace in communitarian dress and is fearful of judgement. This is particularly pertinent with workplace dress, used to fit in with others (Rafaeli *et al.* 1997), seek the safety of belongingness (Baumeister and Leary 1995) and engender feelings of confidence (Guy and Banim 2000) related to performance (Peluchette, Karl and Rust 2006; Entwistle 2003; Rafaeli *et al.* 1997; Bandura 1995). Bauman notes the short-term mentality and increasing frequency of change in the workplace, bringing the benefits of flexibility but the burden of uncertainty. Although Liquid Modernity has created a temporality to careers (Bauman 2012), the findings from this Comfort in Clothing study suggest it has not fully influenced dress practice in the work environment; the pace of change in terms of workwear seems more structured and static; **comfort in constancy**.

5.4 Objective 4

To propose the critical dimensions of psychological comfort in clothing and female appearance management in Bauman's Liquid Modernity.

Objective 4 was fulfilled by summarising the key findings from objectives 1, 2 and 3. The critical dimensions of comfort in clothing and female appearance management in relation to Bauman's Liquid Modernity are presented as a series of image clouds and 100-word narratives, inspired by the original data-gathering methods and the occularcentricity (Rose 2001) of clothing, fashion and dress. A distinctive feature of Charmaz's (2000) constructivist grounded theory is the use of creative writing to communicate how participants construct their worlds (Mills, Bonner and Francis 2006). A creative writing approach was employed in the communication of the final critical dimensions of this Comfort in Clothing study, presented as **comfort charters**. These **comfort charters** provide a concise and easily disseminated outcome to the research, an image-clothing and written-clothing record (Barthes 1990[1967]) of how everyday clothing, fashion and dress practices contribute to the well-being of women in the UK in contemporary times. They are introduced by the core category (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher 2013), **the comfort of constancy** (Figure 164), and elucidated by the sub-categories: **the comfort of control** (Figure 165), **camouflage** (Figure 166), **colour** (Figure 167), **confidence** (Figure 168), **convenience** (Figure 169), **chilling** (Figure 170), **community** (Figure 171) and **cherished** (Figure 172).

5.4.1 Comfort charters

The comfort of constancy

In Liquid Modernity, all is change; frantic, fast-paced and perpetually shifting.

The contemporary Western notion of freedom breeds anxiety of choice, with fashion's speed of change and easy availability creating the choice-overloaded clothing consumer.

Women now seek safety in dress, employing heuristic appearance management practices with a focus on fitting in, fading into the shadows and avoiding the judgement of others. There is little sense of individuality and strong desire to comply with established and solid cultural dress norms.

A sense of togetherness through likeness is found in the community of dress, with society the supervisor of everyday sartorial style.

'body confidence'



'back fat's literally the worst'



'a sin of flabbiness'



'socially comfortable'

The comfort of control

Clothing, fashion and dress practices control the body, shaping it to be smaller and judging it in all its forms.

The minimising of the body by contemporary corsetry such as shapewear evidences the continued internalisation of the thin-ideal.

The omni-present practice of judgement is summarised as 'I judge, therefore I (assume I) am judged'. These women represent a synoptical society of watchers, utilising Foucauldian panopticism to provide sought-after structure in the form of normative expectations of the contemporary Western female body.

The preoccupation with controlling the body emphasises the role of appearance management in providing positive emotions and hedonic well-being.



'for me the comfort is more hiding my body'



'hides all the lumps and bumps'



'people can be less critical because I am wearing a non-colour and non-shape'



'people might not notice'

The comfort of camouflage

Oversized clothes adorn the covered body, denying its shape. There is inherent negativity towards the perceived bigger body and a strong internalisation of the thin-ideal. Self-imposed clothing restrictions become heuristic practices, limiting colours, shapes and styles to those deemed safe. These rules and routines offer structure and social acceptability, compensating for the anxiety of choice in contemporary society and providing protection from the judgement of others. Young women quickly progress from body confidence to body camouflage as they move past their late teen years and adopt more conservative middle-class feminine norms, with black confirmed as the camouflage colour of choice.



'we are all wearing black'

'why don't you just make that in black?'



'Black, all black, all black errthing'



'you just sort of fade into the background'



The comfort of colour

Forgiving and flattering,
the colour black is an intriguing mix
of ambiguity and constancy.

Wearing black variously makes people
feel confident, important, fashionable and
invisible. Black allows people to shrink
both their body and their very presence,
to remain unnoticed in a cruel and
judgemental world, giving others
nothing to be critical about.

Some favour black's classic and enduring
heritage, others find comfort in its
understated conservatism.

Some seek its power in the workplace.
The popularity of black makes it familiar,
a dress heuristic that provides
a sense of safety and
a way to fit in to an
ever-changing
world.

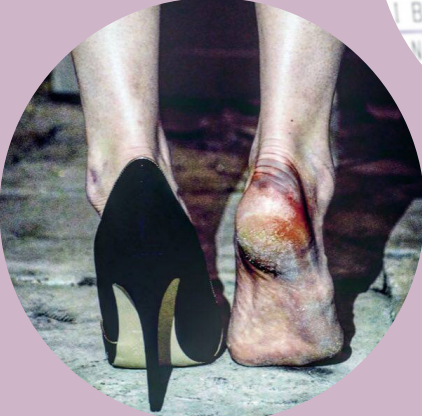
'like you've got your life together'



'I hate going out when I don't feel nice'



'I feel like I do better when I'm dressed better'



'Girl, you look good, you can do this'

The comfort of confidence

Positive emotions are gained through the comfort of confidence in clothing, engendered by presenting yourself properly in public, and gaining positive reviews from others.

Confidence can be loud, signified by the colour red and high heels, or hidden, hence the psychological comfort of matching underwear that underpins a feeling of having got your life together. Often, there is a quiet confidence gained from wearing trusted black clothing, the comfort of classic clothes and safe sartorial styles that enable the individual to fit in and avoid judgement.

There is a hedonic sense of well-being engendered by feeling good through looking good.



'you wear them to be comfy'

'you do always go for a certain pair of jeans'



'I can wear them anywhere'



'jeans are my life'

The comfort of convenience

Jeans offer quiet, uncomplicated dress practice, described as convenient, practical, versatile and timeless.

There is familiarity in jeans, an authenticity and originality that engenders goodwill and acceptance. They are the antithesis of ever-changing fast fashion. Psychological comfort is gained from the dependable blue colour and association with weekend wear, freedom and relaxation. Jeans are not physically comfortable, with high waist jeans used as a contemporary corset by young females, controlling the body with their waist-cinching waistbands. As everyday wear, jeans are unsurpassed but in the comfort of home, they are instantly removed, replaced by joggers or pyjamas; the body released.

'not very flattering'



'you're lazy the whole day if you're wearing lazy clothes'



'you can relax, you can be yourself'



'I look at it and don't think aw this looks good'

The comfort of chilling

There is comfort in clothing in the safety of home, free from judgement.

At home, clothes can be physically comfortable but also engender psychological comfort by facilitating me-time.

Hoodies, pyjamas and cosy socks are the styles of homewear, associated with lounging and lie-ins, being laid-back and stress-free, suggesting retreat or refuge from the uncertainties and anxieties of the outside world. However, a note of caution is tied to this casual, comfortable dress practice. These are lazy-invisible clothes, leading to a lack of productivity, and they are ugly clothes, inhibiting opportunity for hedonic well-being gained from feeling good through looking good.



'never really comfy on a Saturday night'

'people can see you'



'sometimes we send each other pictures of what we are wearing'



'home and memories'

The comfort of community

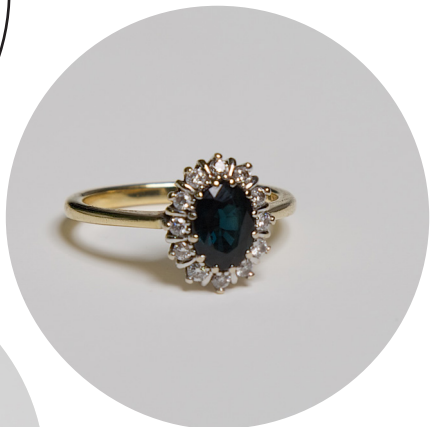
Clothing acts as a mask of civility, allowing people to successfully interact with one another. This facilitates well-being through the forming or maintaining of relationships, engendering a sense of togetherness through likeness.

The macro-level carnival community provides spectacle; an opportunity for normally disparate individuals to gain respite from the anxiety of individual choice, through conforming with fellow citizens. There is a prioritisation of psychological comfort while presenting yourself properly in public, described as pressure-visible dress practice. The micro-level community of family and friends requires less effort, engendering a sense of eudaimonic well-being through memories, shared histories and sense of belonging.

'my most prized possession'



'it is hand printed and ethical'



'makes me feel safe and loved'



'my 2017 camp t-shirt from my summer job in America'



The comfort of cherished

Eudaimonic well-being is gained through dress artefacts imbued with meaning, made through history and memories by clothing and jewellery passed down through generations or given as gifts. Meaning can be the judgement device of status brands

in engendering belonging to a macro-community or the comfort of the micro-community of family; wearing mum's cardigan or dad's scarf as a reminder of home, of solidity.

Clothing with longevity creates worn stories, accruing beyond-market value and providing the psychological comfort of safety. This is slow fashion, the antithesis of fast, transient, disposable fashion, with the potential to save the planet and us personally.

5.5 Contributions to knowledge and opportunities for further research

This Comfort in Clothing study makes an original contribution to theoretical knowledge by applying Bauman's (2012) concept of Liquid Modernity to the phenomenon of well-being in relation to clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice. The findings collate the various aspects of well-being from a subjective, rather than scientific perspective, recognising it as a current consumer phenomenon. Well-being is defined in the context of clothing artefacts, fashion and dress practice, determining how comfort in clothing contributes to the psychosocial well-being of women in contemporary Western society. Given current levels of interest in well-being, further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the identification of **well-being categories and their relation to clothing, fashion and dress practices** provides a useful and timely framework on which to base further research.

A key contribution to knowledge is the indication that female appearance management remains firmly focused on **the body** and controlled by the fear of **judgement**, both self-judgement and the judgement of others. In disciplinary terms, psychologists could benefit from this knowledge to support women with body dissatisfaction, encouraging dress practices that focus less on self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and more on creating an extended sense of self (Belk 1988) using clothing that provides psychological well-being through memories of people, place, and events, meeting recognised needs for attachment and belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Maslow 1943). Further research is required to explore the relationship between the pressure-led culture of fast-fashion, throwaway purchases, reduced self-coherence (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004) and a reduced sense of attachment, known to inhibit well-being. The continued normative discontent (Rodin, Silberstein and Striegel-Moore 1984) with **the body** suggests there is still much work to be done in the fashion communication system to become more inclusive. With global brands such as Nike, Abercrombie and Fitch and Marks and Spencer now regularly featuring more varied body sizes in their marketing and product imagery, further research is required to monitor the effects of this on body positivity going forward. The findings also suggest a need to discuss appearance issues and body-related stereotypes at a younger age, equipping girls and young women with knowledge and experiences that shift the focus away from purely hedonic appearance-related motivations.

The study also makes a new contribution to the research of non-elite, everyday clothing and dress practices, identified as under-researched in extant literature (Jenss 2016; Tynan 2016; Gibson 2012; Craik 1994), with the 15 garments task and image/narrative artefact elicitation providing a useful and unique photographic archive of normative dress for UK females spanning 2015-2017. The findings confirm the **disconnect between the fantasy of fashion and the everyday practice of dress**, highlighting tensions between fashion as an aspirational and creative discipline and a consumer commodity. This was highlighted by a second original contribution to theoretical knowledge, the proposal to extend Goffman's (1990[1959]) Presentation of Self in Everyday Life theory to include **Presentation of Self in Virtual Life**, engendered by **social media as an additional place for presenting yourself properly in public**; acknowledging the contemporary practice of virtual dress dramaturgy and its influence on both dress practices and the transience of fashion. Further research is required to investigate the impact of self-presentation via image-based social media platforms, and associated judgements and reviews (Stone 2006) on well-being. The role of social media in propagating wear-once consumption habits requires further investigation, to establish its impact on fashion businesses, the burgeoning re-sale clothing market and the environment (both in terms of resource use in the creation of clothing and end-of-wear disposal to landfill).

The on-going fear of **judgement** provides a key contribution to knowledge. In fashion industry terms, Bauman's definition of the individualistic person was found to dress as a community-minded citizen, seeking the solidity of normative dress practices and rejecting fashion's fast-paced and perpetual change. This suggests a **disconnect between the contemporary Western fashion system as a driver of creative destruction** (Bauman 2012) and constant consumption, **and the clothing consumer's need for the safety and solidity of routine and the known**. In applying the findings to Bauman's concept of Liquid Modernity, this Comfort in Clothing study finds less 'desire to be distinct from the masses, to acquire a sense of individuality and originality' (2011 p. 20) and more need to belong, driven by the avoidance of judgement. For individuals, the return to a culture with reduced emphasis on ever-changing fashions, near-constant product drops and pressure to buy new products could decrease the psychological discomfort linked to clothing choice.

A third original contribution to theoretical knowledge is the **Hierarchy of attachment** (see Figure 157), which proposes the opportunity for increased eudaimonic well-being (Masuch and Hefferon 2014). The **lack of value ascribed to clothing** by the participants is a key finding; the fashion system has evolved to provide cheap and easily available clothing that is viewed as disposable and replaceable (Lynas 2010). Clothes that are worn once then thrown away offer the excitement of newness, described by Bauman (2012 p. xii) as 'an unstoppable hunt for novelty', but limit the opportunity for the construction of a coherent and stable self-concept that anchors the individual's interaction with the world beyond the present moment (Conway, Singer and Tagini 2004). Dress artefacts with longevity, such as slow fashion purchases or cherished gifts are a form of mnemonic media for the storage and retrieval of memories (Habermas and Paha 2002), affording a positive contribution to Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self by helping to ease life transitions (McCracken 1987) and create, enhance and preserve a sense of identity, providing beyond-market value (Crewe 2017). From a fashion industry perspective, fashion brands and marketers could use this knowledge to encourage the contemporary fashion consumer to **buy less and buy better**, in line with current governmental concerns on the impact fast fashion consumption and disposal has on the environment (House of Commons 2019). If clothing can be re-valued in the minds of consumers, slow fashion brands (Lynas 2010) that offer higher quality products with longevity could benefit. Thus, somewhat unexpectedly, the analysis of individual well-being in relation to clothing artefacts and dress practice provides a focus that relates to a **more sustainable fashion industry and the well-being of the planet**. Further research is required to explore how clothing can be re-valued through production processes and marketing perspectives.

A fourth original contribution to theoretical knowledge is the extension of Baron's (2013) categories of clothing: duty-invisible, duty-visible, pleasure-invisible and pleasure-visible, to include **lazy-invisible** and **pressure-visible clothing categories** (see Figure 158). The pressure-visible category provides insight into the prioritisation of psychological comfort when dressing for the public space, along with all the anxieties this engenders. However, the higher levels of acceptance and adoption of **homewear** out with the home by the younger, mainly millennial participants suggests that the casualization of dress could continue, expanding normative expectations of dress. While this could be a positive development in contemporary Western dress practice, leading to less **judgement**, this Comfort in Clothing study reveals associated risks that warrant future research. For example, widening acceptable dress norms may contribute to the anxieties of Bauman's (2012) choice-overloaded consumer.

The lazy-invisible category of homewear highlights the current preoccupation with **me-time**. From a consumer perspective, this suggests opportunities for fashion and clothing brands to expand into homewear and home-related products; capitalising on the comfort economy (King 2020). This has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 lockdown, which saw reduced need for clothing worn out with the home and increased interest in leisure wear, self-care, and investment in the home (Amed *et al.* 2020). With many fashion brands folding due to the pandemic, **home**, as **a concept of comfort** (see Figure 57) is a key contribution to knowledge, beneficial to the survival of brands who may need to focus their product offer on home-related consumer needs and desires. Further research is required to monitor the on-going impacts of Covid-19 on people's clothing and home-related consumption habits. As lockdowns ease, it is unclear whether casual dress practices will continue or a renewed desire to dress up will emerge. From a psychological perspective, the negative associations with lazy dressing warrants further research. If the casualisation of dress does indeed continue, the reduced opportunity for **feeling good through looking good** and possible implications for productivity, whether in terms of workplace achievement or engagement in other activities, should be investigated. Researching the effects of lockdown dress practices on people's well-being will be important to gain understanding of the wider impacts of Covid-19.

From a psychosociological perspective, the **comfort of home** warrants further research beyond the confines of this Comfort in Clothing study, to explore the importance of home as the UK enters an era of declining home ownership. The trend towards renting rather than ownership may offer flexibility and affordability, but does not offer the solidity or constancy that participants in this study seemed to seek. More widely, the mass movement of refugees across the world sees many without a home and the impact of Covid-19 on employment and income could lead to more migration and increased levels of homelessness, with significant implications for well-being in terms of physiological, safety and belongingness needs (Baumeister and Leary 1997; Maslow 1943).

Finally, this Comfort in Clothing study contributes to the methodology of qualitative research through the implementation of innovative **image/narrative elicitations**, which could have application beyond the fashion and clothing research discipline. The combination of image and narrative enables simultaneous gathering of different data types and triangulation of the resultant multiple data sets, reducing interpretive ambiguity (Barthes 1990[1967]) and increasing validity. In an increasingly occularcentric world (Rose 2001), the power of the visual cannot be underestimated but should always be contextualised.

5.5.1 Reflection

'...the utopia of life revolving around the pursuit of constantly elusive fashion, does not give sense to life...'
(Bauman 2011 p. 30)

Clothes touch skin, accompany the body everywhere on its daily journeys and facilitate relationships. Thus, dress practices form an element of well-being that should not be regarded as frivolous. Instead, dress should be carefully considered as a positive intervention and valued for the meaning it can bring to the human condition. Through a change in mind-set from the normative, body-centric, hedonic well-being gained from feeling good through looking good, to increased eudaimonic well-being gained from slow, meaningful, individual clothing consumption, there is opportunity to reduce both the anxiety of judgement and the impacts of the clothing and fashion industry on the planet.

Clothing should be an investment, not mere vestment.

REFERENCE LIST

- ABOUT WORDS, 2015. *New Words – 8 June 2015*. [online]. UK: Cambridge Dictionary. Available from: <https://dictionaryblog.cambridge.org/2015/06/08/new-words-8-june-2015/> [Accessed 16 July 2019].
- ACHOR, S., 2011. *The Happiness Advantage*. UK: Virgin Books.
- ADAM, H. and GALINSKY, A.D., 2012. Encloded Cognition. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(4), pp. 918-925.
- AMED, I., 2015. *A reality check for fashion's status quo*. [online]. London: Business of Fashion. Available from: <http://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/week-in-review/a-reality-check-for-fashions-status-quo> [Accessed 16 June 2015].
- AMED, I., BERG, A., BALCHANDANI, A., HEDRICH, S., ROLKENS, F., YOUNG, R. and JENSEN, J.E., 2020. *The State of Fashion 2020 Coronavirus Update*. [online]. London: Business of Fashion. Available from: http://cdn.businessoffashion.com/reports/The_State_of_Fashion_2020_Coronavirus_Update.pdf?int_source=article2&int_medium=download-cta&int_campaign=sof-cv19 [Accessed 14 July 2020].
- ALL WALKS, 2019. *Origin*. [online]. UK: All Walks Beyond the Catwalk. Available from: <http://www.allwalks.org/origin/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- ALMOND, K., 2015. The spiral relationship between suffering and the production of fashionable clothes. *Clothing Cultures*, 2(1), pp. 27-49.
- AMCHR, 2020. *Adolescent Development*. [online]. Washington, DC: AMCHR. Available from: <http://www.amchp.org/programsandtopics/AdolescentHealth/projects/Pages/AdolescentDevelopment.aspx> [Accessed 1 July 2020].
- APPADURAI, A., 1986. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- ARTS., 2015a. *Well-being Research Hub*. [online]. UK: University of the Arts London. Available from: <http://www.arts.ac.uk/research/research-environment/research-infrastructure/research-groups-networks-and-collaborations/well-being-research-hub/> [Accessed 22 June 2015].
- ARTS., 2015b. *Events Blog*. [online]. UK: University of the Arts London. Available from: <http://events.arts.ac.uk/event/2015/2/23/Better-Lives-Panel-Discussion-Positive-Psychology-in-Fashion/> [Accessed 22 June 2015].
- BANDURA, A., 1989. Human agency in social cognitive theory. *American Psychologist*, 44(9), pp. 1175-1184.
- BANDURA, A., 1995. *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. NY, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- BARLOW, D.H., ELLARD, K.K., SAUER-ZAVALA, S., BULLIS, J.R. and CARL, J.R., 2014. The origins of neuroticism. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9(5), pp. 481-496.

- BARNARD, M., 2002. *Fashion as Communication*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- BARNARD, M., 2014. *Fashion Theory: An Introduction*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- BARON, J.G., 2013. *Curating the Self: A Proposed Intervention for Positive Identity Crafting Through Self-presentation and Clothing*. [online]. US: University of Pennsylvania. Available from: http://repository.upenn.edu/mapp_capstone/51 [Accessed 6 June 2015].
- BARTHES, R., 2011. Written Clothing. In: L. WELTERS and A. LILLETHUN, eds. *The Fashion Reader*. 2nd Ed. Oxford, UK: Berg. pp. 132-134.
- BARTHES, R., 1990[1967]. *The Fashion System*. CA, US: University of California Press.
- BAUDRILLARD, J., 1994[1981]. *Simulacra and Simulation*. USA: The University of Michigan Press.
- BAUDRILLARD, J., 2005. Simulations. In: A. EASTHOPE and K. MCGOWAN, eds. *A Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*. 2nd Ed. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press. pp. 218-220.
- BAUMAN, Z., 1993. *Postmodern Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- BAUMAN, Z., 2011. *Culture in a Liquid Modern World*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- BAUMAN, Z., 2012. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- BAUMEISTER, R.F. and LEARY, M.R., 1995. The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), pp. 497-529.
- BAUMEISTER, R.F. and TICE, D.M., 1990. Point-Counterpoints: Anxiety and social exclusion. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 9(2), pp. 165-195.
- BAUMGARTNER, J.J., 2012. *You are what you wear: What your clothes reveal about you*. Philadelphia: Perseus Books Group.
- BELL, Q., 1976. *On Human Finery*. London: Hogarth Press.
- BECK, U., 1992. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: Sage.
- BELK, R.W., 1988. Possessions and the Extended Self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), pp. 139-168.
- BEZEMER, J., 2012. *Multimodal*. [online]. UK: Institute of Education. Available from: <http://www.mode.ioe.ac.uk> [accessed 15 February 2016].
- BLADERUNNER, 2019. *Anti-slash Protection*. [online]. UK: Bladerunner. Available from: <https://www.bladerunner.tv> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- BLAXTER, L., HUGHES, C. and TIGHT, M., 2010. *How to Research*. 4th ed. Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

BLUCK, S. and ALEA, N., 2008. Remembering being me: the self-continuity function of autobiographical memory in younger and older adults. In: F. SANI, ed. *Self-continuity: Individual and collective perspectives*. New York: Psychology Press. pp. 55-70.

BLUCK, S., ALEA, N., HABERMAS, T. and RUBIN, D.C., 2005. A Tale of Three Functions: The Self-reported uses of Autobiographical Memory. *Social Cognition*, 23(1), pp. 91-117.

BOATENG, W., 2012. Evaluating the Efficacy of Focus Group Discussion in Qualitative Social Research. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(7), np.

BOGGIANO, A.K. and RUBLE, D.N., 1979. Competence and the overjustification effect: A developmental study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37(9), pp. 1462-1468.

