

**SELECTED ANTECEDENTS TO APPROACH STATUS CONSUMPTION OF
FASHION BRANDS AMONG TOWNSHIP YOUTH CONSUMERS IN THE
SEDIBENG DISTRICT**



By

NKOSIVILE WELCOME MADINGA

STUDENT NUMBER: 210085134

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER TECHNOLOGIAE

in the discipline

MARKETING

in the

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

at the

VAAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Supervisor: Dr. H.B. Mahlangu

Co-supervisor: Dr. M.D.B. Motale

AUGUST 2016

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed.....

Date

STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Technologiae: Marketing.

STATEMENT 2

The dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed.....

Date

STATEMENT 3

I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for interlibrary loans, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organizations.

Signed.....

Date

LETTER FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR

Ms Linda Scott

English language editing

SATI membership number:
1002595

Tel: 083 654 4156

E-mail:
lindascott1984@gmail.com

24 January 2016

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the **dissertation** of

Nkosivile Welcome Madinga

for the degree

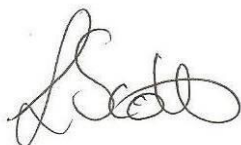
Magister Technologiae in Marketing

entitled:

Selected antecedents to approach status consumption of fashion brands among township youth consumers in the Sedibeng district

The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the dissertation.

Yours truly,



Linda Scott

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following persons are acknowledged for their support and encouragement during my studies.

- I would like to thank God for giving me strength to complete this project. “*And give thanks for everything to God the father in the name of Jesus Christ*” (Ephesians 5:20).
- I deeply appreciate the guidance and patience of Dr. H.B. Mahlangu, my supervisor, who consistently provided me with support, understanding and strong leadership to complete my studies.
- I am especially grateful to Dr. M.D.B. Motale, my co-supervisor, for her additional support and guidance.
- I am grateful to Mrs Aldine Oosthuyzen (North-West University) for the statistical support.
- I thank Linda Scott for her professionalism in the language editing of this study.
- I would like to thank my parents, Mr Mluleki John Madinga and Mrs Nokwanda Madinga, for their unconditional assistance, support and encouragement throughout my studies.
- I would also like to thank Onele Mantanga for her moral support, encouragement and belief in me and my work.
- A special thanks goes to the rest of my family, friends and colleagues who gave additional support and advice that assisted me to complete this study.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My late uncle and aunty, Zinkosi and Nobantu Madinga,

And my late sister, Bongiswa Madinga

ABSTRACT

SELECTED ANTECEDENTS TO APPROACH STATUS CONSUMPTION OF FASHION BRANDS AMONG TOWNSHIP YOUTH CONSUMERS IN THE SEDIBENG DISTRICT

Key words: group identity, social identity, township, status consumptions, materialism and fashion clothing involvement

One important motivating force that influences a wide range of consumer behaviour is the desire to gain status or social prestige from the acquisition and consumption of goods. More often than not, individuals purchase expensive and luxury goods to display their social standing. In addition, individuals purchase status products to fulfil their material desires and reinforce their group identity. This is often a case with regards to youth consumers who often purchase expensive, luxury fashionable clothing brands to portray status and impress their peers. This behaviour seems to be trending among township consumers. The township market is a major contributor to the South African economy with an annual spending power of approximately R307-R308 billion.

This study sought to investigate the influence of fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group identity on fashion brand status consumption amongst the youth. The research concentrates specifically on township youth consumers aged between 18 to 24 years, located in the Sedibeng district.

This study made use of a non-probability convenience sample. A self-administered questionnaire was designed based on the scales used in previous studies. Five fieldworkers were selected and received training from the researcher on the purpose of the research as well as the critical elements of fieldwork. Once the training was completed, the questionnaires were distributed by fieldworkers. The questionnaire requested respondents to indicate on a five-point Likert scale the extent of their agreement or disagreement with items designed to measure their status consumption, fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group identity. In addition, the participants were requested to provide certain demographic data. For this study, a sample of 400 township youth individuals, residing within the Sedibeng district, was drawn. From this sample, only 345 questionnaires were usable leading to a response rate

of 83 percent. The captured data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics comprising of correlation and regression analysis.

The findings indicate that fashion clothing involvement significantly and positively predicted status consumption of township youth consumers. Therefore, the results show that fashion-involved consumers are more likely to engage in status consumption. There was a direct relationship between materialism and status consumption. Group identity had a significant positive influence on status consumption.

Owing to the high demand for status brands or products by township youth consumers, it is recommended that marketers should tap the market potential of this consumer segment while considering the influence of their reference groups. In addition, their advertisements should emphasise the brand or product's ability to indicate status. Furthermore, marketers should make use of social media to effectively reach youth consumers.

Insights gained from this study will help marketers to better understand township youth consumers, their engagement in status consumption, and their involvement in fashion clothing, which, in turn, should help them tailor their marketing efforts in such a way as to appeal to this segment in an appropriate manner.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
EDITOR LETTER	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
ABSTRACT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF TABLES	xviii

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	2
1.2.1 Theoretical framework	2
1.2.2 Status consumption	2
1.2.3 Fashion clothing involvement	3
1.2.4 Materialism	3
1.2.5 Group identity	3
1.2.6 Need for uniqueness	4
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	4
1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	5

1.4.1 Primary objectives	5
1.4.2 Theoretical objectives	5
1.4.3 Empirical objectives	5
1.5 HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT	6
1.5.1 Conceptual research model	6
1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	7
1.6.1 Research design	7
1.6.2 Target population	8
1.6.3 Sample size	8
1.6.4 Sampling method	8
1.6.5 Data collection method	8
1.6.6 Measuring instrument	9
1.7 DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH	9
1.7.1 Data analysis procedure and statistical approach	9
1.7.2 Reliability and validity	9
1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	10
1.9 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION	10

CHAPTER 2 STATUS CONSUMPTION AND SELECTED ANTECEDENTS OF STATUS CONSUMPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION	12
2.2 STATUS CONSUMPTION	12
2.2.1 Defining status consumption	12
2.2.2 Status symbols	13
2.2.2.1 Mobile phones	13
2.2.2.2 Pets	14
2.2.2.3 Luxury cars	14
2.2.2.4 Wellness	14
2.2.2.5 Golf club membership	15
2.2.2.6 Luxury jewelry	15
2.2.2.7 Vacations	16
2.2.2.8 Clothing	16
2.2.3 Motives for status consumption	16
2.2.3.1 Quality assurance motivation	17
2.2.3.2 Desire for social status motivation	17
2.2.3.3 Hedonic motivation	17
2.2.3.4 Social conformity motivation	18
2.2.3.5 Uniqueness motivation	18
2.2.3.6 Symbolic motivation	19

2.2.4 Social class	19
2.2.5 Social class categories	19
2.2.6 Social class categories in South Africa	20
2.2.6.1 Lower class (LSM 1-3)	21
2.2.6.2 Working class (LSM 4-5)	21
2.2.6.3 Middle class (LSM 6-7)	22
2.2.6.4 Upper class (LSM 8-10)	22
2.3 ANTECEDENTS OF STATUS CONSUMPTION	23
2.3.1 Materialism	23
2.3.2 Fashion clothing involvement	24
2.3.3 Group identity	26
2.3.3.1 Types of reference groups	27
2.3.3.2 Normative reference groups	27
2.3.3.2.1 Family influence	27
2.3.3.2.2 Peer influence	27
2.3.3.2.3 Work group influence	28
2.3.3.3 Comparative reference group	28
2.3.3.3.1 Celebrities	29
2.3.4 Need for uniqueness	29
2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING STATUS CONSUMPTION	30

2.4.1 Social identity theory	31
2.5 THE YOUTH AND STATUS CONSUMPTION	31
2.6 OVERVIEW OF THE SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY	32
2.7 CONCLUSION	34
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 INTRODUCTION	35
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN	35
3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE	36
3.3.1 Target population	37
3.3.2 Sample size	37
3.3.3 Sampling method	38
3.4 MEASURING INSTRUMENT	40
3.4.1 Questionnaire layout	41
3.4.2 Administration of the questionnaire	42
3.5 PRE-TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE	42
3.6 PILOT TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE	43
3.7 DATA PREPARATION	43
3.7.1 Data editing	43
3.7.2 Data coding	44
3.8 RELIABILITY	45
3.8.1 Cronbach Alpha	46

3.9 VALIDITY ISSUES	46
3.9.1 Content validity	46
3.9.2 Construct validity	47
3.10 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES	47
3.10.1 Descriptive analysis	47
3.10.2 Measures of central tendency	47
3.10.2.1 Mean	47
3.10.2.2 Standard deviation	48
3.10.2.3 Frequency distribution	48
3.11 INFERENTIAL STATISTICS	48
3.11.1 Correlation analysis	48
3.11.2 Regression analysis	49
3.12 CONCLUSION	49
CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS	
4.1 INTRODUCTION	50
4.2 RESULTS OF THE PILOT STUDY	50
4.2.1 Reliability analysis at the pilot stage	51
4.3 DATA GATHERING PROCESS	52
4.4 PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS	52
4.4.1 Data coding	53
4.4.2 Tabulation of variables	54

4.5 ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN SURVEY RESULTS	56
4.5.1 Response rate	56
4.5.2 Sample description	56
4.5.2.1 Demographic information	56
4.5.2.1.1 Gender composition of the sample	56
4.5.2.1.2 Age of the respondents	57
4.5.2.1.3 Respondents level of education	58
4.5.2.1.4 Respondents occupation	59
4.5.2.1.5 Respondents monthly income or pocket money	60
4.5.2.1.6 Respondents residence	61
4.5.3 Descriptive statistics: mean and standard deviation of the sample	61
4.5.4 Reliability of the main study	62
4.5.5 Validity of the study	64
4.5.5.1 Content validity	64
4.5.5.2 Construct validity	64
4.6 INFERENCE STATISTICS	64
4.6.1 Correlation analysis	65
4.6.2 Regression analysis	66
4.7 CONCLUSION	67
CHAPTER 5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	
5.1 INTRODUCTION	68

5.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES	68
5.2.1 Theoretical objectives	68
5.2.2 Empirical objectives	69
5.3 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	69
5.3.1 Investigate the influence of status consumption on group identity among South African youth	69
5.3.2 Investigate the influence of status consumption on fashion clothing involvement among South African youth	70
5.3.3 Investigate the influence of materialism on status consumption among South African youth	70
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	71
5.4.1 Tap the market potential of township youth consumers	71
5.4.2 Marketers should target status-oriented consumers	71
5.4.3 Consider the influence of reference group	72
5.4.4 Marketers should segment consumers with different materialistic values and customise their advertisements for each segment	72
5.4.5 Marketers should direct their communication efforts to high fashion involved consumers	73
5.4.6 Marketers should emphasise product's ability to indicate social status	73
5.4.7 Target youth consumers through new media platforms	73
5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES	74
5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY	75
5.7 CONCLUSION REMARKS	75
BIBLIOGRAPHY	76

ANNEXURE A: Pilot stud questionnaire	106
ANNEXURE B: Main study questionnaire	111

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Determining the sample size based on past research studies	37
Table 3.2: Coding information	45
Table 4.1: Summary of pilot results	51
Table 4.2: Coding	53
Table 4.3: Frequency table of responses	55
Table 4.4: Respondent's monthly income or pocket money	60
Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics	62
Table 4.6: Reliability and validity of the main survey	63
Table 4.7: Correlation matrix	65
Table 4.8: Predictors of status consumption (Beta and Significance levels)	66

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Proposed conceptual framework	7
Figure 2.1: Sedibeng district municipality map	33
Figure 3.1: Sampling steps	36
Figure 3.2: Sampling methods: Probability and non-probability sampling methods	39
Figure 4.1: Gender	56
Figure 4.2: Respondents' age	57
Figure 4.3 Respondents' level of education	58
Figure 4.4 Respondents' occupation	59
Figure 4.5 Respondents' residence	61

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The trend of buying expensive and fashionable brands to portray social status is increasing rapidly (Lertwannawit & Mandhanchitara 2012:1409). According to O’Cass, Lee and Siahtiri (2013:440), modern consumers are concerned with what they wear and how others perceive them. As such, consumers tend to portray their social standing through the purchase of status-enhancing brands (Goldsmith, Flynn & Clark 2012:105). Status-buying appears to matter as it can be used to signal an individual’s socio-economic position within one’s group and to gain recognition for one’s sense of self and recognition from others (Kaus 2013:69). This is especially the case among the youth. A study conducted by O’Cass and McEwen (2004:32) observed that the youth have a tendency to display their status and materialistic possessions by purchasing expensive branded clothes. According to Goldsmith *et al.* (2012:106), “clothing is a highly symbolic product category”. For example, in their study Khare and Rakesh (2010:209) noted that clothing is one of the products that fulfil both the functional and symbolic needs of the youth. Markert (2004:14) defines youth as those individuals between the age of 10 and 29 in 2015. Pinheiro-Machado and Scalco (2012:108) note that consumers in this age category tend to make huge sacrifices in order to purchase expensive brands as a way to project status among the community members. Typically, the youth tend to perceive brands as essential in creating individual identity, a sense of achievement and individuality (O’Cass & Frost 2002:67).

Schiffman and Kanuk (2010:338) refer to status as the ranking of individuals in each social class using factors such as power, wealth and prestige. Generally, individuals seek status by consuming products or brands signifying their rank in their community (Kao 2013:84). Similar to Kao’s (2013:84) contention, Mazali and Rodrigue-Netro (2013:103) suggest that consumers buy certain products to show their social status. Also true, however, is the fact that certain individuals go to great lengths to buy products or services that people perceive to be high in status to project their social prestige from others (Grotts & Johnson 2012:281).

Therefore, status consumers represent those consumers who buy expensive products to make a statement. Hence, the decision of buying a product cannot be explained by the motivation

derived from using it, rather by what it symbolises to others (Corneo & Jeanne 1997:55). Studies indicate that status consumption occurs through personal antecedents such as group identity, the need to conform to surrounding standards (Khare 2014:333), materialism (Eastman, Fredenberger, Campbell & Calvert 1997:52), the need for uniqueness (Abdolvand & Reihani 2013:1012), and symbolic items like clothing (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2012:102). In conclusion, Clark, Zboja and Goldsmith (2006:45) observe that consumers buy expensive clothing, to seek peer approval and impress others.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 Theoretical framework

The current study utilises the social identity theory (SIT), to explore the proposed relationship between status consumption and its antecedents. Social identity theory proposes that individuals form their identity through belonging to a group (Stets & Burke 2000:230). Ashforth and Mael (1989:23) believe that an individual's identity refers to an individual's desire to interact with other people and affiliate with groups. Group identity influences the manner in which individuals react to situations (Dutton & Dukerich 1991:530). Correspondingly, group members influence an individual's attitudes and behaviours (McKinley, Mastro & Warber 2014:1050). Within the context of youth research, Aghaei, Karbasi, Falahati, Hamayoun Aghapour, Songtarashami and Koulak (2014:5) observe that status consumption among the youth is characterised by a need to belong and conform to social settings and groups.

1.2.2 Status consumption

Patsiaouras and Fitchett (2012:154) argue that status consumption is the practice of displaying status by purchasing well-known and luxury brands. Status consumption refers to the consumption of expensive products or services with the aim of displaying wealth (Bock, Eastman & McKay 2014:112). According to Shukla (2010:111), status consumption is more about establishing social relations than satisfying a basic need. As such, Brezinova and Vijayakumar (2012:169) emphasise that products are not only consumed to satisfy direct needs in the consumption process but also used to portray social status. Specifically, status seekers do not consume products only to satisfy their physiological needs but to satisfy their

psychological needs such as achievement or recognition and appreciation (O'Cass & Frost 2002:70). These individuals tend to surround themselves with tangible evidence of their superiority (Eastman & Liu 2012:94).

1.2.3 Fashion clothing involvement

Generally, the youth is very involved in fashion clothing, as compared to their elders (Khare, Mishra & Parveen 2012:47). O'Cass (2004:870) defines involvement as a link between an individual and an object. In the context of fashion clothing, involvement is defined as the extent to which the consumer views the focal activity as a central part of their life, a meaningful and engaging activity in their life (Zeb, Rashid & Javeed 2011:226). Thus, clothing involvement is the degree by which a consumer perceives the relevance of fashion in his or her life (Vieira & Slongo 2008:47). In general, Khare *et al.* (2014:432) state that clothes are used to display an individual's personality, status, position and social class but also serves as a means to enhance one's social image.

1.2.4 Materialism

Materialism is the extent to which individuals attempt to engage in the construction and maintenance of the self through the acquisition and use of products, services, experiences, or relationships that are perceived to provide desirable symbolic values (Shrum & Wong 2013:1179). Materialism is seen as an obsession a person has for materialistic possessions (Vandana & Lenka 2014:457). Consequently, materialism leads people to spend a huge amount of money on acquiring goods (Goldsmith & Clark 2011:279).

1.2.5 Group identity

Consumers tend to analyse their purchase decisions with respect to their personal and social identities and prefer products that reinforce their group identity (Khare *et al.*, 2012:46). Group identity usually refers to an individual's sense of self, originating from being part of a particular social group (Chen & Xin-Li 2009:431). Ledgerwood, Liviatan and Carnevale (2007:873) emphasise that many people view being part of a group as an extension of one's self and desire to be around other individuals who share similar characteristics. However, Dunleavy (1988:36) argues that individuals become confident in joining a group only when the group members have the same interests.

1.2.6 Need for uniqueness

People are motivated to maintain a sense of specialness as they define themselves on various important self-related dimensions that relate to others (Kao *et al.*, 2013:84). According to Ruvio, Shoham and Brencic (2008:33), uniqueness refers to people wanting to be different from others through acquiring and utilising particular goods with the aim of making and enhancing their social image. Thus, the need for uniqueness is an acquired need – it can be learnt through responses to the external environment (Manikandan & Rajamohan 2014:136). In essence, individuals consume products that are different from others and are always looking for certain unique features that are accepted by the group (Dhar & Sherman 1996:193).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The township market is a major contributor to the South African economy (Statssa 2011:2). In 2011, revenue generated from township spending was estimated to be R307–R308 billion in annual consumer spending (Dlamini 2011:30). Manley (2012:76) states that township consumers have the largest share of purchase power in South Africa. The majority of spending comes from the youth (Selvakumar & Vikkraman 2012:10967). South African youth mainly spend their income on clothing as a sign of depicting their standing in the community (Parker, Hermans & Schaefer 2004:176). In discussing status-related consumption, Bevan-Dye, Garnett and De Klerk (2012:5581) note that the youth spend on status-depicting clothing, status clothes are often associated with their need to belong to a group, suggesting that group identity has a strong influence on status consumption (O’Cass *et al.*, 2002:69).

Several studies (Bevan-Dye *et al.* 2012:5578; Eastman *et al.* 2012:94) have examined status consumption among the younger consumers. While previous research has addressed status consumption (Grotts & Johnson 2012:281) and materialism (Goldsmith & Clark 2011:43), the research has been conducted in developed countries and in a different context. There is a lack of evidence in studies examining this issue in developing countries like South Africa and within the township context. Given that townships play a drastic role in the South African economy, it is surprising to note that little attention has been given to this important segment.

Such an investigation is important and is likely to contribute significantly to both the academic field and to marketers. The main purpose of this study is to fill this gap. This study is expected to generate valuable knowledge to understanding status consumption in developing countries, especially in townships. The findings of this study will assist marketers to understand and target this underserved segment.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were formulated for the study:

1.4.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the influence of fashion clothing involvement, materialism, group identity and the need for uniqueness on status consumption of fashion brands among the township youth.

1.4.2 Theoretical objectives

In order to achieve the primary objective, the following theoretical objectives were formulated for the study:

- Review the literature on status consumption behaviour
- Review the literature on the need for uniqueness
- Review the literature on materialism
- Review the literature on clothing involvement
- Review the literature on the role of group identity on consumption of clothing
- Review the literature on the social identity theory
- Review the literature on the motives for status consumption
- Review the literature on status symbols.

1.4.3 Empirical objectives

In accordance with the primary objective, the following empirical objectives were formulated for the study:

- Determine whether group identity influences status consumption among township youth
- Determine whether fashion clothing involvement influences status consumption among township youth
- Determine whether the need for uniqueness influences status consumption among township youth
- Determine whether materialism influences status consumption among township youth.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT

Based on the theoretical background and framework, four hypotheses were formulated to highlight the various dimensions and relationships under investigation in this study. Based on the conceptualised model, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1** Group identity has a significant positive influence on status consumption.
- H2** Fashion clothing involvement has a positive influence on status consumption.
- H3** Need for uniqueness has a positive influence on status consumption.
- H4** There is a direct relationship between materialism and status consumption.

1.5.1 CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH MODEL

Based on the literature provided in this study, a conceptual model and hypotheses were developed. The following model was proposed for the study:

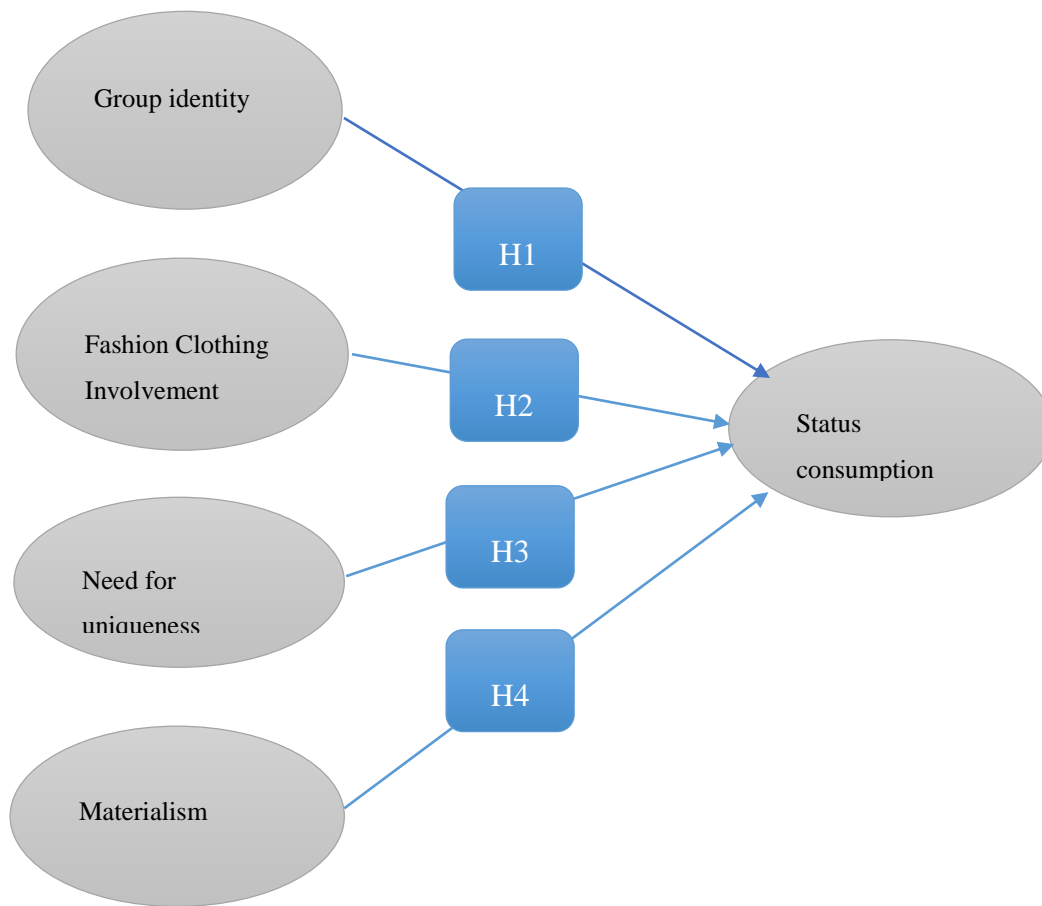


Figure 1.1: Proposed conceptual framework

1.6 DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 Research design

Research methodology is a set of procedures that guides the researcher in the process of verifying a particular hypothesis and excluding all other possible hypotheses and explanations (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagree 2006:185). This study adopted a quantitative approach. A quantitative approach is defined as the analysis of numerical data using techniques that include simply describing the phenomenon of interest or looking for significant differences between groups or among variables (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2009:5). A quantitative approach is used to examine the relationships between variables and quantify the size, distribution, and association of variables in a study population (Malhotra, Gasain & El-Sawy 2005:150).

