

EXPLORING YOGA WEAR NEEDS  
FOR THE BABY BOOMER GENERATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Baby boomers are defined as the demographics born during post-World War II between the years 1946 and 1965. As of 2016, boomers are in their 50s and 60s. As a group, they are interested in pursuing a healthy lifestyle and are willing to invest time and money in maintaining healthy bodies. Yoga, a mind body practice, is an appealing option for this group. A current U.S. national study showed that yoga practitioners over the age of 49 are the second largest group comprising 38% of the yoga practitioners. However, the boomer yoga practitioners do not have many choices when it comes to shopping for yoga wear. Manufacturers of active wear produce the same yoga wear for individuals regardless of age, even though the baby boomer market has different clothing needs and garment design preferences. This study explored baby boomers' clothing needs and preferences in yoga wear.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

As more people incorporate health and well-being into their daily lives, participating in athletic activities has become routine for individuals in contemporary society. Amongst a variety of workout activities and programs, the yoga participation rate continues to surge. Newly released market research study conducted by Yoga Alliance and published in *Yoga Journal* highlighted the growth of yoga participation and yoga practitioners in 2016 in the United States (Yoga Journal, 2016). The *Yoga Journal* is the most circulated yoga magazine in the U.S., founded in 1975. The result of the market study showed the number of yoga practitioners in the U.S. was more than 36 million, representing approximately 15% of Americans, an increase from 20.4 million in 2012 and 15.8 million in 2008 (Yoga Journal, 2016). Also, the study highlighted the fact that the yoga industry is a growing profitable market, as US\$16.8 billion was spent on yoga products in one year (Yoga Journal, 2016). The future demand of yoga will consistently increase as more than 80 million Americans (34% of the population) answered that they are likely to practice yoga in the next 12 months (Yoga Journal, 2016). The yoga boom in North America started in the early 2000s, and now, yoga has become an inevitable cultural convention.

Similarly, in Toronto, Canada, the data collected by Ruth Dargan illustrates continued growth of yoga practitioners within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Ruth Dargan is the co-founder and the director of the Yoga Conference, an 8-year-old annual event in Toronto. This event presents the full spectrum of yoga with over 300 exhibitors and provides dozens of lectures and workshops (The Yoga Conference & Show Ltd., 2016). Dargan tracks the number of yoga studios in the GTA and stated that there were 669 studios as of 2013, more than twice that of

2008 (as cited in Tapper, 2013). This increase indicates a yoga boom in Toronto, and can be representative of what is happening elsewhere in the country.

With the emerging popularity of yoga, demand for yoga-related products such as yoga wear, videos, mats, blocks, towels, and other accessories has increased. The fashion apparel industry, specifically the type of clothing that can be worn for yoga practice, has gained much attention. Active wear, defined as “clothing for active sports” (“Sportswear,” 2016, para. 1), became a new key word in recent fashion trends. The NPD Group (2015), a global information company, reported strong sales in the active wear market. Its data showed the sales growth of active wear exceeded that of the apparel market as a whole; the total apparel market sales during the period from July 2013 to June 2014 reached US\$206.3 billion, a 1% increase over the previous year (NPD Group, 2015). On the other hand, active wear sales accounted for US\$33.7 billion (16% of the total apparel market), a 7% increase over the previous year (NPD Group, 2015). Even though many active wear brands and designer active wear lines do not specify that their products are aimed for yoga practice, yoga practitioners may choose active wear for the purpose of yoga practice. While there is no Canadian comparable data, this research will assume that this trend applies to the Canadian market, as the populations are similar.

As the size of the active wear market expands, consumers are now able to enjoy a wide range of products when it comes to shopping for yoga wear or active wear for yoga practice. However, there is one consumer age group that appears to be underserved in the market: the baby boomer market. The members of the baby boomer generation are those who were born between 1946 and 1965 (Statistics Canada, 2015). Like the general apparel industry, most of active/yoga wear makers tend to target younger consumers, under the age of 49, which is a misunderstanding in consumer demographics. According to current Yoga Journal (2016) data,

the demographics of yoga practitioners were as follows: those aged 30 to 49 comprised 43% of all practitioners; those aged 50 and older, 38%; and those aged 18-29, 19%. The marketers are missing the second largest group of yoga practitioners, which is more than a third of the yoga practitioner population. From a marketing, business, and behavioural perspective, it makes sense to pay closer attention to this consumer segment.

Baby boomers have different concerns, needs, and preferences in many aspects of clothing choices than other age groups. In academia, research has been conducted involving the baby boomer market and their clothing preferences and shopping behaviour (e.g., Coleman, Hladikova, & Savelyeva, 2006; Horwarton & Lee, 2010; Littrell, Jin Ma, & Halepete, 2005; Rahulan, Troynikoy, Watson, Janta, & Senner, 2015; Sparado, 2012). Helen Jason (2014), an undergraduate design student in Finland, conducted a distinctive study to produce yoga wear and accessories in a more sustainable way, but it did not address the needs of baby boomers. After a thorough investigation, it was discovered that little research has been conducted in yoga wear development as it relates to baby boomers and it can be concluded that research involving yoga wear for the baby boomer generation is greatly needed.

This research aims to identify baby boomers' clothing needs and wants specifically for yoga wear, in order to aid active wear designers and apparel product developers. Lamb and Kallal's (1992) Functional, Expressive, and Aesthetic (FEA) model was used as the theoretical framework to gain a better understanding of yoga wear needs and preferences of this group. This study used qualitative methods to reveal rich and detailed findings related to each individual's experience. The method included participant observation and individual interviews. Eight baby boomers (four females, four males) who practice yoga were interviewed.

This researcher was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are baby boomers' clothing concerns and preferences for yoga wear?
2. Are baby boomers satisfied with the yoga wear currently available in the market place?
3. Based on the FEA model, what recommendations can be drawn to develop specially designed yoga wear to meet the needs of this group?

It is this researcher's hope that the above questions will be answered.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter outlines the background for assessing the needs of yoga wear. Lamb and Kallal's (1992) Functional, Expressive, and Aesthetic (FEA) model is delineated as tool providing assessment criteria, followed by the key features of the activity (yoga) and the user (baby boomers).

### **FEA Model by Lamb and Kallal (1992): Theoretical Framework**

In order to analyze and assess yoga wear attributes, the FEA model posited by Lamb and Kallal (1992) was used as the theoretical framework for this study. Lamb and Kallal proposed this model to be applied to any type of apparel design including “designing garments for special needs” which is also called “functional garment design” (p. 42). Lamb and Kallal emphasize that the general design process and functional garment design framework should be integrated, because people who require special clothing needs do not want unappealing functional fashions or clothing that conveys a stigmatized image. For this study, the latter statement can be interpreted as baby boomer yoga practitioners who do not want functional yoga wear that conveys the image of a 50+ age group and although they want functional garment construction to support bodily changes with aging.

This model assesses user needs and wants using FEA considerations. The explanation of the three design criteria is depicted in Figure 1, and a detailed discussion of each consideration follows.



*Figure 1. FEA Consumer Needs Model. Source: Lamb and Kallal (1992, p. 42).*

**Function.** Lamb and Kallal (1992) defined functional considerations as those relating to the utility of the garment (p. 43). Functional attributes include garment fit, comfort, ease of movement, and protection. Rosenblad-Wallin (1985) emphasizes the importance of considering the demands of a “use-situation” (p. 279). For instance, athletic activities, cleaning, and physical work in a dangerous environment create specific functional demands on apparel. It is crucial to meet the required clothing needs in such use-situations. Triemstra-Johnston (2013) used this model in her research to develop sustainable children costumes, and indicated that “comfort often relates to the physiology of the body regarding temperature, pressures on the body, rubbing, static electricity, and ease of movement,” which all represent functional attributes (p. 25).

**Expression.** Expressive considerations include the communicative or symbolic aspects of dress. According to Lamb and Kallal (1992), clothing often conveys particular information such as the wearer’s role, values, personal taste, status, social class, and self-esteem (p. 43). Clothing is a significant aspect of one’s appearance. Thus, wearers seek clothing that can well represent

their self-image and the values that they pursue. According to Triemstra-Johnston (2013), this element is understood with the concept of brand choices in contemporary society. She notes that “the reflection of brand, either through label, insignia, or design elements has become one of the primary functions of clothing to show status and prestige, often superseding the use-value of a garment” (p. 25). Additionally, expressive considerations today are often discussed in relation to sustainable fashion. With the growing number of advocates for sustainable fashion (Fletcher, Grose, & Hawken, 2012; Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011; Hethorn & Ulasewicz, 2015), concepts such as anti-fast, slow, eco-friendly, fair trade, ethical, and timeless fashion are topics that are much debated when it comes to clothing choice and self-expression.

**Aesthetics.** This element relates to beauty. Aesthetically pleasing design is believed to make the wearer of the garment look attractive. The standard of aesthetics varies by culture and through time periods; ideal beauty is influenced by social norms of each culture and current trends. According to Lamb and Kallal (1992), aesthetic requirements correspond to “the use of line, form, colour, texture and pattern” (p. 43). Triemstra-Johnston (2013, p.26) adds that “materials, processes such as finishing techniques, style lines and silhouette” (p. 26) are all factors that influence aesthetics. In terms of active wear, this consideration envisages how the garment is worn on the body or interacts with the range of movement.

Lamb and Kallal (1992) elaborated that the three FEA considerations are not mutually exclusive. They explained that attributes can be interrelated, and are often paired together on a continuum. There are functional-expressive, expressive-aesthetic, and aesthetic-functional continuums. Each continuum encompasses the idea of intertwining two considerations in a balanced way. Reconciling two considerations is essential to achieving successful design development.