BOSWELL, J.F., THOMSON-OLLANDS, J., FARCHIONE, T.J. and BARLOW, D.H., 2013. Intolerance of uncertainty: a common factor in the treatment of emotional disorders. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 69, pp. 630-645.

BOURDIEU, P., 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BOURDIEU, P., 2010[1979]. *Distinction*. Oxon: Routledge Classics.

BRANSON, D. H., and SWEENEY, M., 1991. Conceptualisation and measurement of clothing comfort: Toward a metatheory. In: S. KAISER and M.L. DAMHORST, eds. *Critical Linkages in Textiles and Clothing: Theory, Method and Practice*. Monument, CO: International Textile and Apparel Association. pp. 96-104.

BRAUDEL, E., 1981. *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. Volume One: The structures of everyday life: The limits of the possible*. London: Collins.

BRENNEN, B.S., 2017. *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Students*. 2nd Ed. Oxon: Routledge.

BREWARD, C., 1995. *The Culture of Fashion*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

BREWARD, C., 2003. *Fashion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL, 2015. *The economic value of the UK's fashion industry in 2015*. [online]. UK: British Fashion Council. Available from: https://www.britishfashioncouncil.co.uk/uploads/files/1/J2089%20Economic%20Value%20Report_V04.pdf [Accessed 21 July 2019].

BROWN, A. and DITTMAR, H., 2005. Think thin and feel bad: the role of appearance schema activation, attention level, and thin-ideal internalization for young women's responses to ultra-thin media ideals. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 24(8), pp. 1088-1113.

BRYANT, A. and CHARMAZ, K., eds., 2019. *The Sage handbook of current developments in grounded theory*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

BUCKLEY, C. and CLARK, H., 2016. In search of the everyday: Museums, Collections, and representations of Fashion in London and New York. In: H. JENSS, ed. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London, UK: Bloomsbury. pp. 25-41.

BUNTING, M., 2003. *Passion and Pessimism*. [online]. London: The Guardian. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2003/apr/05/society> [Accessed 8 December 2018].

BURNHAM, A., 2012. *Labour scorns Cameron's 'happiness' agenda*. [online]. London: The Guardian. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/jan/29/happiness-targets-misplaced-andy-burnham> [Accessed 8 March 2016].

BUSHNELL, E.W., and BOUDREAU, J.P., 1991. The Development of Haptic Perception During Infancy. In: M.A. HELLER and W. SCHIFF, eds. *The Psychology of Touch*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. pp. 139-161.

BUZASI, C., 2018. *Anatomy of a Trend*. [online]. London: WGSN.

BYE, E. and HAKALA I., 2005. Sailing Apparel for Women: A Design Development Case Study. *International Textile and Apparel Association*, 23(1), pp. 45-55.

CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY, 2018a. *Comfort*. [online]. UK: Cambridge University Press. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/comfort> [Accessed 19 October 2018].

CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY, 2018b. *Calm and Relaxed Smart Thesaurus*. [online]. UK: Cambridge University Press. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/topics/calm-and-quiet/calm-and-relaxed/> [Accessed 19 October 2018].

CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY, 2018c. *Well-being*. [online]. UK: Cambridge University Press. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/well-being> [Accessed 19 October 2018].

CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY, 2018d. *Improvement*. [online]. UK: Cambridge University Press. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/improvement> [Accessed 3 December 2018].

CAMPBELL, C., 1989. *The romantic ethic and the spirit of modern consumerism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

CARLETON, R.N., 2016. Into the Unknown: A review and synthesis of contemporary models involving uncertainty. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 39(2016), pp. 30-43.

CARROLL, K. and GROSS, K., 2010. An Examination of Clothing Issues and Physical Limitations in the Product Development Process. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 39(1), pp. 2-17.

CARSON, D. et al., 2001. *Qualitative Marketing Research*. London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.

- CHAMBERLAIN-SALAUN, J., MILLS, J. and USHER, K., 2013. Linking Symbolic Interactionism and Grounded Theory Methods in a Research Design: From Corbin and Strauss' Assumptions to Action. *Sage Open*, July-September 2013, pp. 1-10.
- CHARMAZ, K., 2000. Grounded Theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In: N DENZIN and Y. LINCOLN, eds. *Handbook of qualitative research*. CA, USA: Sage. pp. 509-535.
- CHARMAZ, K., 2001. Grounded Theory: Methodology and Theory Construction. In: N.J. SMELSER and P.B. BALTES, eds. *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Oxford: Pergamon. pp. 6396-6399.
- CHARMAZ, K., 2006. *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London, UK: Sage.
- CHARMAZ, K., 2014. Grounded Theory in Global Perspective: Reviews by International Researchers. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(9), pp. 1074-1084.
- CHUNG, A., 2015. *Harper's Bazaar*, June, p. 107.
- CILI, S. and STOPA, L., 2015. The retrieval of self-defining memories is associated with the activation of specific working selves. *Memory*, 23(2), pp. 233-253.
- CILI, S. and STOPA, L., 2019. *Autobiographical Memory and the Self*. Oxon: Routledge.
- CLANDININ, D.J., 2005. Qualitative Analysis, Anthropology. In: K. KEMPF-LEONARD, ed. *Encyclopedia of Social Measurement*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. pp. 217-223.
- CLARK, D.A. and BECK, A.T., 2010. *Cognitive Therapy of Anxiety Disorders: Science and Practice*. NY, NY: Guilford Press.
- CLARKE, V., BRAUN, V., 2017. Thematic Analysis. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), pp. 297-298.
- CLEMENTS, M., 2015. *Comfort Seekers? Fashion Apparel Retail Expert Identifies Surprising Millennial Consumer Segments*. [online]. Chicago, IL: Chicago Now. Available from: <http://www.chicagonow.com/.../comfort-seekers-fashion-apparel-retail-expert-identifies-surprising-millennial-consumer-segments/> [Accessed 2 April 2016].
- CLINE, E., 2013. *Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion*. New York: Penguin.
- CONWAY, M.A., SINGER, J.A. and TAGINI, A., 2004. The Self and Autobiographical Memory: Correspondence and Coherence. *Social Cognition*, 22(5), pp. 491-529.
- COOLEY, C.H., 2009[1902]. *Human nature and the social order*. 7th ed. London: Transaction Publishers.
- CORNER, F., 2014. *Why Fashion Matters*. New York, NY: Thames & Hudson.

- CRAIK, J., 1984. Fashion, clothes, sexuality. *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2(1), pp. 68-83.
- CRAIK, J., 1994. *The face of fashion: Cultural studies in fashion*. London: Routledge.
- CRAIK, J., 2009. *Fashion: The Key Concepts*. Oxford, UK: Berg.
- CRAIK, L., 2017. The return of the cardigan. *Elle*, October, pp. 82-83.
- CRANE, D., 2000. *Fashion and its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- CRESWELL, J.W., 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- CREWE, L., 2017. *The Geographies of Fashion: Consumption. Space and Value*. London: Bloomsbury.
- CRONIN, A.M., 2000. Consumerism and "Compulsory Individuality": Women, Will and Potential. In: S. AHMED, J. KILBY, C. LURY, M.MCNEIL and B. SKEGGS, eds. *Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism*. London: Routledge. pp. 273-288.
- DAMHORST, M.L., MILLER-SPILLMAN, K.A. and MICHELMAN, S.O., 2005. *The Meanings of Dress*. 2nd Ed. New York, NY: Fairchild Publications Inc.
- DAVID, A.M., 2015. *Fashion Victims*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.
- DAVIES, W., 2015. *The Happiness Industry*. London: Verso.
- DE KLERK, A., 2020. *Will the experience of lockdown change the way we dress forever?* [online]. Available from: <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/fashion/fashion-news/a32400342/fashion-post-lockdown/> [Accessed 16 July 2020].
- DE LA HAYE, A., TAYLOR, L., and THOMPSON, E., eds., 2005. *A Family of Fashion: Six Generations of Dress*. London: Philip Wilson.
- DECI, E.L. and CASCIO, W.F., 1972. Changes in intrinsic motivation as a function of negative feedback and threats. *Eastern Psychological Association*. pp. 1-25.
- DECI, E.L. and RYAN, R.M., 2000. The 'What' and 'Why' of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behaviour. *Psychological Enquiry*, 11(4), pp. 227-268.
- DEELEY, R., 2019. *British Fashion Exploits, Celebrates and Fetishises the Working Class. Here's Why*. [online]. UK: Business of Fashion. Available from: https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/british-fashion-exploits-celebrates-and-fetishises-the-working-class-heres-why?utm_source=daily-digest-newsletter&utm_campaign=1644841471209635&utm_term=11&utm_medium=email [Accessed 17 September 2019].
- DESIGN MUSEUM, 2015. *Women Fashion Power Exhibition*. London: Design Museum.

- DI BELLA, L., and CRISP, R.J., 2015. Imagining oneself in a stereotyped role may stifle generalized tendencies to support social change. *Social Influence*, 10(3), pp. 157-167.
- DIMUK, M., 2019. *Defining Generations: Where Millennials end and Generation Z begins*. [online]. Washington DC, USA: Pew Research Centre. Available from: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/> [Accessed 19 August 2019].
- DOUGLAS, M., 1973. *Natural Symbols, Explorations in Cosmology*. London: Barrie and Jenkins.
- DUNNE, C., 2011. The place of the literature review in grounded theory research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 14(2), 111-124.
- DUSEK, S., 2007. *The Science of Warmth*. [online]. USA: SummitPost. Available from: www.summitpost.org/the-science-of-warmth/359562 [Accessed 20 April 2016].
- EASTMAN, J.K. and LIU, J., 2012. The impact of generational cohorts on status consumption: an exploratory look at generational cohort and demographics on status consumption. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 29(2), pp. 93-102.
- EICHER, J.B., ed., 1995. *Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time*. Oxford: Berg.
- EICHER, J., ROACH-HIGGINS, M. and JOHNSON, K., eds., 1995. *Dress and Identity*. New York, NY: Fairchild Books.
- EICHER, J.B., 2016. Editing Fashion Studies: Reflections on Methodology and Interdisciplinarity in The Encyclopedia of World Fashion and Dress. In: H. JENSS, ed. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 198-214.
- EISMAN, L., 2006. *Colour: Messages and Meanings*. Gloucester, MA: Hand Books Press.
- ELAN, P., 2020. *UK fashion industry pleads for more aid to survive Covid-19 crisis*. [online]. UK: The Guardian. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2020/may/13/uk-fashion-industry-pleads-for-more-aid-survive-coronavirus-crisis> [Accessed 14 July 2020].
- ELLIOT, A.J. and NIESTA, D., 2008. Romantic red: Red enhances men's attraction to women. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(5), pp. 1150-1164.
- ENTWISTLE, J., 2000. *The Fashioned Body*. UK: Polity Press.
- ENTWISTLE, J., 2003. The Dressed Body. In: L. WELTERS and A. LILLETHUN, eds. *The Fashion Reader*. Oxford, UK: Berg. pp. 139-149.
- ENTWISTLE, J., 2006. The cultural economy of fashion buying. *Current Sociology*, 54(5), pp. 704-724.

- EVANS, J., MACRORY, I., and RANDALL, C., 2015. *Measuring National Well-being: Life in the UK*. [online]. UK: ONS. Available from: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766_398059.pdf [Accessed 17 June 2015].
- FAIERS, J., 2008. *Tartan*. Oxford: Berg.
- FASHION CAPITAL, 2014. *Profile: Li Edelkoort – Trend Forecaster*. [online]. UK: Fashion Capital. Available from: <http://www.fashioncapital.co.uk/industry/industry-bios/3563-Profile-Li-Edelkoort-Trend-forecaster> [Accessed 25 June 2015].
- FESTINGER, L., 1954. A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations*, 7, pp. 117-140.
- FINKELSTEIN, J., 1991. *The Fashioned Self*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- FINKELSTEIN, J., 2007. *The art of self-invention: Image and identity in popular visual culture*. London: Tauris.
- FITZSIMMONS-CRAFT, E.E., HARNEY, M.B, KOEHLER, L.G. DANZI, L.E, RIDDELL, M.K. and BARDONE-CONE, A.M., 2011. Explaining the relation between thin ideal internalisation and body dissatisfaction among college women: the roles of social comparison and body surveillance. *Body Image*, 9, pp. 43-49.
- FLUGEL, J., 1950[1930]. *The Psychology of Clothes*. London: Hogarth Press.
- FLYNN, J.Z. and FOSTER, I.M., 2009. *Research Methods for the Fashion Industry*. NY, USA: Fairchild Books.
- FOUCAULT, M., 1977. *Discipline and Punish*. London: Penguin Books.
- FOUCAULT, M., 1996. What is critique? In: J. SCHMIDT, ed. *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. pp. 382-398.
- FOUCAULT, M., 2005[1975]. *Discipline and Punish*. In: A. EASTHOPE and K. MCGOWAN, eds. *A Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press. pp. 94-101.
- FOURT, L. and HOLLIES, N.R.S., 1970. *Clothing Comfort and Function*. NY, NY: Marcel Decker Inc.
- FOX, C., 2018. *Vogue essentials: little black dress*. UK: Conran Octopus Ltd.
- FREDRICKSON, B.L., 2009. *Positivity*. New York: Crown.
- FREDRICKSON, B.L. and ROBERTS, T., 1997. Objectification Theory: Towards Understanding Women's Lived Experiences and Mental Health Risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21(2), pp. 172-206.
- FREDRICKSON, B.L., ROBERTS, T.A., NOLL, S.M., QUINN, D.M. and TWENGE, J.M., 1998. That swimsuit becomes you: Sex differences in self-objectification, restrained eating and math performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(1), pp. 269-284.

- FREEDBERG, D., and GALLESE, V., 2007. Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Aesthetic Experience. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11(5), pp. 197-203.
- FRISBY, C.M., 2004. DOES RACE MATTER? Effects of Idealized Images on African American Women's Perceptions of Body Esteem. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34(3), pp. 323-347.
- FUSCH, P.I. and NESS, L.R., 2015. Are We There Yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(9), pp. 1408-1416.
- GAIMSTER, J., 2011. *Visual Research Methods in Fashion*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- GANNON, E., 2018. *The Multi-Hyphen Method*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- GAUGUIN, P., 1985[1901]. *Noa Noa: The Tahitian Journal*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications Inc.
- GAYE, M., 2015. *Fashion Experts Explore Scent*. [online]. UK: UAL. Available from: <http://blogs.arts.ac.uk/fashion/2015/02/12/positive-psychology-fashion-experts-explore-scents-clothing/> [Accessed 22 June 2015].
- GIBSON, P.C., 2012. *Fashion and Celebrity Culture*. London: Berg.
- GLASER, B., 1978. *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. CA, USA: Sociology Press.
- GOFFMAN, E., 1990[1959]. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- GOFFMAN, E., 2002[1959]. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. In: CALHOUN et al., eds. *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. 3rd ed. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 46-61.
- GOODHEW, S.C., and KIDD, E., 2020. Bliss is blue and bleak is grey: Abstract word-colour associations influence objective performance even when not task relevant. *Acta psychologica*, 206.
- GRANT, M.J., and BOOTH, A., 2009. A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 26(2), pp. 91-108.
- GRAY, M., 2009. *The Optimized Woman*. Ropely, UK: O Books.
- GREENBAUM, T.L., 2000. *Moderating focus groups: A practical guide for group facilitation*. CA, USA: Sage.
- GROSE, V., 2012. *Basics Fashion Management 01: Concept to Consumer*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- GUEGUEN, N., 2012. Color and women attractiveness: When red clothed women are perceived to have more intense sexual intent. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 152(3), pp. 261-265.

- GUREL, L.M. and BEESON, M.S., 1979. *Dimensions of Dress and Adornment*. US: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- GUY, A., and BANIM, M., 2000. Personal collections: Women's clothing use and identity. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 9(3), pp. 313-327.
- GUY, A., BANIM, M., and GREEN, E., 2001. *Through the wardrobe: women's relationships with their clothes*. New York, NY: Berg.
- HABERMAS, T. and PAHA, C., 2002. Souvenirs and other personal objects: Reminding of past events and significant others in the transition to university. In: J.D. WEBSTER and B.K. HAIGHT, eds. *Critical Advances in Reminiscence Work*. NY: Springer. Pp. 123-138.
- HAGERTY, M.R., 1999. Testing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: National Quality-of-Life Across Time. *Social Indicators Research*, 46(3), pp. 249-271.
- HAGGER, M.S., RENTZELAS, P and CHATZISARANTIS, N.L.D., 2013. Effects of individualist and collectivist group norms and choice on intrinsic motivation. *Motivation and Emotion*, 38, pp. 215-223.
- HAIG, B.D., 2010. Abductive Research Methods. In: P. PETERSON, E. BAKER and B. MCGAW, eds. *International Encyclopedia of Education*. 3rd ed. Amsterdam: Elsevier Science. pp. 77-82.
- HAIGH, C., 2018. What are your hormones telling you? *Marie Claire*, March. pp. 195-196.
- HALVORSEN, K., HOFFMANN, J., COSTE-MANIERE, I. and STANKEVICIUTE, R., 2013. Can fashion blogs function as a marketing tool to influence consumer behaviour? *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 4(3), pp. 211-224.
- HAMEIDE, K., 2011. *Fashion Branding Unravelling*. USA: Fairchild Books.
- HAN, Y.J., NUNES, J.C., and DREZE, X., 2010. Signalling Status with Luxury Goods: The Role of Brand Prominence. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(4), pp. 15-30.
- HANCOCK, J.H., 2016. *Brand Story: Cases and Explorations in Fashion Branding*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Fairchild Books.
- HANCOCK, M.E., AMANKWAA, L., REVELL, M.A. and MUELLER, D., 2016. Focus Group Data Saturation: A New Approach to Data Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 21(11), pp. 2124-2130.
- HANSON, J.L., BALMER, D.F. and GIARDINO, A.P., 2011. Qualitative Research Methods for Medical Educators. *Academic Pediatrics*, 11(5), pp. 375-386.
- HARPER, C., and MCDUGALL, K., 2012. The Very Recent Fall and Rise of Harris Tweed. *Textile*, 10(11), pp. 78-99.
- HART, C., 2018. *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Research Imagination*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- HAYBRON, D.M., 2013. *Happiness A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

HEFFERON, K., 2015. *Positive Psychology fashion experts explore scents*. [online]. UK: UAL. Available from: <http://blogs.arts.ac.uk/fashion/2015/02/12/positive-psychology-fashion-experts-explore-scents-clothing/> [Accessed 22 June 2015].

HELLER, S.G., 2007. *Fashion in Medieval France*. Cambridge, UK: DS Brewer.

HIRSH, J.B., MAR, R.A. and PETERSON, J.B., 2012. Psychological Entropy: A Framework for Understanding Uncertainty-Related Anxiety. *Psychological Review*, 119(2), 304-320.

HOBSBAWM, E., 1998. The Cult of Identity Politics. *New Left Review*, 217, p. 40.

HOLLIDAY, R., 1999. Sexualities. *Sage Publications*, 2(4), pp. 475-479.

HONE, L.C., JARDEN, A., SCHOFIELD, G.M., and DUNCAN, S., 2014. Measuring flourishing: The impact of operational definitions on the prevalence of high levels of wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 4(1), pp. 62-90.

HORN, M.J., and GUREL, L., 1981. *The Second Skin: An Interdisciplinary Study of Clothing*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, 2019. *Fixing fashion: clothing consumption and sustainability*. [online]. UK: House of Commons. Available from: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmenvaud/2311/2311.pdf> [Accessed 24 July 2019].

HSE, 2018. *Work related stress depression or anxiety statistics in Great Britain, 2018*. [online]. UK: Health and Safety Executive. Available from: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress.pdf> [Accessed 14 June 2019].

HUBERMAN, M. and MILES, M.B., 2002. *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion*. Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage Publications Ltd.

HUMPHREYS, A., and GRAYSON, K., 2008. The Intersecting Roles of Consumer and Producer: A Critical Perspective on Co-production, Co-creation and Prosumption. *Sociology Compass*, 2(3), pp. 963-980.

HUNT, K., 2017. Dress for Success. *Elle*, October, pp. 230-234.

HUNT, K., 2019. The Kingdom of Karl. *Elle*, May, pp. 38-42.

INDEPENDENT, 2019. *What is modest fashion and why is it becoming mainstream?* [online]. UK: Independent. Available from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/modest-fashion-asos-hijab-range-design-islam-religion-a8875636.html> [Accessed 23 July 2019].

JACOBS, K., PETERSEN, L., HORISCH, J. and BATTENFELD, D., 2018. Green thinking but thoughtless buying? An empirical extension of the value-attitude-behaviour hierarchy in sustainable clothing. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 203(2018), pp. 1155-1169.

JAWORSKI, A., and COUPLAND, N., eds., 1999. *The Discourse Reader*. London: Routledge.

JAYNE, M. and FERENCUHOVA, S., 2013. Comfort, identity and fashion in the post-socialist city: Materialities, assemblages and context. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 15(3), pp. 329-350.

JENSS, H., ed., 2016. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London: Bloomsbury.

JOHNSON, E., 2015. *The Real Cost of Your Shopping Habits*. [online]. Jersey City, NJ: Forbes. Available from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/emmajohnson/2015/01/15/the-real-cost-of-your-shopping-habits/#3a83dc421452> [Accessed 15 July 2020].

JONES, S.J., 2005. *Fashion Design*. 2nd Ed. London: Laurence Kind Publishing.

JONES, E.E. and GOETHALS, G.R., 1972. Order effects in impression formation Attribute context and the nature of the entity. In: E.E. JONES et al., eds. *Perceiving the Causes of Behaviour*. Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press. pp. 27-46.

KAISER, S.B., 2012. *Fashion and Cultural Studies*. London: Berg.

KAISER, S.B., and GREEN, D.N., 2016. Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Fashion Studies. In: H. JENSS, ed. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 160-180.

KAISER, S.B., NAGASAWA, R.H., and HUTTON, S.S., 1991. Fashion, Postmodernity and Personal Appearance: A Symbolic Interactionist Formulation. *Symbolic Interaction*, 14(2), pp. 165-185.

KAMALHA, E., ZENG, Y., MWASIAGI, J. and KYATUHEIRE, S., 2013. The Comfort Dimension; a review of perception in clothing. *Journal of Sensory Studies*, 28, pp. 423-444.

KAWAMURA, Y., 2011. *Doing Research in Fashion and Dress*. Oxford, UK: Berg.

KAWAMURA, Y., 2018. *Fashion-ology*. 2nd ed. London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing plc.

KEYNOTE, 2015. *Clothing Retailing* [online]. UK: Keynote. Available from: <https://www-keynote-co-uk.ezproxy.rgu.ac.uk/market-report/retail/clothing-retailing> [Accessed 6 April 2016].

KHAN, C., 2018. *Miserable staff don't make money; the firms that have switched to a four-day week*. [online]. UK: The Guardian. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2018/nov/05/firms-switched-four-day-week-increase-efficiency-health-happiness> [Accessed 09 November 2018].

KIMLE, P.A., and DAMHORST, M.L., 1997. A grounded theory model of the ideal business image for women. *Symbolic Interaction*, 20(1), pp. 45-68.

KING, R., 2020. *From cookies to cashmere, the comfort economy gains momentum during the coronavirus pandemic*. [online]. Chicago, IL: Fortune. Available from: <https://fortune.com/2020/04/21/coronavirus-athleisure-comfort-self-care-economy-covid-19/> [Accessed 23 April 2020].