This section focuses on explaining the research methodology that is employed in the empirical portion of the study. The target population, sampling size, sampling method, data collection method and measurements instruments are discussed.

1.6.2 Target population

Population is the universe of people from which the study is generalised (Aaker, Kumar & Day 2004:374). A target population is defined as the subset of people from the population who will participate in the study (Vanderstoep & Johnston 2009:25). In this study, the target population comprised of individuals from the Sedibeng district, Gauteng province, between the ages of 18 and 24 years. The population included both female and male participants.

1.6.3 Sample size

A comparison of past research studies was used to choose the sample size. Grotts *et al.* (2012:286), O'Cass *et al.* (2013:448), O'Cass and Siahtiri (2013:510), Eastman *et al.* (2014:113) and O'Cass *et al.* (2002:75) were considered in determining the sample size. These studies used sample sizes ranging from 250 to 600. Therefore for this study, a sample size of 400 individuals was drawn.

1.6.4 Sampling method

The researcher selected the most appropriate sampling technique to obtain a representative sample. There are two sampling methods available, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is a sampling technique wherein every individual in the population has an equal chance of being selected. Subjects are selected based on their accessibility. On the other hand, non-probability sampling refers to sampling technique where it is not known which of the units will be picked to be sampled (Churchill & Iacobucci 2005:325).

The sampling technique used during this research is non-probability sampling in the form of convenience sampling method using mall intercepts at township malls in the Sedibeng district.

1.6.5 Data collection method

The data was collected through the distribution of self-administered structured questionnaires. Structured questionnaires are able to collect large amounts of information, from a large number of respondents and results can be easily and quickly quantified (Feinberg, Kinnear & Taylor 2012:264). Furthermore, questionnaires are cost effective when dealing with a large audience.

1.6.6 Measuring instrument

A scale developed by Eastman *et al.* (1999:45) was used to measure status consumption. Clothing involvement was measured by using Mittal and Lee's measurement scale (1989:377). To measure materialism, Richins and Dawson's (1992:307) measurement scale was used. The Cameron (2004:250) scale measured the group identity. A scale developed by Burns and Warren (1995:7) was used to measure the need for uniqueness. Modifications were made to the scales to fit the context and purpose of the study. All variables were measured using five-point Likert scales with anchors strongly agree=1 and strongly disagree=5. A Likert scale is a summated scale for the assessment of survey respondents' attitudes (Clason & Dormody 1990:31).

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH

1.7.1 Data analysis procedure and statistical approach

To accomplish the research objectives of this study, the researcher commenced with coding data in an Excel spreadsheet. From Excel, data was imported and analysed for descriptive statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 for Windows. Empirical data was tested by assessing reliability, validity, descriptive analysis, correlations and regression analysis.

1.7.2 Reliability and validity

Reliability is an estimate of the accuracy and internal consistency of a measurement instrument (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagree 2006:184). Coldwell and Herbst (2004:17) explain reliability as the assurance that the items posited to measure the construct are

sufficiently reliable. In order to test reliability of the measurement instruments this study made use of Cronbach's alpha. The acceptable requirement for Cronbach coefficient should be greater than 0.70 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham 2006:134).

Validity is defined as the extent to which a test measures what it is meant to measure (Coldwell *et al.*, 2004:18). In this study, content and construct validity were assessed.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues are principles and guidelines that clarify the conditions under which the research will be conducted (Kolb 2008:13).

- The researcher requested permission for respondents' time to complete the questionnaire.
- Each respondent was informed about the purpose of the survey.
- Respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the data collected.
- Personal information from the individual was not ascribed to any individual.
- The right to equality, justice, human dignity/life and protection against harm was ensured.

1.9 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

Chapter 1: Introduction and problem statement

This chapter provides an overview and background of the study. The design of the research was discussed briefly. A brief description of statistical analysis, reliability, validity and ethical issues pertaining to the study were highlighted. Ethical issues were also described and adhered to.

Chapter 2: status consumption and selected antecedents of status consumption

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation on status consumption. The chapter provides a review of the literature on the status consumption antecedents, particularly group identity, materialism, need for uniqueness and fashion clothing involvement.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research design and methodology used in this study. In this chapter, details of the target population, sampling method, sample size, and data collection methods were provided.

Chapter 4: Analysis and interpretation of empirical findings

Chapter 4 focuses on the analysis of the data, interpretation and evaluation of the research findings.

Chapter 5: Recommendations and conclusions

Conclusions based on the findings are discussed. Recommendations emanating from the study are provided. The chapter concludes by providing limitations and implications for further research.

CHAPTER 2

STATUS CONSUMPTION AND SELECTED ANTECEDENTS OF STATUS CONSUMPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided a background to the study. The problem statement and objectives of the study were outlined. The chapter also briefly introduced the design of the study. This chapter provides the review of literature on status consumption followed by the social identity theory. Given the focus of this study, it is important to first give a definition of status consumption and provide the reasons why individuals consume products for status. The chapter proceeds with a discussion of antecedents of status consumption, by focusing on materialism, fashion clothing involvement, group identity and need for uniqueness. The chapter will conclude by discussing the characteristics of youth consumers' segment of the market.

2.2 STATUS CONSUMPTION

Status consumption is a buyer consumption pattern that normally displays only noticeable products (Eng & Bogaert 2010:63). Hence, luxury fashion goods are the focus of status consumption studies (Heaney, Goldsmith & Jusoh 2005:87).

2.2.1 DEFINING STATUS CONSUMPTION

O'Cass and McEwen (2004:28) define status consumption as the individual nature of possessing status goods both for inner reasons (self-reward, without showing the product to the public) and/or external reasons (to show wealth through public display of products). In the definition of Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn (1999:46), status consumption is viewed as an individuals' behaviour of seeking to buy products or services for the status they represent, regardless of the individual's income or social class. Drawing upon various definitions on status consumption, Mason (2001:31) concluded that the visible consumption of expensive products and services offers the consumer fulfilment from others' responses to the wealth shown rather than from the worth of the product itself. Status consumption is a concept, which has been defined in different ways. For the purpose of this study, status consumption

will be viewed as buying or possessing products to enhance one's image and to demonstrate wealth through public display of those products irrespective of one's socio-economic background. Different types of status symbols are discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 STATUS SYMBOLS

According to O'Cass and Frost (2002:72), status symbol is what the product means to consumers and the broad spectrum of feelings they experience in purchasing and using it, such as arousal, excitement or pleasure. In addition, O'Cass and Frost (2002:72) maintain that status symbols relate to the image a particular item elicits in consumers' minds.

For any product to be perceived as a status symbol, certain characteristics must prevail. Del Río, Vázquez and Iglesias (2001:410) suggest that the status of a product is determined by the product's attributes, benefits and attitudes. Attributes refer to what an individual perceives a product to be and what is involved with its buying or consumption (Jakpar, Na, Johari & Myint 2012:221). Benefits refer to what consumers think the product can do for them. Attitudes entail individual's overall judgment of the product (Onyango, Nayga & Schilling 2004:202). If consumers believe that the product or brand will uplift their status, it becomes a status symbol (Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto 2013:126). Products such as mobile phones, luxury cars, pets and branded clothing have been associated with status (Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto 2013:128).

2.2.2.1 Mobile phones

Individuals buy cellphones for several reasons. Certain individuals buy cellphones to use as a communication tool; these individuals appear to care less about the cellphone appearance or symbolism. However, other people purchase the cellphone to project status (Oksman & Rautianinen 2003:106). These individuals are very selective when choosing a cellphone to use (Davis 1992:3). According to Heugel (2015:13), consumers often purchase expensive cellphones such as Apple (iPhone) and Samsung Galaxy to portray their status to their surroundings. As such, Swartz (2003:3) ascertains that a cellphone is an extension of the consumer's identity.

2.2.2.2 Pets

Hirschman (1994:624) states that individuals buy rare and unusual animals to satisfy their need for status. According to Pajarskaite and Cekavicious (2012:21), individuals purchase pets as beautiful-to-behold possessions and they serve as “animal ornaments”. These pets are used to portray consumer’s fortune and high social class (Pajarskaite & Cekavicious 2012:21). Pets such as King Charles spaniels, Chinese shar-pei dogs, sphynx and Bengal cats normally are perceived as status objects (Hirschman 1994:624). Furthermore, animal companions, particularly cats and dogs, often are bought to satisfy social needs and they are utilised as tools to extend the self and to symbolise certain aspects of who you are as an individual (Endenburg, Hart & Bouw 1994:201).

2.2.2.3 Luxury cars

Modes of transportation, luxury cars in particular, have long been considered general status symbols. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, luxury cars have been one of the most dominant and universal status symbols (Vella 2008:14). Not every car can be utilised to symbolise an individual’s status but cars that are only available on a limited basis can be used to display status (Fan & Burton 2003:39). Hence, Wiedmann, Hennings and Siebels (2009:630) opined that products are regarded as a status symbol when they are expensive and only the wealthy can afford them.

2.2.2.4 Wellness

Many people regard wellness as a status symbol and the privilege of the wealthy individuals (Fodor, Csiszarik-Koscir, Katalin & Medve 2013:140). Furthermore, individuals display good health as a social status symbol of dominance (Ansbacher & Ansbacher 1967:12). According to Berry (1994:68), wellness is a symbol of the new luxury taking over the upper class consumers. Thomas (2007:168) indicates that in the past, consumers used to show off new expensive luxury cars or expensive designer handbags to obtain status from their society. However, “health bragging” has become the alternative to show others how privileged you are (Kraft & Goodell 1993:21).

Zhang and Kim (2013:69) states that wellness is the new buzzword of the flourishing lifestyle trend and it is not cheap. Many people consider going to a gym as a madly extravagant expenditure since it is not a once-off purchase but a monthly habit for an increasing

percentage of the people for whom wellness has come to be a visual stamp of their superfluity lifestyle (Vlachopoulos, Theodorakis & Kyle 2008:295). Benavides and David (2010:28) indicate that consumers, who are health conscious, feel a little superior to others.

2.2.2.5 Golf club membership

Golf is a well-known leisure activity primarily used to meet people (customers) and used as an indicator of status (Bell 2000:43; Chopra 2003:176). Middle class consumers believe that having a golf club membership card is the best way to mark their identity and separate themselves from socially inferior individuals (Mrozek 1983:124). According to Petrick (2001:68), golf club membership reveals an individual's wealth and prestige, and certain consumers may seek to boost their social standing by buying into a golf community or playing the game. Furthermore, Garl, Hirsh, Leininger, Mulvihill, Renner and Scavo (2001:234) indicate that aspects such as status and exclusivity of golf courses encourage individuals to play golf. However, not all individuals who own a golf club membership card are golf players. They just enjoy the aesthetic qualities and the perceived exclusivity of the community (Garl *et al.*, 2001:6).

2.2.2.6 Luxurious jewelry

According to Andrews (1990:59), the word jewelry is derived from the Latin word *jocale*, meaning plaything. Curtis and Tallis (2005:241) point out that jewelry is the most ancient form of body ornamentation. Apart from functional use, jewelry is a symbol of wealth and status (Schiffman & Kanuk 2004:340). In addition, Piron (2000:315) indicates that the ownership of luxury jewelry normally signifies the owner's economic status. As a result, consumers purchase and exhibit luxurious jewelry to display their social status and their ability to afford them (Chandon, Wansink & Laurent 2000:68). Consumers tend to believe that the more expensive the jewelry, the higher perceived social status they can attain (Wattanasuwan 2005:183). Dubois and Duquesne (1993:37) argue that the main motive of purchasing and exhibiting luxury jewelry is for the symbolic value thereof.

2.2.2.7 Vacations

Vacations are considered to be "new luxury" (Hanzaee & Rouhani 2011:36). New luxury represents a product or service, which cannot be owned or consumed by everybody and gives

consumers higher levels of quality, passion and pleasure. Status-conscious consumers, who are typically middle class (Heine 2012:152), are likely to find new ways to display their status and differentiate themselves from others. Expensive vacations have become one of the ways those consumers display their status (Ustuner & Holt 2010:44).

2.2.2.8 Clothing

Clothing is among the product categories used to communicate one's status (O'Cass & Frost 2002:68). In a study by Karpova, Nelson-hodges and Tullar (2007:12), respondents revealed they could identify an individuals' social status by observing their outfits. Furthermore, O'Cass and Choy (2008:348) assert that clothing is used to indicate the social position of its wearer. Thus, clothing assists individuals in expressing their identities associated with social class (Coskuner & Sandikci 2004:287). Through clothing, the middle and upper class communicate their standing in society (Solomon & Rabolt 2004:239). More importantly, the upper class establish their superiority over lower classes by consuming certain clothing items (Coskuner & Sandikci 2004:287). As such, clothing helps individuals express their social standing and social status.

2.2.3 MOTIVES FOR STATUS CONSUMPTION

The consumers' willingness, decision, or need to buy a product (Chaudhuri & Majumdar 2006:53) is a reaction to several influences (Ko, Robert & Cho 2006:97). According to Vigneron and Johnson (1999:239), the inner human desires are liable for status purchase motivations. In addition, consumers purchase status products because of the influence they receive from their societies (Chadha & Husband 2006:345). Teimoupour, Hanzae and Teimpour (2012:1681) revealed that consumers purchase status products because of quality assurance, desire for social status, hedonism, social conformity, desire for uniqueness and symbolic motivation. These motives for status consumption are discussed in the following section.

2.2.3.1 Quality assurance motivation

Gentry, Putrevu, Shultz and Commuri (2001:261) indicate that consumers usually purchase status products for the superior quality reflected in the product or brand name. Hence, quality superiority is a substantial, perceptible value associated with status goods (Wiedmann,

Hennings & Siebel 2009:637). This is consistent with the notion that status products provide greater quality and performance compared to non-status products (Quelch 1987:41; O’Cass & Frost 2002:83; Vigneron & Johnson 2004:487). According to Aaker (1991:456), consumers are likely to associate status products with greater brand quality and reassurance in such a way that they perceive more value from status brands. Thus, individuals purchase well-known brands mainly for their perceived high level of quality (Zhou & Wong 2008:473). Thus, quality assurance is known as a self-directed drive in status consumption (Tsai 2005:430).

2.2.3.2 Desire for social status motivation

With this motive, individuals wish to advance their self-esteem and social status by purchasing and consuming luxury goods in the presence of others (Vigneron & Johnson 1999:239). Several studies (Belk, Bahn, & Mayer 1982:11; Solomon 1983:321) established that consumers are often more interested in status-directed symbolism compared to utilitarian functions. Grubb and Grathwohl (1967:25) propose that every individual has a self-concept and aims to boost it through use of products as symbols. Mason (1981:156) asserts that status pursuit is the most essential motive in status consumption, and it generally occurs across all social classes (Eastman, Goldsmith, & Flynn 1999:47).

2.2.3.3 Hedonic motivation

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982:98) believe that individuals have a tendency to buy goods through the experience of fun, fantasy and playfulness with products. Liao and Ma (2009:90) contend in such instances, pleasure is the main motivator of individual’s behaviour. Therefore, individuals are likely to purchase goods to fulfil their own hedonic requirements (Dubois & Laurent 1994:274; Tsai 2005:438).

Hedonism is defined as “the perceived subjective utility and intrinsically attractive properties acquired from the purchase and consumption of a luxury brand as the arousing feeling and affective states received from personal rewards and fulfillment” (Sheth, Newman & Gross 1991:164). According to Hirschman and Holbrook (1982:94), hedonic consumption is viewed as “consumers’ multisensory images, fantasies and emotional arousal in consuming products.” In this case, multisensory refers to the experiences obtained from several sensory systems: taste, touch, smell and visual. Vigneron and Johnson (2004:492) state that

individuals who depend on their inner preferences and who are not vulnerable to interpersonal influences are more likely to engage themselves with hedonic consumption.

2.2.3.4 Social conformity motivation

According to Mason (1993:49), conformity is defined as the behaviour of individuals purchasing luxury products due to interpersonal influence, so that a specific social group can accept them, particularly those individuals around them. In social psychology theory, individuals are viewed as social creatures that conform to social norms and whose behaviour is powerfully directed by their group memberships (Kotler 1965:42). Therefore, it is a natural way for consumers to conform to the majority opinion of the groups they communicate with, thereby owning products because of the membership connotations (Grubb & Stern 1971:383; Solomon 1983:324). Hence, Zhou and Wong (2008:476) state that individuals purchase luxury brands to adhere to a particular social group. In essence, reference groups influence individuals when they make purchase decisions (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel 1989:479; Burnkrant & Cousineau 1975:210).

2.2.3.5 Uniqueness motivation

Uniqueness is based on the assumption that the perceived exclusivity and rareness of the product enhances a consumer's need or preference for it (Verhallen 1982:317; Lynn 1991:263; Pantzalis 1995:47). Snyder and Fromkin (1977:522) argue that the main aim of purchasing unique products is to reinforce consumer's need for uniqueness and their desire for differentiation and exclusivity. Vigneron and Johnson (2004:487) state that this desire can only be fulfilled when a few individuals consume the product or brand.

2.2.3.6 Symbolic motivation

Veblen (1899:210) defines symbolic consumption as the "process when consumers consume status products as symbols to communicate meaning about themselves to their reference groups". Symbolic products are products that are mainly sensitive to social influence and are visible (Nueno & Quelch 1998:62). Eastman, Iyer, and Thomas (2013:58) point out that symbolic products include luxury clothing, accessories, automobiles, and furniture.

Dubois and Duquesne (1993:36) indicate that symbolic motivation of status consumption is divided into two groups known as snobbism and bandwagon. Snobbism refers to individuals

that purchase less of the product or brand if others are purchasing it as well (Dubois & Duquesne 1993:36). Individuals within this classification prefer purchasing unique products to signify their exclusive identities. According to Leibenstein (1950:204), snobs demand for a product or brand will drop if they notice mass consumers' demand for the same product increases. In addition, snobs tend to prefer limited supplies of luxury goods and they reject the product when they notice that it has been consumed by the masses (Vigneron & Johnson 1999:243).

Bandwagons are individuals who purchase what other consumers are purchasing (Dubois & Duquesne 1993:39). Bandwagon refers to consumers that desire to conform to their ideal reference group and to segregate from an undesired reference group (Vigneron & Johnson 1999:240). Bandwagons' demand for a product escalates when they notice others are also using the same product

2.2.4 SOCIAL CLASS

2.2.5 SOCIAL CLASS CATEGORIES

A major influence on individuals' buying habits and behaviour is the social class to which the individual belongs (Blythe 2013:203). Consumers' associate brands of various products and services with social classes and this has an effect on the products they purchase (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard 1993:153). Schiffman and Kanuk (2000:297) define social class as "the division of members of a society into a hierarchy of distinct status classes, so that members of each class have relatively the same status and members of all other classes have either more or less statuses".

Hamilton (2009:257) maintains that individuals of the same social class usually have similar attitudes, stay in similar neighbourhoods, drive a similar class of cars, dress alike, purchase similar brands and even buy at the same types of stores.

Gilbert and Kahl (1982:166) point out there are nine variables that determine social class. These variables include economic variables (income, wealth and occupation), interaction variables (personal prestige, association and socialisation) and political variables (power, class consciousness, mobility). The most obvious indicator of social class is the individual's disposable income and wealth. Block and Roering (1979:144) observe that rich individuals

can afford to purchase expensive, luxury, high quality products while low-income consumers can only afford necessities. Another variable known to indicate one's social class is occupation (Sharma 2004:203). Thus, an individual's occupation is usually a reflection of their education level and has an impact on their status, consumption and lifestyle, as well as type of house, car and clothes they purchase and their neighborhood choice (Caruana & Magri 1996:40). In addition, the level of education is viewed as a key determinant of individuals' success (Breen 2005:15).

According to Gherasim (2013:7), personal prestige is defined as the respect an individual gets from others due to having more possessions compared to them, while association refers to the way individuals live their lives in the same way within the same social class category (Ranjbarian, Shekarchizade & Fathi 2013:95). Socialisation is mainly about how individuals interact and learn the skills and attitudes of others (Lawlor & Prothero 2007:1209).

With regards to political variables, power is viewed as the ability of an individual to exert influence over others (Durmaz & Tasdemir 2014:188). Class consciousness is the sense of belonging to a specific social class group (Post 2010:7). According to Engel *et al.* (1999:109), class consciousness is reinforced by the other individuals' consumers associated with. Lastly, social mobility is the process of moving from one social class to another (Behrman 2000:73). Yaish and Andersen (2012:529) argue that social mobility can either be downwards (moving from upper class to lower class) or upwards (moving from lower class to upper class).

Schiffman and Kanuk (2000:298) assert that little is known on how many different class divisions are essential to sufficiently describe the class structure of the market. According to Sivadas, Mathew and Curry (1997:469), social class categories can range from two, three, four, five and even six class schemes. The choice of how many class schemes to utilise solely depends on the amount of particulars the researcher believes is required to explain sufficiently the attitudes or behaviour under the study (Islam, Wills & Hemilton 2009:269). Peter and Olson (2008:328) suggest that a four social class scheme is appropriate for generalisation. These social class schemes comprise of lower class, working class, middle class and upper class.

2.2.6 SOCIAL CLASS CATEGORIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Within the South African context, Seekings (2003:4) points out that the researcher needs to reflect on the appropriate theoretical bases of class, acknowledging the difference between the South African and the developed countries society. According to Motale (2015:32), class in South Africa is mainly characterised by financial gains. Hence, Strydom (2011:64) argue that an individual's financial worth is a primary determinant of their social standing.

Joubert (2010:28) indicates that one of the most essential ways South African social classes are described is by using the Living Standard Measure (LSM), which is the most generally applied technique of segmenting the South African consumer market. The LSM divides the South African market into 10 groups, 10 representing the highest social class and one representing the lowest social class (Ungerer & Joubert 2011:104). In South Africa, lower class consumers are known as LSM 1-3; working class as LSM 4-5; Middle class as LSM 6-7 and Upper class as LSM 8-10 (Ungerer & Joubert 2011:104). The social class categories are explained below.