The FEA model has been used by a number of fashion scholars (e.g., Carroll, 2001; Emerich, 2007; Haar, 1998; Pitimaneeyakul, LaBat, & DeLong, 2004; Stokes & Black, 2012; Triemstra-Johnston, 2013) for garment design development studies. In terms of active wear design development studies, Bye and Hakala (2005) conducted a prototype development study of sailing apparel for women. Under the FEA design criteria, they developed, tested, evaluated, and revised the prototype garment. Chae and Evenson (2014) conducted research involving golf wear for mature women, while Jin and Black (2012) explored clothing needs of young male tennis players. Luo (2012) developed functional cycling sportswear, and Ho (2010) assessed the clothing needs of indoor cycling wear. Steinhardt (2010) studied cycling apparel especially for women who commute by cycling. In addition, Michaelson (2015) researched functional needs for rock climbing pants. Chau (2012) conducted swimwear development for special needs children. While some research has included various sports and physical activities, such no research has been found that relates specifically to yoga wear. This study thus aims to investigate specific needs of baby boomer yoga practitioners.

## **Yoga**

**Background.** Yoga is an ancient spiritual practice that originated approximately 5,000 years ago in the geographical area that is now known as India (Fouladbakhsh, 2011). An alternative medicine researcher, Judith Fouladbakhsh (2011), defines yoga as “a complete system of mental and physical practices for health and well-being” and its goal is “to unite body, mind, and spirit” (p. 40). Although yoga initially arrived in North America in the late 19th century, it has only been in the last 15 years that yoga has experienced a boom in popularity (White, 2012). Given this emerging cultural emphasis on fitness, health, and well-being, yoga has become an appealing option among the public in Canada. While yoga has been transformed from the ancient practice to



a more westernized and modernized leisure activity, its traditional spirit and form has evolved in different ways.

Mark Singleton's (2010) *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice* outlines some textual evidence of yoga practice. According to Singleton, the first use of the word "yoga" was in the book *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (3rd century BCE), and the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (3rd century BCE) recognized yoga as a way of reconciling body and mind with postures and control (p. 26). He also outlines the traditional six-fold yoga method described in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad*. This six-fold yoga method was the root of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* scheme in *Yogasūtra* (350-450 AD) compiled by Sage Patañjali (Wujastyk, 2011, p. 33). The eight limbs, or acts, of Patañjali's *aṣṭāṅgayoga* scheme are deemed the most acknowledged framework of yoga practice, and they are commonly known today as the traditional elements of yoga. The eight limbs (Carrico, 2007) are as follows:

- Prāṇāyāma: Breath control.
- Pratyāhāra: Withdrawal of the senses.
- Dhyāna: Meditation.
- Dhāraṇā: Placing of the concentrated mind.
- Samādhi: Concentration.
- Yama: Ethical inquiry and sense of integrity.
- Niyama: Self-discipline and spiritual observances.
- Āsana: Body postures (approximately 84 are used in today's practices).

The eight traditional limbs of yoga represent the journey to the destination to enlightenment. Gregoire (2013) explained that westernized and modernized yoga tends to just encompass one limb among the eight: Āsana. Similarly, Singleton (2010) described that modern yoga is the form of Āsana, a postural exercise. Singleton notes that modern yogic practice

became popular with the cultural attention towards healthism, and is understood as a form of gymnastics and bodybuilding. With many transitions over the years, yoga has now evolved to have more than 10 variations.

**Different types of yoga.** According to Yoga Journal (2016), there are 14 types of yoga. Six of them are regarded as the basic major styles of yoga today in the West:

- Hatha yoga: Refers to a practice combining postures with breathing. It is usually recommended for beginners.
- Vinyasa yoga: Is fast-paced with a *vinyasa* sequence; a flowing series of lunging, bending, and stretching poses. Since it involves powerful movements, it is also known as power yoga.
- Ashtanga yoga: Is a very athletic and physically challenging type. It is one of the oldest forms of yoga and focuses on the traditional eight limbs. It was brought to the West by Pattabhi Jois in the 1970s. It consists of six specific sequences of postural practice, and requires breathing control during the entire practice.
- Kundalini yoga: Incorporates movement, breathing, meditation, and chanting. It aims to develop balanced spiritual and physical practices.
- Iyengar yoga: Is a slow-paced, therapeutic form of yoga, developed by B.K.S. Iyengar. Poses are held for a longer time with deep breaths, and sometimes modified with props such as straps, blankets, and blocks. It requires much attention to align each posture properly.
- Bikram yoga: Was established by Bikram Choudhury. It is also known as hot yoga. It is practiced in a room with a temperature of nearly 105 degrees Fahrenheit and 40% humidity. It consists of a series of 26 basic yoga poses.

In addition to these six basic/major types of yoga, others are *Jivamukti*, Power, Prenatal, Restorative, Tantra, and Yin. There are also a number of hybrid forms of yoga introduced recently. They mix yoga postures with other forms of exercises such as dance, martial arts, or acrobatic movements. Tools such as ropes or hammocks are being used for new forms of yoga. Additionally, yoga has come to be used as a therapy (called yoga therapy) for the modern public in order to ease bodily pain from physical overload, or to release mental and emotional stress.

Substantial research has been conducted regarding the benefits of yoga. Many medical scholars (Galantino et al., 2003; Garfinkel, Schumacher, Husain, Levy, & Reshetar, 1994; Manjunath & Telles, 1991, 2001; Tran, Holly, Lashbrook, & Amsterdam, 2001; Weintraub, 2004) conducted empirical studies with participants using yoga. The positive physical changes with regular yoga practice were found to provide significant improvements in flexibility, muscular and bone strength, muscular endurance, lower blood pressure, blood sugar, heart rate, body weight, and higher cardiorespiratory endurance. Through practicing postures like backbends, counter poses, and twists, yoga practitioners can prevent the breakdown of cartilage and joints and even spinal injury. In addition, since yoga is an activity that promotes overall health, it improves the immune system, reduces fatigue, reduces digestive problems, relieves insomnia, and can relieve asthma and hypertension.

Yoga not only has physical benefits but is known to also have emotional and spiritual benefits. Herrick and Ainsworth (2000) found that the outcomes of yoga practice(s) included emotional balance, improved awareness, and increased energy. Emerging data also indicate positive results in people with depression, anxiety, or emotional malfunction (Büssing, Edelhäuser, Weisskircher, Fouladbakhsh, & Heusser, 2010; Zeidan, Johnson, Gordon, & Goolkasian, 2010). Galantino et al. (2008) found valid therapeutic effects with physiological

benefits for children who practiced yoga. Moreover, since yoga practice incorporates meditation, it helps to improve overall mood and release stress.

However, Fouladbakhsh (2011) explained the possible risks of practicing yoga. Like any physical activity, yoga postures that are too intensely aligned or misaligned could result in injuries or discomfort when an individual is unprepared or limited under certain medical conditions. Fouladbakhsh notes that the “potential risks of yoga practice ... include over-stretching, lower back strain, and knee, wrist, or shoulder injuries from improper positioning and extended length of the pose” (p. 43). Thus, the intensity of yoga classes must be tailored to individuals to avoid risk of injury.

**Yoga population.** The 2016 national study reported by Yoga Journal (2016) in conjunction with IPSOS Public Affairs examined the community of yoga practitioners in the United States. As previously mentioned, there were approximately 36.7 million yoga practitioners in the U.S. as of 2016. In the IPSOS study, yoga practitioners were defined as people who have practiced yoga in the last 6 months. An additional 30 million people indicated they had tried practicing yoga at least once, although not in the last 6 months.

Of all yoga practitioners who responded to the IPSOS survey, 28% (10.3 million) were male and 72% (26.4 million) were female; in terms of age range, 43% (15.8 million) of the respondents were 30-49 years old, 38% (14 million) were 50 years old, and 19% (7 million) were 18-29 years old (Yoga Journal, 2016). These data indicate there are more male and older yoga practitioners compared to the past (about 4 million male practitioners and approximately 4 million 55+ year olds in 2012). Other meaningful results of the study include:

- More than 75% of practitioners engage in other forms of exercise such as running, cycling, and group sports.

- The most commonly reported reasons for practicing yoga were: flexibility (61%), stress relief (56%), general fitness (49%), improve overall health (49%), and physical fitness (44%).
- Yoga practitioners are more concerned with their health, a green lifestyle, and the community. Around 50% said that they pursue an ecofriendly lifestyle, eat in a more sustainable way, and support their local community.
- Yoga practitioners have more a positive self-image than non-practitioners. They are more confident with regard to a clear mind and a strong body.
- Regarding level of experience, 56% practitioners represented themselves as beginners, 42% as intermediate, and 2% as advanced.
- For venues to practice yoga, “home” was reported to be the most common (65%), while the gym and yoga studio were reported as 48% and 45%, respectively.
- US\$16 billion was spent in a year for yoga products. Fees for yoga classes accounted for \$5.8 billion, yoga clothes, \$4.6 billion, equipment, \$3.6 billion, and accessories, \$2.8 billion.
- Almost 70% of practitioners reported to have purchased yoga wear in the last 6 months. When they shop for yoga products, 24% of practitioners found functionality and performance as the most important factor. Price and comfort were the second and the third most important factors, respectively.

While the above data pertains to the United States, and in the absence of a Canadian study, one could suggest that similar trends likely apply to Canada.

### **The Baby Boomers**

Statistics Canada (2015) defines baby boomers as persons born during the post-World

War II period (between 1946 and 1965). As of 2011, there were 9.6 million baby boomers in Canada, comprising 29% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2015). Currently, members of the baby boomer generation are in the ages of 50 to 70. This age cohort will become a more significant portion of the total Canadian demographic.