- KRITSONIS, A. and HILLS, D., 2005. Comparison of Change Theories. *International Journal of Scholarly Academic Intellectual Diversity*, 8(1), pp. 1-7.
- KROM, K., 2014. *The Health & Wellness market is the next trillion dollar industry*. [online]. New York, NY: Women's Marketing Inc. Available from: <http://www.womensmarketing.com/blog/2014/11/health-and-wellness-market/> [Accessed 16 June 2015].
- KVIDAL-ROVIK, T., 2018. The Meaning of the Feminist T-Shirt: Social Media, Postmodern Aesthetics, and the Potential for Sociopolitical Change. *Media and Communication*, 6(2), pp. 210-219.
- LAMB, J.M. and KALLAL, M.J., 1992. A conceptual framework for apparel design. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 10(2), pp. 42-47.
- LANE, R.E., 2000. *The Loss of Happiness in Market Economies*. CT, USA: Yale University Press.
- LANG, K. and LANG, G.E., 1961. The Power of Fashion. In: L. WELTERS and A. LILLETHUN, eds. *The Fashion Reader*. Oxford, UK: Berg. pp. 128-131.
- LARDI, C., D'ARGEMBEAU, A., CHANAL, J., GHISLETTA, P. and VAN DER LINDEN, M., 2010. Further characterisation of self-defining memories in young adults: A study of a Swiss sample. *Memory*, 18(3), pp. 293-309.
- LAVAR, J., 1950. *Dress*. London: John Murray.
- LAVAR, J., 1959. *Fashion: A Detective Story*. Vogue, January.
- LEDIN, P. and MACHIN, D., 2018. *Doing Visual Analysis*. London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.
- LENNON, S.J., JOHNSON, K.P. and RUDD, N.A., 2017. *Social Psychology of Dress*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic USA.
- LEOPARDI, G., *Dialogue Between Fashion and Death*. London: Penguin Books.
- LEWIN, K., 1947. *Field Theory in Social Science*. New York: Harper and Row.
- LEXICO, 2019. *Cozy*. [online]. UK: Oxford University Press. Available from: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/cozy> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
- LIGHTMAN, A., 2013. *The Accidental Universe*. London: Constable and Robin Ltd.
- LINLEY, P.A., 2006. Counselling Psychology's Positive Psychological Agenda: A model for Integration and Inspiration. *The Counselling Psychologist*, 34(2), pp. 313-322.
- LINLEY, P.A., STEPHEN, J., HARRINGTON, S., and WOOD, A.M., 2006. Positive psychology: past, present, and (possible) future. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1(1), pp. 3-16.
- LIPPITT, R., WATSON, J. and WESTLEY, B., (1958). *The Dynamics of Planned Change*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

- LOHMANN, S., HEIMERL, F., BOPP, F., BURCH, M. and ERTL, T., 2015. *Concerti Cloud: Word Cloud Visualisation for Multiple Text Documents*. 2015 19th International Conference on Information Visualisation.
- LOMAS, T., HEFFERON, K. and IVTZAN, I., 2014. *Applied Positive Psychology*. London: Sage.
- LUI, R. and LITTLE, T., 2009. The 5ps model to optimise compression athletic wear comfort in sports. *Journal of Fibre Bioengineering and Informatics*, 2(1), pp. 41-52.
- LYNAS, E., 2010. Textiles, connection and meaning. In: C.V. CHATURVEDI, ed. *Fashion: Sustainability and Creativity Conference Proceedings*. Taipei, Taiwan: Fu Jen Catholic University. pp. 61-70.
- LYUBOMIRSKY, S., KING, L., and DIENER, E., 2005. The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(6), pp. 803-855.
- MADDEN, T.J., HEWETT, K. and ROTH, M.S., 2000. Managing Images in Different Cultures: A Cross-National Study of Colour Meanings and Preferences. *Journal of International Marketing*, 8(4), pp. 90-107.
- MADDUX, J.E., 2009. Self-efficacy: The power of believing you can. In: C.R. SNYDER and S.J. LOPEZ, eds. *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 335-343.
- MAIN, D., 2017. *Who are the Millennials?* [online]. Bath, UK: Futureplc. Available from: <https://www.livescience.com/38061-millennials-generation-y.html> [Accessed 19 August 2019].
- MAIR, C. 2018. *The Psychology of Fashion*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- MAJUMDAR, A., MUKHOPADHYAY, S. and YADAV, R., 2010. Thermal properties of knitted fabrics made from cotton and regenerated bamboo cellulosic fibres. *International Journal of Thermal Sciences*, 49(10), pp. 2042-2048.
- MAK, G., 2020. IBISWorld industry report G47.710: *Clothing Retailing in the UK (March)*. London: IBISWorld.
- MARCHE, S., 2013. *In Praise of the New Narcissism*. [online]. New York, NY: Hearst Communications. Available from: <http://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a17741/new-narcissism-essay-0113/> [Accessed 21 April 2017].
- MARINO, S., 2017. Philosophical Accounts of Fashion in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century: A Historical Reconstruction. In: G. MATTEUCCI and S. MARINO, eds. *Philosophical Perspectives on Fashion*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 11-45.
- MARKUS, H. and NURIUS, P., 1986. Possible Selves. *American Psychologist*, 41(9), pp. 954-969.
- MARSHALL, M. N., 1996. Sampling for Qualitative Research. *Family Practice*, 13(6), pp. 522-526.

MASLOW, A.H., 1943. A theory of human behaviour. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), pp. 370-396.

MASLOW, A.H., 1970. *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper and Row.

MASUCH C.S. and HEFFERON, K., 2014. Understanding the links between positive psychology and fashion: a grounded theory analysis. *International Journal of Fashion Studies*, 1(2), pp. 227-246.

MATHIESEN, T., 1997. The Viewer Society: Michel Foucault's 'Panopticon' Revisited. *Theoretical Criminology*, 1(2), pp. 215-234.

MAUSS, M., 1973[1935]. Technique of the Body. *Economy and Society*, 2(1), pp. 70-89.

MAY, N., 2020. *This is why it's important to get dressed every morning while WFH, according to the experts*. [online]. Available from: <https://www.standard.co.uk/fashion/experts-why-is-it-important-to-get-dressed-when-working-from-home-a4396326.html> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

MAY, T., 2002. *Qualitative Research in Action*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

MCCRACKEN, G., 1986. Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(1), pp. 71-84.

MCCRACKEN, G., 1987. Culture and Consumption among the Elderly: Three Research Objectives in an Emerging Field. *Aging and Society*, 7(2), pp. 203-224.

MCDOWELL, L., 1997. *Capital Culture: Money, Sex and Power at Work*. Oxford: Blackwell.

MCGHEE, G., MARLAND, G.R. and ATKINSON, J., 2007. Grounded theory research: Literature reviewing and reflexivity. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 60(3), pp. 334-342.

MCKELVEY, K. and MUNSLOW, J., 2008. *Fashion Forecasting*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

MEAD, G.H., 1967[1934]. *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION, 2018. *Mental health statistics: stress*. [online]. UK: Mental Health Foundation. Available from: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-stress> [Accessed 12 July 2019].

MIDA, I., and KIM, A., 2015. *The Dress Detective*. London, UK: Bloomsbury.

MILLER, D., 2008. *The Comfort of Things*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

MILLER, D., 2010. *Stuff*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

MILLER, K., JASPER, C.R. and HILL, D.R., 1991. Costume and the Perception of Identity and Role. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 72, pp. 807-813.

- MILLS, C.W., 2000[1959]. *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MILLS, J., BONNER, A. and FRANCIS, K., 2006. The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), pp. 25-35.
- MINTEL, 2015. *Womenswear*. London: Mintel Group Limited.
- MINTEL, 2017. *Womenswear – UK*. London: Mintel Group Limited.
- MOERAN, B., 2011. Fragrances and Perfume. In: L. SKOV, ed. *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion, Volume 8*. New York: Berg. pp. 426-430.
- MOLLOY, T., 1975. *The Women's Dress for Success Book*. USA: Warner Books.
- MORAN, L. and SKEGGS, B., 2004. *Sexuality and the Politics of Violence and Safety*. London: Routledge.
- MORRISON, J., 2015. Smartworks (Dress to Impress) *Sunday Mail Seven Days*, April 12, pp. 12-13.
- MUKHOPADHYAY, A., and MIDHA, V.K., 2008. A review on designing the waterproof breathable fabrics part II: Construction and suitability of breathable fabrics for different uses. *Journal of Industrial Textiles*, 38(1), pp. 17-41.
- NHS, 2015a. *Well-being Self-assessment*. [online]. NHS: UK. Available from: <http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Wellbeing-self-assessment.aspx> [Accessed 17 June 2015].
- NHS, 2015b. *Conditions: Stress, anxiety and depression*. [online]. NHS: UK. Available from: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/improve-mental-wellbeing.aspx> [Accessed 17 June 2015].
- NIXON, E. and GABRIEL, Y., 2015. So much choice and no choice at all: A socio-psychoanalytic interpretation of consumerism as a source of pollution. *Marketing Theory*, 16(1), pp. 39-56.
- ORBACH, S., 2016[1978]. *Fat is a Feminist Issue*. London: Arrow Books.
- PALUMBO, R., FAIRFIELD, B., MAMMARELLA, M. and DI DOMENICO, A., 2017. Does make-up make you feel smarter? The 'lipstick effect' extended to academic achievement. *Cogent Psychology*, 4(1), pp. 1-10.
- PARK, H.J. and LIN, L.M., 2020. Exploring attitude-behaviour gap in sustainable consumption: comparison of recycled and upcycled fashion products. *Journal of Business Research*, 117(2020), pp. 623-628.
- PARTINGTON, R., 2020. *UK paid employment falls by almost 650,000 as Covid-19 crisis bites*. [online]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/jul/16/number-of-uk-workers-on-company-payroll-falls-by-650000-amid-covid-19-crisis> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

PEAT, C.M., PEYERL, N.L and MUEHLENKAMP, J.J., 2008. Body Image and Eating Disorders in Older Adults: A Review. *The Journal of General Psychology*, 135(4), pp. 343-358.

PECK, J. and CHILDERS, T.L., 2003. Individual Differences in Haptic Information Processing: The 'Need for Touch' Scale. *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, Vol 30, pp. 430-442.

PETRARCA, E., 2017. *The State of the Trend: Are Trends Dead, or Are They Just Being Recycled in an Endless Loop?* [online]. W Magazine: USA. Available from: <http://www.wmagazine.com/story/fashion-trends-2017-retail-buyers> [Accessed 4 May 2017].

PHELAN, P., 1993. *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. London: Routledge.

PICARDIE, J., 2015. The Language of Fashion. *Harper's Bazaar*, January, p. 144-196.

PIKE, H., 2016. *Tapping Generation Z*. [online]. UK: Business Of Fashion. Available from: <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/tapping-generation-z> [Accessed 27 February 2019].

PINE, K., 2011. *Fashion Psychology*. [online]. Hatfield: Karen Pine. Available from: www.karenpine.com/research/fashion-psychology/ [Accessed 25 June 2015].

PINE, K., 2014. *Mind What You Wear: The psychology of fashion*. [online]. Hatfield: Karen Pine. Available from: read.amazon.co.uk/?asin=B00KBTB3NS [Accessed 20 April 2017].

PINEAU, C., 2008. The Psychological meaning of comfort. *Applied Psychology*, 31(2), pp. 271-282.

PONTRELLI, F.J., 1975. Partial analysis of comfort's gestalt. In: N.R.S. HOLLIES and R.F. GOLDMAN, eds. *Clothing Comfort: Interaction of Thermal, Ventilation, Construction, and Assessment Factors*. Michigan: Ann Arbor Science Publishers. pp. 71-80.

QSR International., 2016. *NVivo*. [online]. UK: QSR International. Available from: <http://www.qsrinternational.com/product> [Accessed 6 April 2016].

RADNER, H., 1997. Producing the body: Jane Fonda and the new public feminine. In: P. SULKUNEN et al., eds. *Constructing the New Consumer Society*. New York: Pgrave Macmillan. pp. 108-133.

RAFAELI, A., DUTTON, J., HARQUAIL, C.V and MACKIE-LEWIS, S., 1997. Navigating by Attire: The use of dress by administrative employees. *Academy of Management Review*, 40(1), pp. 19-45.

RAMBERG, B. and GJESDAL, K., 2005. *Hermeneutics*. [online]. US: Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Available from: www.plato.stanford.edu [Accessed 19 February 2016].

RATH, T., and HARTER, J., 2010. *Wellbeing: The five essential elements*. New York: Gallup Press.

- RAWSTHORN, Q., 2018. Colour Decoded. *Harper's Bazaar*, May. p. 116.
- RIEGER, K.L., 2019. Discriminating among grounded theory approaches. *Nursing Inquiry*, 26(1), pp. 1-12.
- RICHARDS, L., 2009. *Handling Qualitative Data*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- ROBERTS, M., 2015. *Choose Happy Clothes*. [online]. Kent, UK: Kelsey Media Ltd. Available from: <https://psychologies.co.uk/choose-happy-clothes> [Accessed 22 June 2015].
- ROBERTS, T. and PENNEBAKER, J.W. 1995. Gender Differences in Perceiving Internal State: Towards a His-and-Hers Model of Perceptual Cue Use. In: M.P. ZANNA, ed. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology Volume 27*. Toronto: Academic Press. pp. 143-175.
- ROCHBERG-HALTON, E., 1984. Object Relations, Role Models, and Cultivation of the Self. *Environment and Behaviour*, 16(3), pp. 335-368.
- RODIN, J., SILBERSTEIN, L. and STRIEGEL-MOORE, R., 1985. Women and weight: A normative discontent. In: T.B. SONDEREGGER, ed. *Psychology and gender*. USA: University of Nebraska Press. pp. 267-307.
- ROSE, G., 2001. *Visual Methodologies*. London: Sage Publications.
- ROUTLEDGE 2016. *Liquid Modernity*. [online]. London: Routledge. Available from: <http://routledgesoc.com/category/profile-tags/liquid-modernity> [Accessed 18 July 2017].
- RUDD, N.A. and LENNON, S.J., 2000. Body image and appearance-management behaviours in college women. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 18(3), pp. 152-162.
- RUGGERONE, L., 2016. The Feeling of Being Dressed: Affect Studies and the Clothed Body. *Fashion Theory*, 21(5), pp. 573-593.
- RYAN, R.M., CONNELL, J.P. and DECI, E.L., (1985). A motivational analysis of self-determination and self-regulation in education. In: C. AMES and R.E. AMES, eds. *Research on motivation in education: The classroom milieu*. NY: Academic Press. pp. 13-51.
- SALDANA, J., 2016. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. London: Sage.
- SALMONS, J.E., 2019. *Little Quick Fix: Find the theory in your research*. London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.
- SANTOS, H.C., VARNUM, M.E.W. and GROSSMAN, I., 2017. Global Increases in Individualism. *Psychological Science*, 28(9), pp. 1228-1239.
- SAPIR, E., 1931. Fashion. In: *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences Volume 6*. New York: Macmillan. pp. 139-144.

- SASTRE, A., 2014. Towards a Radical Body Positive. *Feminist Media Studies*, (14)6, pp. 929-943.
- SAVAGE, M., 2003. A new class paradigm? *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(4), pp. 535-541.
- SAVAS, O., 2004. A perspective on the person-product relationship: attachment and detachment. In: D. MCDONAGH et al., eds. *Design and emotion: the experience of everyday things*. London, UK: Taylor & Francis. pp. 319-320.
- SCHEIBEHENNE, B., TODD, P.M. and GREIFENEDER, R., 2010. Can there ever be too many options? A meta-analytic review of choice overload. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(3), pp. 409-425.
- SCHEIN, E.H., 1996. Kurt Lewin's change theory in the field and in the classroom: Notes towards a model of managed learning. *Systems Practice*, 9(1), pp. 27-47.
- SCHULMAN, A., 2015. *Editorial*. Vogue. p. 45.
- SCHWAB, P.N., 2015. *Show me the size of your logo and I will tell you who you are*. [online]. Brussels, Belgium: Into The Minds. Available from: <http://blog.intotheminds.com/show-me-the-size-of-your-logo-and-i-will-tell-you-who-you-are/signal-preference-an-taxonomy-based-on-wealth-and-need-for-status/> [Accessed 25 June 2015].
- SCHWANDT, T.A., 1998. Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry. In: N.K. DENZIN and Y.S. LINCOLN, eds. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*. CA, USA: Sage Publications.
- SELIGMAN, M.E.P., 2002. *Authentic happiness*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- SELIGMAN, M.E.P., 2011. *Flourish*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- SELIGMAN, M., 2016. *The Pursuit of Happiness*. [online]. Mark Setton. Available from: www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/martin-seligman-psychology/ [Accessed 18 July 2017].
- SEN, A., VOIA, M. and WOOLLEY, F., 2010. The effect of hotness on pay and productivity. *Carlton Economics Working Papers*, CEP 10-07, pp.1-42.
- SENNETT, R., 1998. *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequence of Work in the New Capitalism*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co.
- SHERIDAN, J. and CHAMBERLAIN, K., 2011. The power of things. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 8(4), pp. 315-322.
- SHERMAN, L., 2016. *Nike taps the transformation economy*. [online]. London, UK: Business of Fashion. Available from: http://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/news-analysis/nike-taps-the-transformation-economy?utm_source=Subscribers&utm_campaign=ab0945b0ef-&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d2191372b3-ab0945b0ef-416973469?utm_source=Subscribers&utm_campaign=ab0945b0ef-&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d2191372b3-ab0945b0ef-416973469 [Accessed 20 March 2016].

- SHINKLE, E., ed., 2008. *Fashion as photograph: viewing and reviewing images of fashion*. London: Tauris.
- SHUSTERMAN, R., 2017. Fits of Fashion: The Somaesthetics of Style. In: G. MATTEUCCI and S. MARINO, eds. *Philosophical Perspectives on Fashion*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 91-106.
- SILVERMAN, D., 2005. *Doing Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- SIMMEL, G., 2003[1985]. The Philosophy of Fashion. In: D. CLARKE, M. DOEL and K. HOUSIAUX, eds. *The Consumption Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 238-245.
- SKEGGS, B., 2005. The Making of Class and Gender through Visualising Moral Subject Formation. *Sociology*, 39(5), pp. 965-982.
- SKOV, L., 2014. Fashion. In: J.S. MAGUIRE and J. MATTHEWS, eds. *The Cultural Intermediaries Reader*. London: Sage Publications Ltd. pp. 113-124.
- SLATER, K., 1985. *Human Comfort*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.
- SLEIGH, S., 2018. *The UK fashion industry is worth £32 billion to the UK economy*. [online]. UK: Evening Standard. Available from: <https://www.standard.co.uk/fashion/uk-fashion-industry-32-billion-uk-economy-british-fashion-council-caroline-rush-a3934781.html> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- SMELIK, A., 2015. *Fashion and Visual Culture*. [online]. Netherlands: Anneke Smelik. Available from: <http://www.annekesmelik.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/FashionAndVisualCulture.pdf> [Accessed 6 April 2016].
- SMITH, K., 2015. *Athleisure: a mass movement not a trend*. [online]. London, UK: Edited. Available from: <https://editd.com/blog/2015/08/athleisure-a-mass-movement-not-a-trend/> [Accessed 31 August 2015].
- SOCIAL THEORY, 2018. *Liquid Modernity*. [online]. UK: Routledge. Available from: <http://routledgesoc.com/category/profile-tags/liquid-modernity> [Accessed 3 December 2018].
- SOLOMON, M.R., 1983. The Role of Products as Social Stimuli: A Symbolic Interactionism Perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10, pp. 310-329.
- SOLOMON, M.R. and RABOLT, N.J., 2009. *Consumer Behaviour in Fashion*. 2nd Ed. UK: Pearson.
- SONTAG, M.S., 1985. Comfort dimensions of actual and ideal insulative clothing for older women. *Clothing and Textile Research Journal*, 4(1), pp. 9-17.
- SPIVACK, E., 2014. *Worn Stories*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press.
- STEELE, V., 1998. A Museum of Fashion is more than a Clothes-bag. *Fashion Theory*, 2(4), pp. 327-335.

- STEELE, V., 2001. *The Corset: A Cultural History*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.
- STONE, G.P., 2006. Appearance and the Self: a slightly revised version. In: D. BRISSET and C. EDGLEY, eds. *Life as Theatre: A Dramaturgical Sourcebook*. London: Aldine Transaction. pp. 141-154.
- STONE, G.P., 1962. Appearance and the self in human behaviour and social processes. In: A.M. ROSE, ed. *An interactionist approach*. Boston: Houghton. pp. 86-118.
- STRAUSS, A. and CORBIN, J., 1998. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. 2nd ed. CA, USA: Sage.
- SYVERSTEN, T., 2020. *Digital Detox: The Politics of Disconnecting*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited.
- SWANN, J., 2015. *Photos Reveal How Popular Fashions Leave Uncomfortable Marks*. [online]. USA: Takepart. Available from: <http://www.takepart.com/article/2015/03/02/the-body-wearing-tight-clothing-justin-bartels> [Accessed on 24 July 2019].
- SWICOFIL. 2015. *Natural Fibres Synthetic Fibres – Cotton*. [online]. Emmenbruecke: Swicofil. Available from: <http://www.swicofil.com/products/001cotton.html> [Accessed 20 April 2017].
- SZOKOLAY, S.V., 2008, *Introduction to Architectural Science: The Basis of Sustainable Design*. 2nd ed. Burlington, MA: Elsevier Architectural Press.
- THE GLOBAL COUNCIL FOR HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING, 2019. *Global Happiness and Wellbeing Policy Report 2019*. New York: Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
- THE INNOVATION GROUP, 2018. *Future 100*. [online]. New York: J. Walter Intelligence. Available from: https://www.thegeniusworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Future-100_2019.pdf [Accessed 10 July 2019].
- THOMPSON, K. 2016. *Zygmunt Bauman's Liquid Modernity*. UK: *Revise Sociology*. Available from: <https://revisesociology.com/2016/08/07/zygmunt-baumans-liquid-modernity-summary/> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
- THOMPSON, M.J., 2017. *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Theory*. NY, USA: Palgrave Macmillan.
- TOURAINÉ, A., 1998. Can we live together, equal and different? *European Journal of Social Theory*, 1(2), pp. 165-178.
- TSEELON, E., 1995. *The masque of femininity: The presentation of woman in everyday life*. London: Sage Publications.
- TSEELON, E., 2016. Jean Baudrillard, Post-modern Fashion as the End of Meaning. In: A. ROCAMORA and A. SMELIK, eds. *Thinking Through Fashion*. London, UK: IB Tauris and Co Ltd. pp. 215-232.

- TYNAN, J., 2016. Michel Foucault, Fashioning the Body Politic. In: A. ROCAMORA and A. SMELIK, eds. *Thinking Through Fashion*. London: IB Tauris and Co Ltd. pp. 184-199.
- UAL, 2015a. *Well-being Research Hub*. [online]. UK: UAL. Available from: <http://www.arts.ac.uk/research/research-environment/research-infrastructure/research-groups-networks-and-collaborations/well-being-research-hub/> [Accessed 22 June 2015].
- UAL, 2015b. *Events Blog*. [online]. UK: UAL. Available from: <http://events.arts.ac.uk/event/2015/2/23/Better-Lives-Panel-Discussion-Positive-Psychology-in-Fashion/> [Accessed 22 June 2015].
- UAL, 2018. *Better Living Research Hub*. [online]. UK: UAL. Available from: <https://www.arts.ac.uk/research/groups-networks-and-collaborations/better-living-research-hub> [Accessed 19.10.18].
- USHER, P., 2018. *The Multi Billion-Dollar Modest Fashion Industry That's Gone Global*. [online]. UK: Conde Nast. Available from: <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/the-multibillion-dollar-modest-fashion-industry-thats-gone-global> [Accessed 24 July 2019].
- V&A., 2019. *Six revolutionary designs by Mary Quant*. [online]. UK: Victoria and Albert Museum. Available from: <https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/six-revolutionary-designs-by-mary-quant> [Accessed on 11 June 2019].
- VARTANIAN, L.R. and DEY, S., 2013. Self-concept clarity, thin-ideal internalisation, and appearance-related social comparison as predictors of body dissatisfaction. *Body Image*, 10(4), pp. 495-500.
- VEBLEN, T., 2011. Dress as an Expression of the Pecuniary Culture. In: L. WELTERS and A. LILLETHUN, eds. *The Fashion Reader*. 2nd ed. Oxford, UK: Berg. pp. 125-127.
- VEBLEN, T., 1994[1899]. *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications Inc.
- VON BUSCH, O., 2008. *Fashion-able: Hacktivism and Engaged Fashion Design*. Gothenburg: Artmonitor.
- VON BUSCH, O., 2016. Action! Or, Exploring Diffractive Methods for Fashion Research. In: H. JENSS, ed. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 181-197.
- WALKER, D.C. and MURRAY, A.D., 2012. Body Image Behaviours: Checking, Fixing, and Avoiding. In: T. Cash, ed. *Encyclopedia of Body Image and Human Appearance*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. pp. 166-172.
- WATKINS, S., 1995. *Clothing: The Portable Environment*. 2 ed. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.
- WEALE, S., 2019. *Levels of distress and illness among students in UK 'alarmingly high'*. [online]. UK: The Guardian. Available from: <https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/education/2019/mar/05/levels-of-distress-and-illness-among-students-in-the-uk-alarmingly-high> [Accessed 5 August 2019].