2.2.6.1 Lower class (LSM 1-3)

According to Peter and Olson (2005:338), lower class consumers comprise 16 percent of the population. Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2013:136) point out that lower class consumers are often unemployed and rely mostly on government support and are usually assisted by non-profit organisations. Unskilled labourers with minimal education and very low income or are out of work make up the majority of these consumers (Shiffman & Kanuk 2007:371).

2.2.6.2 Working class (LSM 4-5)

Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2013:134) state that working class comprises of skilled and semi-skilled sales, factory and service workers. According to Joubert (2010:27), this social class group is the largest segment in South Africa. They consist of 38 percent of the population (Peter & Olson 2005:338). These consumers stay in modest homes or flats that are usually located in marginal urban neighborhoods, old suburbs or rural areas (Hawkins, Best & Coney 2004:136). Working class individuals cannot afford to move to better places when their neighborhoods become unsafe and undesirable to stay in (Varnum, Na, Murata & Kitayama 2012:521). Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2013:134) point out that this segment

dislike upper-class consumers and favour purchasing products located at their social-class level.

2.2.6.3 Middle class (LSM 6-7)

In South Africa, middle class consumers are also known as Black Diamonds and are the most attractive market (Joubert 2010:27). Middle class individuals comprise of the white-collar personnel (office employees, schoolteachers, and low-level managers), high-paid blue-collar (plumbers and factory managers) and independent businessmen/business women, corporate managers and successful professionals (Mahalingam 2007:306). Middle class consists of 32 percent of the population (Peter & Olson 2005:338). Members of this social class are university graduates, many with advanced degrees (Blythe 2013:204). These individuals stay in fine homes, drive newer model vehicles, purchase quality furniture, drink expensive alcohol and visit nice resorts (Hawkins *et al.*, 2004:134). According to Grossmann and Varnum (2011:85), middle class individuals are concerned about responsibility and they care what other people think.

2.2.6.4 Upper class (LSM 8-10)

Upper class forms part of the smallest segment of the entire population. According to Peter and Olson (2005:338), this social class category only consists of 14 percent of the population. In most cases, consumers in the upper class have small well-established families, memberships to country clubs and sponsor big charity events (Solomon 2004:447). These consumers buy and consume expensive multiple homes, luxury automobiles, branded clothes and so forth, mainly to demonstrate their great wealth and status (Shiffman & Kanuk 2007:371) and their exclusivity to others (Truong, Simmons, McColl & Kitchen 2008:192). Peter and Olson (2005:338) add that prestige education for children continues to be the highest consumption priority of this segment.

In spite of social class influence, researchers indicate that certain antecedents also play a major role in influencing consumption patterns of individuals. The following section discusses the dimensions of status consumption.

2.3 ANTECEDENTS OF STATUS CONSUMPTION

In this section, selected antecedents of status consumption are discussed.

2.3.1 Materialism

An excessive portion of people's time and effort is dedicated to attaining and thinking about material possessions (Douglas & Isherwood 1979:273). Such individuals are of the opinion that their well-being could be enhanced by a relationship with objects (Burroughs & Rindfleisch 2002:354) and their achievement in life would be judged by the material possessions they have acquired (Belk 1984:267; Richins 1994:360). Thus, possessions have come to serve as an important symbol for an individual's happiness. Hence, Dittmar (1992:205) states that a person's identity is influenced by the symbolic meanings of his or her own material possessions, and the way in which she or he relates to those possessions. Such possessions occupy a vital place in an individual's life and are assumed to offer the greatest sources of pleasure (Ogle, Karen, Yan & Littrell 2014:154). Thus, Clow, Cole and DeNardin (2014:32) claim that materialism is an individual's orientation concerning possessions and use of money for happiness.

Belk (1984:291) describes materialism as the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions. Richins and Dawson (1992:308) define materialism as a set of "beliefs about the importance of possessions in one's life". O'Cass (2001:48) points out that essential aspects of possessions for materialistic consumers are utility, appearance, financial worth and ability to convey status, success and prestige. However, Richins and Dawson (1992:307) suggest that possessions are a necessary, pleasing form of conduct to reach desirable states, including happiness. This is particularly the case among highly materialistic consumers. Roberts, Tsang and Manolis (2015:489) maintain that highly materialistic customers value the accumulation of possessions as they are important to their lives, judge other individuals success by the quality of the products they have, and consider possessions as important in attaining happiness and well-being (Roberts, Tsang & Manolis 2015:489). Ferle and Chan (2013:205) further argued that individuals who are highly materialistic will also be high in status consumption. Similarly, Nga, Yong and Sellappan (2011:244) propose that highly materialistic consumers may value obtaining products more than actually using them in view of the fact that they acquire such products to communicate success and status.

In other instances, materialism has been used to express a person's effort to describe his or her social identity grounded on ownership of certain goods. As such, Goldsmith, Flynn and Clark (2012:104) have found a link between materialism and a person's identity. This

perspective is supported by the social constructionist assumption that possessions are basically ‘self-extensions’. According to Segev, Shoham and Gavish (2015:87), material goods are considered symbols of various aspects of social identity including social class and status.

Materialism is linked further to culture. Thus, material belongings and the attainment of possessions usually are regarded as an imperative element of any culture in the modern society (Clow *et al.*, 2014:33). Several modern societies are described by a powerfully held belief that “to have is to be” (Dittmar 1992:118). Hence, there is a belief that developed countries are more materialistic than developing countries (Cleveland & Chang 2008:967). That being the case, materialism is not only a phenomenon observed in developed countries. The unhealthy obsession with objects is also prevalent in developing countries. Recently, the majority of individuals in the developing countries are beginning to imitate the Western style of materialistic culture (Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen 2008:54). Those individuals, who live in materialistically oriented places, generally see possessions as playing a dominant role in identity construction and maintenance (Inglehart 1990:465).

Perhaps the most used item to demonstrate one’s possessions is fashion clothing. According to Auty and Elliott (1998:120), the reason individuals use fashion clothing to show materialism is that fashion clothing is susceptible to differences in usage stereotyping, and consequently to differences in capacity to encode and decode a variety of messages.

2.3.2 Fashion clothing involvement

A typical product category utilised to display status is fashion clothing (Eastman *et al.*, 1999:47). Solomon and Rabolt (2004:239) concur with the notion and point out that fashion is the main example of a product category used to display status and personal meaning.

Past research indicates that fashion clothing fulfils a number of functions beyond mere functional performance (Hourigan & Bougoure 2012:128). Clothing says how important a person is, tells others how much status an individual has and what the individual is like (Piamphangsant & Mandhachitara 2008:443). Hence, a strong link between consumers’ involvement and fashion clothing exists. With regards to clothing, involvement refers to a person’s perception of importance and awareness throughout several situations related to fashion (Tigert, Ring & King 1976:49).

Zaichkowsky (1985:349) defines involvement as an individual's perceived significance of a product or service based on needs, desire and values. O'Cass *et al.* (2000:550) refer to involvement as the degree to which the buyers observe the main object as a fundamental part of their life, a significant and engaging entity in their life that is important to them. This led Kim (2008:295) to conclude that involvement shows the tendency of a person to pay more attention to specific products or to participate actively in specific product acquisition activities.

Involvement is also a variable used to predict the buying behaviour of the consumer (Khare 2015:433). Therefore, there are observed differences between consumers who are highly involved and those who are less involved (Hourigan & Bougoure 2012:128). Martin (1998:18) asserts that highly involved consumers are most likely to purchase fashion clothes than less involved consumers. Furthermore, consumers' that are highly involved with clothing products often purchase products before others and encourage others to buy them as well (McFatter 2005:57). Likewise, they do not mind paying a premium price for products and spend a larger quantity of their time shopping (Vieira 2009:184). These consumers are regarded as the drivers of the fashion adoption process. Thus, highly involved consumers constitute an imperative group to fashion marketers. Individuals who have high fashion involvement obtain fashion information for themselves and others, making these individuals good opinion leaders (Hourigan & Bougoure 2012:130). Therefore, consumers who are high in involvement prefer doing extensive research before making decisions with regards to fashion clothing as they feel that fashion is personally relevant (Jordaan & Simpson 2006:35). Whereas, low involved consumers usually do not conduct any research before making purchase decisions (Josiassen 2010:25). Moreover, less fashion-involved consumers tend to buy fashion clothes when on sale (Miquel, Caplliure & Aldas-Manzano 2002:8).

Fashion clothing involvement is a fast growing research stream as it is connected with how essential and meaningful clothes have become to the lives of individuals around the world (Hourigan & Bougoure 2012:128). O'Cass *et al.* (2004:870) define fashion-clothing involvement as the degree to which a purchaser views the related fashion clothing activities as a fundamental part of their lives. Fashion clothing involvement generally results in repeat purchase, use of a product and increased attainment of product information (Jordaan & Simpson 2006:37).

2.3.3 Group identity

Studies (Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi & Ethier 1995:284; Laverie, Kleine & Schultz 2002:663) have examined the influence of group identity on consumer attitudes and opinions. Group identity is commonly referred to as an individual's sense of self, derived from perceived belonging in social groups (Reza & Valeecha 2013:198). When individuals belong to a group, they are likely to grow a sense of identity (Chen & Xin-Li 2009:431). A person who identifies himself or herself as an affiliate of a particular social group will regularly conform to core characteristics of that specific social group, inviting that person to take the group's interest to heart including their buying behaviour (Reed, Forehand, Puntoni & Warlop 2012:310). Consequently, group identity has a great impact on individual's behaviour (Akerlof & Kranton 2005:27). Overall, once individuals see themselves as part of a group, they derive self-esteem from that group affiliation and embrace behaviours that are consistent with the stereotypes related to their group identity.

Consumers' brand choices for products such as food (Roper & La Niece 2009:87) and clothes (Aaker, Benet-Martinez & Garolea 2001:497) have all been found to be influenced by consumers' group identity. Relating a brand with a consumer's group identity has also been established to impact the extent of self-brand connection the consumer forms with the brand (Escalas & Bettman 2005:382). As such, group identity can govern what types of brands individuals purchase (Forehand & Deshpande 2001:338; Grier & Deshpande 2001:219).

Consumers even choose their way of gathering information about fashionable brands based on their group identity (Christopher, John & Sudhahar 2014:5). Thus, consumers frequently seek out information from other consumers prior to purchase in order to minimise the risk of making bad decisions. A consumer who looks for the opinions of others in a group makes the others a reference point of purchase decision-making process to which she or he could turn to. Hence, Ramanathan and McGill (2007:511) opine that groups may also have an impact on how the consumer feels towards particular products or brands. As proposed by Kaufmann, Loureiro, Basile and Vrontis (2012:408), this type of group is referred to as reference group. According to Muniz and O'Guinn (2001:415), certain reference groups may exist exclusively around the usage of a particular brand or product. Hogg (2003:417) maintains that reference groups source the consumers with numerous social identities, which combine with the consumer's self-concept to complete his or her entire identity. However, these groups are not

equally exclusive and, therefore, these consumers may be influenced by various reference groups at the same time (Luna, Ringberg & Peracchio 2008:283). The types of reference groups are described below:

2.3.3.1 Types of reference groups

Escalas and Bettman (2003:341) refer to reference groups as those groups a consumer will compare their behaviour to. Bristol and Mangleburg (2005:83) point out that reference groups are divided into two types, known as normative and comparative reference groups.

2.3.3.2 Normative reference groups

Normative reference groups are defined as groups of people that have an influence on individual's values, norms, and behaviour (Pentina, Prybutok & Zhang 2008:116). A normative reference group comprises of family, peers and work groups (Childers & Rao 1992:206). According to Subramanian and Subramanian (1995:16), individuals learn and develop their norms and values through direct interaction with their normative reference group. Normative reference groups are divided into various categories, which is discussed below.

2.3.3.2.1 Family influence

Social sources such as the family often influence consumer buying behaviour (Sharma 2011:90). Bearden and Etzel (1982:199) maintain that the family influence on the individuals' consumption behaviour tends to be very strong, as family tends to help shape individual's values, attitudes and buying behaviour, through the process known as socialisation (Lamb 2004:160). The socialisation process is defined as the manner parents pass cultural values and norms to children (Tucker 2011:150).

2.3.3.2.2 Peer influence

Bristol and Mangleburg (2005:84) define peer influence as "the extent to which peers exert influence on the attitudes, thoughts and actions of an individual". The degree of peer influence varies across products (Bearden & Etzel 1982). As a result, several studies (Bachmann, John & Rao 1993; Bearden & Etzel 1982; Childers & Rao 1992) found that peer influence is strong, especially in the consumption of luxury products that often are consumed

publicly. Makgosa and Mohube (2007:65) indicate that young consumers seek their peers' opinions before purchasing luxury products.

2.3.3.2.3 Work group influence

Work groups are a more formal primary reference group that have a great influence on what an individual purchases because the members of this group interact frequently (Reza & Valeecha 2013:198). According to Shiffman and Kanuk (2007:317), work groups are classified into two types, formal work groups and informal friendship-work groups. The formal work group comprises of people who work together as part of a team, therefore, they have an ongoing opportunity to influence each other's purchasing and consumption-related attitudes and actions. However, people who formed a friendship due to working for the same organisation are considered to be informal friendship-work group. These individuals might not even work for the same department but often meet during company functions or tea breaks. As individuals spend a significant amount of their time at their workplaces interacting with colleagues, they tend to influence each other's consumption behaviour (Bearden & Etzel 1982:183). This is true, especially when it comes to products such as clothing (McDermott & Pettijohn 2011:65), mobile phones (Singh & Goyal 2009:180) and cars (Reza & Valeecha 2013:197).

2.3.3.3 Comparative reference group

Escalas and Bettman (2003:341) maintain that comparative reference groups are formal groups where individuals do not interact often with their group members; however, they indirectly influence these individuals (Martin & Bush (2000:447). Cocanougher and Bruce (1971:379) assert that the influence of comparative reference groups is possible only when individuals' attitudes are favourable towards these groups. Celebrities are a good example of comparative reference group (Ahmed, Farooq & Iqbal 2014:2). This type of comparative reference group is discussed briefly below:

2.3.3.3.1 Celebrities

Celebrities are individuals who are well known to the public (Ahmed *et al.*, 2014:4). These individuals have special skills and live extraordinary lifestyles (Sliburyte 2009:937). Many people desire to be like them to the extent that they even imitate their consumption behaviour

(Wang 2005:408). As a result, celebrities are viewed as a powerful force in creating interest or actions with regard to buying or consumption of goods and services (Lafferty & Goldsmith 2004:27). As such, companies pay celebrities a lot of money to endorse their products, in anticipation that the celebrity fans will respond positively to the celebrity's association with their product (Shiffman & Kanuk 2007:321).

2.3.4 Need for uniqueness

Snyder and Fromkin (1980:187) define consumer need for uniqueness as “the trait of pursuing differences relative to others through the acquisition, utilisation, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one's self-image and social image” (Tian, Bearden & Hunter 2001:52). The consumer's need for uniqueness is a phenomenon with which people compare themselves with their peers, giving themselves a frame of reference for forthcoming consumption behaviours (Jordaan & Simpson 2006:36). Therefore, it is a social comparison process, which rests on the person's self-perceived uniqueness (Jordaan & Simpson 2006:36).

Individuals display their need for uniqueness through creative choice counter-conformity, unpopular choice counter-conformity and avoidance of similarity (Chan, To & Chu 2015:4). With regards to creative choice counter-conformity, individuals purchase products that express their uniqueness and are acceptable to their surroundings. Therefore, brand names that can offer some distinctive attribute such as unique features, exclusivity and prestige can appeal to consumers who exhibit this type of consumer behaviour. Chan *et al.* (2015:4) state that these types of consumers conform to social norms. They express their self-identity and exclusivity by purchasing new brands and exclusive goods as they desire to be accepted by society (Knight & Kim 2007:272). Those individuals who align themselves with unpopular choice counter conformity are expected to experience risk of social disapproval by selecting unique brands that stray from social norms because they cannot seek active ways to distinguish themselves in a socially approved way (Tian *et al.*, 2001:53). Furthermore, they purposely purchase unusual products or brands and neglect criticism from their peers (Simonson & Nowlis 2000:53). These individuals willingly risk social disapproval to develop their uniqueness. Fascinatingly, their risky behaviour may eventually increase their self-image. The final type of consumer is referred to as avoidance of similarity. Consumers with a propensity to avoid similarities, try to avoid brands and products that are considered common

and consequently terminate the purchase and use of popular brands to avoid similarities with peers, and in such a way, differentiate themselves (Knight & Kim 2007:273). Moreover, consumers with this type of behaviour have a tendency to choose products or brands that are unlikely to become too popular, but that will differentiate them from others. For instance, they may purchase discontinued styles, shop in vintage stores, or combine apparel in unusual ways (Kernis 1984:355).

Snyder and Fromkin (1980) claim that individuals with need for uniqueness are striving to sustain a sense of specialness as they describe themselves on numerous significant self-related dimensions in relation to other people. Roehrich (2004:674) opines that the consumer need for uniqueness inspires the person to differentiate him/herself through the ownership of rare products or brands. Ross *et al.* (2014:29) indicate that people with need for uniqueness perceive high similarity with their peers and always try to differentiate themselves from others.

There is evidence linking the need for uniqueness to clothing consumption. In most instances, individuals seek uniqueness through seeking of fleshly products or brands (Knight & Kim 2007:273). This is particularly the case when these brands are fashion clothes. Individuals tend to buy such branded fashion clothes just because they are perceived to be scarce and are distributed in limited retailers (Bian & Forsythe 2012:1448). As such, the purchase of such brands can give individuals a unique feeling among their peers (Chan *et al.*, 2015:3).

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING STATUS CONSUMPTION

In order to understand status consumption, social identity theory will be used. Social identity theory is based on the assumption that people want to belong in a group. Based on this theory, individuals' behaviour is influenced, among other things, by the people they associate with. The next section discusses the Social Identity Theory.

2.4.1 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY (SIT)

Social identity has been utilised by psychologists to understand the link between individuals and the functions of groups (Brewer 2001:115). Sociologists and psychologists view SIT as a

very crucial aspect in determining human behaviour (McKinley, Mastro & Warber 2014:1049). According to Solomon (2006:380), a human is a social creature that needs to belong to a particular group in which they try to conform and use other persons as mirrors on how to behave.

Hogg and Abrams (1988:187) define social identity as an individual's knowledge about his or her membership to a social group. Social group refers to a number of individuals who share similar social identification and view themselves as being part of the same social category (Stets & Burke 2000:225). These individuals often, through a social comparison process, judge themselves as either "Us or Them" (Hogg 2001:186). There are two main categories that have been formulated to classify individuals into social groups. Individuals with similar characteristics to self are classified as the in-group while individuals who are different from the self are classified as the out-group (Campbell 1997:21). This categorisation of groups results in evaluation, where the in-group is often judged positively and the out-group is judged negatively (Stets & Burke 2000:225).

The social identity theory further evaluates the influence of groups such as friends, peers, family and the community on an individual. The effect of such evaluations results in a unified response by group members in terms of their expected behaviours and expectations (Brewer 2001:118) and how they fit in a group (Pratt 2003:167). Consequently, group behaviours may compel individuals to act in a particular way, giving rise to group pressure especially when it comes to usage of symbolic products such as apparels and fashion brands (Brittain 1963:389). This is particularly so with regards to young consumers. According to Bearden and Rose (1990:469), young consumers value group identity in such a way that before they make a purchase they consider the views of others.

2.5 THE YOUTH AND STATUS CONSUMPTION

According to Markert (2004:14), youth are those individuals born between 1986 and 2005. This implies that youth in 2015 are individuals aged between 10 and 29 years old. These consumers are estimated to be approximately 38 percent of the total South African population in 2015 (Statistics South Africa, 2015). This is a rapid growing generation cohort (Hussain & Wong 2015:1).

Youth consumers have grown up in an environment dominated by computers (Rawlins, Simeon, Ramdath & Chadee 2008:592), and have mastered their use for numerous aspects of their lives, especially communications (Park, Kee & Valenzuela 2009:731). These digital natives are often described as technologically savvy and the most visually sophisticated of any generation (Lenhart & Madden 2007:124). These consumers tend to interact with each other through social media platforms (Palfrey & Gasser 2008:213). In addition, they spend a significant amount of their time on social media (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert 2009:229). They are also more likely to value others' opinions in social media and to feel important when they provide feedback about the brands or products they use (Espinoza & Juvonen 2011:706).

Phau and Marchegiani (2010:20) assert that the youth cohort has a greater propensity to spend (Bakewell, Mitchell & Rothwell 2006:170) and are likely to engage in status consumption through purchasing fashion clothes since spending money on expensive fashion brands serves as an indication of social standing (Kim & Jang 2014:41). Ruane and Wallace (2013:317) point out that youth consumers are in love with fashion clothing and enjoy doing shopping. As a result, these consumers spend two-third of their income, whether from parents or salary, on clothing (Bakewell *et al.* 2006:169). These consumers are more likely to spend their money as quickly as they get it to purchase consumer goods (McKay 2008:42).

More importantly, as indicated previously, the youth usually purchase products not for quality but status (Johnson 2006:10). This makes this cohort more open to new ideas of status products and services, such as expensive fashion clothing, as a means of self-expression or to display their desired lifestyle (O'Cass & Siahtiri, 2013:509). Also, young consumers view fashion clothing as trendy (Danziger, 2005:123). As a result, they are prepared to pay premium price to obtain such products (Eastman & Eastman 2011:9). This is also the case for township youth consumers in the Sedibeng District. The next section provides an overview of the Sedibeng district municipality.