Coleman et al.'s (2006) study found the baby boomer generation to be a market worth economic investment due to baby boomers' distinct characteristics: they make efforts to stay young, pursue an active lifestyle, and have the highest level of disposable income valued at around \$36 trillion (US\$28 trillion). Coleman et al. pointed out that the majority of businesses focus on the younger population, aged 18-49, and disregard the older population. Thus, marketers are missing this large commercially viable segment.

Gregory Weimann (2005) agreed with the view that baby boomers are a critical consumer group. According to him, 87% of baby boomers are high school graduates and more than 50% have attended college. Weimann noted that baby boomers have higher education and are consumers who have high expectations. They have increasing buying power and are willing to pay for products that promote their health or quality of life. Thus, providing products or service that improve their lifestyle could yield great profit.

In addition, baby boomers are approaching retirement and planning to manage their life after retirement; most will attempt to find a new career or try new leisure activities. Coleman et al. (2006) depict baby boomers as individuals who "seek ways to maintain a healthy, active, energetic and engaged lifestyle" (p. 194). Thus, it is a crucial time for marketers to consider preparing for the upcoming demands of baby boomers.

In the *Educational Gerontology* journal, Johnson and Bungum (2008) showed a noticeable increase in activity among baby boomers as a result of their willingness to learn new

avocations. Particularly, findings of this study indicated that baby boomers prefer low impact activities, acknowledge the probable increase in the risk of injury, perceive time management as the barrier to acquiring new activities, and find advantages to learning new activities that promote improved health and longevity. Johnson and Bungum concluded that health educators should consider promoting low impact and cognitively enriching activities for baby boomers. As such, yoga, frequently referred to as a mind-body exercise (Collins, 1998), can be one of the most valuable options for baby boomers because the benefit of yoga offers great advantages to the baby boomer demographics and yoga is a meditational activity that has low impact.

Martyn Evans (2011), a researcher in the area of new products and services development, argued that understanding the future is important to designers, and they need to prepare for the unpredictable. He advised that successful designers should be able to recognize and grasp future demand, even when consumers may not know their future needs and wants. Thus, it would be wise to consider possible growing future demand in baby boomers' yoga wear. Consequently, successful active wear designers should offer the products that satisfy the baby boomer market.

Another feature of the baby boomers is that they are different from previous senior age groups. Even though baby boomers have become the senior population, they do not have the same buying behaviour or lifestyle as their parents' generation. Kuehner-Hebert (2004) pointed out that baby boomers have a younger mindset and they do not think of themselves as being of old age. Thus, marketers should avoid the use of stereotypes related to aging consumers to target the baby boomers. Marketers must reconsider their studies of consumers and carefully observe and analyze this group. It is vital to understand baby boomers as seniors who are in their 50s and 60s, yet who still cling to the behaviour they had as youths.

**Bodily changes with aging.** Dr. Richard W. Besdine (2013) explained bodily changes related to aging. He described that physical functions peak before 30 years of age and then gradually decline. Functional changes through the life span include loss of bone density; thinner joints; less elastic ligaments; decreased muscle strength; weakened bones, particularly at the thighbone, the end of arm bones at the wrist, and the spine; loss of near vision; and thinner and less elastic skin.

However, Besdine (2013) suggested regular exercise has many benefits that mitigate body changes in older people. Regular exercise brings positive outcomes that help prevent the physical disorders related to aging. Besdine recommends a 30-minute workout, five times per week for those who do not have physical restrictions or limitations. This workout routine consists of four types of exercise: endurance, muscle strengthening, balance training, and flexibility, which together would promote staying healthier longer.

Yoga is an appealing option for baby boomers since it combines all four types of Besdine's prescribed workout. Yet, as the Besdine (2013) suggested, there still exist some risks for doing these exercises, as older individuals are more susceptible to possible injuries. With a decline in bodily function, the older yoga practitioners might experience different struggles during practice. Therefore, tailored classes and modified postures should be provided for them. In addition, yoga wear may help support them with special functions, which have not yet been made available within the current market.

In addition to changes in the internal bodily function, but changes in body shapes also occur with the aging process, particularly among women. Campbell and Horne (2001) researched the common characteristics of the body shape of women aged over 50, and reported that women experience "shorter stature, thickened waist, protruding abdomen, flattened buttocks, and a



forward tilt of the head and shoulders” (p. 196) with the aging process. Lee, Damhorst, Lee, Kozar, and Martin (2012) criticized the fact that the U.S. clothing sizing system was based on measurements conducted in the 1940s, which is not accurate for use in the current market (Ashdown & Dunne, 2006; Devarajan & Istook, 2004). Similarly, the Canadian General Standards Board remarked that Canadian women apparel size system was taken from the database on a population of about 10,000 American women measured in 1939 and 1940 (Gupta & Zakaria, 2014). As a result, many complaints associated with garment fit occurred among apparel consumers over the last several decades (Howarton & Lee, 2010). Even though some further research regarding a new sizing system has been undertaken, few researchers have conducted studies involving people in an older age group (Lee et al., 2012, p. 103).

**Baby boomers as a new over-50s consumer group.** A number of scholars have researched the clothing behaviour of baby boomers. Baby boomers have a distinctive lifestyle as they are socially oriented, focus on social self-image, and have fashion leadership (Stern, Gould, & Barak 1987). Even though they are categorized as a senior group, they do not associate themselves with the prejudice traditionally related to the elderly. They are redefining the older market with a new image of aging, which involves being more socially engaged and fashion conscious (Kent-Dychtwald, 1997). Findings from Sawchuck’s (1995) research also serve as evidence that baby boomers spend more money any than any other age cohort on luxury products such as vacations, automobiles, and alcohol. Harris (2003) explains baby boomers “see age as a lifestyle choice rather than a chronological imperative” (p. 6). This indicates that baby boomers are different from any previous cohort.

Since there are different needs and wants among the over-50s market today, several consumer studies investigated baby boomers. Scholars such as Moore and Carpenter (2008),

Mumel and Prodnik (2005), and Myers and Lumbers (2008) have reviewed baby boomers' clothing choices, fashion preferences, and the factors that influence their final decisions when shopping for clothes. Overall, the researchers concluded that baby boomers value quality over other aspects, compared to other age cohorts.

Most notably, Howarton and Lee (2010) investigated fitting preferences of 229 U.S. female baby boomers. The researchers asked participants about their purchasing attitudes and behaviours, and identified valued apparel characteristics and expectations and frustrations regarding garment fit. The results showed the female baby boomers' distinct preferences in clothing choice and also highlighted the fact that 99% of respondents disagreed that the current apparel industry catered to their needs. The study found that multiple features were considered before a garment was purchased, including ease of following care instructions (82.5%), fabric content (75.5%), and the construction of the garment (56.8%). Additionally, participants in Howarton and Lee's study reported their clothing preferences are determined by how comfortable the clothing is (91.3%), how well the apparel fits (79.9%), and how flattering the garment is to their figures (76.9%; p. 226). Also the authors indicated that the female baby boomers use various tactics, such as use of colour and layering techniques, to hide bodily features. The respondents answered that they are most comfortable showing, by order of preference, their forearms, lower legs, and neck. On the contrary, they felt least comfortable when showing their upper legs, breasts, and stomach. In terms of sleeve lengths, the respondents showed a preference for full- and short-sleeved apparel, and a dislike for spaghetti straps and sleeveless garments. With regards to skirt lengths, skirts coming down to the lower end of the calf or just below the knee were preferred.

Sparado (2012) conducted a similar market analysis with Canadian female boomers with

55 participants. Her results indicated the following major details sought when purchasing a piece of garment:

- For tops: V-necklines, light weight sweaters and layers, versatile silhouettes, accentuated natural waist, and form fitting fabrics that did not cling to the mid-section.
- For bottoms: Mid-rise pants, mid-length skirts that fell below the knee, lightweight fabrics, versatile or elongating silhouettes, narrow legs, accentuated natural curves of the body, little cling to the thighs, and straight or A-line skirts. (p. 41)

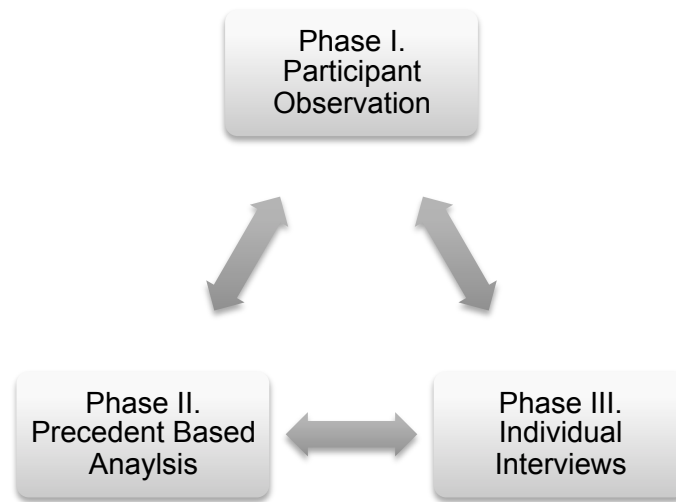
Sparado elaborated that the element most commonly sought is the clothing details that accommodate bodily changes that occur as the wearer enters her 50s and 60s. The results also showed that female baby boomers value comfortable, versatile clothes that convey an updated and contemporary sense of fashion, and are also depicted as fun, interesting, and unique (p. 46).

Many scholars concluded that research done by the current industry is only somewhat, if at all, meeting the needs and wants of the baby boomers. Thus, further investigation and research to inform the apparel market is required. Because the current literature has a dearth of studies examining active wear for baby boomers, this research investigating yoga wear for baby boomers is expected to fill this gap.