- WEBSTER, J. and TIGGEMANN, M., 2003. The Relationship Between Women's Body Satisfaction and Self-Image Across the Life Span: The role of Cognitive Control. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 164(2), pp. 241-252.
- WEEDE, J., 1997. Woman's suffrage: Women liberate themselves from men's outdoor apparel. *Sport-style*, 19(1), pp. 79-97.
- WEEKS, J., 2000. *Making Sexual History*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- WELTERS, L. and LILLETHUN, A., 2018. *Fashion History: A Global View*. London: Bloomsbury.
- WGSN., 2015. *Wellthness*. [online]. UK: WGSN. Available from: www.wgsn.com [Accessed 25 June 2015].
- WGSN., 2016. *The Athleisure Boom*. [online]. UK: WGSN. Available from: www.wgsn.com [Accessed 25 June 2015].
- WHITEHEAD, G.D. and PETROV, P., 2017. *Fashioning Horror*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- WILSON, E.O., 2013. *The Social Conquest of Earth*. New York: Liveright.
- WILCOX, C., 2001. *Radical Fashion*. London: V & A Publications.
- WILCOX, K., HYEONG, M.K. and SANKAR, S., 2009. Why do Consumers Buy Counterfeit Luxury Brands? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 46(2), pp. 247-259.
- WILLIAMS, R., 1961. *The Long Revolution*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- WILLIAMS, R., 1980. *Problems in Materialism and Culture: Selected Essays*. London: Verso.
- WILMOT, A., 2016. *Designing Sampling Strategies for Qualitative Social Research*. [online]. London: ONS. Available from: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/.../designing-sampling-strategies.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2016].
- WILSON, E., 1992. Fashion and the meaning of life. *The Guardian*, 18 May, p. 34.
- WODAK, R., and MEYER, M., 2016. Methods of Critical Discourse Studies. In: R. WODAK and M. MEYER, eds. *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*. London: Sage Publications Ltd. pp. 2-21.
- WOOD, H. and SKEGGS, B., 2008. Spectacular Morality, 'Reality' television, individualisation and the remaking of the working class. In: D. HESMONDHALGH and J. TOYNBEE, eds. *The Media and Social Theory*. London: Routledge. pp. 177-193.
- WOODWARD, S., 2007. *Why women wear what they wear*. Oxford: Berg.
- WOODWARD, S., 2016. 'Humble' Blue Jeans: Material Culture Approaches to Understanding the Ordinary, Global, and the Personal. In: H. JENSS, ed. *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*. London, UK: Bloomsbury. pp. 42-57.

WOOLMARK. 2017. *Benefits of Wool*. [online]. Australia: Woolmark. Available from: <http://www.woolmark.com/resources/benefits-of-wool/> [Accessed 20 April 2017].

WORKMAN, J.E., and LEE, S.H., 2017. What do we know about fashion adoption groups? A proposal and test of a model of fashion adoption. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 41(1), pp. 61-69.

WRIGHT, A.A., and LYNCH, J.G., 1995. Communication Effects of Advertising versus Direct Experience When Both Search and Experience Attributes Are Present. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21(4), pp. 708-718.

YOO, S., and BARKER, R.L., 2004. Moisture management properties of heat-resistant workwear fabrics effects of hydrophilic finishes and hygroscopic fibre blends. *Textile Research Journal*, 74(11), pp. 995-1000.

YOUNG, I., 2005. *On Female Body Experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

YOUNG, R., 2011. *Power Dressing*. London: Merrell.

APPENDIX I Focus group powerpoint presentation

Focus Group

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this focus group.

Please be assured that all recordings will be securely stored, and that responses will be confidential and reported anonymously.



Focus Group

Please write **the first 3 words** you think of when viewing each garment.

Try to keep your answer sheet covered, so that others can't see your response...



Garment 1



Garment 2



Garment 3



Garment 4



Garment 5



Garment 6



Garment 7



Garment 8



Garment 9



Garment 10



Garment 11



Garment 12



Garment 13



Garment 14

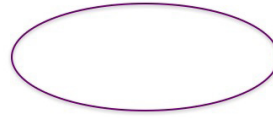


Garment 15

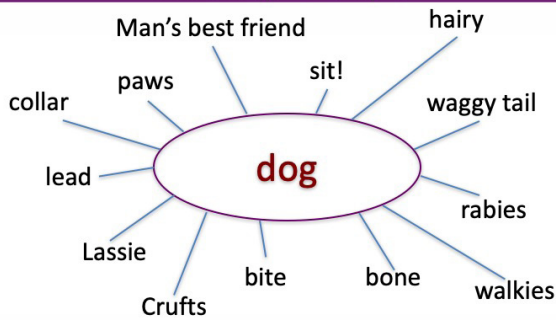


Next task – Mind map

Use the sheet with the oval on it for the next task



Mind Map - example



Mind Map – exercise

Write the word 'COMFORT' in the circle provided – create a mind map of everything you associate with 'COMFORT'.



Discussion – PHYSICAL COMFORT

Which items of clothing do you have that feel comfortable (or uncomfortable) to wear?

Why?

Discussion – PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT

Who has an item (or items) of clothing that makes them feel good?

What is it, and why do you feel that way about it?

Participation Form

Finally, please complete all sections of the Comfort in Clothing – Focus Group participation form

Thank you very much for participating!

Please gather all your sheets together, with the consent form on the top, ready for collection.

APPENDIX II Focus group structured task handouts



FG Garment Category handout:

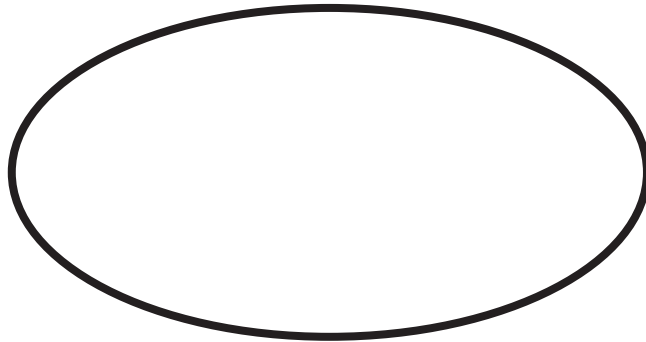
Please write down the **first 3 words** that come to mind when viewing the garments shown:

Garment Number	Word 1:	Word 2:	Word 3:
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			



ROBERT GORDON
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

FG Mind-map task handout:



APPENDIX III Focus group script



ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

FOCUS GROUP SCRIPT

Timing:	Task:	Requirements:
2 mins	Welcome and thank everyone for coming along and taking part.	
1 mins	Distribute FG Garment Category Task handout and explain task – participants should write down the first 3 words they think of when they see the garment. 'Please keep your sheets covered so that others can't see your words!'	FG Garment Category handout Pens!
10 mins	Play FG Garment Slides to show 15 garments & ensure FG Garment Category Task handouts are fully completed.	FG Garment Slides
2 mins	Turn to FG Mind-map Task handout. Show Mindmap example.	FG Mind-map Task handout
5 mins	Ask participants to write the word 'COMFORT' in the circle provided, then to mind map/spider diagram anything they associate with the word 'COMFORT' on the sheet.	
15 mins	Ask participants to discuss their feelings about PHYSICAL COMFORT regarding items of clothing/accessories they wear... 'Which items of clothing (or accessories) do you have that feel comfortable (or uncomfortable) to wear? Why?' Prompts: tight/loose, restriction of movement, sensation against skin, touch/feel, warm/cold, heavy/light, smell	Recording device: Ensure recording is on!
15 mins	Ask participants to discuss their feelings about PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT regarding items of clothing/ accessories they wear or possess/keep... 'Who has an item (or items) of clothing (or accessories) that makes them feel good? What is it and why do they feel that way about it?' Prompts: feeling good, confidence, new situations, appropriateness, sentimental value, memory, first impressions, interactions with others, performance	Recording device: Ensure recording is on!
5 mins	Turn to FG Consent Forms & ask participants to complete.	FG Consent Form
5 mins	Ask participants to collate all their sheets together, with Consent Form on top, gather in, staple together and check FG Consent Forms have been fully completed. Thank participants again for coming along and taking part.	Stapler or paper clips

APPENDIX IV Focus group transcription guide



ROBERT GORDON
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

COMFORT IN CLOTHING - Focus Group Transcription Guidelines:

Participants should be coded as follows – your initials, participant number, age, for example: KCP121, KCP218, KCP319 – you must write this code on the top right corner of their completed Focus Group sheets (Garment Category task, Comfort Mindmap and demographic info sheets)

Responses from different participants should be labelled with the appropriate code at the left margin and separated by a line space,

For example:

KCP121 – I like baggy trousers.

KCP218 – Yes, I hate things being too tight.

Comments made by the moderator should be coded as follows – your initials, M,

For example:

KCM – Which items of clothing do you have that feel comfortable or uncomfortable to wear?

Audiotapes should be transcribed verbatim (i.e., recorded word for word, exactly as said), including any nonverbal or background sounds (e.g., laughter, sighs, coughs, claps, snaps fingers, pen clicking, and car horn).

- Nonverbal sounds should be typed in parentheses, for example, (short sharp laugh), (group laughter), (police siren in background).
- If the moderator or participants mispronounce words, these words shall be transcribed as the individual said them. The transcript should not be “cleaned up” by removing foul language, slang, grammatical errors, or misuse of words or concepts.
- If an incorrect or unexpected pronunciation results in difficulties with comprehension of the text, the correct word should be typed in square brackets.

For example:

KCP121 - I thought that was pretty pacific [specific], but they disagreed.

Filler words such as hm, huh, mm, mhm, uh huh, um, mkay, yeah, yuhuh, nah huh, ugh, whoa, uh oh, ah, and ahah should be transcribed.

Inaudible Information

The transcriber should identify portions of the audiotape that are inaudible or difficult to decipher. If a relatively small segment of the tape (a word or short sentence) is partially unintelligible, the transcriber should type the phrase “inaudible segment.” This information should appear in square brackets.

For example:

KCP121 - The process of identifying missing words in an audiotaped interview of poor quality is [inaudible segment].

If a lengthy segment of the tape is inaudible, unintelligible, or is “dead air” where no one is speaking, the transcriber should record this information in square brackets. In addition, the transcriber should provide a time estimate for information that could not be transcribed.

For example:

[Inaudible: 2 minutes of interview missing]

Overlapping Speech

If individuals are speaking at the same time (i.e., overlapping speech) and it is not possible to distinguish what each person is saying, the transcriber should place the phrase “cross talk” in square brackets immediately after the last identifiable speaker’s text and pick up with the next audible speaker.

For example:

KCP121 - Turn taking may not always occur. People may simultaneously contribute to the conversation; hence, making it difficult to differentiate between one person’s statement [cross talk]. This results in loss of some information.

Pauses

If an individual pauses briefly between statements or trails off at the end of a statement, the transcriber should use three ellipses. A brief pause is defined as a two- to five second break in speech.

For example:

KCP121 - Sometimes, a participant briefly loses . . . a train of thought or . . . pauses after making a poignant remark. Other times, they end their statements with a clause such as but then

If a substantial speech delay occurs at either beginning or the continuing a statement occurs (more than two or three seconds), the transcriber should use “long pause” in parentheses.

For example:

KCP121 - Sometimes the individual may require additional time to construct a response. (Long pause) other times, he or she is waiting for additional instructions or probes.

Questionable Text

If the transcriber is unsure of the accuracy of a statement made by a speaker, this statement should be placed inside parentheses and a question mark is placed in front of the open parenthesis and behind the close parenthesis.

For example:

KCP121 - I want to switch to ?(Donna Kranky)? if they have a job available for me because I think the conditions would be better.

Sensitive Information

If an individual uses his or her own name during the discussion, the transcriber should replace this information with the appropriate interviewee identification label/naming convention.

For example:

KCP121 - My supervisor said to me, "KCP218, think about things before you open your mouth."

KCP319 - I agree with KCP121; I hear the same thing from mine all the time.

If an individual provides others' names, locations, organizations, and so on, the transcriber should enter an equal sign immediately before and after the named information. This will allow identification of sensitive information that may require substitution during analysis.

For example:

KCP121 - My colleague =John Doe = was very unhappy in his job so he started talking to the web administrator at = Donna Karan = about a different job.

Reviewing for Accuracy

The transcriber/proofreader should check (proofread) all transcriptions against the audiotape and revise the transcript file accordingly. The transcriber/proofreader should adopt a three-pass-per-recording policy whereby each recording is listened to three times against the transcript before it is submitted.

Saving Transcripts

The transcriber should save the transcript as a word file (.doc), as follows: surnamefirstnameFG.doc, for example: CrossKarenFG.doc and upload to the Focus Group Transcriptions Dropbox on Moodle.

Please complete the following information:

Focus Group Location:	
Focus Group Date:	
Number of Participants:	
Name of Transcriber:	

(Start your transcription here – use Arial 11 point text)

APPENDIX V Focus group consent form



ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

COMFORT IN CLOTHING - FOCUS GROUP

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in the Comfort in Clothing project. I would be grateful if you would complete the demographic information below and sign the consent statement.

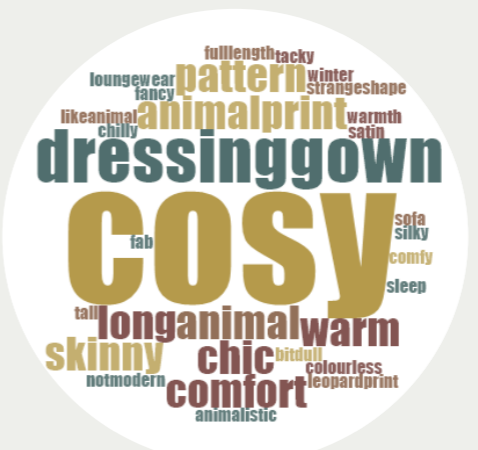
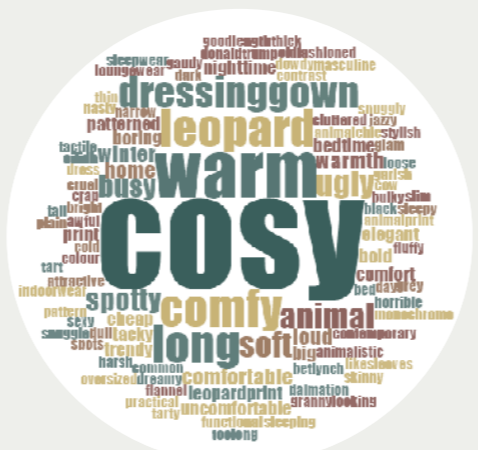
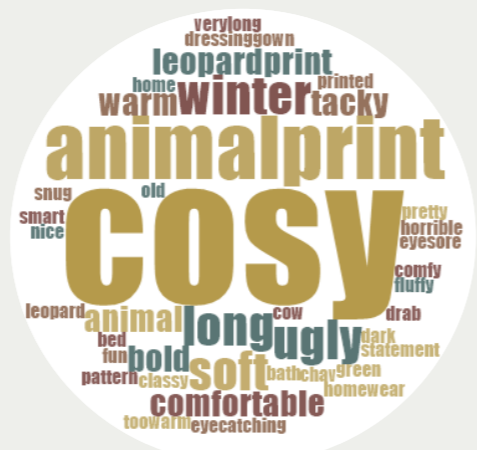
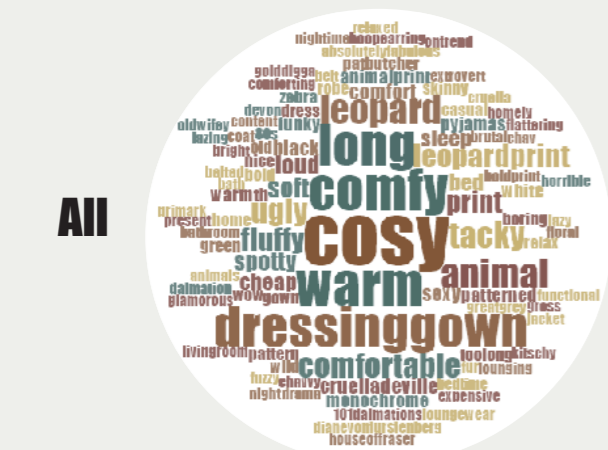
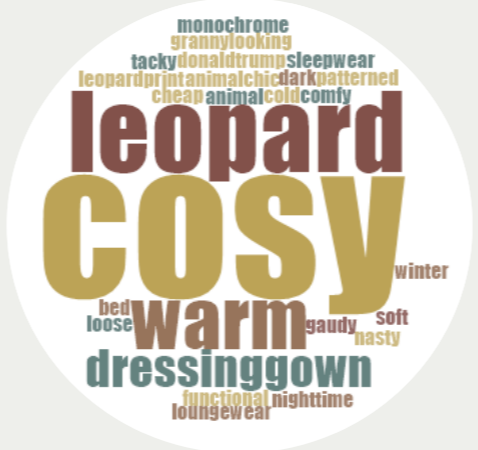
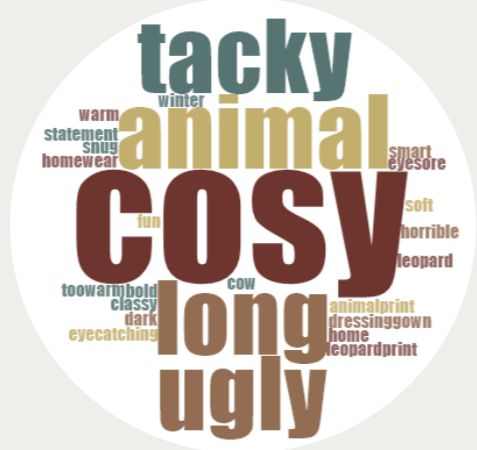
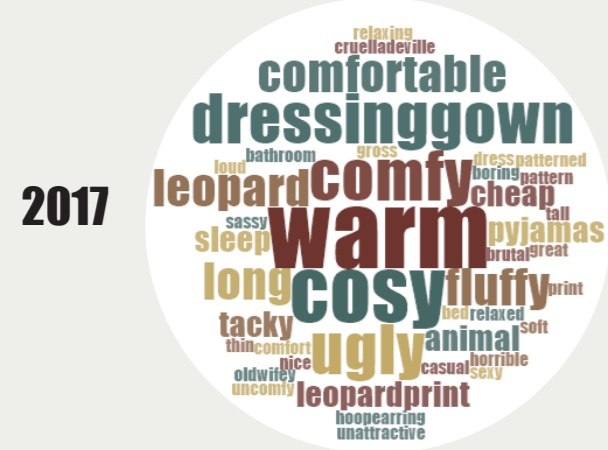
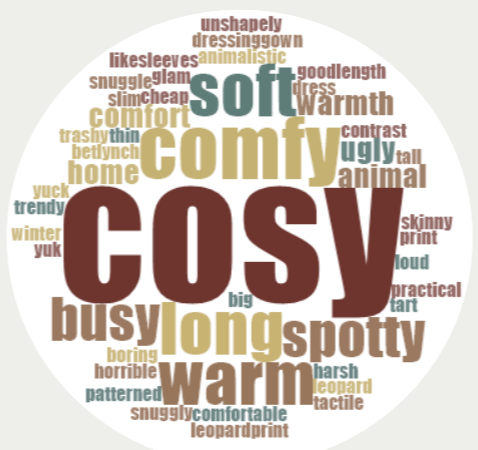
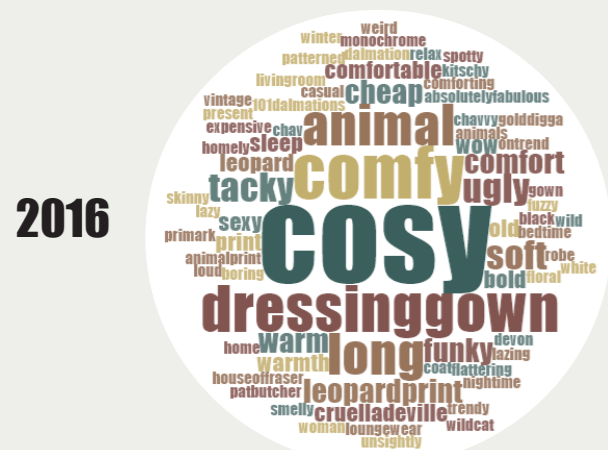
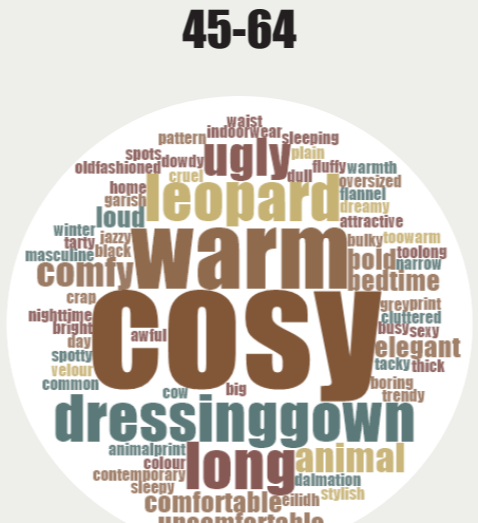
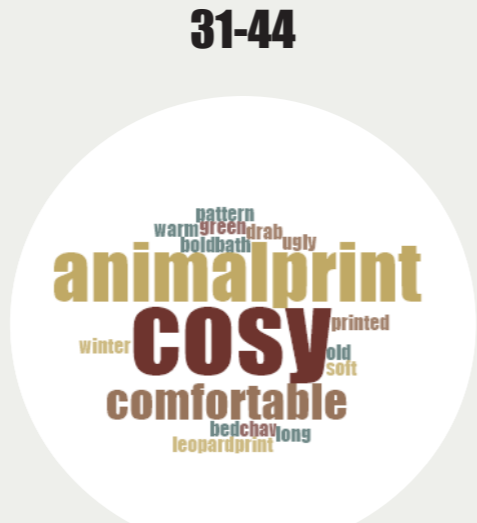
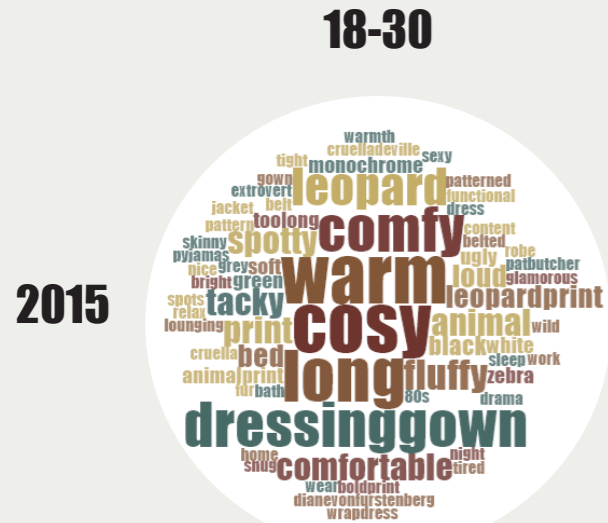
Please be assured that all recordings will be securely stored, and that responses will be confidential and reported anonymously.