2.6 OVERVIEW OF THE SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

The Sedibeng District Municipality is one of the municipalities located in the southern part of the Gauteng province of South Africa. Sedibeng's population is approximately 942 000 (Integrated Development Plan 2015) with a third of the economic active population

unemployed (South African LED Network 2012). The majority (56 percent) of the population in Sedibeng is under the age of 30 (Bews 2008). Sedibeng district municipality encompasses three municipalities, the Emfuleni Municipality, the Midvaal Municipality and the Lesedi Municipality (South African Local Government Association 2012). The municipality covers the area formerly known as the Vaal Triangle which covers the following towns: Vanderbijlpark, Meyerton, Vereeniging and Heidelberg as well as the historic townships of Evaton, Sebokeng, Bophelong, Tshepiso, Sharpeville, Impumelelo, Boipatong, Jameson park, Kwazenzele, Mamello and Ratanda, which have a rich political history and heritage (Sedibeng Integrated Development Plan 2010). According to the Sedibeng Integrated Development Plan (2012), Sedibeng is a major recipient of new migrants every year, particularly, young people. In addition, the majority of people coming to this area are students who come to study at the North-West University, Sedibeng College and Vaal University of Technology. Figure 2.1 presents a map of the Sedibeng District Municipality:



Source: South African LED Network, 2012

Figure 2.1: Sedibeng District Municipality map.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to provide the review of literature in order to set the theoretical grounding of the study in accordance with the theoretical objectives set in Chapter 1. Section 2.2 briefly discussed status consumption, including its definition (Section 2.2.1). Status symbols were discussed in Section 2.2.2, including mobiles phones (Section 2.2.2.1), pets (Section 2.2.2.2), luxury cars (Section 2.2.2.3), wellness (Section 2.2.2.4), golf club membership (Section 2.2.2.5), luxury jewelry (Section 2.2.2.6), vacations (Section 2.2.2.7) and clothing (Section 2.2.2.8). In Section 2.2.3, consumer reasons for consuming products for status were discussed. The motives for status consumption comprises of quality assurance motivation (Section 2.2.3.1), desire for social status motivation (Section 2.2.3.2), social conformity motivation (Section 2.2.3.4), uniqueness motivation (Section 2.2.3.5) and symbolic motivation (Section 2.2.3.6). Social class (Section 2.2.4) and social class categories (Section 2.2.5) were highlighted, including lower class (Section 2.2.6.1), working class (Section 2.2.6.2), middle class (Section 2.2.6.3) and upper class (Section 2.2.6.4). Highlighted in Section 2.3 are the antecedents of status consumption, including materialism (Section 2.3.1), fashion clothing involvement (Section 2.3.2), group identity (Section 2.3.3) and need for uniqueness (Section 2.3.4). The theoretical framework for understanding status consumption was discussed in Section 2.4 and the selected theory was social identity theory (SIT), which was also discussed in Section 2.4.1. The youth consumers and status consumption was discussed in Section 2.5. The chapter concludes with providing an overview of the Sedibeng district municipality in Section 2.6.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, will outline the research methodology used for the empirical part of the study with reference to the research design, sampling procedure, data collection method, measuring instrument, administration of the questionnaire, pre-testing of the questionnaire, pilot testing of the questionnaire, data preparation, and statistical analysis.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is one of the most significant facets of marketing. It plays an imperative role in gathering useful information, discovering new opportunities and cultivating marketing strategies that will assist in solving marketing difficulties (Malhotra 1996:9). Marketing research is viewed as a valuable instrument in marketing mainly because it stipulates the procedures that should be used to gather data, manage the process of gathering information, analysing the gathered information and interpreting the results to enable better marketing decisions (Mullarkey 2001:72). The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research procedure used to carry out the empirical objectives of this study.

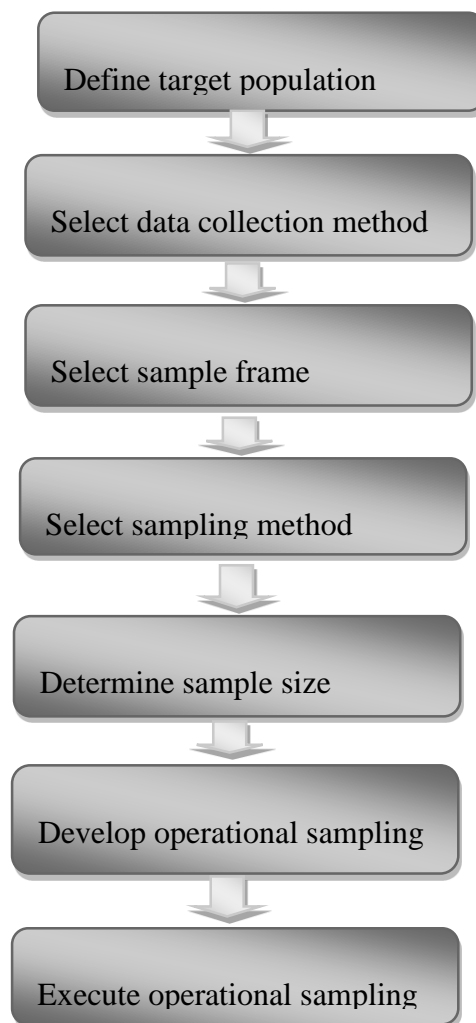
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Decisions regarding the research design are a significant phase in the marketing research course as it delivers the structure and techniques that need to be used in conducting valuable research and acquire reliable responses for the research questions (Mullarkey 2001:74).

According to Churchill, Brown and Suter (2010:78), a research design is the plan that is followed in gathering and analysing data. Malhotra (2010:102) defines the research design as the structure that guides the implementation of a research project. Kent (2007:5) indicates that there are three main available research designs, known as exploratory research, descriptive research and causal research. An exploratory design research is similar to detective work, in that the researcher hunts for understandings and clues into a research problem through a number of sources (Stevens *et al.*, 2006:27). However, decisive research designs, like descriptive research and causal research, are often structured and formal (Malhotra 2010:104). Kent (2007:5) maintains that descriptive research concentrates on measuring and forecasting on the rate with which things occur. According to Malhotra (2010:106), descriptive research naturally contains measuring market characteristics, for instance, consumer attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. Lastly, casual research determines the cause and effect connections among variables (McDaniel & Gates 2001:196).

3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

After choosing a specific research design for the study, the data collection needs to be determined. According to Zikmund (2000:462), it is preferable to use a sample rather than a census in marketing research as it is a more reasonable approach for data collection. Struwig and Stead (2001:109) pointed out that gathering data from the sample is more practical than gathering data from the entire population. Sampling is recommended when it is impossible for the researcher to obtain information from the entire population. Zikmund and Babin (2007:406) recommend specific steps to be followed in developing the sampling procedure for empirical study. Figure 3.1 presents the steps in the sampling process



Source: Zikmund and Babin (2007:406)

Figure 3.1. The sampling process steps

3.3.1 Target population

According to Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:283), a population is the whole group of individuals about whom the investigator needs to get information. McDaniel and Gates (2006:319) define a target population as a set of all the individuals or subjects the scholar is fascinated in knowing about and from which the sample is selected. Aaker, Kumar and Day (2007:374) indicate it is imperative to identify the target population properly and accurately as improper identification may produce unclear results. As such, it is crucial for the researcher to be accurate in specifying precise population elements of interest (Fraenkel, & Wallen 2008:91). For the purpose of this study, the population comprised of males and females, ranging between 18 - 24 years and who reside in townships in the Sedibeng district.

3.3.2 Sample size

A sample size is described as a number of individuals chosen to participate in the study (Malhotra & Birks 2003:357). A sample of 400 was selected based on previous research studies. Table 3.1 outlines the determination of the sample size based on past studies.

Table 3.1 Determining the sample size based on past research studies.

Authors	Year	Scope of the study	Sample Size
O'Cass, A. & Frost, H.	2002	Status brands: examining the effects of non-product-related brand associations on status and conspicuous consumption	315
Goldsmith, R.E., Flynn, L.R. & Clark, R.A.	2012	Materialistic, brand engaged and status consuming consumers and clothing behaviours	258
O'Cass, A., Lee, W. & Siahtiri, V.	2013	Can Islam and status consumption live together in the house of fashion clothing?	300
Grotts, A.S. & Johnson, T.W	2013	Millennial consumers' status consumption of handbags	598

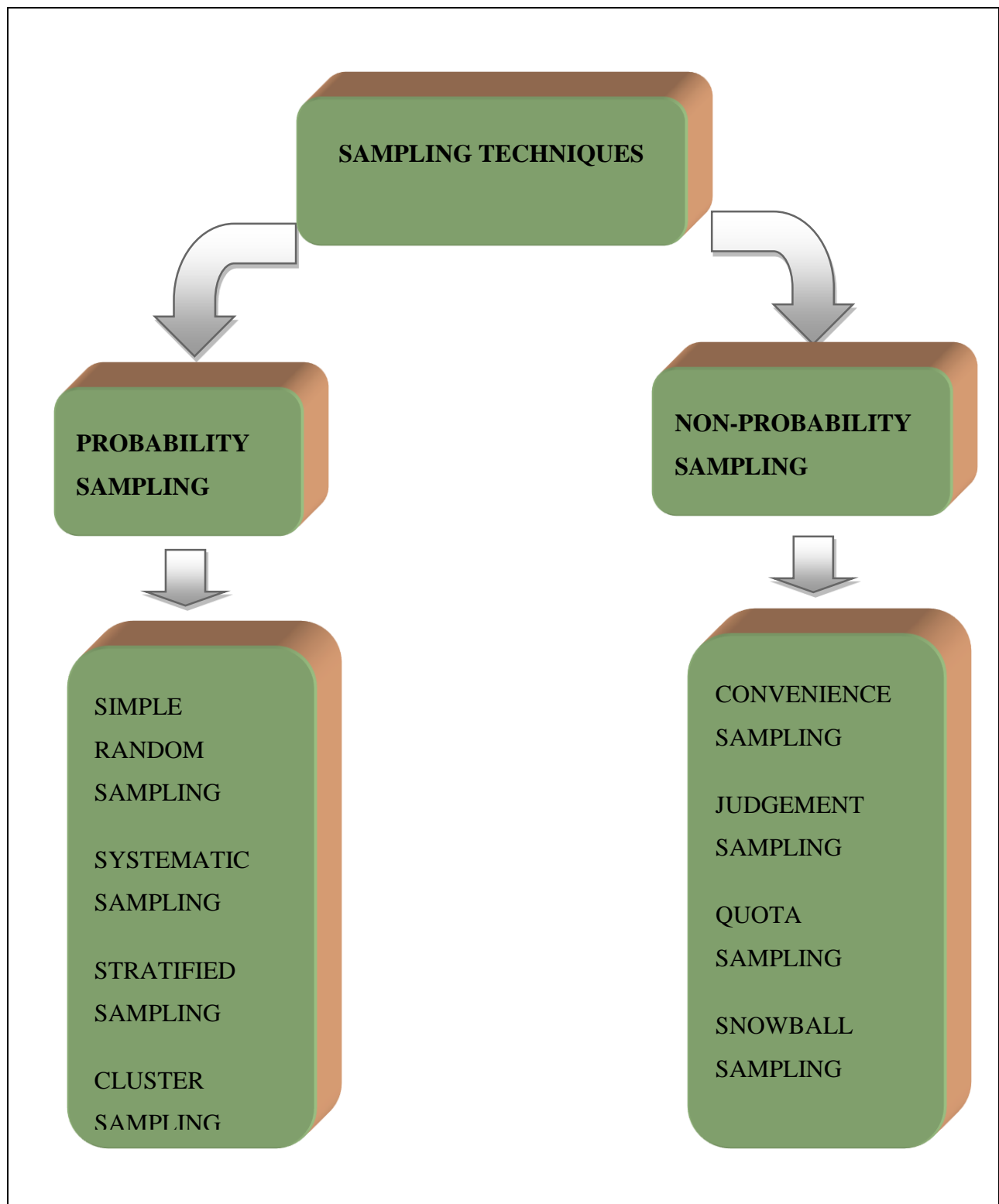
Sources: O'Cass and Frost (2002:75); Goldsmith, R.E., Flynn, L.R. & Clark, R.A (2012:102); O'Cass *et al.* (2013:448); Grotts *et al.* (2013:286).

3.3.3 Sampling method

Sampling is defined as a rigorous procedure of choosing units of analysis from a bigger population (Malhotra 2010:402). There are numerous reasons for choosing a sample, instead of studying the entire population (Zikmund & Babin 2010:302). Those reasons include speed of collecting the information, cheap research cost and accuracy of results.

Sampling methods are classified into two basic categories, namely probability and non-probability sampling (Loubser, Martins & Van Wyk 1996:253). According to Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2000:344), in non-probability sampling the chance of selection of each element is unknown. Whereas, on probability sampling the probability of an element being selected is known (Churchill *et al.*, 2010:333). When a researcher wants to get a representative sample, probability sampling methods are advised. A probability sampling method offers numerous advantages; it allows an explicit statement as to how much variation is introduced, because a sample is used instead of a census of the population, and it makes possible the most explicit identification of possible biases (Aaker, Kumar, Day & Laene 2011:342).

Due to the nature of this study, the researcher selected non-probability sampling. Convenience sampling was used in the current study. According to Bradley (2007:179), convenience sampling refers to choosing the sample elements due to their availability when the study takes place. The greatest advantage of this sampling technique is that it allows the researcher to contact many respondents in a very short period of time (Hair *et al.*, 2000:355). The following figure illustrates the two types of sampling techniques.



Sources: Probability and non-probability sampling methods (Shukla 2008:59)

Figure 3.2 Sampling methods

3.4 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

The measuring instrument design is a vital stage in the survey. Doyle (2011:322) describes a questionnaire as a number of questions utilised to gather data for research purposes. According to Malhotra (2004:205), a questionnaire is a formalised set of questions used by the researcher to obtain information from the respondents. Zikmund (2003:250) maintains that relevance and accuracy are the two criteria a questionnaire must meet if it is to fulfil a researcher's purpose. Burns and Bush (2006:300) suggest six functions of a questionnaire, which are discussed below:

- A questionnaire translates the research objectives into specific questions that are asked of the respondents.
- A questionnaire standardises those questions and the response categories so every participant responds to identical stimuli.
- By its wording, question flow and appearance, a questionnaire fosters cooperation and keeps respondents motivated throughout the interview.
- Questionnaires serve as a permanent record of the research.
- Depending on the type of questionnaire used, a questionnaire can speed up the process of data analysis.
- Questionnaires contain the information on which reliability assessments may be made, and they are used in follow-up validation of respondent's participation in the survey.

For the purpose of this research, a structured questionnaire was selected. A structured questionnaire contains several questions that are offered to every respondent in precisely the same order and phrasing in order to compare responses (Churchill & Iacobucci 2005:215). Structured questionnaires are often utilised in marketing practice because of their consistency and ease of recording.

The survey method used in this study opens with a cover letter. A cover letter is described as a letter that accompanies a measuring instrument with the purpose of introducing the research and motivating the respondents to answer the questionnaire (Zikmund & Babin 2010:222).

Hair, Wolfinbarger, Ortinau, and Bush (2010:192) emphasise that it is imperative for a researcher to identify the organisation conducting the research as this helps to generate trust from the respondents. The Vaal University of Technology letterhead was utilised and the contact details for researcher and supervisor of the study were provided. According to Burin (2010:211), it is important for any research cover letter to contain the importance of the study and a brief explanation of the nature of the research. On the cover letter, the researcher assured the respondents that the information they provide would be held confidential. Furthermore, the cover letter stated the estimated amount of time a respondent might take to complete the questionnaire.

3.4.1 Questionnaire layout

The questionnaire used in this study comprised five sections.

Section A: Biographical information consisted of seven questions.

Section B: Fashion clothing involvement. The scale developed by Mittal and Lee (1989:377) was used to measure fashion clothing. A five-point Likert scale with one denoting strongly disagree and five denoting strongly agree was utilised. The fashion involvement scale consisted of six items such as: “Fashion clothing means a lot to me”; “Fashion clothing plays a significant part of my life”; “I consider fashion clothing to be a central part of my life”; “I am very interested in fashion clothing”; “I think a lot about my choices when it comes to fashion clothing”; and “I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing”.

Section C: Status consumption. The scale developed by Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn (1999:45) was used to measure status consumption. A five-point Likert scale with one denoting strongly disagree and five denoting strongly agree was utilised. The scale consisted of five items such as: “I buy fashion brands to enhance my image”; “I buy fashion brands to indicate a social status symbol”; “I buy fashion brands as a symbol of success and prestige”; “I buy fashion brands to indicate wealth”; and “I buy fashion brands to indicate achievement”.

Section D: Materialism. The scale developed by Richins and Dawson (1992:307) was used to measure materialism. A five-point Likert scale with one denoting strongly disagree and five denoting strongly agree was utilised. The scale consisted of seven items such as: “I usually

buy only things I need”; “I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned”; “The things I own are not all that important to me”; “I enjoy spending money on things that are not practical”; “Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure”; “I like a lot of expensive things in my life” and “I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know”.

Section E: Group identity. The scale developed by Cameron (2004:250) was used to measure group influence. A five-point Likert scale with one denoting strongly disagree and five denoting strongly agree was utilised. The scale consisted of five item such as: “I often buy fashion brands that friends have told me about”; “I place a lot of confidence in friends’ opinions regarding buying fashion brands”; “I often decide to buy fashion brands that I see my friends wearing”; “After buying fashion brands similar to those my friends bought, I want to let them know” and “I am often concerned with the impression friends may form of me because of the fashion brands I buy”.

Section F: Need for uniqueness. A scale developed by Burns and Warren (1997:7) was used to measure the need for uniqueness. A five-point Likert scale with one denoting strongly disagree and five denoting strongly agree was utilised. The scale consisted of five item such as: “I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special products or brands”; “Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assist me in establishing a distinctive image”. “The products and brands that I like best are the ones that express my individuality”. “I often think of things I buy and do interns of how I can use them to shape a more unusual personal image” and “I’m often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness”.

3.4.2 Administration of the questionnaire

The survey was conducted from 15 June to 15 July 2015. The following shopping centers were used to collect data; Sebokeng Plaza, Thabong Mall and Evaton Plaza. Five fieldworkers were chosen and received training from the researcher on the purpose of the research as well as the critical elements of fieldwork. The selection was based on their knowledge of the subject matter, their understanding of research projects and language proficiency. The researcher supervised the fieldwork administration to ensure an efficient, accurate and effective sample was obtained.

3.5 PRE-TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Zikmund and Babin (2007:232), pre-testing is a trial run with a group of respondents to iron out fundamental problems in the instructions or design of a questionnaire. Malhotra (2010:322) indicated that pre-testing helps the researcher to identify and eliminate potential problems. In addition, conducting a pre-test study gives an advance warning to the researcher about possible difficulties and problems regarding the proposed methods and whether the research instrument is appropriate. Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003:464) note that during a pre-test stage, the respondents are requested to pay significant attention to factors such as words, questions, phrases and instructions flow patterns and point out anything they think is confusing or complicated to understand. Furthermore, pre-testing assists to eliminate ambiguity and variation in respondents' understanding and interpretation of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pre-tested by the statistician, the supervisor and two academics.

3.6 PILOT TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According Bradley (2010:210), a pilot study is a good way to test if the questionnaire will function as it should. A pilot test can be seen as a survey employing a limited number of respondents who fit the selection criteria (McDaniel & Gates 2004:22). According to Zikmund (2003:57), a pilot study is a descriptive term indicating a small-scale study in which the results are only preliminary and intended to assist in the design of a subsequent study. A pilot study is used by the researcher to improve the validity of the research (Quinlan 2011:481).

3.7 DATA PREPARATION

Shiu, Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2009:494) maintained that data preparation is “converting raw data from questionnaires into an alternative format for analytical use”. Editing and coding are the data preparation methods that were used in this study to ensure that the questionnaire is complete and ready for answering. These methods are discussed in the following section.

3.7.1 Data editing

McDaniel and Gates (2013:437) pointed out that editing is the process of checking completeness, consistency, and legibility of data and of making the data ready for coding and transfer to storage. The main aim of editing is to increase accuracy and precision (Malhotra

2010:453). The editing procedure contains field editing and central office editing. The field edit is a preliminary edit, designed to detect the most glaring omissions and inaccuracies in the data. Churchill and Iacobucci (2005:406) state that field editing also assists to control the field force and clear up its misunderstandings about the procedures and specific questions. The next editing procedure is central office editing, which involves a careful physical inspection of each questionnaire for mistakes and possible omissions to responses to questions (Churchill & Brown 2006:427).

3.7.2 Data coding

Coding involves forming meaningful sets for responses gathered by means of questionnaires or other data gathering forms, so that the responses may be classified into usable categorisations (Perreault & McCarthy 1996:114). Researchers organise coded data into fields, records and files (Zikmund 2000:560). It is advisable to follow certain conventions when coding the data. Churchill and Iacobucci (2005:409) suggest the following conventions when coding data:

- Use only one character per column. Most computer programs cannot read multiple characters per column. When the computer allows multiple responses, use separate columns for each answer.
- Use standard codes for “no information”.
- Give each respondent an identification number. This number need not, and typically does not, identify the respondent by name.

The final step in the coding process is to prepare a codebook. The codebook contains general instructions indicating how each item of the data was coded, so that people conducting the data analysis can see what the coders did.

The questionnaire was separated into five sections. Section A was selected to gather demographical data from respondents, Section B measured consumer’s fashion involvement, Section C measured status consumption, Section D measured materialism, Section E measured group influence and Section F measured need for uniqueness. Data coded in this study is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Coding information

TYPE OF DATA	VARIABLE	QUESTION NUMBER
Demographic data	A1 to A7	Section A, Question A1 to A7
Fashion involvement	B1 to B6	Section B, Items B1 to B6
Status consumption	C1 to C5	Section C, Items C1 to C5
Materialism	D1 to D7	Section D, Items D1 to D7
Group influence	E1 to E5	Section E, Items E1 to E5
Need for uniqueness	F1 to F5	Section F, Items F1 to F5

3.8 RELIABILITY

Reliability is defined as the degree to which a measuring instrument can achieve consistent measurement outcomes across repeated trails (Hair *et al.*, 2010:156). Generally, reliability is a measure of consistency in measurement that alternatively is referred to as internal consistency (Malhotra 2007:284). According to Zikmund (1999:221), reliability is the extent to which a questionnaire is free from random error and as such, yields reliable results. Systematic sources of errors do not have an adverse impact on reliability because they affect the measurement in a constant way and do not lead to inconsistency.

Malhotra and Peterson (2006:274) indicate that there are different techniques of assessing reliability, namely:

- Test-retest reliability: an approach in which respondents are administered in identical sets of scale items at two different times under as nearly identical conditions as possible.

- Alternative form: an approach for assessing reliability, which requires two equivalent forms of the scale to be constructed and then measures the same respondent at two different times using the alternate forms.
- Internal consistency: is used to assess the reliability of the summated scale or subscale where scores for several items are summed to form a total score for a construct. It consists of two types of measurement, which are split-half reliability and Cronbach's alpha.

Cronbach alpha was used as the technique to establish reliability in the study.

3.8.1 Cronbach alpha

Cronbach alpha is known as a method that computes the average of all split-half measures that result from differences in the division of the scale questions. In establishing the degree to which these individual variables correlate collectively with the questionnaire, the reliability of the questionnaire was established by employing the Cronbach alpha measurement method. According to Malhotra (2007:285), the coefficient value of the Cronbach alpha is between zero (representing 'no reliability') and one (representing 'complete reliability'). Malhotra (2007:285) also stated that a value of 0.7 upwards is considered reliable.

3.9 VALIDITY ISSUES

McDaniel and Gates (2006:224) indicate that validity reports the matter of whether what the investigator is trying to measure was actually measured. Validity is defined as "the degree to which variances in observed questionnaire scores reveal true variances in what is being measured, rather than systematic or random error" (Malhotra & Peterson 2006:274). Content and construct validity will be undertaken in this study.

3.9.1 Content validity

Parasuraman (1991:442) states that a questionnaire has content validity if there is universal consensus among scholars that the questionnaire contains items that cover all facets of the variables measured. It is not mathematically evaluated but subjectively evaluated by researchers. Cooper and Schindler (2001:211) claim that if the questionnaire comprises a representative sample of the target population being studied, then content validity is believed

to be good. In this study, the questionnaire was piloted to achieve content validity. After conducting pilot testing the researcher made necessary changes to the measuring instrument.