After reviewing backgrounds regarding the FEA model, yoga, and baby boomers, the researcher found a strong rationale to study this field of baby boomers' yoga wear, because the number of yoga practitioners in the baby boomer generation is expected to grow; the demands for shopping yoga wear would be higher as time goes on; and research has never been undertaken that involves yoga wear for baby boomers.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

This study used qualitative methods and applied ethnographic approaches to gain a better understanding of yoga clothing behaviour from individuals' experiences. The researcher gathered data over a period of 3 months (January-March, 2016) in Toronto, Canada. The data collection process involved three phases: Participant observation, precedent based analysis, and individual interviews (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Data collection phases.

The first phase involved observation of yoga participants in the progress of yoga classes in order to see how yoga practitioners choose and engage with yoga apparel while practicing yoga. The data collected in the observation phase facilitated phases II and III. The second phase encompassed a precedent-based analysis, which means the researcher conducted the market study to investigate what products and retailers in yoga wear currently are available to consumers. Finally, phase III consisted of interviews with eight people who contacted the researcher in order to voluntarily participate via recruitment posters. All the phases of data collection were initiated after receiving approval from the Research Ethics Board at Ryerson University (Appendix A). The following sections detail procedures of each phase.

## Methods and Procedures

**Phase I: Participant observation.** Marshall and Rossman (1989) defined observation as “the systemic description of events, behaviours and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study” (p. 79). Kawulich (2005) in turn posited that observation is an invaluable data collection method to get a better understanding of the context as well as the participants’ behaviours and their activities. Particularly, this study needed the observation phase since the nature of yoga activity involves constant body movements and quiet meditation that participants would not be willing to share or show during one-on-one interviews.

In this phase, the researcher, while attending and observing the yoga classes, investigated the baby boomers’ clothing choices and possible clothing concerns in their yoga wear. Also, the researcher hoped to see the differences in clothing choice and preferences by age groups. Thus, when selecting the place of observation, the researcher carefully considered whether or not the yoga studio could accommodate practitioners in a wide range of age groups and different levels. After comparing three different yoga sites in Toronto as potential observation venues, the researcher selected an athletic centre at a university located in Toronto. The chosen venue provided various types of drop-in group fitness classes including different yoga styles and participants with a variety of demographic traits. In order to gain entry and understanding of the characteristics of the venue, permission from internal collaborators was essential. Thus, the researcher requested and received an official letter of approval from the group fitness program coordinator and their instructor (Appendix B).

The researcher further discussed with the internal collaborators about what classes would be the best suited to the research and the specific processes of conducting observations. After an observation schedule of yoga classes was set, potential participants were notified of the details

about the observation through announcement documents posted in studios a week ahead of the chosen dates (Appendix C). Also, the instructor of the yoga classes made a verbal announcement at the start of every class so that all participants were aware of the details of the research observation. After the instructor's announcement, explicit verbal consents were collected from participants, but only after the researcher had left the room to prevent potential participants from feeling pressure to consent. The data collection of this phase was conducted only when all participants in a class agreed to be observed.

The researcher in this study took the observer-as-participant stance (Gold, 1958), whereby the researcher is allowed to participate, with the main role being data collection, and the group being studied is aware of the researcher's observation activities. In this study, the researcher was not a member of the studied group (baby boomer yoga practitioners); her activity consisted of observing rather than participating in the class. Kawulich (2005) explained that the observer-as-participant stance provides the most ethical approach among the four stances of the observer, those being: the complete participant, the participant as observer, the observer as participant, and the complete observer. In this case the participants were aware of the researcher's observation activity and the researcher emphasized her role of observing more than participating.

The researcher also conducted disguised observation (Parasuraman, Grewal, & Krishnan 2006), defined as observation in a natural setting. In this case, the researcher sat at the back of the room and took notes of what she observed. During this phase, there were no photographs or recordings of the classes and participants due to ethical and privacy concerns. Also, to avoid being intrusive, the researcher did not approach participants in person. This phase was initiated in February 2016 in six classes, each lasting an hour. Thus, total observation time was 6 hours.

Field notes were taken in an observation format (see Figure 3) that the researcher created during each observation by hand writing. Then, the data were analyzed after the completion of this phase in which all the data were gathered.

- Observation date: - Class name / time: - Number of total participants: ____ (Female __, Male __) - Number of baby boomers (Based on appearance): ____ (Female __, Male __)	
Choice of yoga clothing (Types of garment, length, sleeve, fabrics, fit, apparel brands identified...)	
Possible garment concerns, needs, and preferences during poses and movements.	

*Figure 3.* Observation form.

Even though the researcher is not in the baby boomer generation, she has been practicing yoga for more than 5 years; hence, she has a comprehensive understanding of the group's activities in yoga. This allowed the researcher to transcribe more detailed descriptions in the field notes. A constant comparison analysis, proposed by Corbin and Strauss (2008), was used for data analysis. The gathered field notes were compared, and categories then were integrated with a simultaneous comparison. Table 1 presents demographic information about observed class participants.

Table 1

*Observed Participants*

Observation	Total number of class participants	Number of female participants	Number of male participants	Number of baby boomers
1	23	18	5	3
2	19	14	5	5
3	14	13	1	3
4	10	8	2	0
5	12	11	1	3
6	14	12	2	3

**Phase II: Precedent-based analysis.** This phase presents the data collection from the researcher's principal investigation of the current yoga wear market. She conducted the market analysis of products and retailers. The researcher visited 10 different yoga apparel and active wear retail stores in Toronto, Canada. The 10 sites included flagship stores of Nike, H&M, Adidas, Gap, Victoria's Secret, Aeri, Lululemon, Manduka, Hyba, and TNA, all located in Toronto, since these were the most commonly observed yoga wear brand products worn by yoga participants in phase I. During the visits, the researcher gathered the information regarding product features while listening to sales associates' explanations and examining product descriptions and in-store advertisements. Also, product features on the web sites of the aforementioned 10 apparel retailers were investigated. The gathered data of yoga wear product features was interpreted as yoga practitioners' clothing needs defined by yoga wear producers. Then, the user needs in yoga wear, regardless of user age, were organized based on the FEA model (see Table 2).



Table 2

*Clothing Needs for Yoga Wear Regardless of User Age*

Attribute	Clothing needs for yoga wear as determined by the researcher
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stretchy enough and light weight to move</li> <li>– Comfortable to put on and take off</li> <li>– Soft and cool touch texture</li> <li>– Wrinkle-free</li> <li>– Breathable, sweat wicking, and anti-odour fabric for thermal comfort</li> <li>– Easy to wash and dry</li> <li>– Breast support for female yoga practitioners</li> </ul>
Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Brand value and logo with prestigious image</li> <li>– Eco-friendly manufacturing</li> <li>– Health and well-being conscious image</li> <li>– Fair trade mark</li> <li>– Locally made</li> <li>– Quality of fabric</li> <li>– Style that fits self-image</li> <li>– Design exclusivity; unique style</li> </ul>
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Colour</li> <li>– Pattern of the fabric</li> <li>– Silhouette, garment fit, and interaction with body movement</li> <li>– Proper amount of body coverage</li> <li>– Possibility of style variations; multiple styling</li> <li>– Availability of body shaping function</li> <li>– Pads or push up function for the breast for female yoga practitioners</li> </ul>

Source: Principal investigation of current yoga wear market conducted by the researcher.

After investigating products, the researcher then examined apparel-market providers' yoga wear segment. Given the concept of yoga wear, it is important to discuss and distinguish

the terms below. The definitions are derived from the Women's Wear Daily (WWD) fashion dictionary:

- Sportswear: "Originally used to refer to clothing for active sports and later to clothing worn to watch sporting events, this term has come to be applied to the broad category of casual wear and is worn at any time of the day and for a wide variety of activities" ("Sportswear," 2016, para. 1).
- Active wear: "Today the term active wear is more likely to be applied to clothing for active sports" (as cited in "Sportswear," 2016, para. 1).
- Yoga wear: There not yet an official definition of yoga wear. As clothing worn to play tennis is called "tennis wear" and the clothing worn to play golf is called "golf wear," the researcher has chosen to define "yoga wear" as the clothing worn by yoga practitioners for yoga practice.

Because there are many types of yoga, the definition of yoga wear could vary by individual. Depending on which type of yoga one practices, yoga practice could be active or passive. Thus, clothing for practice, in other words yoga wear, can be any type of sportswear, active wear, or even a basic cotton T-shirt and pants. When it comes to shopping for yoga wear in the market, consumers can find options from various fashion apparel brands within or outside the active wear market. After conducting principal investigation according to brand identity and what their products feature, the researcher divided the yoga wear market to be as inclusive as possible and classified the market into four different groups shown in Table 3.

Table 3

*Possible Yoga Wear Providers—Retail Brands in the Active Wear Market*

Brand type	Brand examples (date founded)
A. Professional yoga wear brands	
Brands that have initiated in the recent past, starting with the idea of yoga incorporation, and keep the majority of their products in clothing designed specifically for yoga practice. Products include not only yoga wear but also yoga gears such as yoga mats, bags, towels, blocks, and straps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lululemon (1998)</li> <li>– Manduka (1997)</li> <li>– Gaiam (1988)</li> <li>– Prana(1992)</li> <li>– Beyond Yoga (2006)</li> </ul>
B. Sportswear brands	
Brands that have a long history in producing clothing purposed for various sports activities. Their garments are designed more for authentic sports use than any other brands, with the priority on utilitarian functionality over style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Nike (1964)</li> <li>– Reebok (1895)</li> <li>– Adidas (1949)</li> <li>– Puma (1948)</li> </ul>
C. Casual wear brands	
Brands that produce casual clothing that can be worn during athletic activities; running, cycling, studio workouts, to-and-from gym, or anytime of the day, designed with priority on style over functionality. But, still their design serves a comfortable fitting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lole (2002)</li> <li>– Titika (2009)</li> <li>– TNA (2002)</li> <li>– Hyba (2015)</li> </ul>
D. Other fashion brands	
Brands that have been successful in a different fashion apparel market than the active wear market, those that have just started to producing active wear partly, or recently added a new athletic line in their collection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– H&amp;M</li> <li>– Forever21</li> <li>– Express</li> <li>– Gap</li> <li>– Victoria’s Secret</li> <li>– Topshop</li> <li>– Aeri</li> </ul>

As is evident in Table 3, there are many active wear brands on the market today, each with a different focus. Group A consists of professional yoga wear brands targeting yoga practitioners as their main customers. Such brands emphasize their products to be technically

designed solely for yoga practice. Mostly, their price range is high with a premium image of the exclusivity for yoga practitioners. Prices run from CAD\$50 to \$200 for a piece of top or bottom clothing. A yoga mat is on average CAD\$60, ranging from \$48 to \$128.