Age: Please state...	Gender: Please circle as appropriate...	MALE	FEMALE	
Education level: Please circle as appropriate...	SCHOOL	COLLEGE	UNIVERSITY	
Currently a student? Please circle as appropriate...	YES	NO		
Occupation: Please state...				
Occupation: Please circle as appropriate...	FULL TIME?	PART TIME?		
Location – work: Please circle as appropriate...	CITY	TOWN	RURAL/ COUNTRYSIDE/ VILLAGE	
Location – home: Please circle as appropriate...	CITY	TOWN	RURAL/ COUNTRYSIDE/ VILLAGE	
Fashion Attitude: I am... ? in fashion...	VERY INTERESTED	INTERESTED	NOT VERY INTERESTED	NOT INTERESTED AT ALL
Nationality: Please state...				
Signature:				
Date:				

Appendix VI: 15 Garments: Constant Comparative Analysis



15 Garments: garment 1: dressing gown



Comparative Analysis:
 The non-student participants recognised garment 1 as a dressing gown and largely associated it with the physiological comfort of warmth. The most prevalent word was **cosy**, implying the comfort and relaxation associated with warmth, beyond the functional aspect of warmth. This is a positive association, and there are other positives associated with comfort evident in the participants' words, such as **snuggly** and **soft**, suggesting physical comfort. **Home, relaxed** and **bed** place garment 1 in the home environment. A strong negative theme becomes apparent, not through key words emerging, but through a variety of negative words associated with the leopard pattern, including **tacky, ugly, loud, awful, cheap, cluttered, horrible, eyesore, chav** and **brutal**. Cultural references include **Bet Lynch** and **Cruella de Ville**.

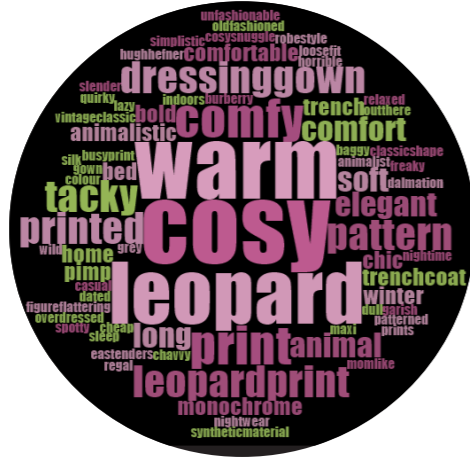


15 Garments: Garment 1: Dressing gown

2015



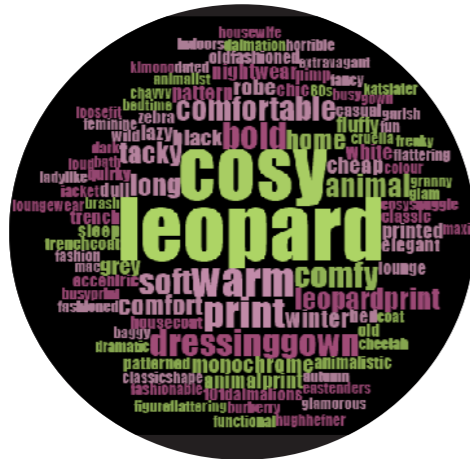
2016



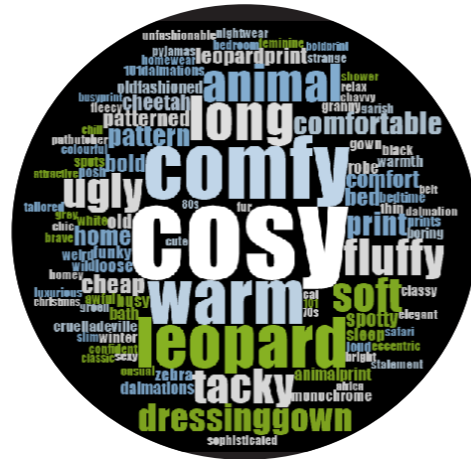
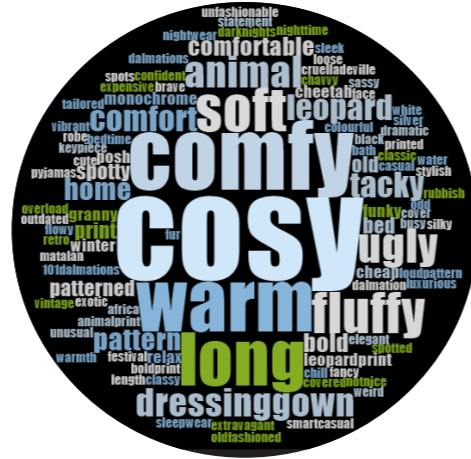
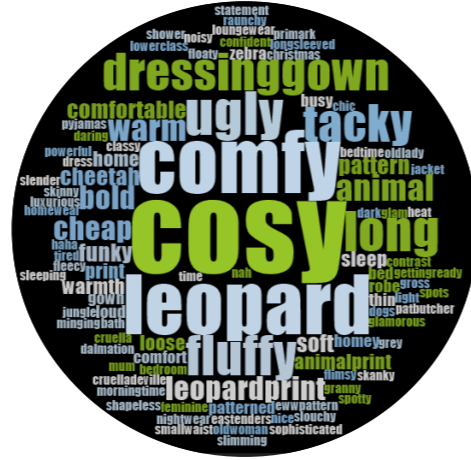
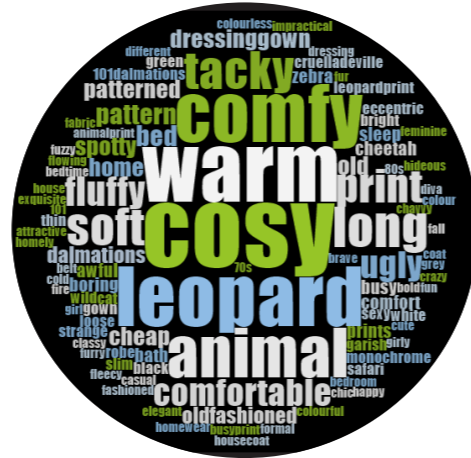
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:

The student participants recognised garment 1 as a dressing gown and largely associated it with the physiological comfort of warmth, using words such as **cosy** and **warm** to convey this. The Fashion Management (FM) students deemed the garment as **soft**, while the Non-Fashion Management (NFM) students described it as **fluffy**. Soft and fluffy are haptic qualities that connote physical comfort. The pattern was recognised as **leopard** print by both participant cohorts. Close examination of the data suggests the FM student participants were somewhat more accepting of the leopard print pattern, while the NFM student participants were more judgemental, with words such as **tacky**, **cheap** and **ugly** used more often. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted. There was overall agreement that this was a **comfy** garment.

Thematic Narrative:

Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. A few participants misunderstood garment 1 as a dress or coat, however the majority recognised it as a dressing gown. On viewing the dressing gown, the most prevalent word to emerge from the participants was **cosy**, implying the comfort and relaxation associated with warmth, beyond the functional aspect of physiological comfort. This is a positive association, and there are other positives associated with comfort evident in the participants' words, such as **fluffy** and **soft**; these are haptic qualities, suggesting physical comfort. Participants described the dressing gown as **comfortable** and used the contracted term, **comfy**, more often, implying the casual nature of the garment. Words such as **home**, **relaxed**, **bath** and **bed** firmly place garment 1 in the home environment; there is no association with the outside world. A strong negative theme becomes apparent, not through key words emerging, but through a variety of negative words associated with the **leopard** pattern, including **tacky**, **ugly** and **cheap**. FM students were most accepting of the pattern, perhaps due to their fashion-specific knowledge and the status of leopard print as a design classic in the fashion industry. NFM and NS participants were more judgemental, using a wide vocabulary of negative words, including **cluttered**, **horrible**, **eyesore**, **chav** and **brutal**. Cultural references differed between age cohorts, including barmaids **Bet Lynch** and **Pat Butcher** for the younger student participants; both seem to connote participants found the pattern **cheap** and **loud**.



All Students Combined

All Non-Students Combined

All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 2: floral dress

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:
The FM student participants mainly made descriptive, denotative associations with garment 2, identifying it as a **floral** dress. The NFM student participants are in agreement, however the floral pattern seemed to connote **summer** to them more strongly. The participants show some knowledge of fashion terms, describing the dress as **skater** style; this was more prevalent with the FM students though, demonstrating their more fashion-specific knowledge. It is dismissed as **cheap** by the FM students. There is some ambiguity evident in the results. Some NFM students view it as **ugly** and **unflattering**, while others describe it as **girly**, **floaty** and **pretty**. The student participants agreed that the dress was **old fashioned** and **boring**, and use a variety of negative terms, including **frumpy** and **disgusting**. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

Thematic Narrative:
Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. On viewing the dress, the most prevalent word to emerge from the participants was **floral**, suggesting the **pattern/print** is a key visual element of the garment. To the participants, floral, perhaps in conjunction with the **short** length of the dress, clearly connotes **summer**. This seems to place the dress outside, at a **wedding** and on **holiday**. Traditional views are evident; the participants see this floral dress as **feminine**, **pretty** and **girly**. Some body concerns are evident in the NS participants, with some describing the dress as **shapeless**. One of the age 65+ participants associates the **sleeveless** style of the dress with the body anxiety of having **bingo wings**. A short, **floaty**, floral summer dress, associated with weddings and holidays sounds like an easily accepted style, so it is surprising to note the level of negativity evident in participant responses towards garment 2. It is described as **ugly**, **old fashioned**, **frumpy**, **dull** and **boring**. Although some positive words are given (**nice**, **elegant**), they are less frequent and less emotional. Further scrutiny of the word cloud reveals a variety of strongly emotional and judgemental words used, including **horrible**, **yuk**, **disgusting**, **messy**, **awful** and **hideous**. Despite being described as frumpy, old fashioned, **mature** and **mumsy**, the style is also associated with youth, through words such as **childish**, **teenager**, **young** and **cute**. The confusion around the appropriate age for this floral print dress, and the level of negativity towards it, is at odds with the status of floral prints as an enduring, staple product in womenswear and girlsweat in the fashion industry.



All Students Combined

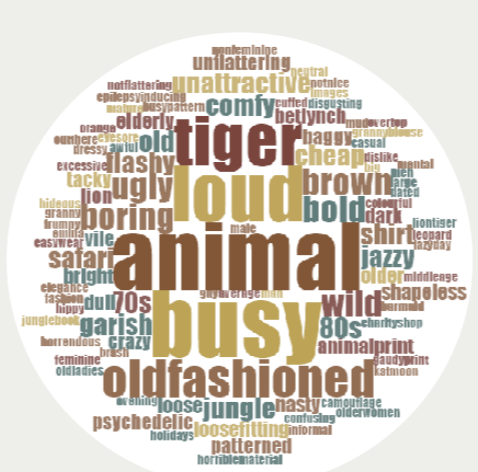
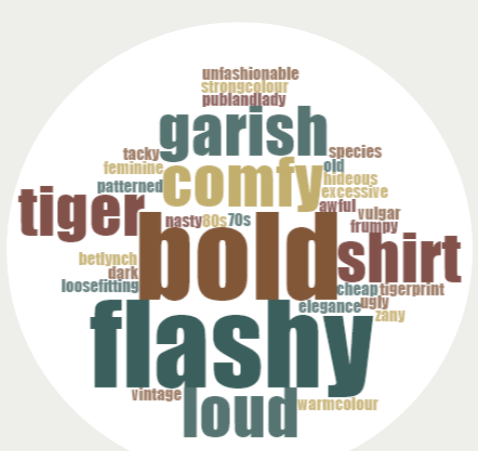
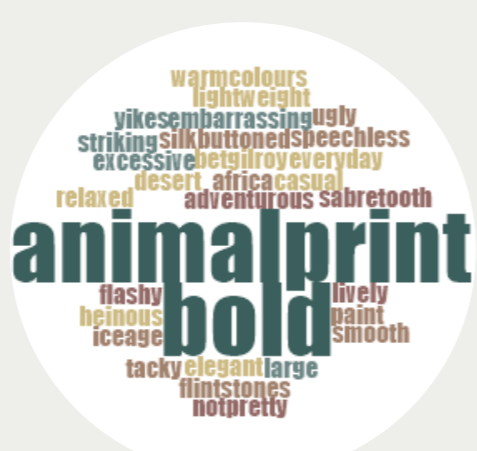
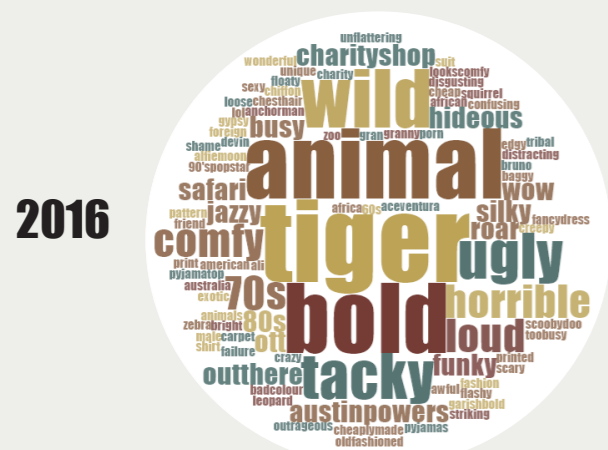
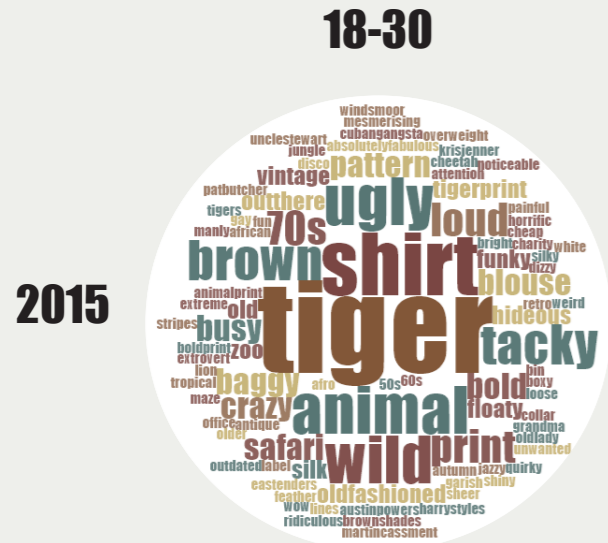


All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 5: tiger print shirt



Comparative Analysis: The non-student participants conveyed universal dislike for garment 5, using strong and emotionally-charged words. The animal print pattern was too much for most of the participants, with the most polite and positive words used being **bold, loud, zany** and **wild**, bringing a cultural association with Africa and **safari**. Popular culture references were evident, with participants mentioning **Austin Powers** and **Bet Lynch**, characters of ridicule and low social status. This is reinforced by the association with the 1970s, seen as a decade of bad taste, and words such as **cheap** and **charity shop**. Even the 65+ aged participants described the garment as **dated, elderly** and **old fashioned**. Negative word used included **tacky, flashy, eyesore, hideous, awful, vile, scary, horrible, nasty, disgusting, garish** and **embarrassing**.



15 Garments: Garment 6: Skinny jeans



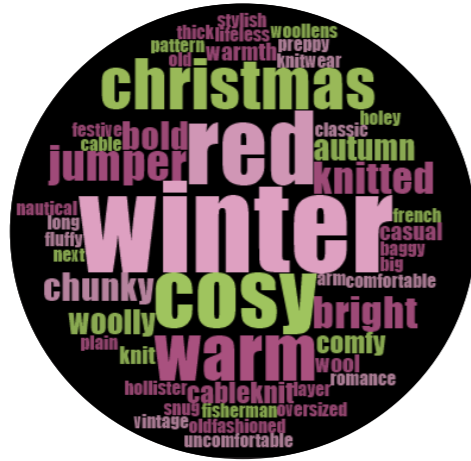
Comparative Analysis:

The non-student participants were universally positive about garment 6, using words such as **good** and **nice** to describe the jeans. Although some binary views about whether they were **comfortable** or **uncomfortable** were evident, more participants agreed that jeans are **comfy** and **easy**. Generally, the words used to describe the jeans were less emotional, although some emotional words such as **essential**, **needed** and **lifesaver** were used. Often words were denotative, or descriptive, such as **denim**, **jeans** and **blue**. The participants described jeans as **plain**, **standard**, **ordinary** and **everyday**. Associations with fashion were evident, in words such as **fashionista**, **stylish**, **trendy** and **fashionable**. There were also some associations with youth and with a thin body ideal, including **skinny**, **slim**, **tight** and **bodycon**.



15 Garments: Garment 8: handknit jumper

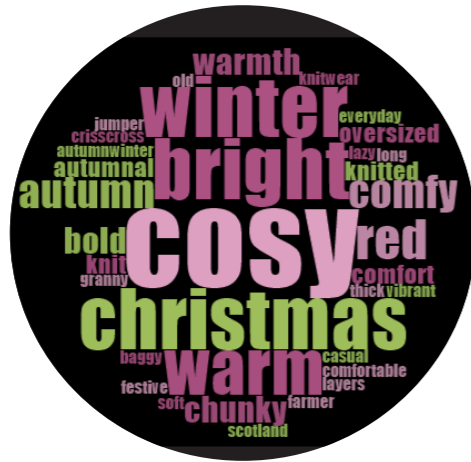
2015



2016



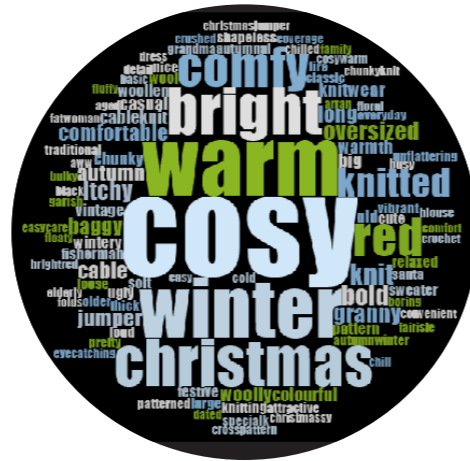
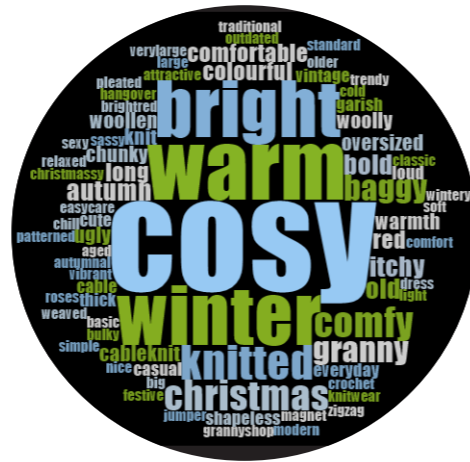
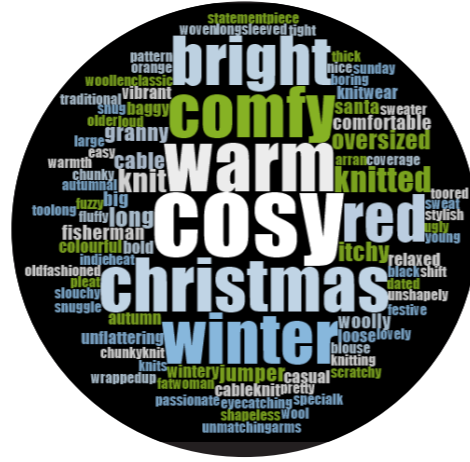
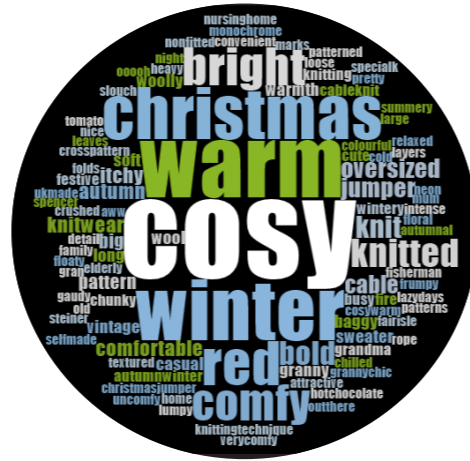
2017



All



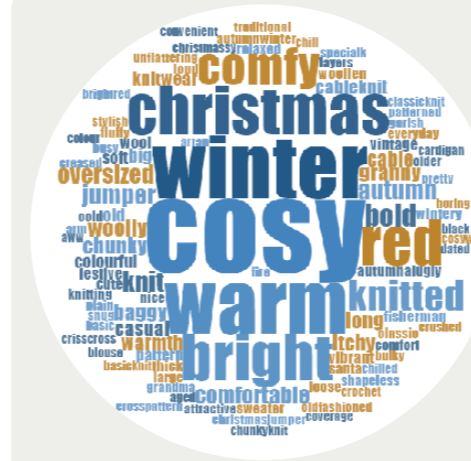
Fashion Management Students



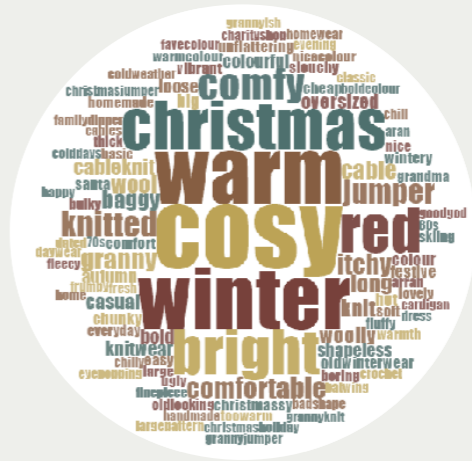
Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:
The student participants were in agreement that garment 8 offers physiological comfort, evidenced through the frequency of words such as **warm** and **cosy**. Some participants, from both the FM and NFM samples, correctly identified the garment as **knitted**, **cable knit** and **Aran**, showing a good level of textile knowledge. The **bright**, **red** colour was also a focus for the participants, and there is agreement that the garment is **comfy**. Some of the student participants made judgements about the haptic qualities of the knitted jumper, deeming it either **fluffy** or **itchy**. Others used words such as **loose**, **baggy** and **oversized** to describe the garment shape. The bright red colour, oversized shape and knit construction combine to evoke associations with **winter**, **Christmas** and tradition. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

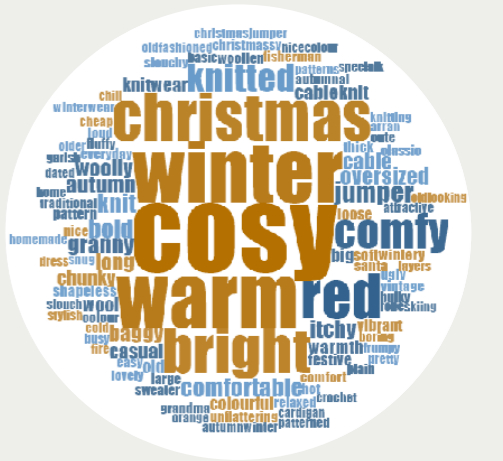
Thematic Narrative:
Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. Participants recognised garment 8 as being a **cable knitted** construction. This was the only **handmade** garment shown to the participants, and a few participants aged 31+ did recognise that it was a **handknit**. One age 18-30 participant wrongly identified this knit style as **crochet**. Some participants described the garment as **traditional** and **vintage**. The garment connotes the cultural **Christmas** and **festive** season to the participants, perhaps due to its **bright**, **red** colour. Christmas, tradition and handmade suggest an element of nostalgia in the participants' associations, which could be linked with psychological comfort. One participant describes the garment as **happy**. Other positive words are used to describe the garment, such as **cute**, **attractive** and **relaxed**, again suggesting psychological comfort. Associations with physical comfort are evident using words such as **slouchy**, and haptic qualities such as **soft** and **fluffy**. There is ambiguity though, as some participants used the word **itchy**. The participants agreed in associating garment 8 with the physiological comfort of warmth, with **warm** and **cosy** being the most prevalent words used. **Shapeless**, **unflattering** and **chunky** highlight body shape concerns. However, more positive words are also associated with the garment shape, such as **oversized**, which could suggest that the participants think garment 8 is **comfy** due to non-restriction. Negatives focus on the garment style, which is described by some participants as **old-fashioned**, **dated** and **ugly**. Overall however, the associations are balanced, avoiding extreme judgement.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 9: elasticated skirt

