

Fabric quality issues related to apparel merchandising

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The objectives of this study are to develop an understanding of fabric quality related issues and research gaps relevant to apparel manufacturing and merchandising within the South African context. The specific focus is on fabric objective measurement (FOM), a relatively new and highly advanced technology which involves a new generation of instrumentally measured parameters that provide a more complete picture of fabric quality, tailorability and clothing performance, and which has found wide application internationally. The research involves a questionnaire survey of major clothing and retail companies in South Africa and interviews with them, with a specific focus on apparel and garment manufacturing and retailing in South Africa. The data and information so captured are graphically presented statistically analysed and interpreted. The main finding is that although manufactures and retailers carry out most of the important fabric and garment testing, they lag behind the world in adopting highly advanced and integrated FOM systems, such as FAST and Kawabata, which are widely used to improve and ensure the quality of apparel fabric and garments.