Group B consists of well-known sportswear brands. They convince customers that their products involve the invention and innovation of design. They advertise that they use the latest cutting edge technology and conduct testing and research of products with experienced athletes so that they benefit users' workout efficiency. Within the fashion industry, the general public have the preconception that the brands in group B would better serve the utilitarian purposes of sportswear than other style-oriented fashion brands. Prices are usually high as with group A, but because they usually have broader distribution channels and promotions such as bargain sales, customers would be able to find more opportunities to purchase their products at lower prices than at the original prices.

Group C encompasses with brands that produce clothing with concepts such as active, sportive, and casual for younger adults and teenagers. Their products are mainly transferrable between active sports and daily look. Thus, young consumers under the age of 30 choose these brands for their daily clothes as these brands not only focus on comfort but also follow trendy colours and patterns. As they target younger consumers, prices are lower than the brands in groups A and B.

Lastly, the numerous other fashion apparel brands comprising group D have added a new athletic clothing line in their collection, including Gap Fit from Gap, VSX Sport from Victoria's Secret, and New Aerie Studio from Aerie. Even high-end fashion designers such as Rebecca Minkoff and Tory Burch introduced their active wear lines. Stella McCartney and Kate Spade also have introduced their athletic wear line by co-branding with Adidas and Beyond Yoga,

respectively. In addition, most fast fashion brands, such as H&M, Express, and Forever 21, have already started to produce bra tops, tanks, and leggings that can be worn for studio and outdoor fitness activities. As group D involves different levels of brands, the prices vary and range widely as well. Mostly, fast fashion brands offer the benefit of cheaper prices. High-end brands involve for a much higher price, as their brand image combines luxury fashion and active wear.

In addition, some athletic wear retailers focus only on a specific target market, such as Ivivva (Operated by Lululemon Inc.) or Limeapple for children, the cohort under the age of 15. Nonetheless, there are no such active wear brands targeting other age cohorts, including the baby boomers group.

During phase II, the researcher also examined current trends (2014-2016) in yoga apparel design. According to *Yoga Journal*, the most circulated yoga related magazine, the trends in yoga apparel product development are as follows:

- For sports bras and tank tops, adjustable straps and convertible straps have appeared. The back of tops applied catchy designs with intricate straps or a double layer of fabric.
- Especially for women, yoga leggings presented fun, bold, colorful, and vivid patterns with prints, colour blocks, or various techniques of dyeing.
- A variety of necklines were applied such as high neck, halter, wide boat neck, etc.
- Cuts or partly see-through fabrics were used to show some part of the wearer's body.
- High-waist yoga pants were popular and introduced for the 2016 spring/summer season.
- Overall, bright or neon colours were much used for yoga clothing, gears, and props.

(Yoga Journal, 2016)

**Phase III: Individual interview.** This phase involved semi-structured individual interviews. The interview protocol included 15 open-ended questions (Appendix D), which was

edited and supplemented after compiling a comprehensive understanding of participants' behaviour through phase I. Some of the questions involved the FEA model, which analyzes clothing needs under three considerations proposed by Lamb and Kallal (1992). Potential interviewees were recruited through a purposive sample selection by posting recruitment documents in public places such as libraries, schools, gyms, and community boards.

The interviewees were four female and four male baby boomer yogis. One-on-one interviews were conducted to create a space in which participants feel more comfortable sharing their feelings than they would in a group context (Barbour, 2008). The interview was structured to discover (a) participants' bodies and their use of yoga practice, (b) discussion of yoga wear under FEA considerations, and (c) additional information. Before each interview, the researcher went through the research consent agreement (Appendix E) with the participant, and all participants signed the document when they agreed. All interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed. Upon completion of data analyses, all the associated files including recordings and transcribed scripts were deleted and destroyed.

After the completion of each interview, a Starbucks gift card was provided to each participant as a thank-you gift. Each interview session took an average of 25 minutes, ranging from about 20 to 35 minutes. Some participants left their email addresses with the researcher as they wished to be contacted to see the research results.

For data analysis, manual coding was conducted to select data that are substantive with regard to the study. Then, the data were organized in several sections of certain themes. De Munck and Sobo (1998) described codes as "rules for organizing symbols into larger and more meaningful strings of symbols. It is important, no imperative, to construct a coding system ... it offers a framework for organizing and thinking about the data" (p. 48). The data were examined

sentence by sentence. By performing analysis of interview transcripts and in combination with the observation field notes, the researcher identified major themes and categories, which are presented and discussed in chapter 4.

### **Population and Sample**

Recruitment of interviewees for this study was limited to participants who regularly practice yoga and are in the baby boomer generation. A total of eight people participated and their information is provided in Table 4. Each participant was given a number to ensure anonymity.

Table 4

#### *Interviewee Participants' Information*

Participant no.	Gender	Year of birth	Type of current yoga practice	Years, frequency, and self-identified level of yoga practice
1	Female	1947	Hatha	25 years; 3 times per week; intermediate
2	Female	1963	Boot camp	10 years; 3 times per week; advanced
3	Female	1963	Hatha	44 years; several times per week; intermediate to advanced
4	Female	1964	Kundalini, hatha	10 years; 3 times per week; intermediate
5	Male	1946	No name, classical yoga	On and off for more than 60 years, continuously 7 years; 5 times per week; intermediate to advanced
6	Male	1949	Hatha	50 years; once per day; intermediate to advanced
7	Male	1958	Classical	37 years; once per day; advanced
8	Male	1963	Maha	6 years; 3 times per week; intermediate

## **Methodological Limitations**

The limitations within the methods of this study were related to the scope and the size of data collection. The data collection in the observation phase of the study involved only six classes at one place. Due to the nature of yoga classes being quiet and meditational, it was difficult to acquire an access grant to observe yoga classes from a facility. Thus, finding the observational study site and discussing with internal collaborators led the researcher to conduct the given number of observations. Also, because the yoga style in the observed classes was limited to Hatha, the researcher's observations did not include a variety of yoga styles.

Due to monetary and time limitations, the number of interviewees was limited to eight, which is not a large population. The recruitment of interviewees who were yoga practitioners at various levels presented a challenge. All the interview volunteers were long-time yoga practitioners, which is natural given that highly involved yoga practitioners show more interest in participating in a study related to yoga. Consequently, the interviews went smoothly because participants had rich experiences with yoga and had much knowledge of its origins, specific postures, and philosophy.



## **Chapter 4: Findings**

Through the analysis of data compiled from observations and personal interviews, the researcher discovered three themes in this study: (a) clothing concerns and preferences in yoga wear under FEA; (b) purchase patterns and brand choices; and (c) perception of current yoga and yoga wear market.

### **Theme 1: Clothing Concerns and Preferences in Yoga Wear Under FEA**

Clothing concerns and preferences vary by individuals. One has different clothing concerns and preferences according to experiences in aging and changes in the body. Although this is true, observations and responses reflect a consistent tendency in the demographics studied.

To address the functional part of yoga wear, the interviews covered the topic of participants' yoga experience and physical bodies. Participants most frequently mentioned knees when asked which body part needed protection during yoga practice. This is because there are repeated postures and movements in yoga that hyperextend or put strong, direct pressure on the knees. More than half of the total participants remarked arthritis on the knees as a consequence of getting older, which requires more care and attention. They reported that they use a towel or an additional mat as a cushion to avoid knee discomfort. Participants frequently mentioned back, wrists, neck, spine, and hips as other body parts that need protection.

Body coverage is associated with both expressive and aesthetic elements of clothing. Female participants most preferred a sleeveless top and crop pants since they expressed comfort in showing forearms and neck, and discomfort in showing upper legs. This is consistent with the research results of Howarton and Lee (2010). Female participants additionally stated that they dislike tops that have low cuts around the neck or armholes, as these features do not offer sufficient support around these areas. Male participants presented their preferences for either

short-sleeved or sleeveless tops. For the bottom, male participants mentioned that slim or loose fitting shorts with lengths immediately above the knees are best. The reason behind the preferred bottom length was for cooling effect, and that it allowed them constant movements around the knees. Also, they added that it is better to see the alignment of knees. Both female and male participants explained that they prefer long-sleeved tops and full length of bottoms only when the temperature of the practice room is low. Otherwise, they said they do not prefer clothing with a high degree of body coverage since it keeps them too warm and interrupts movements.

The interviews also covered participants' preferences among three degrees of fitting (loose-slim-tight), which relates to how clearly one shows the body. Both male and female participants expressed comfort in wearing clothing that cling to their bodies nicely and is slim fitting. However, a compressing tight fit was unwanted. Some advanced yoga participants added that slim-fitting clothing is preferred since it does not slip down when they do upside-down postures. Male participants said that they like loose fitting clothing as second best for cooling, while women said loose fitting pants tend to be harm from tripping or catching. Participant 2 added that loose fitting clothing tend to cling to the body and create unnecessary spaces between clothing and skin, which makes her feel uncomfortable.