3.9.2 Construct validity

Construct validity refers to the ability or the extent to which the questionnaire measures what it is supposed to measure (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:257). According to Malhotra and Birks (2006:286), construct validity presents the question of what exactly builds or characterises the scale. Zikmund and Babin (2010:251) argue that construct validity be presented when the measuring instrument reliably measures and honestly represents a unique concept. Construct validity considers how well ideas and theories are transformed into real measures or statements (Shao 2002:247). As stated by Hair *et al.*, (2010:708), the measuring instrument's construct validity can be confirmed by considering its convergent, discriminant and nomological validity,

Convergent validity assesses the ability of the items of the same construct to correlate when measured by two measurements (Shao 2002:248). In other words, the items that are indicators of a specific variable should converge (Hair *et al.*, 2010:709). Discriminant validity is determined when a variable does not correlate with other constructs from which it is supposed to differ (Maholtra, 2006:286). It involves demonstrating a lack of correlation among differing constructs. Lastly, nomological validity evaluates whether the correlations among the constructs in a measurement instrument are accurate and relevant (Hair *et al.*, 2006:136).

In developing the measuring instrument, the researcher made use of prior studies that have all verified reliabilities. This study made use of inter-item correlations to assess construct validity. Clark and Watson (1995:316) points out that an average inter-item correlation that falls within the 0.15 and 0.50 suggests that the measuring instrument has construct validity. Construct validity was undertaken in a pilot-test of the questionnaire. The pilot-test is reported in section 4.1 of the study.

3.10 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The following section presents a description of the statistical analyses conducted on the data collected from the survey.

3.10.1 Descriptive analysis

According to Lombaard, Van Der Merwe, Kele, and Mouton (2012:3), descriptive analysis refers to the process of condensing large volumes of information into a summarised version. Descriptive analysis is advised when the researcher wants to “characterise certain groups” (Bryman & Bell 2011:84). Therefore, descriptive statistics are utilised to summarise and explain the data gathered from the sample using measures of central tendency (Churchill *et al.*, 2010:429).

3.10.2 Measures of central tendency

Measures of central tendency are employed to describe the centre of the distribution. According to Kobus (2007:186), there are three measures of central location, known as mean, median and mode. In this study, only the mean will be used. The mean is discussed below.

3.10.2.1 Mean

Mean is defined as an average value for a set of raw data that is computed from interval or ratio (metric) data (Bradley 2007:64). McDaniel and Gates (2005:436) indicated that the mean is calculated by counting the values for all observations for a certain variable and dividing the resulting sum by the total number of observations. The mean is the most regularly used measure of central tendency.

3.10.2 Standard deviation

According to Shui, Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2009:531), standard deviation shows the square root of the variance, with the variance being an indication of how the different values are centrally located around the mean.

3.10.3 Frequency distribution

Frequency of distribution refers to the amount of times each probable response to a question was recorded by the respondents (Hair *et al.*, 2010:160). Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2005:523) state that frequency distribution shows how popular the different values were among the units of analysis.

3.11 INFERENCE STATISTICS

Inferential statistics focus on drawing conclusions and assist in making predictions about the properties of a population grounded on the information acquired from a sample (Cooper & Schindler 2006:633). It simplifies the making of broader statements about the associations between the data (Mouton 1996:166). Malhotra (2004:343) maintains that amongst other things, inferential statistics is also able to provide more comprehensive information compared to descriptive statistics, yield insight into connections between variables, disclose the causes and effects relationship, make predictions and it creates a substantial support for a given theory. Gujarati (1988:276) states that correlation and regression analysis are the most commonly used types of inferential statistics in research. Correlation and regression analysis are discussed in the following sections.

3.11.1 Correlation analysis

Correlation is described as the easiest way to recognise a relationship between two metric variables (Malhotra & Birks 2007:573). Aaker *et al.* (2004:509) pointed out that correlation analysis contains measuring the strength of the relationship between the variables. Relationship is a consistent and systematic link between two or more variables.

The correlation coefficient (r) ranges from -1 to +1. According Zikmund and Babin (2007:234), a positive correlation reveals a tendency for a high value in one variable to be related to a high value in the second variable; whereas, negative correlation reveals a relationship between a high value in one variable and low value in the second variable. A value of zero means there is no correlation between the variables.

3.11.2 Regression analysis

Regression analysis is a mathematical method used to relate constructs. Regression focuses on the correlations observed between variables (Pallant 2007:145). It enables the researcher to scrutinise the interrelationships between these variables or dimensions. According to Aaker *et al.* (2004:515), the main aim of regression analysis is to build a model equation connecting the dependent variable to one or multiple independent variables. Therefore, the constructed model can be employed to control, describe, and predict the variables of interest based on the

independent variables. Malhotra and Peterson (2006:503) state that regression analysis is used for the following reasons:

- To determine whether the independent variables explain a significant variation in the dependent variable, *inter alia* whether a relationship exist
- To determine how much of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable, *inter alia* strength of the relationship
- To determine the structure or form of the relationship
- To predict the values of the dependent variable on the independent variable
- To control other independent variables when evaluating the contributions of a specific variable or sets of variables.

3.13 CONCLUSION

The chapter introduced concepts in preparation for the empirical phase of the study. The research design, the sampling procedure, the measuring instrument, validity and reliability issues and statistical techniques used in this study were discussed. Furthermore, the chapter provided a brief clarification of the pre-testing and data preparation of the study. The following chapter covers the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the research findings and an analysis of the findings of the empirical research that was undertaken.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the empirical findings attained from the data gathered during the main survey of the study. Furthermore, this chapter covers a summary of the results of the pilot test in Section 4.2. Section 4.3 discusses the data gathering process. Preliminary data analysis is discussed in Section 4.3, which comprised of the coding and tabulation of the gathered data. Section 4.5 discusses the analysis of the main study, including descriptive statistical analysis of the data and the reliability and validity of the main survey. Section 4.6 contains the various inferential statistics used in this study.

SPSS version 22.0 was utilised to analyse the data for this study. Data analysis was undertaken in two phases. The first phase involved analysing the data for pilot testing and the second phase involved analysing the results of the main survey. The following section will discuss the results of the pilot survey.

4.2 RESULTS OF THE PILOT STUDY

According to Teijlingen and Hundley (2001:1), a pilot study is undertaken to assess whether the questions are correctly worded in the questionnaire prior to the main survey. The main aim of pilot testing is to address essential complications in administration procedures (Zikmund 1999:258) and test the reliability of the questionnaire (Malhotra 2010:153). The Cronbach alpha was utilised to evaluate reliability of individual scales. Malhotra (2010:319) maintains that the Cronbach alpha has to range between 0.6 and one to be considered reliable, and the nearer the Cronbach alpha is to one, the more reliable the scale is.

A pilot test was performed with 50 respondents. The pilot testing was conducted a month before the actual survey, in order to check for misinterpretations by the respondents, lack of continuity, additional alternatives for pre-coded and closed-ended questions, and general respondent reaction to the questionnaire. This was also conducted in order to review and modify the instrument.

The pilot survey obtained 39 responses. Respondents for pilot testing were selected based on their availability. Respondents from the pilot study were not part of the main survey.

The piloted questionnaire comprised five sections. The first section included demographic information of the respondents. The second section consisted of fashion clothing involvement questions. The third section comprised status consumption questions. The fourth section comprised of materialism questions. The fifth section comprised group identity questions and the sixth section comprised need for uniqueness questions. In Section A, dichotomous and multiple choice questions were utilised. In Section B, C, D and E, a five-point Likert scale was utilised. A summary of the pilot test results is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of pilot results

Constructs	Number of items	Cronbach alpha	Average inter-item correlation
B1-B6 (Fashion involvement)	6	0.826	0.463
C1-C5 (Status consumption)	5	0.905	0.463
D1-D7 (Materialism)	7	0.751	0.434
E1-E5 (Group identity)	5	0.573	0.457

4.2.1 Reliability analysis at the pilot stage

The Cronbach alpha was undertaken to determine the reliability of the measuring instrument. The fashion clothing involvement (six items) subscale's Cronbach alpha is 0.826, which is above the recommended level of 0.60 and suggests that the questionnaire subscale is reliable. The status consumption (five items) subscale's Cronbach alpha is 0.905, which exceeds the recommended level of 0.60 and suggests that the questionnaire subscale is reliable. The materialism (seven items) subscale's Cronbach alpha is 0.751, which is beyond the recommended level of 0.60 and suggests that the subscale is reliable. The need for uniqueness (five items) subscale's Cronbach alpha is 0.594, which is lower than the recommended level of 0.60 and this suggests that this subscale may be multidimensional and that the items of the

scale may be testing more or less the same thing (Cortina 1993:100). As a result, this variable was removed from the questionnaire for the main study.

The Cronbach alpha for group identity subscale (five items) produced a value of 0.573. This value is lower than the acceptable level of 0.60. An average inter-item correlation was performed to ascertain which items are testing more or less the same thing. Pallant (2010:97) states that an average inter-item correlation that falls within the recommended value shows that the questionnaire displays internal consistency reliability. Clark and Watson (1995:316) indicate that the average inter-item correlation should range between 0.15 and 0.50. The average inter-item correlation of group identity subscale is 0.457, which falls within the recommended average inter-item correlation range. For that reason, not a single item included in the group identity was removed or changed, as this subscale was found to be reliable.

4.3 DATA GATHERING PROCESS

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data from youth consumers residing in townships in the Sedibeng district. The researcher selected fieldworkers to help administer the questionnaires from each township in the Sedibeng district. The questionnaires were then delivered to those individuals and afterwards dispersed to youth in each township. The participation of the respondents was voluntary and they were assured that all the information they provide would be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

4.4 PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS

Churchill and Iacobucci (2002:572) indicate that conducting a preliminary data analysis is crucial in research and it normally comprises of coding and tabulation of the raw data. The succeeding section will discuss the coding and tabulation of the data.

4.4.1 Data coding

Churchill (1995:51) defines coding as the technical process utilised to divide data into categories. Coding involves assigning a code, commonly a number, to each probable response to each question (Malhotra 2010:454). The questionnaire used in this study contained four sections, namely Section A - demographical data; Section B - fashion clothing involvement; Section C - status consumption; Section D – materialism; and Section E - group identity. All the participants within the sample received the same questionnaire. Table 5.2 represents the coding employed for the questionnaire.

Table 4.2: Coding information

Section A: Demographic data			
Question	Code	Variable	Value assigned to response
Question 1	A1	Gender	Male (1); Female (2)
Question 2	A2	Age	18 (1); 19 (2); 20 (3); 21 (4); 22 (5); 23 (6); 24 (7); Older than 24 (8)
Question 3	A3	Level of education	Primary school (1); High school (2); FET qualification (3); Undergraduate degree (4); Postgraduate degree (5)
Question 4	A4	Occupation	Employed (1); Self-employed (2); A student (3); Out of work and looking for a job (4); Out of work but not looking for a job (5); Housewife (6)
Question 5	A5	Average monthly income or pocket money	Less than R500 (1); R500-R1000 (2); R1001-R1500 (3); R1501-R2000 (4); R2001-R2500 (5); R2501-R3000 (6); R3001-R3500 (7); R3501-R4000 (8); R4001-R4500 (9); R4501-R5000 (10); R5001-R5500 (11); R5501+ (12); R5501+ (13)
Question 6	A6	Residence location	Sebokeng (1); Evaton (2); Sharpeville (3); Boipatong (4); Bophelong (5); Tshepiso (6); Ratanda (7); Impumelelo (8); Jameson Park (9); Kwazenzele (10); Mamello (11); other (12)
Section B: Fashion clothing involvement			
Item	Code	Construct	Value assigned to response
Item 1	B1	Fashion clothing involvement	Strongly disagree (1); Disagree (2); Neither disagree nor agree (3); Agree (4); Strongly agree (5)
Item 2	B2		
Item 3	B3		

Item 4	B4		
Item 5	B5		
Item 6	B6		
Section C: Status consumption			
Item	Code	Construct	Value assigned to response
Item 1	C1	Status consumption	Strongly disagree (1); Disagree (2); Neither disagree nor agree (3); Agree (4); Strongly agree (5)
Item 2	C2		
Item 3	C3		
Item 4	C4		
Item 5	C5		
Section D: Materialism			
Item	Code	Construct	Value assigned to response
Item 1	D1R	Materialism	Strongly disagree (1); Disagree (2); Neither disagree nor agree (3); Agree (4); Strongly agree (5)
Item 2	D2R		
Item 3	D3		
Item 4	D4		
Item 5	D5		
Item 6	D6		
Item 7	D7		
Section E: Group influence			
Item	Code	Construct	Value assigned to response
Item 1	E1	Group identity	Strongly disagree (1); Disagree (2); Neither disagree nor agree (3); Agree (4); Strongly agree (5)
Item 2	E2		
Item 3	E3		
Item 4	E4		
Item 5	E5		

Note: R refers to reverse scored questions

4.4.2 Tabulation of variables

After the data had been coded, it was tabulated. The main aim of tabulation is to display a summary of the data in a manner that it is easy to read. Zikmund and Babin (2010:335) point out that tabulation involves arranging data in an orderly manner, typically in the form of a table, which displays the number of answers in each response category. Table 4.3 presents frequency tables assembled for the scaled responses collected from the main survey.

Table 4.3: Frequency table of responses

Scale B: Fashion clothing involvement					
Scale item	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither disagree nor agree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
B1	12	13	29	55	236
B2	10	18	40	126	151
B3	17	16	48	127	137
B4	8	13	43	105	176
B5	4	12	36	117	176
B6	15	39	58	72	161
Scale C: Status consumption					
Scale item	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither disagree nor agree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
C1	8	19	37	89	192
C2	6	29	45	158	107
C3	14	22	66	124	119
C4	22	45	68	87	123
C5	30	49	65	71	130
Scale D: Materialism					
Scale item	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither disagree nor agree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
D1	24	58	133	75	55
D2	8	23	82	138	94
D3	18	32	50	94	151
D4	18	26	52	76	173
D5	6	9	36	96	198
D6	13	22	51	75	184
D7	36	92	91	54	72
Scale E: Group identity					
Scale item	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither disagree nor agree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
E1	20	27	42	109	147

E2	19	31	30	122	143
E3	24	31	46	103	141
E4	29	35	41	96	144
E5	28	39	58	69	151

4.5 ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN SURVEY RESULTS

4.5.1 Response rate

In the main survey 400 questionnaires were distributed to respondents. Of the respondents approached, 37 refused to participate in the survey resulting in 363 respondents who completed the questionnaires. However, 18 questionnaires were incomplete and were removed from the survey resulting in 345 usable questionnaires, thus leading to a response rate of 86 percent.

4.5.2 Sample description

This section provides a brief description of the respondents' personal information such as gender, age, level of education, occupation, monthly income or pocket money and location of residence. The descriptions of the results are presented in graphical form.

4.5.2.1 Gender composition of the sample

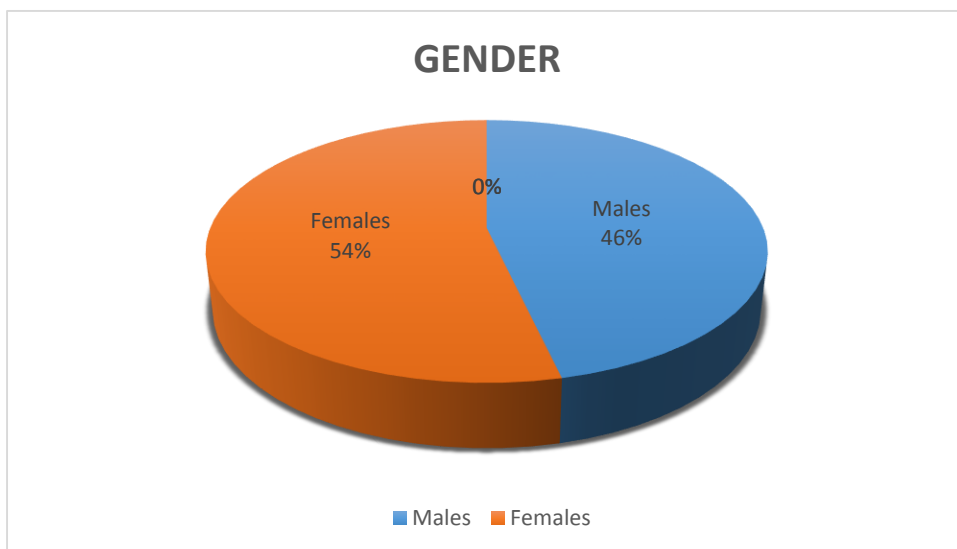


Figure 4.1 Gender

Figure 4.1 shows that of the 345 respondents who participated in the main survey, 160 (46.4%) were male and 185 (53.6%) female.

4.5.2.2 Age of the respondents

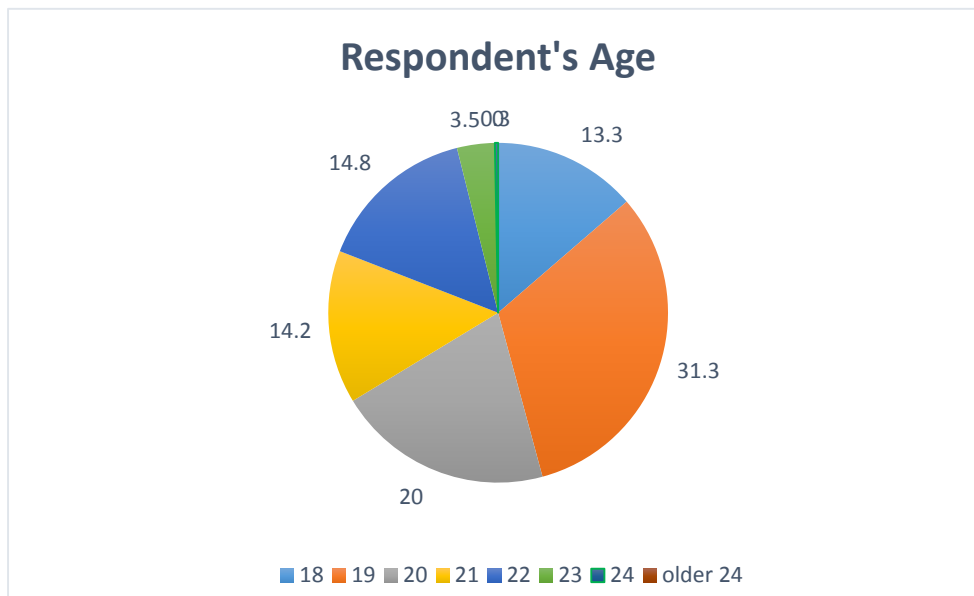


Figure 4.2 Respondents' age

Figure 4.2 represents the age composition of the respondents. The results show that 13.3 percent (n=46) of respondents were 18 years old, 31.3 percent (n=108) were 19 years old, 20 percent (n=69) were 20 years old, 14.2 percent (n=49) were 21 years old, 14.8 percent (51) were 22 years old, 3.5 percent (n=12) were 23 years old, 2.6 percent (n=9) were 24 years old, and only 0.3 percent (n=1) were older than 24 years.

4.5.2.3 Respondents level of education

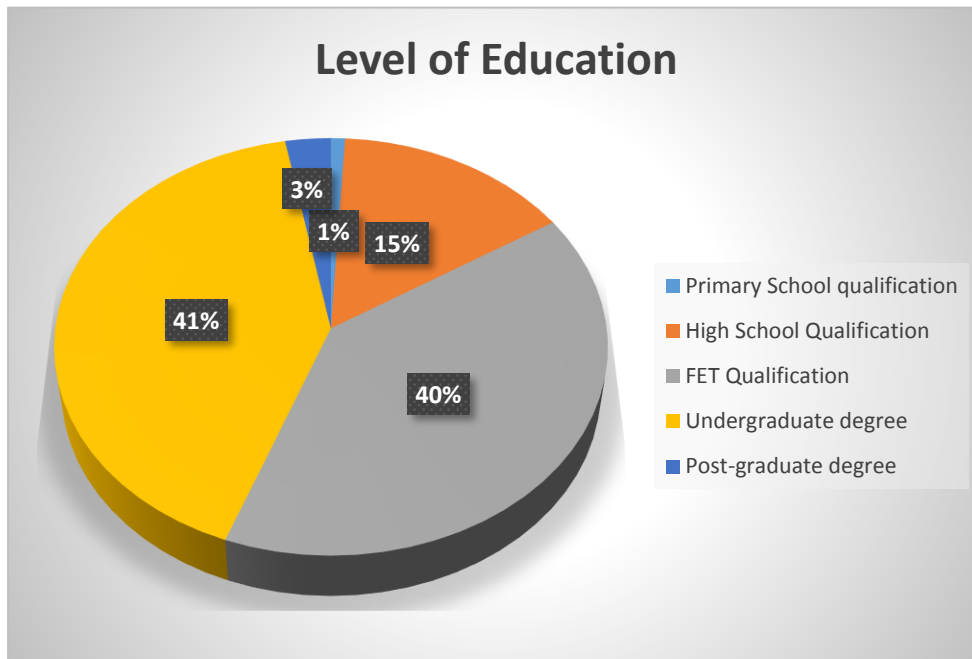


Figure 4.3 Respondents' level of education

Figure 4.3 reports on respondent's level of education. Approximately 0.9 percent (n=3) of the respondents were in possession of a primary school qualification, 15.1 percent (n=52) were in possession of a high school qualification, 39.7 percent (n=137) were in possession of an FET qualification, 41.4 percent (n=143) were in possession of an undergraduate degree, and 2.9 percent (n=10) were in possession of a post-graduate degree.

4.5.2.4 Respondents occupation

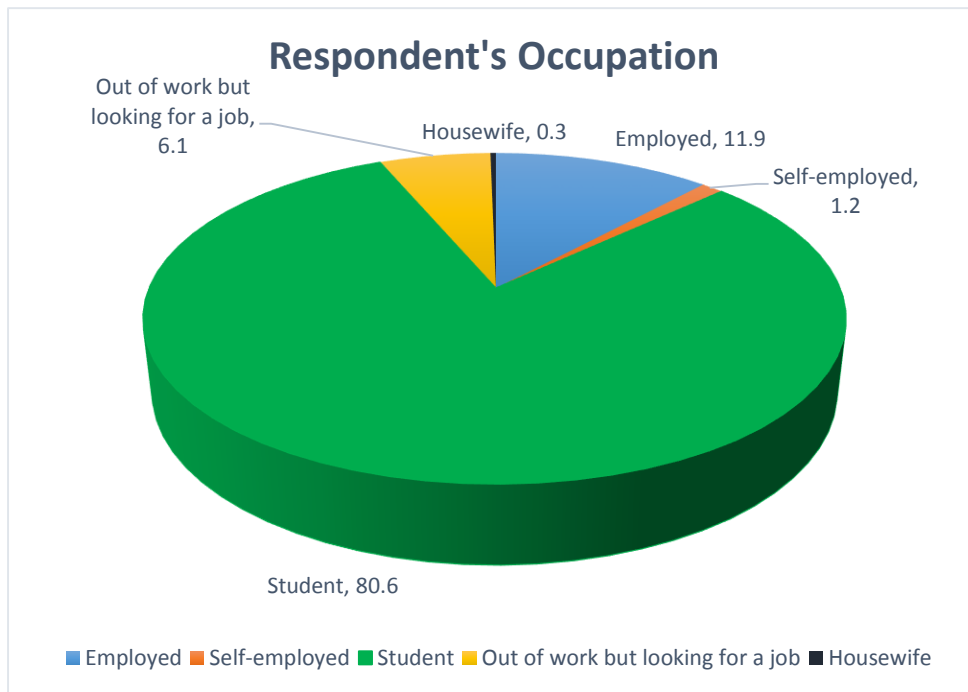


Figure 4.4 Respondents' occupation

Figure 4.4 represents respondents' occupation. The results indicate that majority (n=278) 80.6 percent of the respondents were students. Employed people were (n=41) 11.9 percent. Individuals who were out of work but looking for a job comprised 6.1 percent (n=21). Approximately 1.2 percent (n=4) respondents were self-employed. Lastly, individuals who were housewives comprised 0.3 percent (n=1) of the respondents.

