

Stage 2 Research Project B – 2014

External Assessment Cover Sheet

Assessment Type 3: Evaluation

SACE Registration Number:

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Research Question: What are the effects of high heels on female health and how can I design a caring pair of high heels? _____

_____ word count _____

This **evaluation** is assessed using the following specific features:

Synthesis	Evaluation
S3	E1
	E2
	E3

RESEARCH PROJECT B

ASSESSMENT TYPE 3. EVALUATION

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF HIGH HEELS ON FEMALES HEALTH AND HOW CAN I DESIGN A CARING PAIR OF HIGH HEELS?

Summary of the research question and research outcome

A series of TV programs about high heels caught my eyes last year. What are the side effects of high heels for females' feet became my initial question. During the process of researching plenty of fresh information, which was related to the negative influence on other parts of bodies of females, was found. As the project progressed, the question was refined to help females find out what are the side effects of high heels which impacted their figure and to use this information to design high heels.

After a lot of preparation my outcome was a design for a caring pair of high heels including more space for females' toes, avoiding the diseases like bunions. As well, the heel for high heels can be detachable. For the materials of my ideal high heels I chose soft cotton because females always complained that hard leather of high heels abraded their feet. (150 words)

Evaluation of the research processes specific to the research question

The main research processes that I used was analysing secondary sources from the internet, as well as an interview and a student questionnaire.

Newspapers and magazines were really useful for finding out the new styles of high heels in fashion shows in Paris, which were shown to be overwhelmingly strange. Similarly, a large amount of the designs of high heels in recent years have been exaggerated and very high and the design of them is the basis of damaging the feet of women. Magazines show that females are prepared to wear high heels to be fashionable even if it is bad for their health and posture. Fashion is very important. This strengthened my resolution of designing a pair of caring high heels for women.

I also discovered from magazines that shoe designers such as Christian Louboutin say it does not matter to him if women are in pain when they wear his shoes saying: "If you can't walk in them, then don't wear them." This shows that there could be a market or a need for shoes from designers who do care.

A skill I learnt was how to search the internet for good information about high heels and use the information and learning the special terms that appeared in the articles. I needed to know these terms to design shoes and know the words for parts of shoes to label my sketches. For example, the website on ehow.com by P. Pritchard called the *Negative effects of high heels* discussed the health problems such as bunions, hammer toes and arthritis. I thought about this information when designing the high heels at the end by leaving room for the toes. The ehow website has professionals in each field to offer their advice with categories that cover everything legally and to help people deal with challenges in daily life. Another good website was on www.elsevier.com called *Biomechanical effects of wearing high-heeled shoes*. This

article was by some scientists from D_____University in South Korea who set up an experiment with 200 women to see how high heels impact on females bodies. This helped me design good shoes.

I used websites to help me learn the skill of drawing a shoe. The website of <http://idrawfashion.com/accessories/shoes/10-how-to-draw-high-heels> and http://www.ehow.com/how_4441282_draw-shoe.html gave good instructions about sketching shoes. A common mistake is making the leg look too big or small for the shoe so I might be best to draw the shoe without a leg. I practised the design drawing for many hours to get it to look right and not unbalanced. I did improve my skills of sketching a design of a shoe with good design features. For this skill I had to keep trying and draw many sketches before I was happy with one. It had to look good as well as use the improvements of more toe space, cotton fabric and a removable high heel.

The interview with an expert, Ms White from the hospital was a very effective process, as I learned lots of useful information. I was very nervous when I visited the hospital and Ms White required the final comments of the interview to be debriefed by her and her agreement before the information could be used in my outcome. Ms White introduced the figures of women who suffered from high heel injuries that had rose heavily as high heels have become more fashionable. Ms White could not use some medical cases as examples due to occupational ethics.

The questionnaire I designed included questions for 80 females aged 20-30 years old. Knowledge I learned in the survey was that there is no doubt that women love high heels deeply. Truth was that they would feel uncomfortable after wearing high heels for a whole day therefore a caring pair of high heels will be valuable. I also asked these 80 women for suggestions about how to design high heels that would not hurt but none of the respondents gave me any suggestions I could use to improve shoes. This is a challenge as I will need to use my own imagination to invent the new design.

Decisions made in response to challenges and/or opportunities

Through my research I discovered lots of articles and information that emphasized how high heels influence females' health. There was not a lot of information about how to design high heels. When I found articles about how to design shoes they used a lot of special terms that I could not understand. This was one challenge when interpreting the technical language. I had to use a glossary to find the meaning of terms such as cambrelle, combination lasted and injection moulded soles.

I started my project thinking I would make some shoes but I learned that it is much more difficult to design and make shoes without the equipment such as a last and it is very hard to sew thick materials like leather by hand and make the shoe the right shape to fit comfortably. It is also hard to make high heels strong enough so the heels do not fall off or break and hurt the lady in an accident. I would need a lot of specialised equipment. For this reason I made the decision to not make the shoes but instead concentrated on designing caring high heels.

The other challenge I faced was designing a new product. I decided to plan shoes that are made out of cotton as hard fabrics such as leather can cause extra pain. I also wanted to include more toe space to avoid bunions. My biggest innovation was to invent a high heel that can be taken off and put back on. The main challenge for this is how to make the bottom of the shoe flexible enough to be comfortable even if the heel is taken off.

Another opportunity that I decided not take up was to find other ways to help females besides designing a new shoe such as writing a brochure or pamphlet that describes some ideas women could use to reduce the problems of pain they might experience from wearing uncaring high heels. For example I did find out that a female could do more stretching activities to stop the tendons from shrinking, wear commuter shoes on the bus and change into high heeled shoes at work or regularly change the height of the shoes. Giving this suggestion could have been better than designing caring high heels because I do not know if there is such a thing and if there was why they have not already been invented.

Reflection on the research outcome

The outcome of my research brings a lot of benefits for females. In order to help women out of the stress, I had passion to design a pair of caring high heels. The results collected from the survey provided me numerous ideas in my design. My design mainly spared more space for female toes as well as the high heels can be detachable. As a young female my outcome was valuable to me. I am a big fan of high heels and I was always worried about the side effects. Fortunately I designed this kind of caring high heels for all females, including myself.

However, even now I wonder if the caring high heel I have drawn a sketch of would actually work when it is made into a shoe. Would the cotton fabric be strong enough and would the detachable heel hang on and not fall off? These are questions that cannot be answered until a prototype shoe is made and tested.

(1569 words)