Preferences about aesthetic elements such as colour, pattern, and fabric appeared to be different for each individual. These preferences related more to personal taste, which cannot be generalized by age. One of the participants said she likes solid black workout clothing since it provides a slimming effect, while another said they like bright colours since solid black or grey colours are somewhat depressing. They described their willingness to try bright colours and said that patterns add more fun in yoga wear and motivate their workout. Others said that they like

solid colours of black, navy, and blue, and that they dislike colourful prints on garments as they distract their focus during practice.

Half of the participants preferred natural fabrics such as cotton, since it is soft and easy to care for. Participant 8 added that he also prefers recycled fabric or other new natural fabric such as organic bamboo textile featuring biodegradable and antibiotic effects. The other half preferred a blend of cotton and synthetic material. Participant 4 explained that she prefers technical fabrics for yoga wear as they are lighter in weight, easier to wash, quicker to dry, and are more stretchy. Participant 6 also mentioned that cotton and synthetic blended fabric gives more thermal comfort when perspiring, which happens considerably during his yoga practice. He added that when the cotton-made clothing becomes wet, that part of the clothing becomes uncomfortable as it creates friction against the skin. Participant 6 remarked:

If you do perspire a lot, the clothing has to be comfortable. I mean, even though cotton is used a lot, it has that problem once it is wet... it is a real pain to wear. You know, because it shapes and heavy, and it does not dry, it does not wick. So, it should look good but it should be really functional if you are sweating a lot, and still look good, if possible, but it has to be comfortable, which means it has to wick and dry easily. You know, if you are in a relaxation pose, you cannot really change your clothing. So, it should be adaptable to different conditions.

Table 5 provides a summary of details or concerns of yoga wear as it relates to FEA. This table was created from the interview results.

Table 5

*Baby Boomers' Garment Concerns and Preferences Under FEA Criteria—Interview Results*

FEA design criteria	Yoga wear concerns & preferences
1. Function	
– Putting on and taking off	Current compression types of tops and bras with lesser flexibility are difficult to put on and take off.
– Protection	Especially, knees or wrists should be cared for with additional cushioning pads. However, pads attached to clothing will make the user feel heavier, increase heat and distract movements. Making them detachable will be easier to wash, manage and utilise.
– Fabrics that are sweat wicking and easy to care for was much preferred.	Whether a garment is easily washable and needs no further care in terms of laundry and drying was a critical attribute for them. Participants mentioned that yoga makes practitioners perspire a lot, as this is of great concern.
2. Expression	
– Brand choice	Brand values do not affect purchase decisions.
– Locally made	Most of the interviewees said that they do not pay extensive attention to “locally made” garments.
– Green and ethical manufacturing process.	Most of the interviewees said that they do not pay extensive attention to “locally made” garments. Participants valued manufacturers who ensure eco-friendly and socially responsible work labour environments.
3. Aesthetics	
– Pants rise	For female participants, low-rise pants are not preferred. High-rise pants provide more coverage when doing the downward dog poses.
– Arm hole and neckline	Female participants reported that they feel uncomfortable in wearing tank tops with low armhole lines and low necklines.
– Length of pants.	All male participants answered they prefer shorts that reveal their knees. Most female participants chose crop or capris-lengths.

## **Theme 2: Purchase Patterns and Brand Choices**

Surprisingly, when participants were asked about their experiences of purchasing yoga wear, five participants (including all male participants) answered that they have never purchased clothing solely for yoga practice. The other participants remarked their frequency of purchasing yoga wear as once per year on average. Even though participants represented the practitioners with high involvement in yoga, in terms of years and frequency of practice, they did not find the necessity of yoga wear having a single purpose: yoga practice. They identified themselves as long-time yoga practitioners averaging 20 years. Hence, the level of yoga involvement does not affect clothing choices specific to the purpose of yoga practice.

Participants explained that they wear the same clothes for yoga, running, walking, and other general fitness. Participant 4 elaborated:

If you are going to make something that is yoga wear, I would love for it also be transferrable to a little more cardio or conditioning, one or the other stuff. Then I would be more inclined to buy it, because I can get more wear out of it and it will be worth it for me.

As such, participants indicated that the level of comfort is the most important attribute they consider when choosing what to wear for their yoga practice.

Moreover, Participant 3 added that she is motivated to shop and buy yoga wear when there are store sales, and similarly Participant 6 mentioned, “I mostly look for what is on sale.” Participant 2 said that she used to buy workout pants from named brands offering an exclusive line of athletic clothing. She explained that now she goes to Costco or other cheaper providers to buy no-named brand pants, due to the unreasonable prices of named brand products. All participants stated that the overall price offered by current professional yoga wear or sportswear

markets (represented as groups A and B in Table 3) is much higher than what they expect. Participants displayed indifference toward branded yoga products and clothing. Participant 8 remarked, “I do not buy any branded yoga apparel. Yoga is for everyone and I do not think that they need pricey yoga clothing to practice. You just need to practice and focus.” Rather than purchasing a garment based on brand, participants were more interested in good quality and reasonable prices as factors leading to their purchase decisions. Three participants stated that they use clothing (e.g., t-shirt) purchased or received for free from where they practice, such as a yoga studio or a gym. In addition, all participants showed no interest in purchasing yoga wear with prestigious brand images produced by luxury fashion brands (group A and partly group D in Table 3). However, some of them acknowledged that group A brands (e.g., Lululemon) make more effort to produce clothing for yoga practice, and presented willingness to purchase from those brands later when they need to buy a new yoga apparel.

Most of the participants answered that a garment being locally made is not an important factor in their purchase decisions. They understood many retailers sell products that are made in developing countries due to economic reasons. However, they found it very important for garments to be eco-friendly and from socially responsible manufacturers. They were concerned about providing fair trade and ethical work labour environment. Participant 4 said:

You want to make sure that it is fair trade. I need to make sure that socially I am being responsible that I am not taking advantages of those who have less than us. Also, environmentally, you know, I am doing something to create a future for the generations.

Participant 7 said, “I do not buy clothes that are made in India where women are making 15 cents an hour sewing clothes. I do not buy clothes like that.” Participants’ interest in sustainable fashion consumption when buying yoga wear supports findings from a recent study published in

the *Yoga Journal*, which concluded that “practitioners are highly concerned about their health, the environment and the community. Half of practitioners say they live green, eat sustainably and donate time to their community” (Yoga Journal, 2016, p. 5).

### **Theme 3: Perception of Current Yoga and Yoga Wear Market**

All participants except Participant 2 had the idea of valuing original and classical yoga. The most commonly practiced type of yoga among the participants was hatha (stated by five participants), which is one of the classical forms of yoga. Participants 5 and 6 even told the researcher that what they practice has no assigned name, and described that what they do is just repeat the sequence of postures that are from classical series of yoga movement. Only one female participant answered she does boot camp, which is a hybrid form of yoga that involves high-intensity cardio, flexibility, and balancing and working of core and abdominal muscles.

The seven participants were sceptical about current westernized forms of yoga, including hot yoga (also known as Bikram yoga). With regard to the westernized forms of yoga, they showed either doubts about additional benefits or its lack of spirituality. Participant 6 said,

Hot yoga is not beneficial, not proven to be of any benefit over regular yoga because people do not sweat toxics. I am sorry. Your body gets rid of toxics through kidneys, liver... it has its own mechanism. And if that is not working, you are in big trouble. You are not going to be able to get rid of it through your skin. So, people have this belief.

Also, hot yoga is a fixed series of Asanas, and yoga traditionally you modify, you know.

So, it actually goes against the regular yoga practice.

Even though there was no question specifically asking their thoughts regarding the spiritual side of yoga during the interview, most of them naturally mentioned their thoughts and opinions about what yoga is originally and how yoga is supposed to be. They were aware that a number of

types that are practiced in the West today became extended, blended, and quite different from the classical forms. Three of them mentioned that yoga is about unity. Participant 7 explained,

Yoga means union that is exactly what the word means, literally translated. You know what it is? When you do yoga, it links you with the universal consciousness. When you do yoga, it changes energy patterns. If you are asking me about what the yoga is, then this is exactly what it is. It is not the fashionable thing. It changes energy patterns. It can really change the structure of your whole body.

Similarly, Participant 8 said, “yoga is not an exercise for me. It is more about spirit, meditation and clearing myself. It is not like swimming and playing tennis. It is not about competition or score thing. It is about union.” The same participant added,

I think that yoga practitioners should know why they practice yoga. I mean, they should know the idea of yoga first. Through chanting, disciplining and breathing, you need to get deep in yoga about what is the idea behind. Then, it makes sense for some. Others may not like yoga, which is okay, too. Yoga is not the only way to do practice and make feel your soul and body good. There are other ways, too. It could be something else.

Several participants had similar thoughts; Participant 1 said, “The whole purpose of yoga is to sit quiet and do meditation. But, people do not realise that, yeah, it is like a workout today.”

Participant 4 remarked:

I am not a big fan of cardio-based and modernised yoga of today. Yoga is a discipline and a practice. When you get westernized, it becomes... because here in the western culture, everything is boom, boom, boom, go, go, go. Yoga has nothing to do with that. You do not even do this stretches if you are actually studying yoga. It is about breath. It is about meditation. It is about spirit. It is not physical. It is internal. It is different mental



state with taekwondo or Tai chi. I am not a big fan of... like hot yoga. Now, in Toronto, you can smoke weed and go do yoga. It is the biggest thing, the Ganja yoga studio. Are you kidding me? Do you know what I mean? ... Yoga is becoming more geared towards active people.

Participant 5 mentioned, “Yoga has been a commercial idea. Yoga is yoga, which means union. Yoga is about breath and soul to be unionised. Peaceful mind does not come from a hundred bucks pants.” Participant 7 presented a sceptical view about current yoga market by saying, “It is just they are just making money and capitalising on the latest something that is popular.” Participant 6 expressed the same perspective by mentioning, “There are some fashion brands that would add [yoga wear] to the regular line. They would just call their stuff as yoga wear but that did not make any changes.”