4.5.2.5 Respondents' monthly income or pocket money

Table 4.4 Respondents' monthly income or pocket money

MONTHLY INCOME OR POCKET MONEY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Less than R500	21	6.1
R500-1000	40	11.6
R1001-R1500	57	16.5
R1501-R2000	98	28.4
R2001-R2500	81	23.5
R2501-R3000	22	6.4
R3001-R3500	7	2.0
R3501-R4000	3	0.9
R4001-R4500	7	2.0
R4501-R5000	6	1.7
R5001-R5500	2	0.6
R5501+	1	0.3
Total	345	100

Table 4.4 represents respondents' monthly income or pocket money. Findings reveal that approximately 6.1 percent (n=21) of respondents get monthly pocket money or income of less than R500. Of the 345 respondents, 11.6 percent (n=40) get monthly pocket money or income of R500 to R1000. The results indicates that 16.5 percent (n=57) get monthly pocket money or income of R1001 to R1500 and 28.4 percent (n=98) obtain monthly pocket money or income of 1501 to R2000 and 23.5 percent (n=81) get monthly income or pocket money of R2001 to R2500. While, 6.4 percent (n=22) of the respondents get monthly pocket money or income of R2501 to R3000, 2.0 percent (n=7) get monthly pocket money or income of R3000 to R3500 and 0.9 percent (n=3) get monthly pocket money or income of R3501 to R4000. The findings also shows that 2.0 percent (n=7) of the respondents get monthly pocket money or income of R4001 to R4500 and 1.7 percent (n=6) get monthly pocket money or income of R4501 to R5000. Lastly, the findings reveals that 0.6 percent (n=2) get monthly pocket

money or income of R5001 to R5500, and 0.3 percent (n=1) get monthly pocket money or income of more than R5501.

4.5.2.6 Respondents' residence

Figure 4.5 Respondents' residence

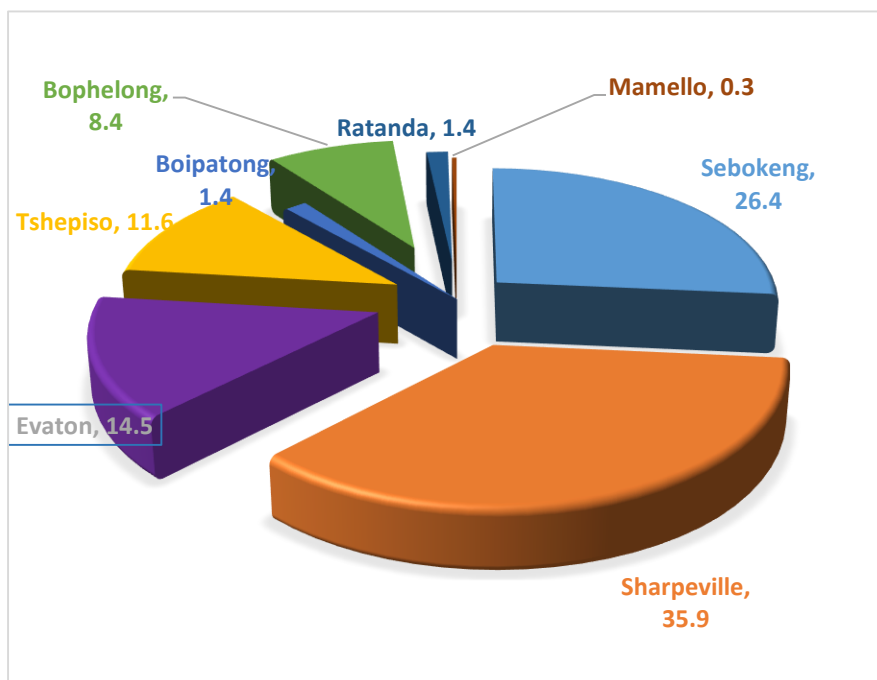


Figure 4.5 illustrates the residence of the respondents. Findings indicated that majority of the respondents 35.9 percent (n=124) reside in Sharpeville, followed by 26.4 percent (n=91) Sebokeng residents. Of the 345 respondents, 14.5 percent (n=50) of the respondents reside Evaton, 11.6 percent (n=40) reside in Tshepiso, 8.4 percent (n=29) of the respondents reside in Bophelong, 1.4 percent (n=5) of the respondents reside in Boipatong and Ratanda, and a small number of the respondents 0.3 percent (n=1) were from Mamello.

4.5.3 Descriptive statistics: mean and standard deviation of the sample

The scaled answers were measured on a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Therefore, higher means are linked with a greater degree of agreement. Descriptive analysis extracted from the study is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics

Construct	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fashion involvement	345	4.17	0.79
Status consumption	345	3.89	0.85
Materialism	345	3.80	0.51
Group identity	345	3.89	1.03
Valid N (listwise)	345		

Table 4.5 indicates the measures of central tendency and dispersion for the dimensions of status consumption. The mean score for fashion involvement was higher, with the value of 4.17. This suggests that the respondents of this study agreed that clothing involvement is one of the important dimensions in status consumption. For group identity, the mean score of 3.89 suggests that the respondents of this study slightly agree that group identity affects status consumption. The lowest mean recorded of 3.80 was on materialism. This indicates that the respondents of this study neither agree nor disagree that materialism has an effect on status consumption.

The highest standard deviation in all the scales computed was on group identity scale (1.03), followed by status consumption scale with 0.85, then fashion involvement scale with 0.79, while materialism (0.51) had the lowest standard deviation. These values indicate that the sample is moderately homogeneous and the mean gives satisfactory indication of the responses.

In the next section, the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument used in this study is discussed.

4.5.4 Reliability of the main survey

In order to test the reliability of a measuring instrument, the Cronbach alpha was computed for each construct. Cronbach alpha is the most frequently used tool to measure reliability of the multiple-item scales. Pallant (2007:98) states that a Cronbach alpha greater than 0.70 is adequate. Moreover, Pallant maintains that a Cronbach alpha higher than 0.80 is more favoured as it indicates good reliability. Malhotra (2010:319) recommends a Cronbach alpha of 0.60 or more as a good sign of sufficient internal consistency reliability.

The Cronbach alpha computed for the various constructs was between 0.659 and 0.890. Therefore, the Cronbach alpha shows satisfactory reliability for all the constructs in the questionnaire with 0.865 obtained for fashion involvement. Status consumption delivered a Cronbach alpha of 0.822. Materialism and group identity returned Cronbach alphas of 0.659 and 0.890 respectively.

With the aim of determining the validity of a measuring instrument, the average inter-item correlation was calculated (Churchill 1995:405). Clark and Watson (1995:16) indicate that the average inter-item correlation has to range between 0.15 and 0.50 for sufficient validity. Inter-item correlation for group influence was 0.621, which is above the recommended values. The inter-item correlations computed for fashion involvement, status consumption and materialism were 0.524, 0.498 and 0.227 respectively. Pallant (2007:100) points out that an inter-item correlation value greater than the suggested value of 0.50 is a sign of a robust relationship between the items of the construct. Overall, all the constructs fell into the suggested values of 0.15 and 0.50 illustrating validity of the measuring instrument.

Table 4.6 gives a summary of the validity and reliability measures of the measuring instrument that was used in this study.

Table 4.6: Reliability and validity of main survey

Valid N	Constructs	Number of Items	Items	Cronbach alpha	Average inter-item correlation
345	Fashion clothing involvement	6	B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6	0.865	0.524
345	Status consumption	5	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5	0.822	0.498
345	Materialism	7	D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7	0.659	0.227
345	Group identity	5	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5	0.890	0.621

4.5.5 Validity of the study

Validity can be defined as the degree to which a test or questionnaire measures what it is supposed to measure (Bae 2004:37). Content and construct validity were utilised to measure the validity of the questionnaire of this study. These methods of validity are discussed in the following section.

4.5.5.1 Content validity

Content validity arises when a measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the subject being studied. Content validity was established by pre-testing the measuring instrument during which changes were made to the questionnaire regarding deletion of items, addition of items, rewording and rephrasing of questions. In order to test validity of this study, 50 participants were selected to take part in the pilot study. The average inter-item correlation was observed in order to detect low or negative correlations among variables.

4.5.5.2 Construct validity

Construct validity of the scale was measured by calculating of the average inter-item correlation for the scale and sub-dimensions of the scale. According to Clark and Watson (1995:16) the recommended level of average inter-item correlation is between the values of 0.15 and 0.50. Whilst average inter-item correlation values of two variable (fashion clothing involvement and group identity) exceeded the recommended level of 0.50, Pallant (2010:100) point out that this simply indicates a strong relationship between the items.

4.6 INFERENCE STATISTICS

This section presents the results of inferential statistical techniques used in this study. The Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis were performed in order to ascertain a relationship between fashion clothing involvement and status consumption; ascertain a relationship between group identity and status consumption; ascertain a relationship between materialism and status consumption; ascertain a relationship between materialism and group identity; ascertain a relationship between materialism and fashion clothing involvement; and ascertain a relationship between fashion clothing involvement and group identity. Furthermore, this section seeks to ascertain which antecedents are likely to influence the township youth consumers' status consumption.

4.6.1 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis was undertaken to address the relationships within the variables of the study. Overall, results show a significant positive relationship among the variables. Table 4.7 presents correlation matrix for the variables of the study.

Table 4.7 Correlation matrix

Constructs		Fashion involvement	Status consumption	Materialism	Group identity
Fashion clothing involvement					
	Pearson correlation	1	0.735**	0.514**	0.712**
	Significance		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	345	345	345	345
Status consumption					
	Pearson correlation	0.735**	1	0.581**	0.783**
	Significance	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	345	345	345	345
Materialism					
	Pearson correlation	0.514**	0.581**	1	0.648**
	Significance	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	345	345	345	345
Group identity					
	Pearson correlation	0.712**	0.783**	0.648**	1
	Significance	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	345	345	345	345

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4.7 indicates the relationship between fashion clothing involvement and status consumption among the township youth consumers. The results indicate a strong significant positive relationship between fashion clothing involvement and status consumption ($r = 0.735$, $p < 0.01$).

Although the relationship between fashion clothing involvement and materialism ($r=0.514$, $p<0.01$) is slightly above the 0.50 cut-off point, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between these constructs. The table shows the positive significant relationship between fashion clothing involvement and group identity ($r=0.712$, $p<0.01$). The relationship between status consumption and materialism is slightly above the 0.50 cut-off point and is positive and significant ($r=0.581$, $p<0.01$). There is an observed positive significant relationship between status consumption and group identity ($r=0.783$, $p<0.01$). From Table 4.7, there is evidence of a positive significant relationship between materialism and group identity ($r=0.648$, $p<0.01$).

4.6.2 Regression analysis

Table 4.8 reports on how fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group identity predicted status consumption. The dependent variable was status consumption and independent variables or predictor variables were fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group identity. On the analysis of the relationship between status consumption and the selected predictors of status consumption, the adjusted $R^2=0.613$. This indicates that the model explained approximately 61.3 percent of variance in status consumption. Table 4.8 presents the results of regression analysis.

Table 4.8 Predictors of status consumption (betas and significance levels)

Predictor variables	Standardised Coefficients	T values	Significance level
Fashion clothing involvement	0.328	7.302	0.000
Materialism	0.124	2.694	0.007
Group identity	0.459	9.140	0.000

Significant at $p<0.05$ level

Fashion clothing involvement ($\beta=0.328$, $p<0.05$) significantly and positively predicted status consumption of township youth consumers. Therefore, the results indicate that fashion-involved consumers are more likely to engage in status consumption. There was a direct relationship between materialism ($\beta=0.124$, $p<0.05$) and status consumption. Group identity ($\beta=0.459$, $p<0.05$) had a significant positive influence on status consumption.

Therefore, the hypotheses that there is a direct relationship among the predictors of status consumption, namely fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group identity, was supported.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to report on and interpret the empirical findings of the study. First, a pilot study was conducted in order to test the reliability of the measuring instrument before the commencement of the main study. The findings of the pilot study were presented and explained in Section 4.2. The modification and changes were made in the measuring instrument items before undertaking the main study. After the pilot study results were presented, the data gathering process was discussed (Section 4.3), followed by the preliminary data analysis process (Section 4.4). This section also discussed the coding and tabulation of the data.

In Section 4.5, the findings of the main survey were presented, interpreted and discussed in the form of tables and graphs. Descriptive statistics (Section 4.5.4), including the mean and standard deviation were considered to summarise the sample and data distribution. Validity and reliability tests of the main survey were conducted on the data and were explained further in Section 4.5.4. Inferential statistics was discussed briefly in Section 4.6 and the section contained correlation and regression analysis. One of the main aims of this study was to test the nature of the relationship between fashion involvement, group influence, materialism and status consumption. Regression analysis (Section 4.6.2) was calculated to further confirm the theoretical relationship that exists between these constructs.

The following chapter, Chapter 5, discusses and contextualises the research findings based on previous research on status consumption. Furthermore, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations made.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Normally, status consumption involves the purchase of expensive branded products to fulfil material desires. Individuals prefer products that convey status and reinforce their group identity and will often buy clothing to display status and personal meaning. Status-driven individuals will often purchase expensive products to impress others and these individuals are not necessarily wealthy (Chapter 2). While status consumption is a global phenomenon that has been studied by several researchers, the aim of this study was to investigate the status consumption of fashion brand practices among township youth. The study focused on three important antecedents of status consumption: a) fashion clothing involvement; b) materialism; and c) group identity (Section 2.3). As such, the primary objective of this study was to investigate the influence of clothing involvement, materialism and group identity on status consumption of fashion brands among the youth. In addition to the primary objective of this study, several theoretical objectives were formulated.

5.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

5.2.2 Theoretical objectives

The theoretical objectives for this study were achieved through review of the relevant literature. The following objectives were set at the beginning of the study (refer to Section 1.4.2):

- Review the literature on status consumption behaviour
- Review the literature on materialism
- Review the literature on fashion clothing involvement
- Review the literature on the role of group identity into consumption of clothing
- Review the literature on the social identity theory
- Review the literature on the motives for status consumption
- Review the literature on status symbols

The theoretical objective one was achieved in Section 2.2 of this study. Theoretical objective two was achieved in Section 2.3.1 of this study. Theoretical objective three was achieved in Section 2.3.2 of this study. Theoretical objective four was achieved in Section 2.3.3 of this study. Theoretical objective five was achieved in Section 2.4.1 of this study. Theoretical objective six was achieved in Section 2.2.3 of this study. Lastly, theoretical objective seven was achieved in Section 2.2.2 of this study (refer to page 13). To achieve these objectives, the researcher made use of various journal articles, books and other literature sources.

5.2.3 Empirical objectives

The following empirical objectives were set at the beginning of the study (refer to Section 1.4.3):

- Investigate the influence of status consumption on group identity among South African township youth
- Investigate the influence of fashion clothing involvement on status consumption among South African township youth
- Investigate the influence of materialism on status consumption among South African township youth

5.3 MAIN FINDING OF THE STUDY

This section discusses the main findings of this study in accordance to the empirical objectives formulated in Chapter 1.

5.3.1 Investigate the influence of group identity on status consumption of South African township youth

The first empirical objectives set out in Chapter 1 was to determine whether group identity has an influence on status consumption of South African township youth. Regression analysis was computed to address this objective. According to the findings reported in Table 4.8, group identity has a statistically significant positive influence on status consumption of South African township youth consumers. This suggests that South African township youth consumers who are more concerned about belonging in a group are likely to engage in status consumption behaviour (Section 2.4.3). This finding is consistent with the studies conducted by Akerlof *et al.* (2005:27) and Khare (2015:437), who found that group identity has a great

impact on individual's behaviour and purchase behaviour. Ramanathan and McGill (2007:511) opine that groups may also have an impact on how the consumer feels towards particular products or brands. As a result, Forehand and Deshpande (2001:338) indicated that group identity governs the types of brands consumers buy.

5.3.2 Investigate the influence of fashion clothing involvement on status consumption of South African township youth

The second empirical objective set out in Chapter 1 was to determine whether fashion clothing involvement has an influence on status consumption of South African township youth. Regression analysis was undertaken in order to address this empirical objective. As evidenced from Table 4.8, fashion clothing involvement has a significant positive influence on status consumption of South African township youth. Results from Table 4.8 suggest that fashion clothing involvement is the strongest predictor of status consumption among South African township youth (Section 2.4.2). This finding is in accordance with the studies done by Gitimu *et al.* (2013:176) and Jordaan and Simpson (2006:37), as they found fashion clothing involvement to have an influence on status consumption. Thus, clothing says how important a person is and demonstrates to others how much status an individual has (Piamphangsant & Mandhachitara 2008:443).

5.3.3 Investigate the influence of materialism on status consumption among South African township youth

The third empirical objective set out in Chapter 1 aimed at determining whether materialism has an influence on status consumption among South African township youth. As with the first and second empirical objectives, regression analysis was conducted in order to address this objective. The results in Table 4.8 reported that materialism has a statistically positive influence on status consumption of South African township youth. This suggests that township youth consumers, who are materialistic, are likely to engage in status consumption (Section 2.4.1). This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Ferle and Chan (2013:205). These authors found that consumers, who are highly materialistic, are also high in status consumption.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Tap the market potential of township youth consumers

Companies have to be aware of the growing potential presented by township youth consumer segments, particularly with respect to its purchasing power and size. The majority of individuals in this consumer segment are studying in tertiary institutions and the others have already obtained their qualifications (Section 4.5.2.3, Figure 4.3), which makes them a valuable market segment. It has been reported that graduates often have a greater earning potential and higher social standing, making them potentially powerful opinion leaders among their peers. As such, it is recommended that companies should start developing marketing strategies targeted explicitly at township consumers to exploit the market potential of this fast growing consumer segment. It is also recommended that academics in the marketing field, and practitioners, engage in extensive research to profile this segment in an endeavor to understand the demographics, attitudinal and behavioural patterns in order to tailor various marketing activities effectively and accurately.

5.4.2 Marketers should target status-oriented consumers

The literature provides numerous recommendations for what marketers can do to reach the status-oriented consumers. Carty (2010:32) emphasises the need for innovations with luxury brands, as status consumers are more tempted to purchase the newest thing. The best way to reach the status-oriented market is for the marketer to create and communicate differentiation in order to make the case as to why their brand is truly special, different and offers a lasting value proposition. Egol, Clyde, Rangan and Sanderson (2010:186) also stress the need for better understanding of different consumer segments and differentiation of marketing efforts. Gardyn (2002:33) proposes that status consumers can be segmented into three groups: (1) those individuals who see luxury as functional and are looking for quality and enduring value; (2) those who see luxury as a reward and demonstrative of their success to others in a 'smart' manner that does not leave them open to criticism; and (3) those who see luxury as an indulgence, will pay a premium for goods that express their individuality and make others take notice, and are focused on the unique emotional qualities of the luxury product. Therefore, status marketers need to have a deep understanding of their status consumers and what they are looking for with their products.

5.4.3 Consider the influence of reference groups

The influence of reference groups and peers plays an important role in the purchasing decisions of the youth consumer segment. It can be advantageous for marketers to consider these reference group members when developing marketing strategies and when communicating the benefits of brands to this consumer segment. It is recommended that marketers should invest in continuous research and keep in contact with this consumer segment to check if their values, perceptions, motivations and importance of purchasing clothing brands have changed.

As status consumers operate within the confines of normative group influence (Section 2.3.3), it is recommended that marketers must target status consumers with visible predictors of prestige and make use advertisements where products are being consumed in a group setting or in situations that imply group approval. Consumers consume products for social acceptance, group affiliation and memberships (Section 2.4.1). Hence, marketers should capitalise on the need for group approval and should encourage the involvement of others when doing shopping or buying a product.

5.4.4 Marketers should segment consumers with different materialistic values and customise their advertisements for each segment

As indicated in the literature reviewed, materialism has also been perceived to affect a wide range of marketplace behaviours and it has been reported that individuals who are more materialistic find possessions to be a sign of success and derive happiness from them, placing possessions as central in their life. These characteristics provide a motivation to claim that when consumers have materialistic tendencies they, in effect, should be more involved in products that allow fulfilment of these tendencies. Particularly so for a product like fashion clothing because it has the ability to be used as a prop, to show others the status and success one has achieved because of its symbolic code, which are all important to materialists.

While marketers may be motivated to encourage materialistic tendencies among consumers, it can be argued that it is not in society's interest to encourage such values (Muncy & Eastman 1998:139). However, Richins and Dawson (1992:310) point out that materialistic values can be influenced by marketing activities such as advertising.

5.4.5 Marketers should direct their communication efforts to high fashion involved

consumers

High fashion clothing involved consumers are likely to be more materialistic and status oriented than other consumers. Therefore, marketers targeting these consumers should emphasise status in their marketing communication efforts. High involved fashion consumers tend to read more fashion magazines, shop more, and are more likely to attend events such as fashion shows. Individuals who have high fashion involvement obtain fashion information for themselves and others, making these individuals good opinion leaders. These consumers are likely to be more innovative regarding fashion clothing and are more inclined to have a need to be on the cutting edge of what is fashionable. For that reason, marketers should design communication messages that stress the innovativeness and trendiness of new fashion styles.

5.4.6 Marketers should emphasises product's ability to indicate high social status

Township youth consumers seem to be driven to purchase luxury public consumed products to display their status. These consumers do not mind paying a premium price for products that will make them feel superior to their peers (Section 2.5). Status oriented consumers perceive low priced products to be of poor quality. For that reason, status conscious consumers are reluctant to purchase affordable or low priced products. Their main purchasing goal is to display status. Therefore, they purchase products that indicate high social status. In most cases, this consumer segment display status through consumption of expensive fashion clothing. For that reason, it is advisable for marketers to put more emphasis on product's perceived role in enhancing consumers' social status.

5.4.7 Target youth consumers through new media platforms

Traditional advertising platforms are slowly fading away while numerous new advertising platforms come into existence. These new advertising platforms are digital in nature. Youth consumers are well known as being technologically informed and are heavy users of digital technology. These consumers spend significant time on online communication and they are very active on social media. Given the importance of social media such as Facebook to the youth consumers, it is suggested that targeting this consumer segment over social media platforms such as Facebook may be feasible for marketers.

5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

This study measured status consumption, fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group influence behaviours of the township youth consumers. This study, like most studies, has some limitations, which present numerous future research opportunities.

The first limitation in this study is that the study utilised a non-probability sampling method. Therefore, even though a number of demographic questions were used in an effort to determine how representative the sample was of the defined target population, care should be taken in generalising the findings to the population under study. Moreover, a single cross-sectional research design was undertaken in this research study (Section 3.2). For that reason, the research study's results need the depth of a longitudinal study. Future research making use of a longitudinal study will deliver valuable information regarding any changes in the elements that determine township youth consumer's status consumption.