2015



2016



2017



All



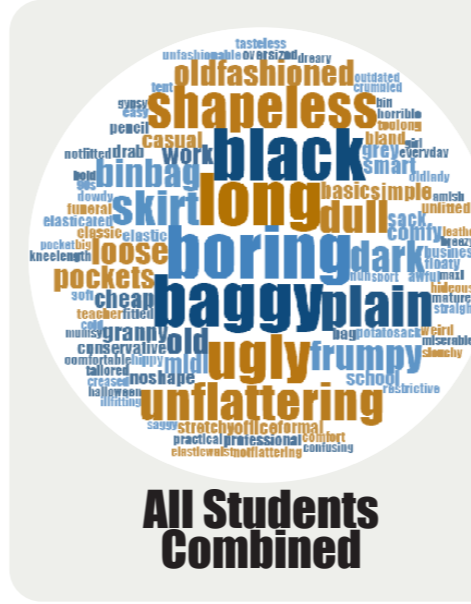
Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:
 There were some initial differences noted between the FM and NFM student participant reactions to garment 9. The FM students focused more on descriptive words, such as **black, long, plain** and **skirt**. The NFM students had a more emotional and judgemental reaction, evidenced by words such as **boring, ugly, baggy** and **frumpy**. The FM students used words such as **conservative, simple** and **basic**, while the NFM students described the garment as **old fashioned**. There was agreement that this was an **unflattering** and **shapeless** garment. Few positive words were evident. Some student participants did associate garment 9 with **comfort**; presumably this was physical comfort gained from non-restriction, due to the **stretchy** nature of the **elastic waist** and the **loose, oversized** fit. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

Thematic Narrative:
 Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. The overall reaction to garment 9 was negative, with 17KMP569 describing it as 'a bit shapeless' and 'not nice'. It may be that the negative reaction to this garment was exacerbated because the dark colour made it hard to see clearly. It is interesting to note that this and the other dark coloured garment (the suit jacket) were both perceived negatively, despite dark coloured clothing tending to sell well. The participants associated garment 9 with physical comfort through its **loose** fit and **elastic** and **shapeless**, highlighting the participants' focus on body shape. Other negatives included **dull, boring** and **frumpy**, with participants associating this style with a **binbag** or **potato sack**, in a derogatory manner. The participants agreed that the style was **old fashioned**, using words such as **dowdy** and **dated**. A variety of emotional and judgemental words were used, including **hideous, nasty, drab, awful, dreary** and **horrible**. In contrast to the judgemental words, some participants used very descriptive words, such as **plain, long, skirt, pockets, dark** and **black**, seeming to echo the **basic, everyday, practical** and **conservative** nature of the garment. Linked to this, some participants associated the style with **work, office** and **business**. A popular culture association was evident; the character **Miss Trunchable** [Trunchbull], the formidable headmistress from Roald Dahls' children's book, Matilda. Similarly, some participants associated garment 9 with being a **teacher**. The **Amish** community was also mentioned.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 10: joggers

2015



2016



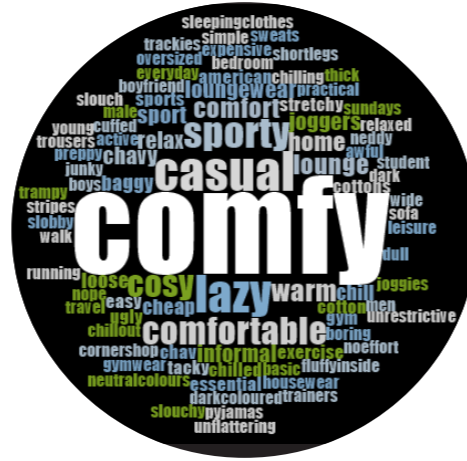
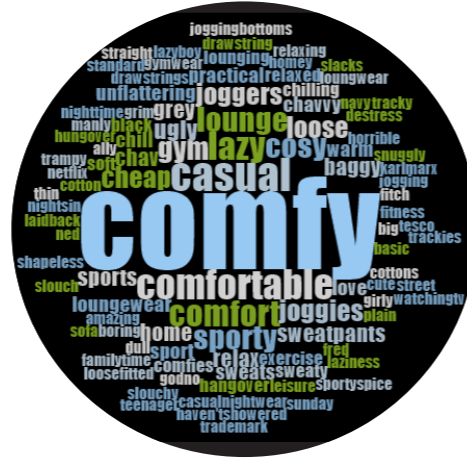
2017



All



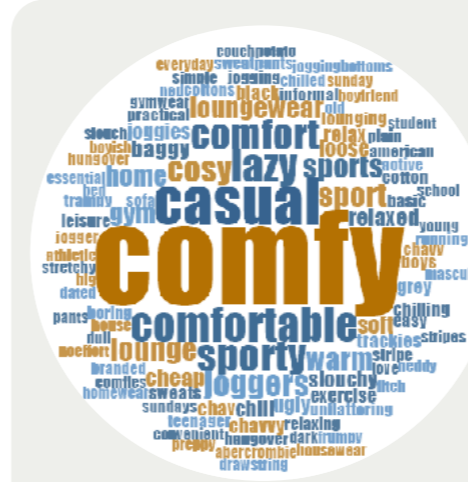
Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:
 There was broad agreement among the student participants that garment 10 was very **comfortable**. The joggers are identified as **casual**, with the most frequently occurring word being the more casual form of comfort, **comfy**. Properties related to physical comfort are evidenced through the **stretchy** and **loose** non-restrictive construction. Physiological comfort was indicated by words such as **warm** and **cosy**. The association of joggers with relaxation suggests psychological comfort, evidenced through words such as **chilling**, **lounging**, **no effort** and **Sunday**. The joggers are also associated with the **home**, and **bed**. The binary of being **lazy** versus **sporty** is evident, with some student participants associating the joggers with **gymwear**, **exercise**, being **active** and **athletic**. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

Thematic Narrative:
 Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is some agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. A few differences were noted. For example, body judgement was evident, with the joggers described as **unflattering**, however the non-student participants showed more concern over the body than the student participants. They also associated joggers with cleaning, which was not mentioned by the student participants. Overall, garment 10 epitomises **comfort**. Words indicating physical, physiological and psychological comfort were evident. One participant described the joggers as a **happy** garment. A few participants associated garment 10 with its original function, mentioning **gymwear**, **sports**, **jogging**, the **gym** and **fitness**. However, **leisure** and **relaxation** were more prevalent, through words such as **loungewear**, **chilling**, **homewear** and **Sundays**. A comfort and shame theme emerges, with a participant stating they 'would not wear [joggers] out of house' (17ABP420). Similarly, another participant states, 'at home, not out' (17ABP520). Both quotes emerged from one focus group though, which could suggest groupthink. Despite the clear comfort associations, there were a variety of negative and judgemental words used, with participants describing the joggers as **tacky**, **ugly** and **chavvy**, for **neds**. Binary to the gym and fitness associations, the garment is also associated with being **lazy**. The garment is seen as a non-feminine style, described by some participants as **boyish**. The style was described as **common**, **cheap**, **unfashionable**, **dull** and **ugly**. However, goodwill was also evident, through words such as **comfies** and **trackies**. The garment is described as **convenient**, **practical** and **essential** by some.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 11: floral trousers

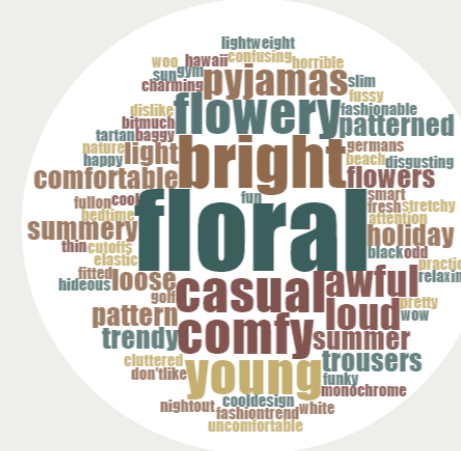
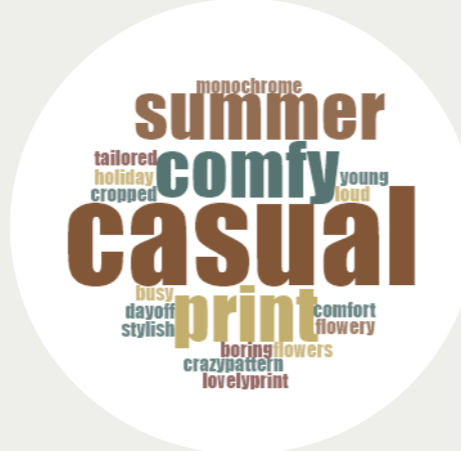
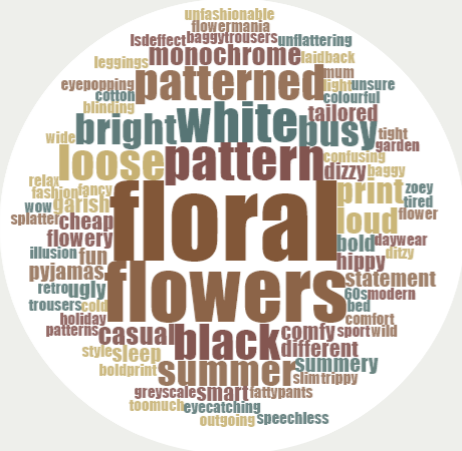
18-30

31-44

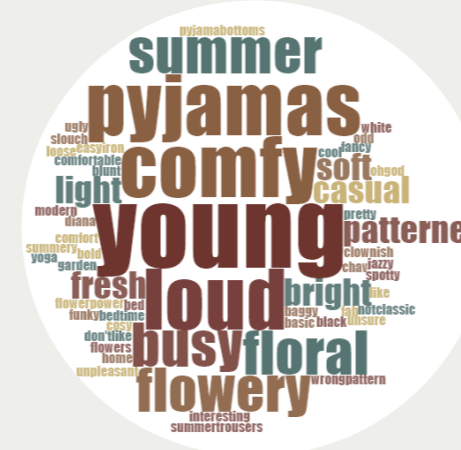
45-64

65+

2015



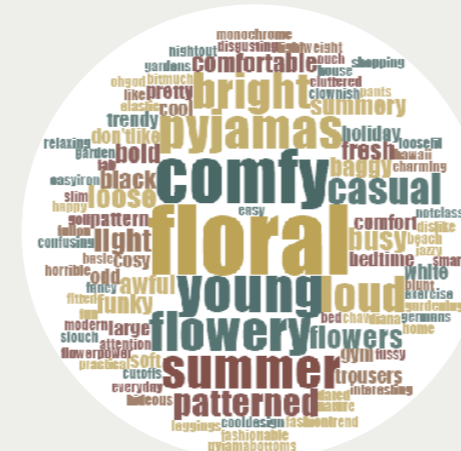
2016



2017



All



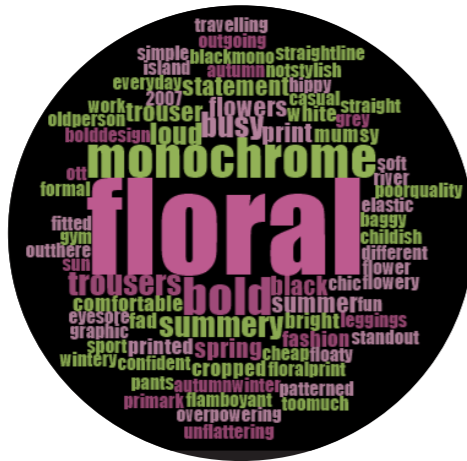
Comparative Analysis:

The non-student participants focused on the strong pattern in garment 11, with the descriptive, denotative word, **floral**, being most prevalent. The floral pattern once again gendered the garment as **girly**. The garment was associated with comfort, although it is not immediately clear why. An assumption could be physical comfort, as the style was described as **casual**, and associated with **holidays** and **home**. There was some misunderstanding evident, as some participants wrongly thought the trousers were **gym** or **active** wear, and others thought they were **pyjamas**, associated with **bedtime**. While some positive words were used (**funky**, **pretty**, **stylish**), more negative and judgemental words were evident, including **eyesore**, **horrible**, **confusing**, **blinding**, **garish**, **ugly**, **cheap**, **laughable** and **ghastly**.



15 Garments: Garment 11: floral trousers

2015



2016



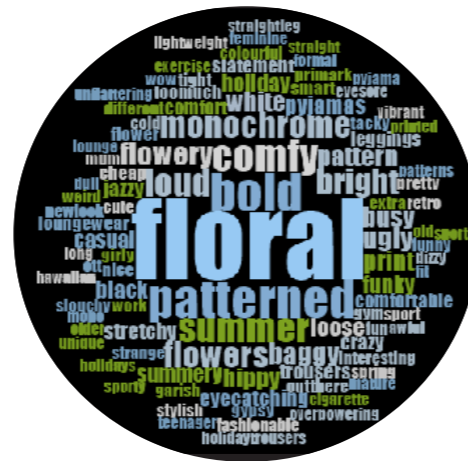
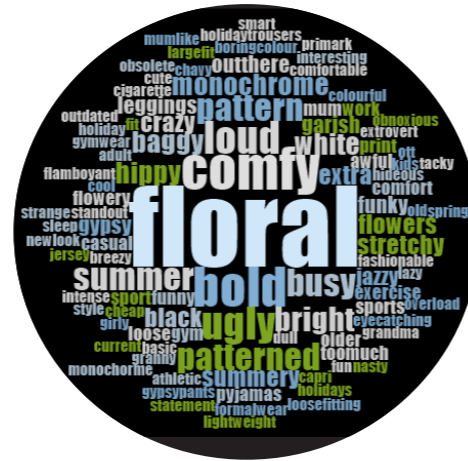
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



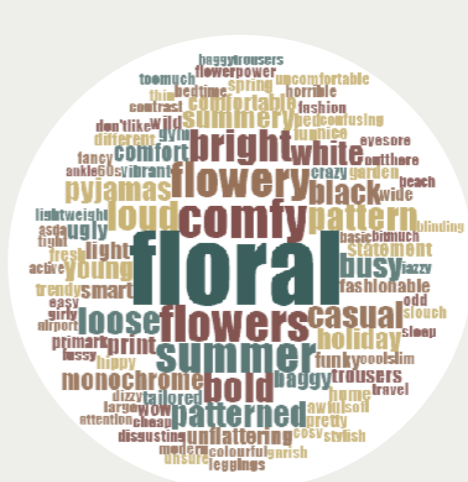
Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:
The student participants recognised garment 7 as **floral**, suggesting that the detailed pattern caught their attention. The pattern was described as **bold** and identified as **monochrome**. **Flowers** connote **summer** and being on **holiday** to the student participants. Some negativity towards the floral pattern is evident, through words such as **loud**, **crazy**, **overpowering**, **garish**, **tacky**, **eyesore** and **too much**. The students did use some positive words too, including **vibrant**, **nice** and **eye-catching**. Some associate the garment with **comfort**, but this may be due to misinterpretation that the garment was pyjamas or leggings, and the assumption that it was **stretchy**. The students show traditional views by associating the floral print with being **feminine** and **girly**. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

Thematic Narrative:
Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. The participants focused on the strong pattern in garment 11, with the descriptive, denotative word, **floral**, being most prevalent. The floral pattern once again gendered the garment as **feminine**, evidencing traditional views among the participants. The floral trousers were associated with comfort, although it is not immediately clear why. An assumption could be physical comfort, as the style was described as **stretchy** by some participants; misinterpreted as being either **pyjamas** or **leggings**. Positive words were used, including **stylish**, **vibrant**, **fun** and **cute**. Participants also described garment 11 as colourful, despite its grey, black and white (achromatic) pattern. Some binaries were evident, including **fashionable** versus **unfashionable** and **pretty** versus **ugly**. Overall though, more negative and judgemental words were evident, including **eyesore**, **garish**, **tacky**, **confusing** and **too much**. Other negatives referred to price, with some participants judging the floral trousers as **cheap** and mentioning the budget high street brand **Primark**. This strength of negativity is surprising, as floral designs are a recurring trend and an enduring feature in high street fashion retailers. Two subculture references were present; **gypsy** and **hippy**, both of which are associated with floral patterns, and, interestingly with lack of money. The floral pattern seems to also connote **summer**, **sun** and being on **holiday** to the participants. Some participants indicate that these **busy** floral trousers require a **confident** wearer, to be psychologically comfortable enough to be seen in this **wild**, **crazy**, **OTT** [Over The Top] style.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 13: grey sweatshirt

2015



2016



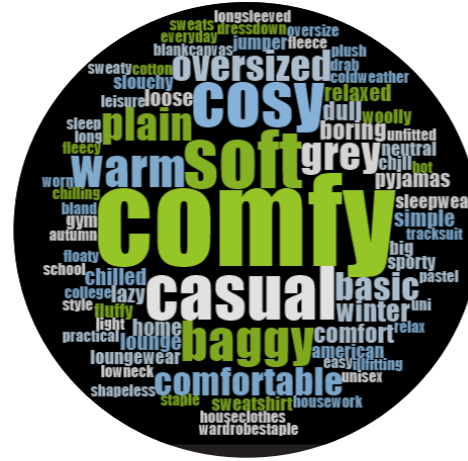
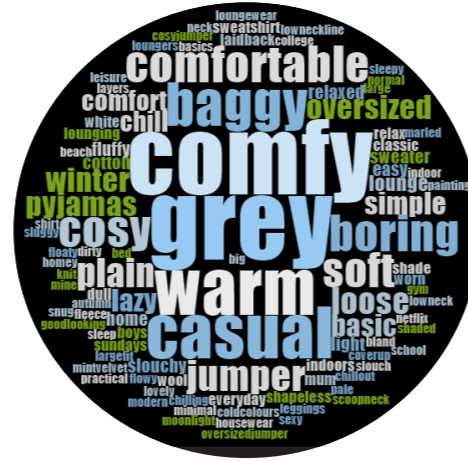
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:

There was broad agreement among the student participants that garment 13 was very **comfortable**. The sweatshirt is identified as **casual**, with the most frequently occurring word being the more casual form of comfort, **comfy**. Properties related to physical comfort are evidenced through the **baggy** and **loose** non-restrictive fit of the garment. Physiological comfort was indicated by words such as **warm** and **cosy**. Garment 13 is associated with relaxation, suggesting psychological comfort, evidenced through words such as **chilling**, **lounging**, **relaxed** and **Sundays**. Descriptive words used include **grey** and **plain**. For the FM students, this connotes a **basic** style. There is agreement that the garment is **simple** (a positive word) and **boring** (a more negative word). No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

Thematic Narrative:

Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. Overall, garment 13 epitomises **comfort**. Words indicating physical, physiological and psychological comfort were evident. Physical comfort is indicated by the non-restrictive **oversized** shape and haptic qualities such as **fleecy**, **fluffy** and **soft**. Physiological comfort is indicated by words such as **warm** and **cosy**. Linked to this, some participants associate the sweatshirt with **autumn** and **winter**. A few participants associated the sweatshirt with its original function, mentioning the **gym**, **sport** and **exercise**. However, **leisure** and feeling **chilled** were more prevalent, through words such as **loungewear**, **slouchy**, **lazy**, **easy** and **Sundays**. Perhaps linked to these associations with relaxation, or psychological comfort and well-being, one participant described the sweatshirt as a **happy** garment. Overall there is a balanced reaction to this garment, with a mix of positive, negative and neutral words evident. Some negative words focus on the aesthetics or style, including **frumpy**, **ugly**, **boring**, **dull** and **bland**. There is also negativity in terms of fit, evidenced through words such as **shapeless**, hinting at the importance of body shape. Neutral words used to describe the style include **basic**, **ordinary**, **plain** and the colour, **grey**. A few participants described the garment as **sad**, which could be due to the colour, as grey is associated with sadness. Positive words include **versatile**, **practical**, **essential** and **staple**, suggesting the participants saw the value in this **simple**, **everyday** garment. A few participants associated garment 13 with **sleepwear** and **bedtime**, linking with the participants' focus on relaxation.

All Students Combined

All Non-Students Combined

All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 14: tartan shirt



Comparative Analysis: The non-student participants focused on the pattern in garment 14, with the descriptive, denotative word **tartan** being most prevalent. Tartan seems to have several connotations for the participants, leading to some ambiguity in the results. Firstly, tartan connotes **Scottish** culture, underpinned by words such as **Highlands**, **traditional** and **heritage**. The 45-64 age group specifically mentioned the **Bay City Rollers**, a tartan-wearing band from their era. Tartan also connotes **casual** to some participants, linking with **American** cultural references, such as **cowboy**, **line dancing**, **hillbilly** and **lumberjack**. The **bright**, red colour is associated with the **festive**, **Christmas** season and **cosy**, **warm** physiological comfort. Tartan also connotes fashion, with the participants using words such as **trendy** and **fashionable**.



15 Garments: Garment 14: tartan shirt

2015



2016



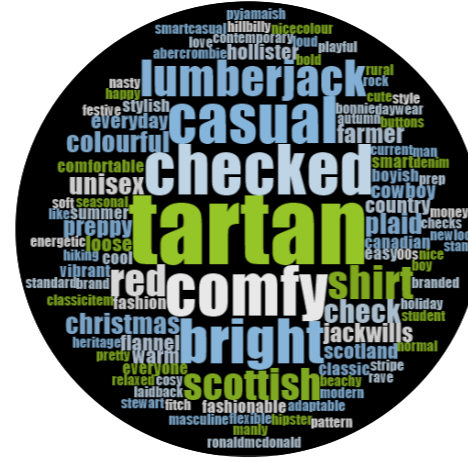
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Comparative Analysis:
The student participants recognised garment 14 as **tartan**, suggesting that the **bright, checked** pattern caught their attention. The participants clearly associate the tartan as being part of **Scottish** culture. The combination of tartan pattern and the **shirt** style connotes **casualness** to the participants, and leads to further cultural associations including **lumberjack** style and the **preppy** subculture, both of which include checked shirts. This genders the garment as **masculine** to some participants, evidenced by words such as **male, man, cowboy, boyish** and **boyfriend**. Other subcultures are mentioned, including **grunge** and **hipster**, which again, are masculine in look. This also demonstrates the prevalence of tartan in fashion and dress practice; it is rarely not present in some form. No significant changes in opinion over the three-year period were noted.