The practitioners’ persistent pursuit of classical yoga reflects that they value the spiritual side of yoga as it was originally meant to be. While disciplining the union between body and soul, they try to have a consistency in their behaviour as well. As they mentioned, in the perspective of consumption, they try to avoid poor purchases; for example, purchasing from a manufacturer that practices unethical and harmful behaviours in the world. Participant 6 noted that “I feel like, with yoga, it fits more the philosophy of yoga to be friendly to environment, you know, because you are being friendly to yourself.”

Participants also portrayed their valuing of the original intention of yoga by avoiding excessive and unnecessary purchases that may bring a temporary, vanity-based sense of joy. As their purchase patterns showed, their purchases of new apparel were not as frequent as the fast pace of current trends. Developers and marketers of commercial fashion industry products use

strategies that encourage their customers to keep shopping and spending money, and this appeared to have absolutely no relation with the participants' idea of yoga.

The pursuit of classical yoga not only changes practitioners' consumption habits to become green and socially responsible, but also affects their design and colour preferences of yoga wear. Participant 6 remarked,

I feel like yoga is a more introverted exercise, like, the focus is inward. It is not like aerobic classes. But I feel like, yoga wear turns in a bit more into fashion and people are focusing a little more [about clothing], when especially when that come in with neon or with all the patterns. I find that tends to be firmly distracting. I will look to see alignment from other people. But, I do not really want to be too stimulated by the look with colours. He added that his favourite garments are of solid colours that provide a hassle-free environment, both visually and physically. His biggest consideration with choosing yoga wear was all about being free of restrictions, in order to focus solely on the process of yoga practice, including controlling breath and body movements, enhancing discipline, meditation, and union.

Overall, from what participants commonly mentioned, it can be said that they value the original idea of classical yoga, which they think is not reflected in current active wear. In their points of view, their consciousness goes to the heart of the practice, not outward, while some new practitioners who do not understand the spiritual side of yoga do not much care about their consciousness during practice. Participant 7 stated,

Back in the 1970s when I started yoga, there was not a lot of people who practiced yoga, no video nor the Internet. I just learned from a book. I see everywhere I go now.

Enormous amount of people I see are carrying yoga mats. It is just... it is like people carrying water bottles. All yoga is about union and spiritual and that is what yoga is to me.

Participants think that use of fun colours and complicated designs in yoga wear is a consequence of popularity of yoga among the general public, and blended yoga with other activities such as aerobics or dances.

This chapter revealed that baby boomers showed different clothing concerns and preferences. With their changes in body from aging, participants presented that they have specific needs and preferred garment styles. Meanwhile, with regards to brand choices, participants did not have specific brands that they follow; instead, they valued the quality of garments. Low frequency of purchasing yoga wear was apparent. Participants expressed overall negative feelings in relation to the current commercialized yoga and yoga wear market.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The three research questions that the researcher initially hoped to answer throughout this study were as follows.

1. What are baby boomers' clothing concerns and preferences for yoga wear?
2. Are baby boomers satisfied with the yoga wear currently available in the market place?
3. Based on the FEA model, what recommendations can be drawn to develop specially designed yoga wear to meet the needs of this group?

The findings of this study discovered answers to the above questions. In response to Question 1, the clothing concerns and preferences for yoga wear have been identified from compiling results of observations and the interviews. Table 5 presents baby boomers' specific concerns and preferences. In sum, ease of putting on and taking off, protection on bodily areas such as knees and wrists, sweat wicking, and easy care of fabrics were the qualities that they look for in functional attributes. In terms of expressive attributes, they pay attention to quality over brand value, and eco-friendly and ethical manufacturing processes. With regards to aesthetic attributes, baby boomers present specific wants in the style of garment as shown in their preferences for high rise over low rise pants, sufficient support around armhole and neckline areas, and specific length of pants (crop for female and shorts above knees for male).

Question 2 sought to determine if baby boomers are satisfied with the current yoga wear market. By uncovering participants' purchase history and patterns, and choices regarding brands, the findings indicate that participants overall are unsatisfied with the market. Even though they did not state directly that they are not satisfied with the yoga apparel market, they expressed the difficulties of finding their yoga wear from the active wear retailers. As participants mentioned in common, professional yoga wear brands and sportswear brands (groups A and B in Table 3)

offer a good quality but are too expensive when purchasing a piece of workout outfit. Also, newly released, trendy products (group C, see Table 3) tend to suit younger consumers due to the use of bright colours, fun prints, and low cuts around neck and armhole. They did not find any value in active wear produced by luxury fashion designers (partly group D, see Table 3). In addition, poorly manufactured products that are harmful to the environment and or poor ethics were unwanted, which are usually from fast fashion labels (partly group D, see Table 3). As such, all possible yoga wear providers described in Table 3 are excluded in participants' purchase options. As a result, participants used either garments acquired from their gyms or studios, which on average satisfied their clothing needs in functionality and somehow met their aesthetic and expressive needs, or the garments of good quality that they purchased from re-distributors such as discount stores or outlets. Thus, participants do not feel that they are serviced sufficiently by the current market.

Question 3 sought to develop recommendations based on the FEA model. Accordingly, Table 6 was created by compiling commonly received responses from interview participants. As the researcher initially pointed out, there is a gap in the active wear market to serve baby boomers practicing yoga. To fill this gap, active wear designers and developers need to consider the comprehensive recommendations (see Table 6).

Table 6

*Recommendations to Develop Yoga Wear for Baby Boomer Yoga Practitioners*

FEA design criteria	Recommendations
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Easy to put on and take off; garment tops of compression type are unwanted.</li> <li>– Easy to launder, dry, and care for.</li> <li>– Sufficient protection to avoid unwanted body exposure during body movements in practice.</li> <li>– Breathable and stretchy fabrics are preferred.</li> <li>– Additional protection for the areas such as knees and wrists is wanted.</li> </ul>
Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Locally made is not important.</li> <li>– Eco-friendly manufacturing is crucial.</li> <li>– Luxury brands with prestigious image are not preferred.</li> <li>– Ethical manufacture process is much cared for.</li> <li>– Price is an important factor to purchase decision. Over \$100 for a piece of garment is perceived as too high.</li> </ul>
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Long or full length in yoga garment is not preferred.</li> <li>– Slim fitting is preferred for both male and female, but tight and loose fitting are unwanted.</li> <li>– For female, high-rise and crop pants and enough garment support around armholes and bust are preferred.</li> <li>– Shorts revealing knees are preferred by male.</li> <li>– Too bright/bold colours or prints in yoga wear are unwanted.</li> </ul>

**Implications**

Results in this study illuminate baby boomers' distinctive needs and wants for an activity (yoga) garment. Participants were disappointed that they could not easily find appropriate garment within what is already available to them in the market. These findings are consistent

with previous research in garment development for baby boomers age cohort (Chae & Evenson, 2014; Lee et al., 2012, Sparado, 2012), in which this group has clothing needs distinguished from other younger groups and there is a positive future demand in this group.

The boomers in this study expressed negative feelings in the recent commercialized yoga wear market that opposes the philosophy of yoga. Participants asserted what they wear during yoga practice should embrace the spiritual side of yoga, such as focusing on inner peace rather than the outer world, as well as the self-love aspect. Thus, this study reveals a new insight that development of baby boomers' activity garment should consider not only their clothing design needs but also their attitude and thoughts that they have for the activity.

Product developers in the active wear market are advised that there is a rich opportunity to serve the baby boomer generation. In fact, as the statistics have shown, there is a large number of people over the age of 50 who want to stay healthy and invest time and money for an active life style. Active wear designers should be aware of older persons' different clothing needs and wants, and are encouraged to apply preferred design elements. In that way, the baby boomer consumers would feel more appreciated by such product offerings and could avoid possible injuries during activities.

### **Future Research Opportunities**

This study explored baby boomers' needs and wants in yoga garments and their perception of current yoga wear products in the market. However, the scope of ethnographic methods used in this study (phases I and III) did not involve a broad enough sample population. In phase I, the researcher took the observational data collection only at one place, for 6 hours. For phase III, the total number of interviewees was eight (four female and four male participants). Further exploration with a larger number of various observation places, and a broader range of

research demographics can generate clearer differences between consumer groups by age cohort. In so doing, stronger strategies to target the baby boomers could be generated. Also, with a large population sample, researchers could identify sub-groups within the baby boomer generation according to different lifestyles and further age segmentation.

In addition, the researcher included walk-in visits of 10 different retail stores for the market analysis in the phase II precedent-based analysis. This was limited to a given season (late winter and early spring). Thus, examining market and products during other seasons may result in different product groups and features. However, the researcher can assert that seasons would not impact yoga wear products significantly because the activity is normally done indoor.

Scholars are encouraged to include prototype development, prototype evaluation, and field tests of this study of the yoga wear development for the demographics as next stages. Prototype garments and refinement by many baby boomer yoga practitioners would greatly enhance the yoga wear for the demographics.

Lastly, researchers are advised to study and develop active sportswear for baby boomers enjoying other activities such as skiing, swimming, and tennis. It is a reasonable recommendation because the baby boomer market is a lucrative consumer group in the active wear market.



## Appendix A: Ryerson Research Ethics Board Approval Letter



To: Sunyang Park  
Fashion (MA)

Re: REB 2015-304: FUNCTIONAL YOGA WEAR FOR BABY BOOMER YOGIS

Date: November 17, 2015

Dear Sunyang Park,

The review of your protocol REB File REB 2015-304 is now complete. The project has been approved for a one year period. Please note that before proceeding with your project, compliance with other required University approvals/certifications, institutional requirements, or governmental authorizations may be required.

This approval may be extended after one year upon request. Please be advised that if the project is not renewed, approval will expire and no more research involving humans may take place. If this is a funded project, access to research funds may also be affected.