The second limitation regarding this study is the focus on the Sedibeng district, more so in only a single South African province, namely Gauteng, and the respondents being from only eleven townships. Future research is recommended across various townships in all nine provinces of South Africa. This will eventually offer more insight and accurate research findings into the understanding of township youth consumers' behaviour towards status consumption.

Furthermore, the study only made use of a quantitative research approach. Future research may consider using a mixed-method approach that includes both a qualitative and quantitative research design, where a qualitative design method could be utilised in obtaining rich ideas and explanations.

Even though the sample size of 400 respondents for this research study was considered to be sufficient for further accurate findings and understandings into the status consumption behaviour, fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group influence, the sample size can be enlarged for future research studies.

The following section will consist of the contribution of the study.

5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into status consumption, fashion clothing involvement, materialism and group identity behaviour amongst township youth consumers. The findings from this study reveal that there is a significant relationship between fashion clothing involvement and status consumption; a significant relationship between group identity and status consumption; lastly, there is also a significant relationship between materialism and status consumption. Findings from this study contribute to the growing body of research on consumer behaviour and status consumption behaviour of township youth consumers in developing countries such as South Africa. Insights obtained from this study will assist marketers to better understand this fast growing segment's consumer behaviour, which, in turn, will assist them tailor their marketing efforts in such a way as to appeal to this segment.

5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The current study expands on previous research on status consumption, materialism, and group identity to look at the youth consumers within the township context. As youth consumers represent the future, it is important to understand their engagement in status consumption in order to develop appropriate marketing strategies.

Fashion clothing represents a vital tool for signaling one's social status to the majority of consumers, particularly the youth. The key insights from the study are that youth consumers are highly involved in fashion clothing and that they consider the opinions of their reference group when making a purchasing decision. Marketers who are targeting this consumer cohort need to familiarise themselves with this market. The study reveals that the youth consumers purchase expensive brands to gain and display status and they believe in owning material possessions.

In conclusion, this study was based on the objectives of the research, the literature review, research methodology used, findings and recommendations made. The findings suggest that marketers in the clothing industry take into account all the important factors discussed in this study as a reference to develop appropriate marketing strategies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AAKER, D.A, KUMAR, V. & DAY, G. 2004. *Marketing research*. 8th ed. New York: John Wiley.

AAKER, D.A. 1991. *Managing brand equity: capitalizing on the value of brand name*. New York: The Free Press.

AAKER, D.A., KUMAR, V. & DAY, G.S. 2007. *Marketing research*. 9th ed. New York: John Wiley.

AAKER, D.A., KUMAR, V., DAY, G.S. & LEONE, R.P. 2011. *Marketing research*. 10th ed. New York: John Wiley.

AAKER, J.L., BENET-MARTINEZ, V. & GAROLERA, J. 2001. Consumption symbols as carriers of culture; a study of Japanese and Spanish brand personality constructs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81:492-508.

ABDOLVAND, M.A. & REIHANI, N. 2013. The effect of brand association in psycho-social and psycho-personality antecedents a conceptual model of conspicuous consumption among youth Adult. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, 6(6):1012-1022.

AGHAEI, M., KARBASI, B.S., FALAHATI, S., HAMAYOUN, R., AGHAPOUR, S.H., SANGTARASHAMI, S.M.H. & KAULAK, K. 2014. Iranian luxury consumption: impact of status consumption, information interpersonal influencers, brand origin and interdependent self-construal. *Research of Recent Sciences*, 3(3):4-11.

AHMED. N., FAROOQ, O. & IQBAL, J. 2014. Credibility of celebrity endorsement and buying intentions an evidence from students of Islamabad, Pakistan. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 20:1-13.

AKERLOF, G.A. & KRANTON, R.E. 2005. Identity and the economics of organisations. *Journal of Economic Perspective*, 19(1):9-32.

ANDREWS, C. 1990. *Ancient Egyptian jewelry*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

- ANSBACHER, H.L. & ANSBACHER, R.R. 1967. *The individual psychology of Alfred Adler*. New York: Harper & Row.
- ASHFORTH, B.E. & MAEL, F. 1989. Social identity theory and the organisation. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(1):20-39.
- AUTY, S. & ELLIOTT, R. 1998. Fashion involvement, self-monitoring and the meaning of brands. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 7(2):109–123.
- BACHMANN, G.R, JOHN, D.R. & RAO, A.R. 1993. Children's susceptibility to peer group purchase influence: an exploratory investigation. *Advance Consumer Research*, 20:463-468.
- BAKEWELL, C., MITCHELL, V.W. & ROTHWELL, M. 2006. UK Generation Y male fashion consciousness. *Journal of Fashion and Marketing*, 10(2):169-180.
- BEARD, F.K. 2003. College student attitudes toward advertising's ethical, economic, and social consequences. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 48(3):217–228.
- BEARDEN, W.O. & ROSE, R.L. 1990. Attention to social comparison information: an individual difference factor affecting consumer conformity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(4):461-471.
- BEARDEN, W.O., NETEMEYER, R.G. & TEEL, J.E. 1989. Measurement of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15:473-481.
- BEHRMAN, J.R. 2000. Social mobility: concepts and measurements in new markets, new opportunities?. *Economic and Social Mobility in a Changing World*, 69-100.
- BELÉN DEL RÍO, A., VÁZQUEZ, R. & IGLESIAS, V. 2001. The effects of brand associations on consumer response. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18(5):410-425.
- BELK, R. W. 1984. Three scales to measure constructs related to materialism: reliability, validity, and relationships to measures of happiness. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 11(1):291-297.
- BELK, R.W., BAHN, K. & MAYER, R. 1982. Developmental recognition of consumption symbolism. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9:4-17.

BELL, R. 2000. Consumption patterns of the new elite in Zimbabwe. Working Paper Number 288, University of Utah, Utah.

BENAVIDES, A.D. & DAVID, H. 2010. Wellness programs: a remedy for reducing healthcare costs. *Hospital Topics: Research and Perspectives on Healthcare*, 80(2):26-30.

BERRY, C.J. 1994. *The idea of luxury: a conceptual and historical investigation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BEVAN-DYE, A.L., GARNETT, A. & DE KLERK, N. 2012. Materialism, status consumption and consumer ethnocentrism amongst black Generation Y students in South Africa. *Journal of Business management*, 6(16):5578-5586.

BEWS, N. 2008. Social study for the environmental management framework for the Sedibeng District Municipality: <http://www.socialassessment.co.za/environmentalimplansedibeng>. Accessed: 25 January 2016.

BIAN, Q. & FORSYTHE, S. 2012. Purchase intention for luxury brands: a cross cultural comparison. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10):1443-1451.

BLESS, C., HIGSON-SMITH, C. & KAGREE, A. 2006. *Fundamentals of social research methods: an African perspective*. Cape Town: Juta.

BLOCK, C.E. & ROERING, K.J. 1979. *Essentials of consumer behaviour*. 2nd ed. Winston: The Dryden Press.

BLYTHE, J. 2013. *Consumer behaviour*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications Inc.

BOCK, D.E., EASTMAN, J.K. & MCKAY, B. 2014. The impact of economic perceptions on status consumption: an exploratory study of the moderating role of education. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 31(2):111-117.

BRADLEY, N. 2007. *Marketing research, tools & techniques*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- BRADLEY, N. 2010. *Marketing research: tools and techniques*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford.
- BREEN, R. 2005. *The comparative study of social mobility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BREZNINOVA, O.I. & VIJAYAKUMAR, S. 2012. The conspicuous consumption and visibility of consumer behavior: special reference to low middle income and poor in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. *International Conference on Economics Marketing and Management*, 28:167-173.
- BREWER, M.A. 2001. The many faces of social identity: implications for political psychology. *Political Psychology*, 22(1):115-125.
- BRISTOL, T. & MANGLEBURG, T.F. 2005. Not telling the whole story: teen deception in purchasing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 33(1):79-95.
- BRITTAIN, C.V. 1963 Adolescent choices and parent-peer cross pressures. *American Sociological Review*, 28:385-391.
- BRYMAN, A. & BELL, E. 2011. *Business research methods*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- BURIN, C.N. 2010. The perceived influence of the elements of internal marketing on the brand image of staffing agencies in South Africa. Unpublished Masters Dissertation (MCom): University of Johannesburg.
- BURNKRANT, R.E. & COUSINEAU, A. 1975. Informational and normative social influence in buyer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2:206-215.
- BURNS, A.C. & BUSH, R.F. 2006. *Marketing research*. 5th ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- BURNS, D.J. & WARREN, H.B. 1995. Need for uniqueness: shopping mall preference and choice activity. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 23(12):4-12.
- BURROUGHS, J.E. & RINDFLEISCH, A. 2002. Materialism and wellbeing: a conflicting values perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29:348-370.

- CAMERON, J.E. 2004. A three factor model of social identity. *Journal of Self and Identity*, 3:239-262.
- CAMPBELL, C. 1997. Self-esteem in context: a case study of the motivational process underlying social identity construction by Township youth. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 22:20-36.
- CARTY, S.S. 2010. Even luxury car makers struggle. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 4:29-37.
- CARUANA, A. & MAGRI, E. 1996. The effects of dogmatism and social class variables on consumer ethnocentrism in Malta. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 14(4):39-44.
- CHADHA, R. & HUSBAND, P. 2006. *The cult of the luxury brand: inside Asia's love affair with luxury*. London: Nicholas Brealey International.
- CHAN, W.Y., TO, C.K.M. & CHU, W. C. 2015. Materialistic consumers who seek unique products: How does their need for status and their affective response facilitate the repurchase intention of luxury goods? *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 27(1):1-10.
- CHANDON, P., WANSINK, B. & LAURENT, G. 2000. A benefit congruency framework of sales promotion effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 64(4):65–81.
- CHAUDHURI, H.R. & MAJUMDAR, S. 2006. Of diamonds and desires: understanding conspicuous consumption from a contemporary marketing perspective. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 11(1):47-56.
- CHEN, Y. & XIN-LI, S. 2009. Group identity and social preferences. *American Economic Review*, 9(1):431-457.
- CHILDERS, T.L. & RAO, A.R. 1992. The influence of familial and peer-based reference groups on consumer decisions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(2):198-211.
- CHOPRA, D. 2003. *Golf for enlightenment*. New York: Harmony Books.

- CHRISTOPHER, A., JOHN, S.F. & SUDHAHAR, C. 2014. Influence of peers in purchase decision making of smartphone: a study conducted in Coimbatore. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 4(8):1-7.
- CHURCHILL, G.A. & BROWN, T.J. 2006. *Basic marketing research*. London: Dryden Press.
- CHURCHILL, G.A. & IACOBUCCI, D. 2002. *Marketing research: methodological foundations*. 8th ed. Orlando, FL: Harcourt College Publishers.
- CHURCHILL, G.A. & IACOBUCCI, D. 2005. *Marketing research: methodological foundations*. 9th ed. Mason, Ohio: Thomson South-Western.
- CHURCHILL, G.A. 1995. *Marketing research methodological foundations*. 6th ed. Fort Worth: Dryden Press.
- CHURCHILL, G.A., BROWN, T.J. & SUTER, T.A. 2010. *Basic marketing research*. Mason: OH: South-Western.
- CLARK, L.A. & WATSON, D. 1995. Construct validity: basic issues in objective scale development. *Psychological assessment*, 7(3):309-319.
- CLARK, R.A., ZBOJA, J.J. & GOLDSMITH, R.E. 2007. Status consumption and role-relaxed consumption: a tale of two retail consumers. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 7(3):45-49.
- CLASON, D.L. & DORMODY, T.J. 1990. Analysing data measured by individual Likert-type items. *Journal of Agriculture Education*, 35(4):31-35.
- CLEVELAND, M. & CHANG, W. 2008. Migration and materialism: the roles of ethnic identity, religiosity and generation. *Journal of Business Research* 62:963-971.
- CLOW, K.E., COLE, H.S. & DENARDIN, T. 2014. Boutique clothing stores and materialism. *International Journal of Business, Marketing and Decision Sciences*, 7(1):32-47.

- COCANOUGH, A.B. & BRUCE, G.D. 1971. Socially distant reference groups and consumer aspirations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 8:379-381.
- COLDWELL, D. & HERBST, F. 2004. *Business research*. Cape Town: Juta Academic.
- COOPER, D.R & SCHINDLER, P.S. 2006. *Marketing research*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- COOPER, D.R. & SCHINDLER, P.S. 2001. *Business research methods*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- CORNEO, G. & JEANNE, O. 1997. Conspicuous consumption, snobbish and conformism. *Journal of Public Economics*, 66:55-71.
- COSKUNER, G. & SANDIKCI, O. 2004. New clothing: meanings and practices. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 31:285-189.
- CURTIS, J. & TALLIS, N. 2005. *Forgotten empire: the world of ancient Persia*. London: British Museum.
- DANZIGER, P. N. 2005. *Them eat cake: marketing luxury to the masses — as well as the classes*. New York: Dearborn Trading Press.
- DAVIS, F. 1992. *Fashion, culture, and identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- DEAUX, K., REID, A., MIZRAHI, K. & ETHIER, K. 1995. Parameters of social identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68:280-291.
- DEL RIO, A. B., VASQUEZ, R. & IGLESIAS, V. 2001. The effects of brand associations on consumer response. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18(5):410-425
- DHAR, R. & SHERMAN, S.J. 1996. The effect of common and unique features in consumer choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 23(1):193-203.
- DITTMAR, H. 1992. *The social psychology of material possessions: to have is to be*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

- DLAMINI, P. 2011. Township markets: Available at: <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/business>. Date of access 10 October 2014.
- DOUGLAS, M. & ISHERWOOD, B. 1979. *The World of Goods*. Basic Books, New York: Dover Publications.
- DOYLE, C. 2011. *Oxford dictionary of marketing*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- DUBOIS, B. & DUQUESNE, P. 1993. The market for luxury goods: income vs culture. *European Journal of Marketing*, 27(1):35-44.
- DUBOIS, B. & LAURENT, G. 1994. Attitudes toward the concept of luxury: an exploratory analysis. *Asia Pacific Advances in Consumer Research, Association for Consumer Research*, 4:273-278.
- DUNLEAVY, P. 1988. Group identities and individual influence: restructuring the theory of interest groups. *Journal of Political Science*, 18(1):21-49.
- DURMAZ, Y. & TASDEMIR, A. 2014. A theoretical approach to the influence of social class on consumer behaviour. *American International Journal of Social Science*, 3(3):187-191.
- DUTTON, J.L. & DUKERICH, J.M. 1991. Keeping an eye on the mirror: image and identity in organisation adaptation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 34(3):517-554.
- EASTMAN, J., IYER, R. & THOMAS, S. 2013. The impact of status consumption on shopping styles: an exploratory look at the Millennial Generation. *Marketing Management Journal*, 23(1):57-73.
- EASTMAN, J.K. & EASTMAN, K.L. 2011. Conceptualising a model of status consumption theory: an exploration of the antecedents and consequences of the motivation to consume for status. *Marketing Management Journal*, 1-15.

- EASTMAN, J.K. & LIU, J. 2012. The impact of generational cohort on status consumption: an exploratory look at generational cohort and demographics on status consumption. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 29(2):93-102.
- EASTMAN, J.K., FREDENBERGER, B., CAMPBELL, D. & CALVERT, S. 1997. The relationship between status consumption and materialism: a cross-cultural comparison of Chinese, Mexican, and American students. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 52-66.
- EASTMAN, J.K., GOLDSMITH, R.E. & FLYNN, L.R. 1999. Status consumption in consumer behaviour: scale development and validation. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 7(3):41-52.
- EGOL, M., CLYDE, A., RANGAN, K. & SANDERSON, R. 2010. The new consumer frugality: adapting to the enduring shift in US consumer spending and behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(4):115-234.
- ENDENBURG, N., HART, H. & BOUW, J. 1994. Motives for acquiring companion animals. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, (1):191–206.
- ENG, T.Y. & BOGAERT, J. 2010. Psychological and cultural insights into consumption of luxury western brands in India. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 9(1):55-75.
- ENGEL, J.F., BLACKWELL, R.D. & MINIARD, P.W. 1993. *Consumer Behaviour*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich: Fort Worth.
- ESCALAS, J.E. & BETTMAN, J.R. 2003. You are what they eat: the influence of reference groups on consumers' connections to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(3):339-348.
- ESCALAS, J.E. & BETTMAN, J.R. 2005. Self-construal, reference groups, and brand meaning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32:178-189.
- ESPINOZA, G. & JUVONEN, J. 2011. The pervasiveness, connectedness and intrusiveness of social network sites. *Cyberpsychology, Behaviour and Social Networking*, 14(12):705-709.

- FAN, J.X. & BURTON, J.R. 2003. Students' perception of status-conveying goods. *Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education*, 13(1):35-46.
- FEINBERG, F., KINNEAR, T. & TAYLOR, J. 2012. *Modern marketing research: concepts, methods, and cases*. Singapore: Cengage Learning.
- FERLE, C. L. & CHAN, K. 2013. Determinants for materialism among adolescents in Singapore. *Young Consumers*, 9(3):201-14.
- FODOR, M., CSISZARIK-KOSCIR, A., KATALIN, M. & MEDVE, A. 2013. The correlation between health conscious and wellness: analyses of consumer's attitudes and preferences according to a Primary Domestic national Wide Survey results. *The Macrotheme Review*, 2(4):137-143.
- FOREHAND, M.R. & DESHPANDE, R. 2001. What we see makes us who we are: priming ethnic self-awareness and advertising response. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(3):336-348.
- FRAENKEL, J.R. & WALLEN, W.E. 2008. *How to design and evaluate research in education*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- GARDYN, R. 2002. Oh, the good life. *American Demographics*, 31-35.
- GARDYN, R. 2002. Oh, The good life. *American demographics*. 24(10):31-35.
- GARL, R.M., HIRSH, L.A., LEININGER, D.L., MULVIHILL, D.A., RENNER, W.B. & SCAVO, J.J. 2001. *Golf course development in residential communities*. Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute.
- GENTRY, J.W., PUTREVU, S., SHULTZ, C. & COMMURI, S. 2001. How now Ralph Lauren? The separation of brand and product in a counterfeit culture. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 28:258-265.
- GHERASIM, T. 2013. Behaviour social factors. *Economy Transdisciplinarity Cognition*, 16(1):5-14.

GILBERT, D. & KAHL, J.A. 1982. *The American class structure: a new synthesis*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

GITIMU, P.N., WORKMAN, J. & ROBINSON, J.R. 2013. Garment quality evaluation: influence of fashion leadership, fashion involvement, and gender. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 6(3):173-180.

GOLDSMITH, R.E. & CLARK, R.A. 2011. Materialism, status consumption, and consumer independences. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 152(1):43-60.

GOLDSMITH, R.E., FLYNN, L.R. & CLARK, R.A. 2012. Materialistic, brand engaged and status consuming consumers and clothing behaviours. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 16(1):102-119.

GRIER, S.A. & DESPANDE, R. 2001. Social dimensions of consumer distinctiveness: the influence of social status on group identity and advertising persuasion. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(2):216-224.

GROSSMANN, I. & VARNUM, M.E. 2011. Social class, culture, and cognition. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2:81-89.

GROTTS, A.S. & JOHNSON, W.T. 2012. Millennial consumption of handbags. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 17(3):280-293.

GRUBB, E.L. & GRATHWOHL, H.L. 1967. Consumer self-concept, symbolism and market behaviour: a theoretical approach. *Journal of Marketing*, 31:22-27.

GRUBB, E.L. & STERN, B.L. 1971. Self-concept and significant others. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 8(3):382-385.

GUJARATI, D.N. 1988. *Basic econometrics*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

HAIR, J.F. (Jr.), BLACK, W.C., BABIN, B.J., ANDERSON, R.E. & TATHAM, R.L. 2006. *Multivariate data analysis*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

HAIR, J.F., BUSH, R.P. & ORTINAU, D.J. 2003. *Marketing research: within a changing in formation environment*. 2nd ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

HAIR, J.F., BUSH, R.P. & ORTINAU, D.J. 2000. *Marketing research*. Boston: Irwin McGraw Hill.

HAIR, J.F., WOLFINBARGER, M.F., ORTINAU, D.J. & BUSH, R.P. 2010. *Essentials of marketing research*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

HAMILTON, K. 2009. Consumer decision making in low-income families: the case of conflict avoidance. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 8:252-267

HANZAEI, K.H. & ROUHANI, F.R. 2011. Investigation of the effects of dimensions of luxury perception and brand preference on the purchase intention of luxury Automobiles in Iranian consumers. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, 28-51.

HAWKINS, D.I. & MOTHERSBAUGH, D.L. 2013. *Consumer behaviour and building marketing strategy*. 12th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

HAWKINS, I., BEST, R.J. & CONEY, K.A. 2004. *Consumer behaviour and building marketing strategy*. 9th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

HEANEY, J.G., GOLDSMITH, R.E. & JUSOH, W.J.W. 2005. Status consumption among Malaysian consumers: exploring its relationships with materialism and attention to social comparison information. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 17(4):83-93.

HEINE, K. 2012. *The concept of luxury brands*. New York: Prentice Hall.

HEUGEL, A. 2015. Status consumption and the millennial consumer: an exploratory study. Master's thesis in Business Administration. Georgia Southern University.

HIRSCHMAN, E. & HOLBROOK, M. 1982. Hedonic consumption: emerging concepts, methods, and prepositions. *Journal of Marketing*, 46:92-101.

HIRSCHMAN, E.C. 1994. Consumers and their animal companions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(4):616–632.

HOGG, M. A. 2003. Social identity. In M.R. Leary & J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity*. New York: Guilford.

HOGG, M.A. & ABRAMS, D. 1988. *Social identifications: a social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes*. London: Routledge.

HOGG, M.A. 2001. A social identity theory of leadership. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 5(3):184-200.

HOOPEER, D., COUGHLAN, J. & MULLEN, M.R. 2008. Structural equation modelling: guidelines for determining model fit. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 6(1):53-59.

HOURLIGAN, S.R. & BOUGOURE, U.S. 2012. Towards a better understanding of fashion clothing involvement. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 20:127-135.

HUSSAIN, M. & WONG, C. 2015. The online banking behaviour of Generation Y. *International Business and Economy Conference*. Bangkok, Thailand, January 5-8.

IACOBUCCI, D. & CHURCHILL, G.A. 2010. *Marketing research methodological foundations*. 10th ed. Australia: South-Western Cengage Learning.

INGLEHART, R. 1990. *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN. 2015. Available at http://www.sedibeng.gov.za/a_keydocs/idp_2015_16/chapter_2_review_analysis_final.pdf. Accessed: 30 May 2016.

ISLAM, G., WILLS, H.E. & HAMILTON, M. 2009. Objective and subjective indicators of happiness in Brazil: the mediating role of social class. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 149(2):267-271.

JAKPAR, S., NA, A.G.S., JOHARI, A. & MYINT, K.T. 2012. Examining the product quality attributes that influences the customer satisfaction most when the price was discounted: a case study in Kuching Sarawak. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(23):221-236.