Thematic Narrative:
Over the three-year data gathering period, no significant change in opinion was seen, suggesting short-term fashion trends did not influence the participants. As can be seen in the combined word clouds, there is broad agreement across the student and non-student participants, suggesting life-stage did not significantly influence the results. The participants focused on the pattern in garment 14, with the descriptive, denotative word **tartan** being the most frequently occurring word. Tartan has several connotations for the participants, leading to some ambiguity in the results. Firstly, tartan connotes **Scottish** culture, underpinned by words such as the **Highlands**. Tartan, on a **shirt** style, also connotes **American** cultural references, such as **cowboy, country** and **western, hillbilly** and **lumberjack**. The use of place names brings a sense of belonging and home to the garment. Other subcultures mentioned include **hipster** and **preppy**. It becomes clear that the participants associate this tartan shirt with mainly **masculine** subcultures, with some describing it as **manly** and **boyish**. Hipster and preppy subcultures are also associated with youth, confirmed by the participants' use of words such as **teenager, young** and **student**. The **bright, red** colour connotes the nostalgia of the **festive, Christmas** season and **cosy, warm** physiological comfort. This places garment 14 in the **autumn/winter** seasons. Tartan also connotes fashion, with the participants using words such as **trendy, stylish** and **fashionable**. Only a few negative words were used by the participants, including **loud, garish** and **busy**. Positive words were more prevalent, including **fun, vibrant, eye-catching, cool** and **nice**. Overall, the participants viewed the tartan shirt positively, describing it as **casual, relaxed, easy** and an **everyday wearable** style, associated with the **weekend**. This shows the broad acceptance of tartan shirts, which could be due to the familiarity and acceptability of tartan, which is ever-present in autumn/winter fashion collections.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

15 Garments: Garment 15: Shift dress

2015

18-30



31-44



45-64



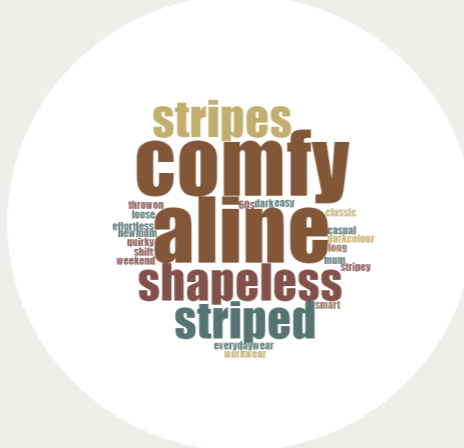
65+



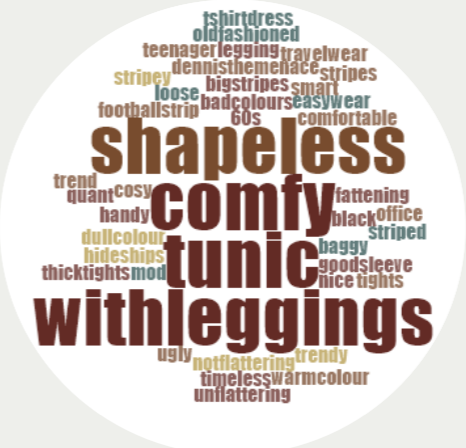
2016



2017



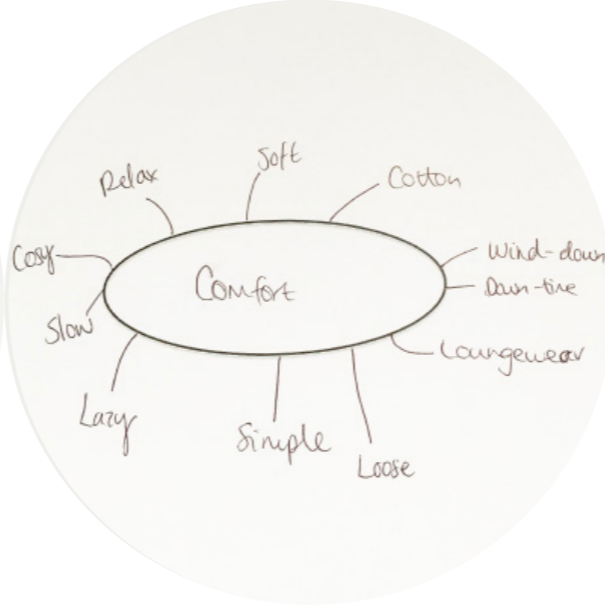
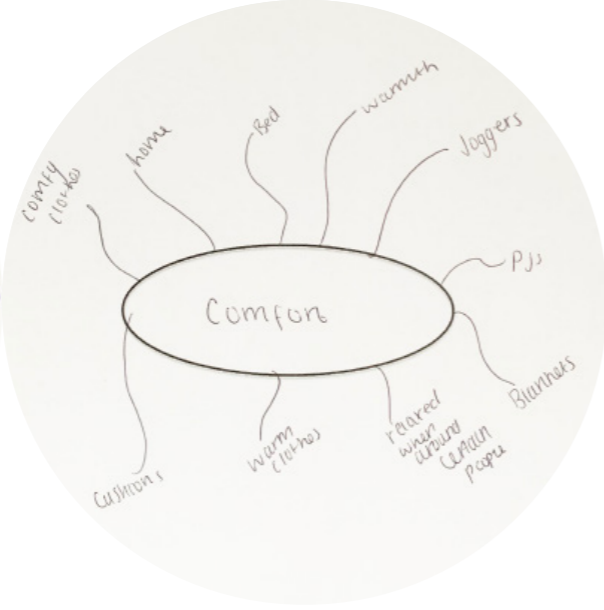
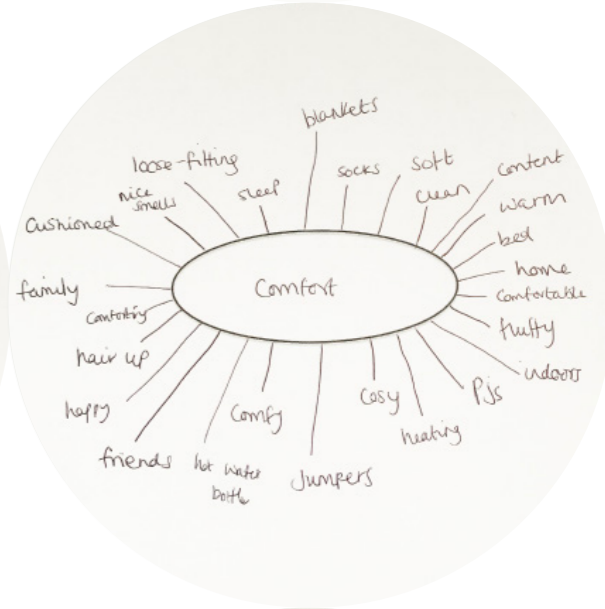
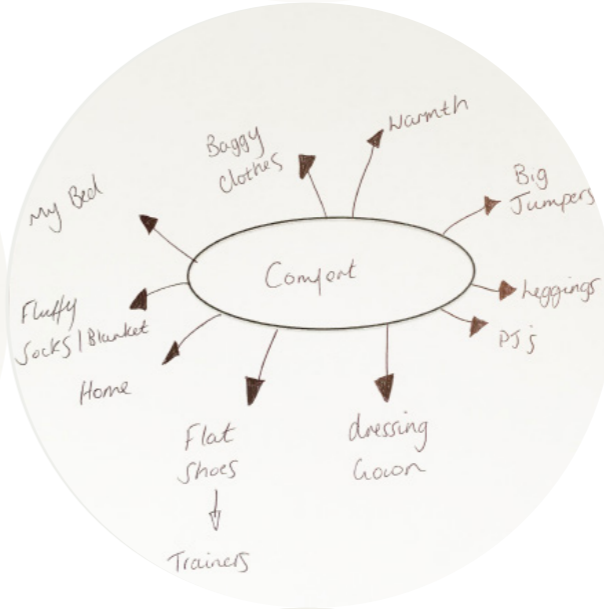
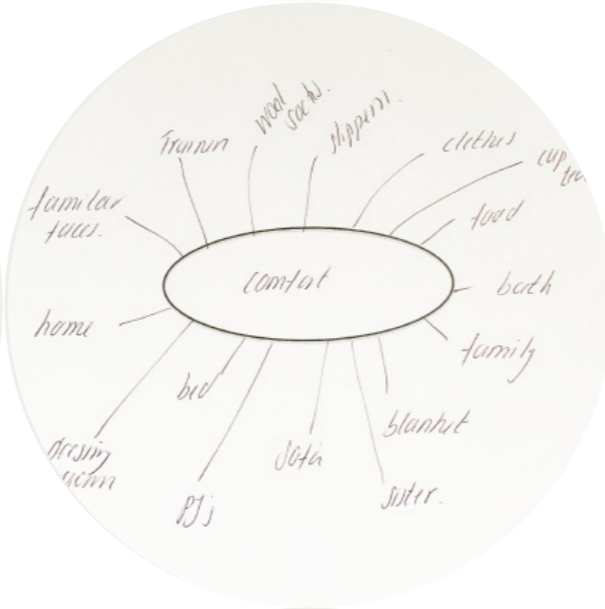
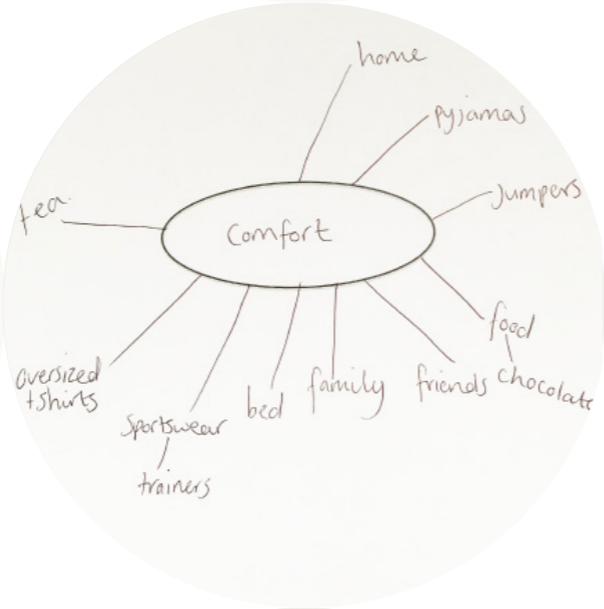
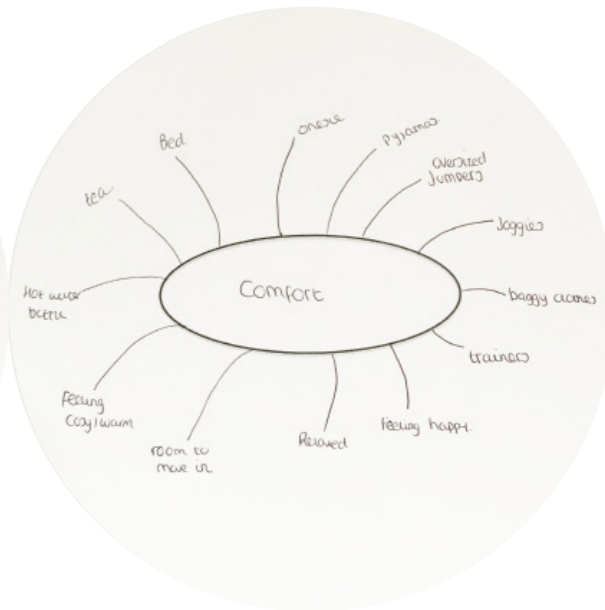
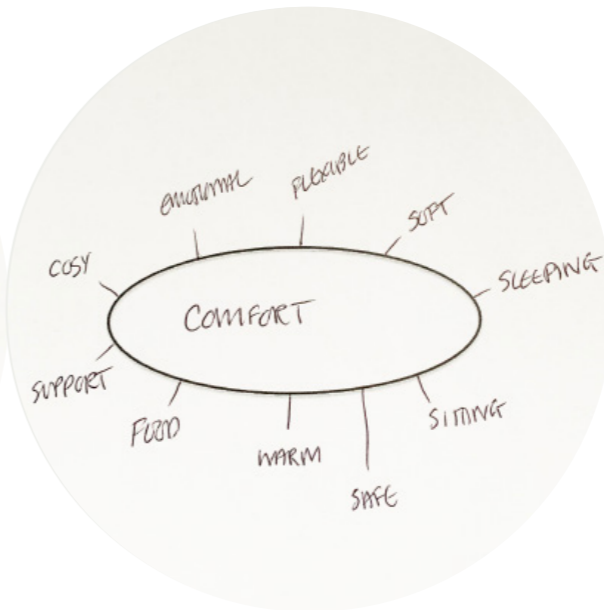
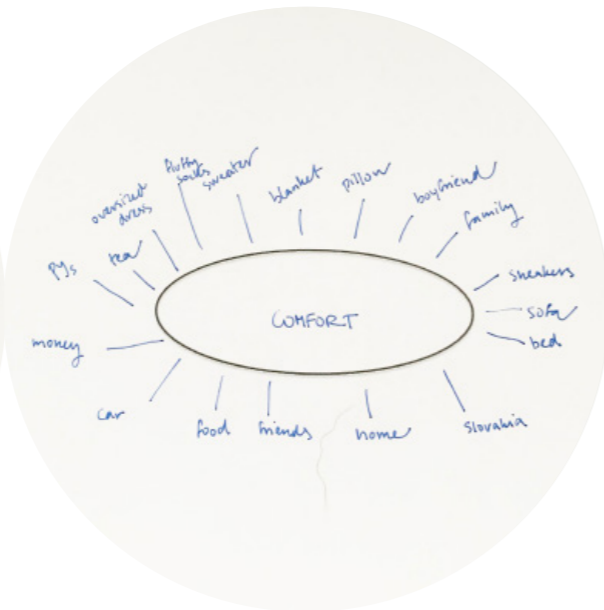
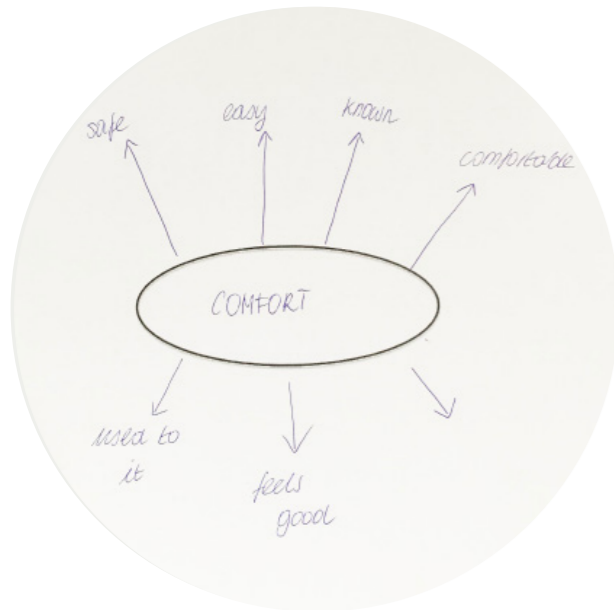
All



Comments:
The non-student participants focused on the pattern in garment 15, with the descriptive, denotative words **stripes/stripy** being most prevalent. Stripes seems to have several connotations for the participants, leading to some ambiguity in the results. Binaries of **bold** and **boring, gross** and **cute**, and **casual** versus **workwear** are evident in the participant responses. The dress is identified as **comfy** by all age groups. While some negativity is evident, through words such as **shapeless, unflattering** and **dowdy**, there are also positive words, including **effortless, classic, simple, everydaywear, practical** and **functional**. The participants' focus on the body and thin ideal is evident in words such as **hides hips, good sleeve** and **fattening**. Cultural reference is made to **Dennis the Menace**, linking the stripes/colours with his stripey jumper.



Appendix VII: Comfort Mind-maps: Comparison & Analysis



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Actions



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Actions

2015



2016



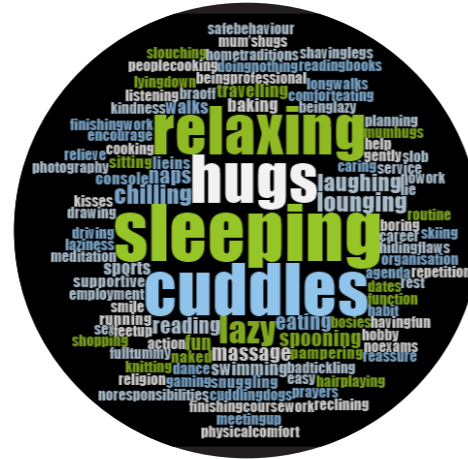
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The comfort of human interaction, in the form of cuddles and hugs (arguably the same thing) is the key finding, closely followed by sleeping and relaxing:

- 83 mentions of cuddles (11.5%)
- 73 mentions of sleeping (10.2%)
- 70 mentions of hugs (9.7%)
- 67 mentions of relaxing (9.3%)

Cuddles and hugs links with the 'people' theme. Seeking comfort from sleeping and relaxing could suggest those participants are tired or stressed; this could reflect the life-stage of student participants, juggling part-time work, study and busy social lives. For NS participants, it could again reflect life-stage in terms of juggling work along with caring responsibilities, which traditionally are part of the female role. However, this study did not collect data on caring responsibilities.

Sleeping and relaxing combine with other words, including **chilling, doing nothing, massage, being pampered, facemask, lie-ins, slouching, lounging, meditation, feet up, naps, lying down, being lazy and zero effort**, which all suggest a theme of down-time. Several participants also mentioned **me-time**. Could this be due to the consumerisation of health and well-being? Perhaps the participants have absorbed media messages and advertising that sell the idea of prioritising the self; this aligns with Bauman's assertions on the rise of the individualistic person and the idea of progress encompassing a life of comfort and leisure.

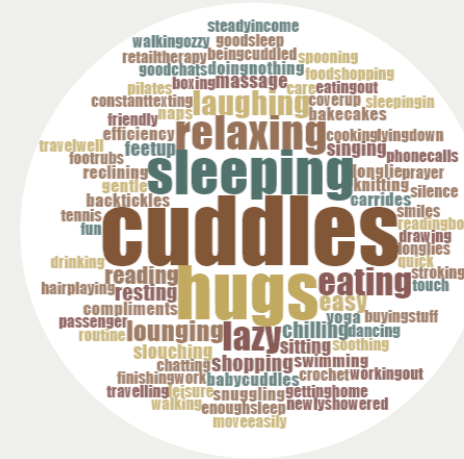
There were a couple of mentions of religion; these were coded to this theme as the action of following a religion. The fact that only a few mentions of religion were made could suggest the breakdown of the grand narrative of religion, acknowledged by Bauman, which would have brought comfort to many in previous times.

Comparative Analysis:

Student participants seem slightly more focused on sleeping and relaxing, with NS participants slightly more focused on cuddles and hugs. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Appearance



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Appearance

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students

Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The findings suggest that wearing hair tied up is more comfortable than having hair down. This could be explored further in terms of workwear dress, as some companies stipulate that females must wear their hair down.

The comfort of wearing makeup is mentioned more frequently than the comfort of not wearing makeup, however the balance was close:

- 25 mentions of makeup (15.3%)
- 21 mentions of no makeup (12.9%)
- 21 mentions of hair up (12.9%)

No makeup could be associated with physical comfort? Makeup could be associated with psychological comfort? Could this be a location-based finding? Discussion in the focus groups suggested the FM student participants did not bother to wear makeup at home/in small home towns, where they grew up and everyone had already seen them at their worst! Being located in the city seemed to engender increased use of makeup.

A variety of other words add weight to the makeup theme, including **nails done**, **fake tan**, **perfume**, **shaved legs**, **black eyeliner**, **red lipstick**, **eyebrows plucked**, **hair done/styled** and **good hair**. This suggests the comfort gained from making an effort with appearance, or **looking good**, a hedonic motivation. This suggests comfort can be gained from appearance-management behaviours and routines.

Comparative Analysis:

Close scrutiny of the data suggests a greater emphasis on appearance from younger age groups; those aged 18-30 mentioned makeup more frequently. Student participants were more likely to mention specific appearance-related items and processes, whereas the NS participants were less specific, mentioning 'looking good'. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Clothes

2015



2016



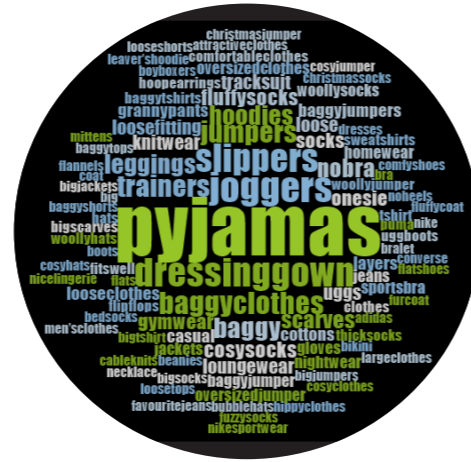
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The physical comfort of clothing, especially pyjamas, was the key finding. The participants gave a variety of words that fit into the physically comfortable clothing category:

- 330 mentions of pyjamas (10.8%)
- 195 mentions of joggers (6.4%)
- 180 mentions of slippers (5.9%)
- 134 mentions of jumpers (4.4%)
- 131 mentions of dressing gown (4.3%)
- 118 mentions of trainers (3.8%)
- 109 mentions of leggings (3.6%)

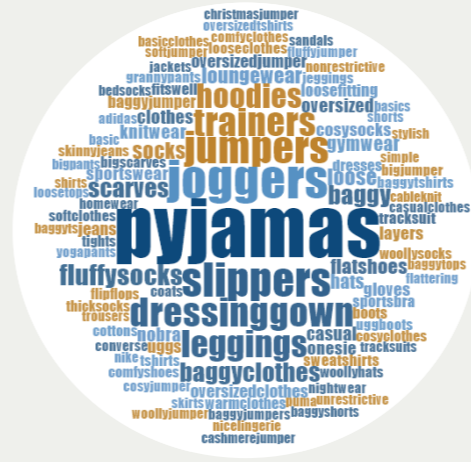
Themes within this category can be seen, including **loose/baggy, stretchy** and **casual**, linking with Mary Quant's 1965 concept of 'house-wear'; special clothes for lounging in at home. There was little association of comfort with formal or structured clothing, e.g. workwear. This suggests physical comfort is a priority.

Pyjamas, dressing gowns and **slippers** all relate to bed (discussed in the 'place' theme).

Modifiers used suggest the comfort of warmth; **cosy, warm** and **woolly**. Thermal underwear was also mentioned! This finding could be location dependent, due to the research taking place in Scotland. It could also be time-dependant, as the data was gathered during October, November and December, which are colder months. Haptic qualities, represented by the use of modifiers such as **fluffy** and **soft** in the data, also suggest the importance of the body, and the role of clothing in providing a sense of physical comfort.

Comparative Analysis:

Hoodies were mentioned more often by the 18-30 age group (both students and NS participants), suggesting this is a younger style. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Colour

18-30

31-44

45-64

65+

2015

red
orange
white

2016

darkcolours
black
white
yellow

neutralshades
personalcolour

2017

colour
boldcolours
grey
pastelcolours

grey

colour
pastelcolour

All

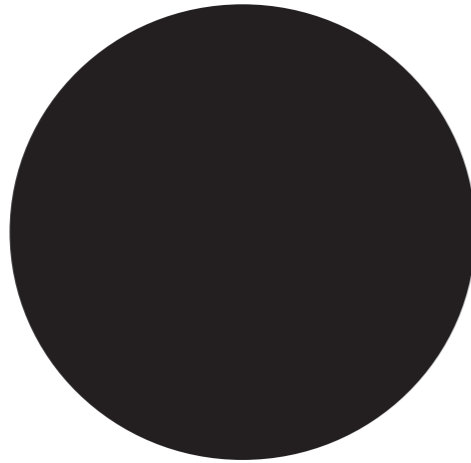
pastelcolours
boldcolours
darkcolours
black
orange
red
grey
colour
yellow
white

grey

neutralshades
personalcolour

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Colour

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students

Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

Overall, colour was not a prevalent theme in the data. Within this small theme, black was the key finding. The association of black with perceived slimming qualities brings focus to the body.

The colours associated with comfort are at odds with Pine's (2014) findings that suggest brighter colours are better for mood; for these participants, calm neutrals, pale pastels and dark colours seem to offer more comfort than brights, apart from red (for the student participants).