Please note that REB approval policies require that you adhere strictly to the protocol as last reviewed by the REB and that any modifications must be approved by the Board before they can be implemented. Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication from the Principal Investigator as to how, in the view of the Principal Investigator, these events affect the continuation of the protocol.

Finally, if research subjects are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research.

Please quote your REB file number (REB 2015-304) on future correspondence.

Congratulations and best of luck in conducting your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Lavallée".

Lynn Lavallée, Ph.D.  
Chair, Research Ethics Board

## **Appendix B: Letter of Permission to Observe Approved by Internal Collaborators**

Dear [Yoga studio owner and instructors]:

My name is Sunyang Sarah Park. I am a graduate student at School of Fashion, Ryerson University. I am requesting permission to observe some classes/your class(es) in the studio for research data collection.

This request is for permission to include observation results as part of the following project that I am preparing:

A Major Research Project [Functional Yoga Wear for Baby Boomer Yogis], which will be presented to Ryerson University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Fashion Master of Arts in the Program of Fashion.

What I will do when observing is sitting/standing at the back of the room, taking notes of what I observe with regards to garment design in wearers during yoga practice. I will get verbal permission from all potential participants and will conduct only when everyone agrees to be observed.

The project and findings will be made available to the public for noncommercial and educational/research purposes when finalized.

I would greatly appreciate your permission. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact me, the principal investigator:

Sunyang Sarah Park  
[slpark@ryerson.ca](mailto:slpark@ryerson.ca)  
350 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5B 2K3,  
Phone: 416-979-5000 ext 7172.

A duplicate copy of this request has been provided for your records. If you agree with the terms as described above, please sign the letter where indicated below.

Sincerely,  
Sunyang Sarah Park                      Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission is hereby granted:  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name & Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board.

## Appendix C: Announcement for Observation



Yeates SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THE SCHOOL OF FASHION



# Announcement for Observation

Hello everyone,

There is a request from a research student to observe some yoga classes in the studio for 9 days between January 2016 and February 2016. The researcher will be observing and taking notes during the class, in order to get a sense of how well the clothing we wear supports our yoga activities. This information will contribute to a graduate study on developing functional yoga wear for baby boomer yogis.

We (the studio and staff) have considered the ethical implications of this observational study carefully, and have decided to give permission to the researcher to observe the yoga participants in this studio.

We would like to reassure yoga members of the following:

- Before the class, the instructor will announce that the researcher will be observing, and the instructor will collect the verbal agreement from all class members. The researcher will not be in the studio at this time.
- If you feel uncomfortable and do not wish to participate, you can simply raise your hand to the instructor when asked. If this is the case, the researcher will not conduct the observation of the class.
- The researcher will enter the room to conduct the observation only when every student in the class agrees to be observed.
- The researcher will enter the room to conduct the observation only when every student in the class agrees to be observed.
- If the researcher is invited to observe the class, she will sit/stand at the back of the room.
- She will take notes of what she observes with regards to garment design.
- There will be no photographs or recording of the class and participants during the observation.
- The researcher will not ask or approach individuals in person.
- Students' names will not be mentioned in the data.

If you are interested in more information regarding this study, contact:

Sarah Sunyang Park, a graduate student in Masters of Arts  
The School of Fashion, Ryerson University  
416-979-5000 ext 7172 / [s1park@ryerson.ca](mailto:s1park@ryerson.ca)

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board.

## Appendix D: Interview Protocol

1. Do you consider yourself to be a baby boomer? The term Baby-Boomer is defined as individuals born between 1946 and 1964 in the years following World War II.
2. How long have you been practicing yoga?
3. How frequently do you practice yoga in a week?
4. How would you define your level of yoga practicing? (i.e., beginner, intermediate, advanced)
5. What kinds of yoga do you take usually?
6. Have you ever purchased yoga wear or clothing only for yoga practice? If yes, how often do you buy yoga clothing?
7. How would you describe baby boomers' physical features compared to other age groups?
8. What difficulties or issues (for example, loss of balance, loss of flexibility, etc.) would you say baby boomer yogis confront during their yoga practice?
9. Are there specific body parts that should be protected or cared for during your/baby boomer yogis' yoga practice?
10. Generally, I noticed that many people for example: adjust their straps, pull their tops, fold their mats, etc. Have you experienced any discomfort like these?
11. Do you have any concerns or suggestions to improve yoga wear in terms of *functional* elements? (i.e. fabric or garment construction)
12. Do you have any concerns or suggestions to improve yoga wear in terms of *expressive* elements? (i.e. reflected social status in clothing or brand choices)
13. Do you have any suggestions to improve yoga wear in terms of *aesthetics* elements? (i.e. colour or design details)
14. Is there anything else you would like to mention on the topic of yoga wear for baby boomer yogis?

Thank you for your time. Please accept this token (Starbucks gift card) as a thank you for your time. If you would like a copy of this final report, I can email it to you.

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board

## **Appendix E: Consent Agreement Form**

### **Ryerson University Consent Agreement**

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Please read this consent form so that you understand what your participation will involve. Before you consent to participate, please ask any questions, to be sure you understand what your participation will involve.

#### **[EXPLORING YOGA WEAR NEEDS FOR THE BABY BOOMER GENERATION]**

**INVESTIGATORS:** This research study is being conducted by Sunyang Sarah Park, and her supervisor, Professor Lucia Dell'Agnese from the School of Fashion at Ryerson University.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Sunyang Sarah Park, s1park@ryerson.ca, 350 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5B 2K3, phone: 416-979-5000 ext 7172.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY** The purpose of this research study is to demonstrate clothing needs of baby boomer yogis for their practice. In this project, Baby-Boomer is defined as an individual born between 1946 and 1964. In order to reach the aforementioned goal, the researcher will address the need for yoga garments by interviewing 12 baby boomer yoga practitioners and yoga instructors in Toronto. The eligibility criteria for prospective participants includes female and male yoga practitioners in the baby boomer generation, who have continued yoga practice for more than three months on a regular basis, more than two times a week. Additionally, some participants will be yoga trainers. Ineligibility criteria includes: 1) Youth yogis since this group has already been covered by the current market and is not the target object of this research, and 2) beginners in yoga who have yoga experience of less than three months, and therefore may lack a deep understanding of yoga. This project is conducted by Sunyang Park, a graduate student in partial completion of her Master's degree. Thus, the results will contribute to her Major Research Project.

**WHAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DO:** If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview. A total of 12 open-ended questions will be asked. There are no right or wrong answers. You will answer the questions honestly from your experience. You will be asked about 1) your yoga experience 2) any bodily changes that might have occurred to you with aging and the relevance to yoga practice. 3) any concerns in your current yoga wear, and 4) provide suggestions and clothing needs for improved yoga wear for the baby boomers (It is recommended that you bring your yoga wear to the interview) .

The interview will be conducted in a mutually agreed location that ensures aural and visual privacy. The interview will take approximately half an hour.

The only demographic data that will be collected is gender, age and contact information. All other personal information is not needed for this study. A professional transcribing service will be used to transcribe your answers. The transcriber will sign a confidentiality agreement. Research findings will be accessible to participants after the project is officially published in May 2016. This will be sent to your email if you wish.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS:** You may not benefit personally or directly from participating in this study. However, you are contributing to the research that will assist apparel designers in the apparel market to better understand bodily features of the baby boomer generation for developing improved yoga garments. It is hoped that, as a result, baby boomer yogis will be able to enjoy practicing yoga with much higher efficiency, increased comfort and lower risk of injury. Also, the research outcomes may shed further light on the significance of the academic study of functional athletic wear for the baby boomer group. The researcher anticipates this project to be a knowledge base for future studies regarding clothing development for a specific group of individuals.

**WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS TO YOU AS A PARTICIPANT:** The potential risks of participating in this project will be minimal. However, you may feel uncomfortable when you are asked to describe any physical changes with aging. If you feel any discomfort during your participation, you may skip answering a question or stop participation at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** For your privacy, your name will remain confidential. Instead, you will be allocated a number (e.g., “Participant 1”). The interview will be audio recorded and then transcribed by a professional transcriber. The recording file will be transmitted electronically. The transcriber will sign a confidentiality agreement. The audio file will be stored in the researcher’s 4-digit password-locked phone device. Signed consent forms and printed transcripts will be stored in a locked drawer only accessible by the researcher at her home. The transcribed document files and audio files will also be stored in my laptop, which requires the password to log in. All data files will be locked with the password, and will only be accessible to the researcher and the transcriber. Once the interview transcript is written, it will be shown to you, and you have the right to review and edit it. All the electronic data will be deleted and destroyed after the project is officially published in May, 2016.

**INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION:** The participant will not receive monetary payment for participation. A Starbucks gift card will be given to compensate the participants for their time. Please note that even if you withdraw during or after your participation, the incentive will be provided.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL:** Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If any question makes you uncomfortable, you can skip that question. You may stop participating at any time and you will still be given the incentive described above. If you choose to stop participating, you may also choose to not have your data included in the study. Your choice of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with Ryerson University, the Yoga studio or the research investigator Sunyang Sarah Park.

**QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY:** If you have any questions about the research now, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact Sunyang Sarah Park, a MA candidate at the School of Fashion, Ryerson University, [s1park@ryerson.ca](mailto:s1park@ryerson.ca), 350 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5B 2K3, phone: 416-979-5000 ext 7172.

This study has been reviewed by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study please contact:

Research Ethics Board  
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation  
Ryerson University  
350 Victoria Street  
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3  
416-979-5042  
[rebchair@ryerson.ca](mailto:rebchair@ryerson.ca)

**CONFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT:**

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to participate in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement. You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I agree to be audio-recorded for the purposes of this study. I understand how these recordings will be stored and destroyed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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