Comparative Analysis:

Some differences can be seen between the student and NS participants. NFM students mentioned colours more frequently than FM students and NS participants. This may be due to groupthink; further scrutiny is required to check for clusters of colour discussion within the same focus groups. Student participants mentioned a broader range of colours than NS participants, with red being one of the most frequently mentioned colours (less so for NS participants):

- 8 mentions of red (13.3%)
- 8 mentions of black (13.3%)

The student participants hardly mentioned grey, but NS participants favoured it. This suggests the NS participants, who tended to be older, did not have the confidence to wear bright colours.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Entertainment



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Entertainment

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The key findings are the comfort gained from movies and music. Cultural references are evident, e.g. Harry Potter, X-Factor and Disney movies. These could suggest the participants find comfort in escapism and happy endings, perhaps seeking respite from the stresses of everyday life. These references could also reflect the participants' search for a sense of community in an era when traditional communities (family, religion) have lessened; Harry Potter finds a like-minded community at Hogwarts and X-Factor participants are put into teams and live together for the duration of the show. Along with Disney movies, **chickflicks** and **romcoms** suggest a desire for happy, fairy-tale endings.

Some of the entertainment could fit into the actions theme of down-time and relaxing (but not all entertainment is relaxing - it could be exciting/stimulating).

- 55 mentions of movies (22%)
- 45 mentions of TV (18%)
- 42 mentions of music (17%)
- 36 mentions of Netflix (14%)

Comparative Analysis:

Specific mentions of Netflix were more frequent in the student and NS participants aged 18-30, suggesting this form of entertainment is more popular with younger demographics.

FM students were less interested in music than NFM students. Could this be due to their interest in and exposure to a more visual culture?

NS participants find equal comfort from movies and music, and mentioned books more. This may be due to students associating books and reading with study and stress. NS participants aged 18-30 mentioned books less than the older participants. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Feelings

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students

Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The key finding is the comfort gained from feeling happy and relaxed; relaxed correlates with the actions theme finding of relaxation. There are several sub-themes within this large theme:

relaxed theme - **at ease, carefree, stress free, at peace, no worries, casual, chilled, calm, easy-going, laid-back, slouchy**

happy theme - **happiness, being happy, enjoyment, positive, pleasing**

love theme - **affection, intimacy, tenderness, cuddly, loyalty, good relationships, being loved, emotional comfort**

security theme - **reassurance, support, trust, safe, protected, stability, feeling safe**

familiarity theme - **usual, routine, known, memories, settled, boring**

confidence theme - **body confident, body image, feeling good, feeling yourself, feeling confident, self confident, being confident**

Happiness theme is important here as it is part of the definition of well-being (happy + happiness accounts for 11% of this feelings theme, and are combined in the final mind-map).

The body is present in this theme, through intimacy and cuddles, and through body image.

Comparative Analysis:

NS participants mention happiness and love slightly more frequently than relaxation. Student participants mentioned the comfort of feeling relaxed more frequently, which could suggest they feel stressed. This aligns with media reports of high levels of stress in students. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Food



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Food

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The participants indicate that food is a comfort! However, comfort is not associated with healthy food; there is minimal mention of fruit, natural foods or healthy foods. The sub-theme of junk food was most prevalent (which could be linked to Scotland's high level of obesity and thus negatively affect well-being). There is cultural reference evident through mentions of brand names, with Irn Bru reflecting the large number of Scottish participants. Traditional, home-cooked food was also prevalent.

junk food theme - **chocolate, cake, fizzy juice, icecream, snacks, takeaway, fast food, pizza, sweets, crisps, sugar, Irn Bru, Nutella, Dominos, MacDonalDs**

traditional/home cooked theme - **Sunday dinner, roast dinner, steak pie, stew, gravy, home cooking, homemade soup, homely foods, homemade food sausage casserole**

The mentions of home could like to the 'place' theme. Mentions of **mum's cooking** and **mum's food** reflect traditional gender roles within the home; there was no mention of dad's cooking.

There is a sense of nostalgia in some of the findings, indicated by words such as **Sunday dinner, gingerbread, cloudy lemonade and custard**, perhaps associated with mum's cooking and home.

- 173 mentions of food (17.7%)
- 138 mentions of tea (14.1%)
- 97 mentions of chocolate (9.9%)
- 88 mentions of hot chocolate (9%)

Tea and hot chocolate suggest the comfort of warm drinks.

Comparative Analysis:

Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined

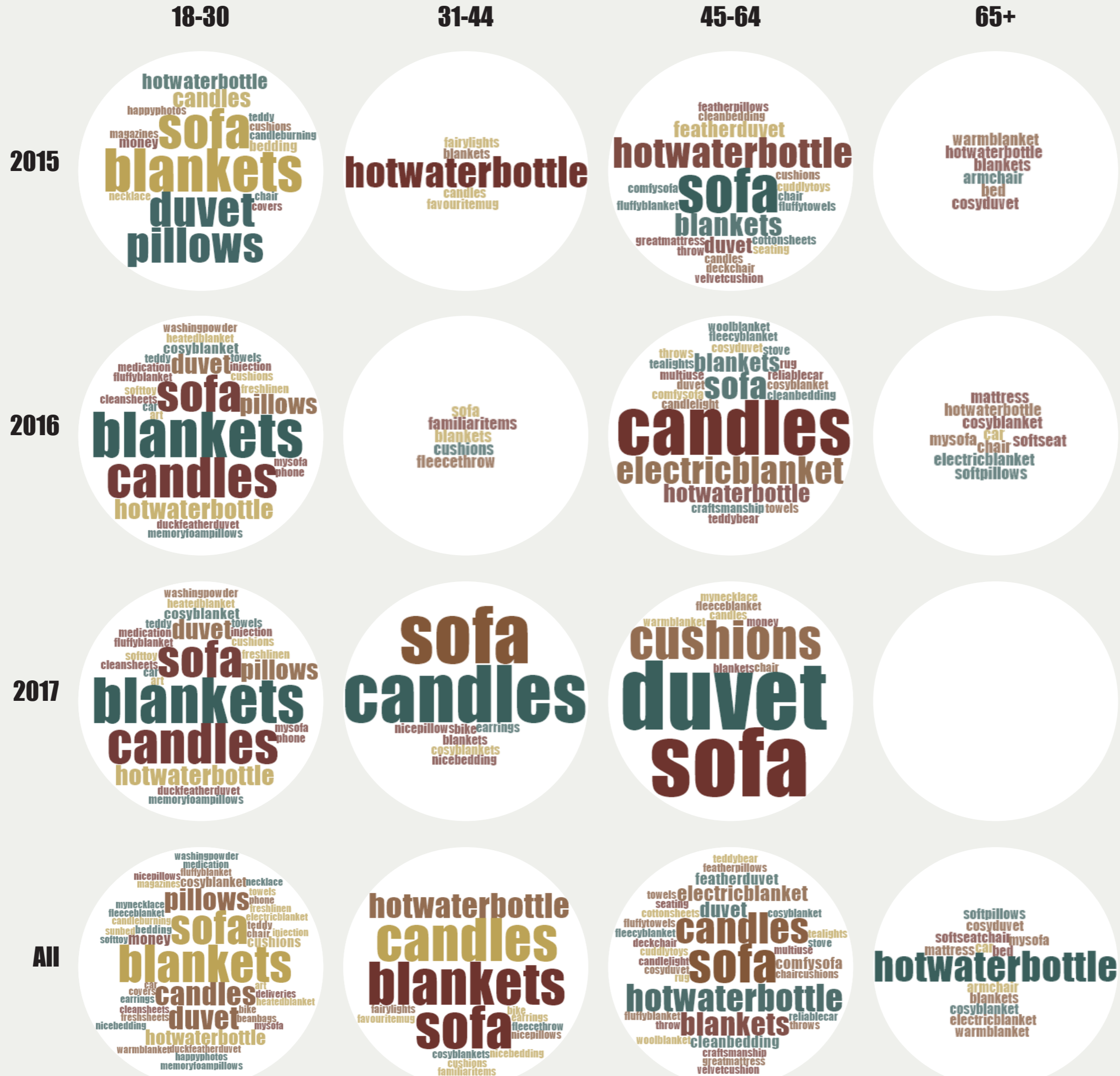


All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Objects



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Objects

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students

Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The key finding is the comfort of blankets. Participants used a variety of modifiers: soft blanket, furry blanket, cosy blanket, warm blanket, electric blanket, fuzzy blanket, suggesting the comfort of warmth and comfort gained from haptic qualities. The main focus of this theme was physical and physiological comfort, although blankets, sofas, pillows and duvets could be linked with relaxation and down-time, suggesting psychological comfort.

- 212 mentions of blankets (24%) + an additional 30 mentions with modifiers
- 108 mentions of sofa (12%)
- 75 mentions of candles (8.6%)
- 74 mentions of pillows (8.5%)
- 59 mentions of duvet (6.8%)

There were some mentions objects/products/possessions that suggest psychological comfort is gained from nostalgia: **Christmas tree, teddybear, photos, sentimental items, diary, favourite mug**

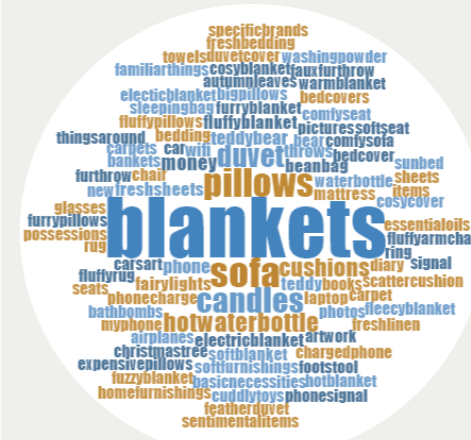
A small theme of cleanliness is evident: **fresh bedding, fresh linen, fresh sheets, clean sheets, washing powder**

There were a few mentions of comfort gained from technology. Given the large number of participants aged 18-30, it is surprising this was not a stronger theme: **laptop, charged phone, phone signal, phone**

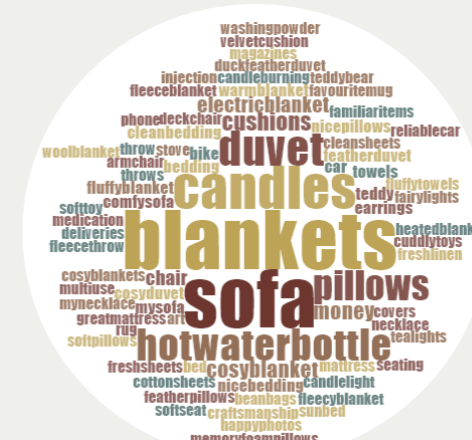
Note: items with modifiers indicating physiological comfort were also coded to the physiological theme: **cosy, warm, hot water bottle**

Comparative Analysis:

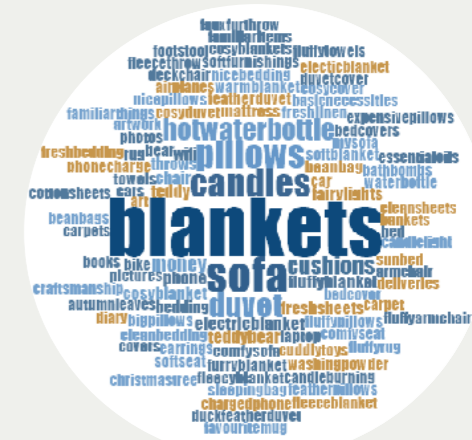
Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants. A minor difference was evident in the responses from the age 65+ participants, indicating comfort gained from sitting down: **armchair, my sofa, soft seat, chair.**



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: People

18-30

31-44

45-64

65+

2015



2016



2017



All



Comfort Mindmap Theme: People

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students

Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The key finding is loved ones or significant others. Family is the most frequently mentioned 'people' source of comfort, although this is closely followed by 'friends':

284 mentions of family (42.9%)
229 mentions of friends (34.6 %)

The family theme is further strengthened by mentions of specific relatives and significant others; mums and boyfriends were most frequently mentioned as a source of comfort, perhaps reflecting the all-female participants. Dad was mentioned infrequently as a source of comfort for these participants. A few NS participants mentioned their husbands and children.

Friends were given a variety of modifiers: **good friends, best friends, old friends, close friends**, with friendship and friends' advice valued.

A variety of positive modifiers were also used: **nice people, happy people, friendly faces**, suggesting people do not find comfort in miserable others.

Comparative Analysis:

Family is mentioned slightly more frequently by older participants. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Pets



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Pets

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The key finding is that dogs provide a source of comfort for these participants.

- 58 mentions of dog(s) (39%) - these were combined in the final mind-map
- 11 mentions of my dog(s) (7.3%)
- 29 mentions of pets (19.4%)
- 20 mentions of cats (13.3%)

What are pets? Are they 'significant others', providing the comfort of cuddles and affection? They could be coded as 'people' based on anthropomorphism, 'the attribution of human characteristics or behaviour to an animal or object' (Oxford Dictionary definition). Or are pets a possession? Several participants use the possessive determiner 'my', denoting belonging or connection.

'as consumer lifestyle and life-stage choices change, pets are coming into focus as a supplementary symbol of adulthood and also of status - and an expense that consumers are willing to spend as much on as on themselves' (The Innovation Group 2018).

Market research company Mintel describes the UK as one of the biggest pet markets in Europe.

Comparative Analysis:

Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



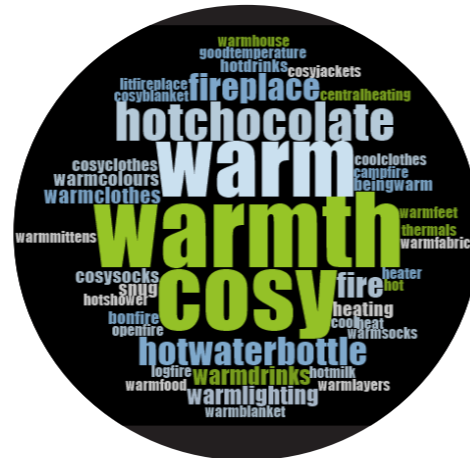
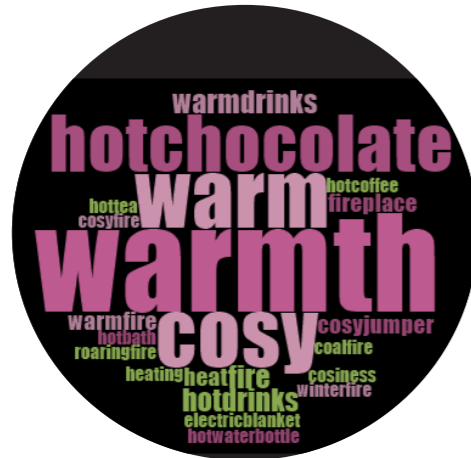
All Non-Students Combined



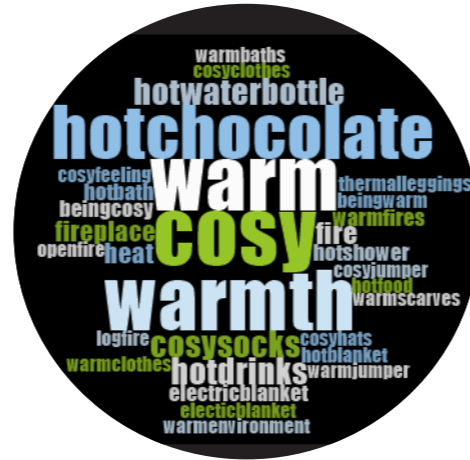
All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Physiological

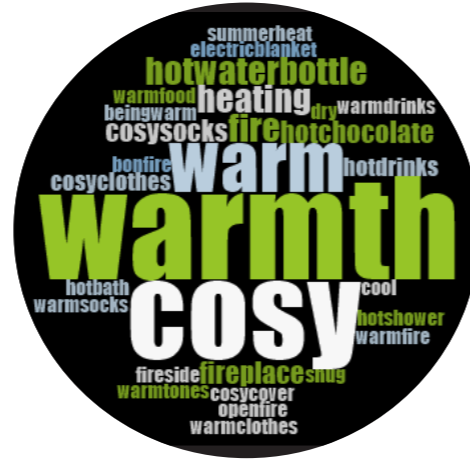
2015



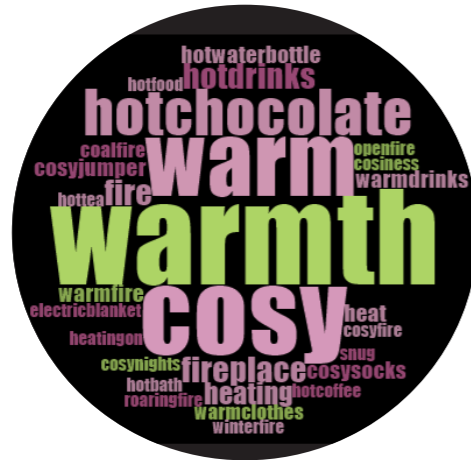
2016



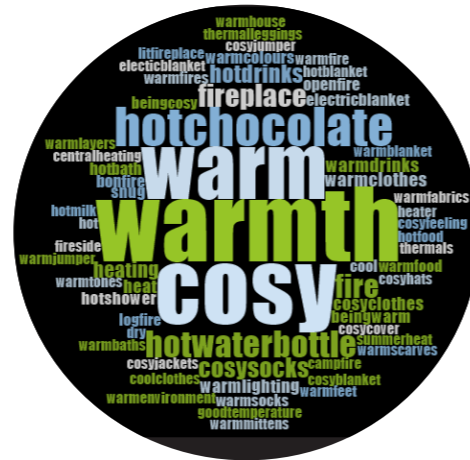
2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The important of physiological comfort to the participants was a key finding, indicated through the use of words such as warm, warmth and cosy and through a variety of products and places that provide warmth.

- 348 mentions of warm/warmth (33.5%)
- 174 mentions of cosy (16.6 %)
- 88 mentions of hot chocolate (8.4%)
- 46 mentions of hot water bottle (4.4%)

products sub-theme, using 'cosy' and 'warm' modifiers - **cosy clothes, cosy socks, cosy woollies, cosy pyjamas, cosy slippers, warm jacket, warm jumper, warm socks, cosy blanket, warm blanket, cosy duvet**

place sub-theme - **cosy house, warm interiors, warm bed, warm room, warm house, cosy fire, warm fire**

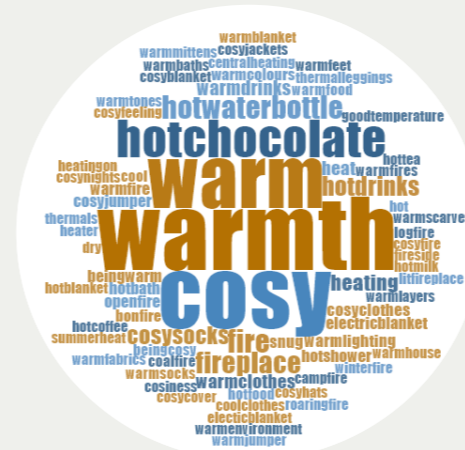
Fire is coded as a place, based on the assumption of finding comfort from being in front of the fire, rather than possessing fire as a product.

The frequency of the physiological comfort finding could be specific to these participants due to their location in Scotland, which has a temperate but cool climate. It could also relate to the time of year that data was gathered (the cooler/winter months of October, November and December). Women tend to feel colder than men, so this finding could also reflect the all-female participant sample.

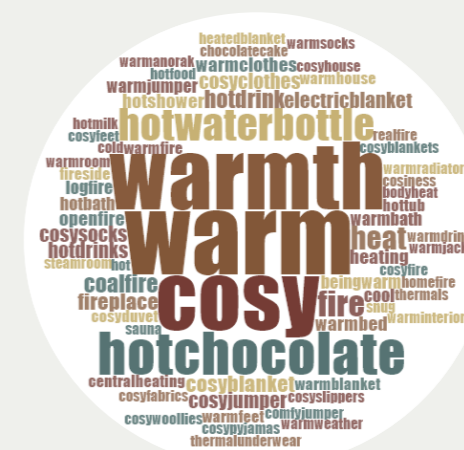
There is an element of nostalgia in the findings, e.g. warm fire and hot chocolate, suggesting psychological comfort as well as physiological. Physiological comfort is closely related to physical comfort in this instance, as many of the words related to the body; the body finds comfort in being warmly clothed or in warm places.

Comparative Analysis:

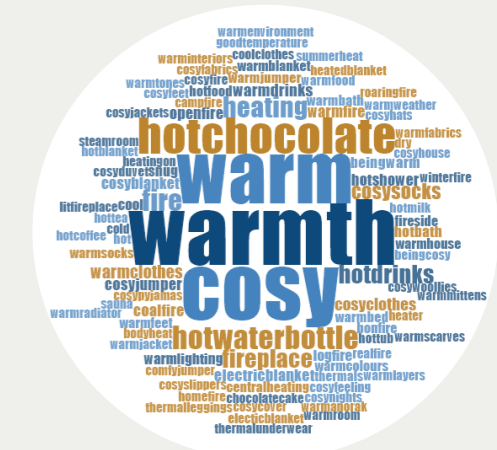
Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Place

18-30

31-44

45-64

65+

2015



2016



2017



All



Comfort Mindmap Theme: Place

2015



2016



2017



All



Fashion Management Students



Non-Fashion Management Students

Memos:

The participants indicated finding comfort in being in bed, and in the home environment. Bed was coded to place rather than as an object, based on the assumption that comfort was gained from being in bed rather than possessing a bed.

333 mentions of bed (32%)
277 mentions of home (26.6%)
62 mentions of bath (5.9%)

The determiner 'my' is used, suggesting a sense of belonging or connection: **my home, my bed, my room.**

The comfort of connection is also indicated through mentions of places associated with significant others: **grandad's house, nan's house.** This links to a sub-theme of familiarity: **known surroundings** and **common surroundings.**

Some specific places are mentioned, mainly countries and towns: **Italy, Norway, Romania, Scotland, lake District, Cornwall, Achiltibuie, Peebles, Dublin.** It is not clear if these are holiday destinations or home countries/places.

Some non-specific places are mentioned, with a small sub-theme of outdoor places emerging: **garden, woods, countryside, mountains, nature, lakes, parks, fresh air, ocean.** This links with a few mentions of space: **enough space, calm environment, isolation, mountain cottage.**

There were just a couple of mentions of church, suggesting that the majority of these participants do not seek comfort in religion, in line with Bauman's assertions on the demise of the grand narrative of religion.

Comparative Analysis:

Bed was more frequently mentioned than home by the age 18-30 and 45-64 participants. Home was more frequently mentioned by those aged 31-44 and 65+. Overall, there is broad agreement between the FM students, NFM students and NS participants.



All Students Combined



All Non-Students Combined



All Participants Combined

Comfort Mindmap Theme: Time

18-30

31-44

45-64

65+

2015



2016



2017



All



APPENDIX VIII Dress artefact form

COMFORT IN CLOTHING: PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT TASK:

**UPLOAD PHOTO OF
CHOSEN ARTEFACT HERE**

ITEM:

COMPOSITION:

COLOUR/PATTERN:

3 KEY WORDS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

LENGTH OF TIME OWNED:

NARRATIVE (100 words):

Giamet ea nonet hitatusdae omnim qui dolut ea que sit untia volut il illecate etur? Evellat laborae stiorum que accuscipidel maio. Ovit quaeperumqui dolore, qui repeleucus sa sum ipita quod untis intiorr uptatem ipiendaes nossi offic te volupta sperepr eptatiur a qui doluptiatur, aut quamusa persped quunt porum inullori consed maio. Ut quosam volorio sandit dolut quam nat laboria solupta tionem renis adite pedit vellupt atiumquae occus verunt que nonem. Ita sant. Pa experios re vidus por aut la nonsequo eat. Xerovide cone plicabo rehendam ut molor molore officabores a conserf erchica boratque