- JORDAAN, Y & SIMPSON, M.N. 2006. Consumer innovativeness among females in specific fashion stores in the Menlyn shopping centre. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, 34(1):32-40.
- JOSIASSEN, A. 2010. Young Australian consumers and country of origin effect: investigation of the moderating roles of product involvement and perceived product origin congruency. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 18:23-27.
- JOUBERT, P. 2010. *Introduction to consumer behaviour*. Claremont: Juta.
- KAO, D.T. 2013. The impacts of consumers' need for uniqueness and brand personality on brand switching intentions. *Journal of Business Theory and Practice*, 1(1):83-94.
- KARPOVA, E., NELSON-HODGES, N. & TULLAR, W. 2007. Making sense of the market: an exploration of apparel consumption practices of Russian consumer. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 11(1):106-121.
- KAUFMANN, H.R., LOUREIRO, S.M.C., BASILE, G. & VRONTIS, D. 2012. The increasing dynamics between consumers, social groups and brands. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 15(4):404-419.
- KAUS, W. 2013. Conspicuous consumption and race: evidence from South Africa. *Journal of Development Economics*, 100(1):63-73.
- KENT, R. 2007. *Marketing research: approaches, methods and applications in Europe*. Mason: OH: Thomson.
- KERNIS, M.H. 1984. Need for uniqueness, self-schemas, and thought as moderators of the false-consensus effect. *Journal of Experimental and Social Psychology*, 20 (1):350-362.
- KHARE, A. & RAKESH, S. 2010. Predictors of fashion clothing involvement among Indian youth. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 18:209-220.
- KHARE, A. 2015. How cosmopolitan are Indian consumers: a study on fashion clothing involvement. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 18(4):431-451.

- KHARE, A., MISHRA, A. & PARVEEN, C. 2012. Influence of collective self-esteem on fashion clothing involvement among Indian women. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 16(1):42-63.
- KIM, D. & JANG, S. 2014. Motivational drivers for status consumption: a study of Generation Y consumers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 38:39-47.
- KIM, Y. 2008. The role of task-induced involvement and learner proficiency in L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*, 58(2):285-325.
- KNIGHT, D.K. & KIM, E.Y. 2007. Japanese consumers' need for uniqueness: effects on brand perceptions and purchase intention. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 11(2):270-280.
- KO, H., ROBERTS, M.S. & CHO, C.H. 2006. Cross-cultural differences in motivations and perceived interactivity: a comparative study of American and Korean internet users. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 28(2):93-102.
- KOBUS, M. 2007. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- KOLB, B. 2008. *Marketing research: a practical approach*. California. SAGE publication.
- KOTLER, P. 1965. Behaviour models for analysing buyers. *Journal of Marketing*, 29:37-45.
- KRAFT, F.B. & GOODELL, P.W. 1993. Identifying the health conscious consumer. *Journal of Health Care Marketing*, 13(3):18-25.
- LAFFERTY, B.A. & GOLDSMITH, R.E. 2004. How influential are corporate credibility and endorser attractiveness when innovators react to advertisements for a new high technology product?, *Corporate Reputation Review*, 7:24-36.
- LAMB, C.W., HAIR, J.H. & MCDANIEL, C.D. 2009. *Essentials of marketing*. 6th ed. Mason (Ohio): South-Western.
- BEARDEN, W.O. & ETZEL, M.J. 1982. Reference group influence on product and brand purchase decision. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9:182-194.

- LAVERIE, D.A., KLEINE, R.E. & SCHULTZ, K. S. 2002. Reexamination and extension of Kleine, Kleine, and Kernon's social identity model of mundane consumption: the mediating role of the appraisal process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(4):659-669.
- LAWLOR, M.A. & ANDREA, P. 2008. Exploring children's understanding of television advertising beyond the advertiser's perspective. *European Journal of Marketing*, 42(11):1203-1223.
- LEDGERWOOD, A., LIVIATAN, I. & CARNEVALE, P.J. 2007. Group identity competition and the symbolic value of property. *Journal of Psychological Science*, 18(10):873-878.
- LEIBENSTEIN, H. 1950. Bandwagon, snob and Veblen effects in the theory of consumers' demand. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 64(5):183-207.
- LENHART, A. & MADDEN, M. 2007. Teens, privacy and online social networks: how teens manage their online identities and personal information in the age of MySpace, pew internet and American life project. Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute.
- LERTWANNAWIT, A. & MANDHANCHITARA, R. 2012. Interpersonal effects on fashion consciousness and status consumption moderated by individualism in metropolitan men. *Journal of Business Research*, 65:1408-1416.
- LIAO, S. & MA, Y. 2009. Conceptualising consumer need for product authenticity. *International Journal of Business and Information*, 4(1):89-114.
- LOMBAARD, C., VAN DER MERWE, L., KELE, T. & MOUTON, S. 2012. *Elementary statistics for business and economics*. Cape Town: Pearson.
- LOUBSER, M., MARTINS, J.H. & VAN WYK, H.D.J. 1996. *Marketing research: a South African approach*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- LUNA, D., RINGBERG, T. & PERACCHIO, L. A. 2008. One individual, two identities: frame switching among biculturals. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(2):279-293.

- LYNN, M. 1991. Scarcity effects on desirability: mediated by assumed expensiveness?. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 10:257-274.
- MAHALINGAM, R. 2007. Essentialism, power, and the representation of social categories: a folk sociology perspective. *Human Development*, 50:300-319.
- MAKGOSA, R. & MOHUBE, K. 2007. Peer influence on young adults' product purchase decisions. *African Journal of Business management*, 64-71.
- MALHOTRA, A., GASAIN, S. & EL SAWY, O.A. 2005. Absorptive capability configurations in supply chain chains: gearing for partner-enabled market knowledge creation. *MIS Quarterly*, 29(1):145-187.
- MALHOTRA, N. & PETERSON, M. 2006. *Basic marketing research: a decision-making approach*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- MANIKANDAN, K. & RAJAMOHAN, A. 2014. Consumer's need for uniqueness in buying small cars. *Journal of Management Policies and Practices*, 2(1):135-146.
- MALHOTRA, N. K & BIRKS D.F. 2007. *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. 3rd ed. London: Prentice-Hall.
- MALHOTRA, N. K. 2007. *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. 7th ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall.
- MALHOTRA, N.K & BIRKS D.F. 2006. *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. 2nd ed. London: Pearson Prentice-Hall.
- MALHOTRA, N.K. & BIRKS, D.F. 2003. *Marketing research: an applied approach*. Harlow: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- MALHOTRA, N.K. 1996. *Marketing Research: an applied orientation*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- MALHOTRA, N.K. 2004. *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. 3rd ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

MALHOTRA, N.K. 2010. *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. 6th ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.

MANLEY, L.L. 2012. Township consumer perceptions of advertised retail brands in Tshwane: South Africa. *International Retail and Marketing Review*, 1:74-93.

MARKET, J. 2004. Demographics of age: generational and cohort confusion. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 26(2):11-25.

MARTIN, C. 1998. Relationship marketing: a high involvement product attribute approach. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 7(1):6-26.

MARTIN, C.A. & BUSH, A.J. 2000. Do role models influence teenagers purchase decisions and behaviour?. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 17 (5):441-454.

MASON, R. 1981. *Conspicuous consumption: a study of exceptional consumer behaviour*. New York: St Martin's Press.

MASON, R. 1993. Cross-cultural influences on the demand for status goods. *European Advances in Consumer Research*, 1:46-51.

MASON, R.S. 2001. Conspicuous consumption: a literature review. *European Journal of Marketing*, 18(3):26-39.

MAZALI, R. & RODRIQUE-NETRO, J.A. 2013. Dress to impress: brands as status symbols. *Journal of Games and Economic Behaviour*, 84:103-131.

MCDANIEL, C. & GATES, R. 2001. *Marketing research essentials*. 3th ed. Cincinnati: South-Western College Publishers.

MCDANIEL, C. & GATES, R. 2005. *Marketing research essentials*. 5th ed. Cincinnati: Thomson Learning.

MCDANIEL, C. & GATES, R. 2006. *Marketing research essentials*. 7th ed. Cincinnati: South-Western College Publishers.

MCDANIEL, C.D. & GATES, R.H. 1999. *Contemporary marketing research*. 2th ed. Cincinnati: South Western College.

- MCDERMOTT, L.A. & PETTIJOHN, T.F. 2011. The influence of clothing fashion and race on the perceived socioeconomic status and person perception of college students. *Psychology & Society*, 4(2):64-75.
- MCFATTER, R.D. 2005. Fashion involvement of affluent female consumers. Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College: Louisiana.
- MCKAY, L. 2008. The matured endure. *Customer Relationship Management*, 12(11):40-44.
- MCKINELEY, C.J., MASTRO, D. & WARBER, K.M. 2014. Social identity theory as a framework for understanding the effects of exposure to positive media images of self and other on intergroup outcomes. *International Journal of Communication*, 8:1049-1068.
- MIQUEL, S., CAPLLIURE, E.M. & ALDAS-MANZANO, J. 2002. The effect of personal involvement of the decision to buy store brands. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 11(1):6-18.
- MITTAL, B. & LEE, M.S. 1989. A causal model of consumer involvement. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 10:363-389.
- MOORE, C.M. & BIRTWISTLE, G. 2004. The Burberry business model – understanding a brand renaissance. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 32(8):412-22.
- MOTALE, M.D.B. 2015. Black generation Y male students' fashion consciousness and need for uniqueness. Unpublished Philosophiae Doctor Dissertation (Phd): North West University.
- MOUTON, J. 1996. *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van-Schaik.
- MROZEK, D. 1983. *Sport and American mentality, 1880–1910*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- MULLARKEY, G.W. 2001. The influence of brands in the fashion purchasing process. *University of Auckland Business Review*, 3(1):56-71.
- MUNCY, J. & EASTMAN, J. 1998. Materialism and consumer ethics: an exploratory study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 17(2):137-145.

- MUNIZ, A.M. & O'GUINN, T.C. 2001. Brand community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(4):411-450.
- NGA, J.K.H., YONG, L.H.L. & SELLAPPAN, R. 2011. The influence of image consciousness, materialism and compulsive spending on credit card usage intentions among youth. *Young Consumers*, 12(3):243-253.
- NUENO, J.L. & QUELCH, J.A. 1998. The mass marketing of luxury. *Business Horizons*, 41:61-68.
- O'CASS, A. & CHOY, E. 2008. Studying Chinese generation Y consumer' involvement in fashion clothing and perceived brand status. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 17(5):341-352.
- O'CASS, A. & FROST, H. 2002. Status brands: examining the effects of non-product-related brands associations on status and conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 11(2):67-88.
- O'CASS, A. & MCEWEN, H. 2004. Exploring consumer status and conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 4(1):25-39.
- O'CASS, A. & SIAHTIRI, V. 2013. In search of status through brands from Western and Asian origin: examining the challenging face of fashion clothing consumption in Chinese young adults. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 20(2):505-515.
- O'CASS, A. 2000. An assessment of consumers' product, purchase decision, advertising and consumption involvement in fashion clothing. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 21:545-576.
- O'CASS, A. 2001. An exploratory study of the influence of person values on purchase decision and advertising involvement. *Asia Pacific Advances in Consumer Research*, 4:67-72.
- O'CASS, A. 2004. Fashion clothing consumption: antecedents and consequences of fashion clothing involvement. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(7):869-882.

- O'CASS, A., LEE, W.J. & SIAHTIRI, V. 2013. Can Islam and status consumption live together in the house of fashion clothing?. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 17(4):440-459.
- OGLE, J., KAREN, H.H., YAN, R. & LITTRELL, M.A. 2014. Segmenting the teen girl apparel market: differences in fashion involvement, materialism and social responsibility. *Young Consumers*, 15(2):153-166.
- OKSMAN, V. & RAUTIANINEN, P. 2003. Extension of the hand: children's and teenager's relationship with the mobile phone in Finland. Mediating the human body. *Technology, Communication and Fashion*, 103-112.
- ONYANGO, B.L., NAYGA, R.M. & SCHILLING, B. 2004. Role of product benefits and potential risks in consumer acceptance of genetically modified foods. *AgBioForum*, 7(4):202-211.
- PAJARSKAITE, M. & CEKAVICIUS, T. 2012. Pets as status symbol. Master's thesis in Business Administration. Jonkoping University.
- PALFREY, J. & GASSER, U. 2008. *Born digital: understanding the first generation of digital natives*. New York: Basic Book.
- PALLANT, J. 2007. *SPSS Survival manual*. 3rd d. London: Open University Press.
- PALLANT, J. 2010. *SPSS survival manual: a step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS*. 4th ed. New York: McGraw Hill.
- PANTZALIS, I. 1995. Exclusivity strategies in pricing and brand extension. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.
- PARASURAMAN, A. 1991. *Marketing research*. 2nd ed. Mass: Addison Wesley.
- PARK, N., KEE, K.F. & VALENZUELA, S. 2009. Being immersed in social networking environment: facebook groups, uses and gratifications, and social outcomes. *CyberPsychology & Behaviour*, 12(6):729-733.

- PARKER, R.S., HERMANS, C.M. & SCHAEFER, A.D. 2004. Fashion consciousness of Chinese, Japanese and American teenagers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 8(2):176-186.
- PATSIAOURAS, G. & FITCHETT, J. 2012. The evolution of conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, 4(1):154-176.
- PEMPEK, T.A., YERMOLAYEVA, Y.A. & CALVERT, S.L. 2009. College students' social networking experiences on Facebook. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 30(3):227-238.
- PENTINA, I., PRYBUTOK, V.R. & ZHANG, X. 2008. The role of virtual communities as shopping reference groups. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, 9(2):114-136.
- PERREAULT, W.D. & MCCARTHY, E.J. 1996. *Basic marketing*. 12th ed. London: Irwin.
- PETER, J.P. & OLSON, J.C. 2005. *Consumer behavior and marketing strategy*. 7th ed. North America: McGraw-Hill.
- PETER, J.P. & OLSON, J.C. 2008. *Consumer behavior and marketing strategy*. 8th ed. North America: McGraw-Hill.
- PETRICK, J. F. 2001. Analysis of golfer motivations and constraints by experience use history. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 33(1):56–70.
- PHAU, I. & MARCHEGIANI, C. 2010. The value of historical nostalgia for marketing management. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 29(2):10-22.
- PIAMPHANGSANT, T. & MANDHACHITARA, R. 2008. Psychological antecedents of career women's fashion clothing conformity. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 12(4):438-455.
- PINHEIRO-MACHADO, R. & SCALCO, L.M. 2012. Brand clans: consumption and rituals among low-income young people in the city of Porto Alegre. *International Review of Social Research*, 2(1):107-126.

- PIRON, F. 2000. Consumers' perceptions of the country-of-origin effect on purchasing intentions of conspicuous products. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 17(4):308–321.
- POST, C. 2010. Exploring working-class consciousness: a critique of the theory of the labour-aristocracy. *Historical Materialism*, 18(1):3-38.
- PRATT, M.G. 2003. Disentangling collective identities in Polzer, J.T: identity issues in groups. *Elsevier Science*, 161-188.
- QUELCH, J.A. 1987. Marketing the premium product. *Business Horizons*, 30:38-45.
- QUINLAN, C. 2011. *Business research methods*. Australia: Cengage.
- RAMANATHAN, S. & MCGILL, A.L. 2007. Consuming with others: social influences on moment-to-moment and retrospective evaluations of an experience. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34:506-524.
- RANJBARIAN, B., SHEKARCHIZADE, Z. & FATHI, S. 2013. Social class influence on child's perception of TV advertisement messages by the elementary students. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 3(6):93-106.
- RAWLINS, J., SIMEON, D.T., RAMDATH, D.D. & CHADEE, D.D. 2008. The Elderly in Trinidad: Health, Social and Economic Status and Issues of Loneliness. *West Indian Medical Journal*, 57(6):589-595.
- REED, A., FOREHAND, M.R., PUNTONI, S. & WARLOP, L. 2012. Identity based consumer behaviour. *Journal of Research in Marketing*, 29(1):310-321.
- REZA, S.A. & VALEECHA, S. 2013. Influence of social reference groups on automobile buying decision-research on young executives. *World Review of Business Research*, 3(4):197-210.
- RICHINS, M.L. 1994. Valuing Things: The Public and Private Meanings of Possessions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21:504-521.

- RICHINS, M.L. & DAWSON, S. 1992. Consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(1):303-316.
- ROBERTS, A.J., TSANG, J. & MANOLIS, C. 2015. Looking for happiness in all the wrong places: the moderating role of gratitude and affect in materialism-life satisfaction relationship. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 10(6):489-498.
- ROEHRICH, G. 2004. Consumer innovativeness: concepts and measurements. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(6):671–677.
- ROPER, S. & LA NIECE, C. 2009. The importance of brands in the lunch-box choices of low income British school children. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 8:84-99.
- ROSS, S., WALSH, P. & SHREFFLER, M.B. 2014. The impact of need for uniqueness, loyalty proneness, and identification on the likelihood of brand extension purchases. *Global Sport Business Journal*, 2(2):28-42.
- RUANE, L. & WALLACE, E. 2013. Generation Y females online: insights from brand narratives. *Quantitative Market Research*, 16(3):315-335.
- RUVIO, A., SHOHAM, A. & BRENCIC, M.M. 2008. Consumers' need for uniqueness: short-form scale development and cross-cultured validation. *International Marketing Review*, 25(1):33-53.
- RYAN, L. & DZIURAWIEC, S. 2001. Materialism and its relationship to life satisfaction. *Social Indicators Research*, 55(2):185-197.
- MCGRAW-HILL.SEGEV, S., SHOHAM, A. & GAVISH, Y. 2015. A closer look into the materialism construct: the antecedents and consequences of materialism and its three facets. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 32(2):85-98.
- SCHIFFMAN, L.G. & KANUK, L.L. 2000. *Consumer behaviour*. 7th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- SCHIFFMAN, L.G. & KANUK, L.L. 2004. *Consumer behaviour*. 6th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

SCHIFFMAN, L.G. & KANUK, L.L. 2007. *Consumer behaviour*. 9th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

SCHIFFMAN, L. & KANUK, L.L. 2010. *Consumer Behaviour*. 10th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

SEDIBENG INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010.

http://www.sedibeng.gov.za/a_keydocs/idp_2009_10/idp2010_chp_3.pdf. Accessed: 25 January 2016.

SEDIBENG INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012.

http://www.sedibeng.gov.za/a_keydocs/idp_2012_16/chapter_1.pdf. Accessed: 25 January 2016

SELVAKUMAR, J. & VIKKRAMAN, P. 2012. Attitude of the youth and entertainment in Coimbatore City. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6(44):10967-10973.

SHARMA, R.K. 2004. *Indian society, institutions and change*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.

SHETH, J.N., NEWMAN, B.I. & GROSS, B.L. 1991. Why we buy what we buy: a theory of consumption values. *Journal of Business Research*, 22:159-170.

SHIU, E., HAIR, J.F., BUSH, R.P. & ORTINAU, D.J. 2009. *Marketing research*. London: McGraw-Hill.

SHRUM, L.J. & WONG, N. 2013. Re-conceptualising materialism as identity goal pursuits: functions, processes, and consequences. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(3):1179-1185.

SHUKLA, P. 2008. Conspicuous consumption among middle age consumers. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 17(1):45-66.

SHUKLA, P. 2010. Status consumption in gross-national context: social-psychological, brand and situational antecedents. *International Marketing Review*, 27(1):108-129.

SIMONSON, I. & NOWLIS, S.M. 2000. The role of explanations and need for uniqueness in consumer decision making: unconventional choices based on reasons. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (1):49-68.

SINGH, J. & GOYAL, B.B. 2009. Mobile handset buying behaviour of different age and gender groups. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(5):179-187.

SIVADAS, E., MATHEW, G. & CURRY, D.J. 1997. Apreliminary examination of the continued significance of social class to marketing: ageodemographic replication. *Journal of Consumer Market*, 14(6): 469-500

SLIBURYTE, L. 2009. How celebrities can be used in advertising to the best advantage?, *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*, 58:934-939.

SNYDER, C.R. & FROMKIN, H.I. 1980. *Uniqueness: The human pursuits of difference*. New York: Plenum Press.

SNYDER, C.R. & FROMKIN, H.L. 1977. Abnormality as a positive characteristic: the development and validation of a scale measuring need for uniqueness. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 86:518-27.

SOLOMON, M.R. & RABOLT, N. 2004. *Consumer behaviour in fashion*. 2nd ed. New York: Prentice Hall.

SOLOMON, M.R. 1983. The role of products as social stimuli: a symbolic interactionism perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10:319-329.

SOLOMON, M.R. 2004. *Consumer behaviour: buying, having and being*. 6th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

SOLOMON, M.R. 2006. *The psychology of fashion. The advances in retailing stores*. Lexington: Lexington Books.

SOUTH AFRICAN LED NETWORK. 2012. Municipality: Sedibeng district municipality. www.led.co.za. Accessed date: 13 February 2016.

STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA (Statssa). 2011. Mid-year population estimates: 2013 key indicators, statistical estimates: statistical release P0302. <http://www.statssa.gov.za>. Accessed date: 13 October 2014.

STETS, J.E. & BURKE, P.J. 2000. Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63:224-237.

STEVENS, R.E., WRENN, B., SHERWOOD, P.K. & RUDDICK, M.E. 2006. *The marketing research guide*. New York: Best Business Books.

STRUWIG, W.F. & STEAD, B.G. 2001. *Planning, designing and reporting research*. Cape Town: Pearson Education.

STRYDOM, J. 2011. *Introduction to marketing*. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta.

SUBRAMANIAN, S. & SUBRAMANIAN, A. 1995. Reference group influence on innovation adoption behaviour: incorporating comparative and normative referents. *European Advance in Consumer Research*, 2:14-18.

SWARTZ, K. 2003. Style ranks high in cellphone design. *Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News*.

TASHAKKORI, A. & TEDDLIE, C. 2009. *Foundations of mixed methods research. Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in social and behavioural sciences*. Washington DC: McGraw-Hill.

TEIJLINGEN, E.R & HUNDLEY, V. 2001. *The importance of pilot study: social research update*. Guildford: University of Surrey.

TEIMOURPOUR, B., HANZAEI, H.K.H. & TEIMOURPOUR, B. 2012. Segmenting consumers based on luxury value perceptions. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, 5(5):1681-1688.

THOMAS, D. 2007. *Deluxe: how luxury lost its luster*. New York: The Penguin Press.

TIAN, K.T., BEARDEN, W.O. & HUNTER, G.L. 2001. Consumers' need for uniqueness: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28:50-66.

TIGERT, D.J., RING, L.J. & KING, W.C. 1976. Fashion involvement and buying behaviour: a methodological study. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 3:46-52.

TRUONG, Y., SIMMONS, G., MCCOLL, R. & KITCHEN, P.J. 2008. Status and conspicuousness – are they related? Strategic marketing implications for luxury brands. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 16(3):189-203.

TSAI, S.P. 2005. Impact of personal orientation on luxury-brand purchase value: an international investigation. *International Journal of Market Research*, 47(4):429-454.

TUCKER, T. 2011. What influences young adults' decision to adopt new technology?. *Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 2(2):147-157.

TUSTIN, D.H., LIGTHELM, A.A., MARTIN, J.H. & VAN WYK, H.D. 2005. *Marketing research*. Cape Town: University of South Africa Press.

UNESCO. 2014. What do we mean by “youth”. Available at:
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>.
Date of access: 27/10/2014.

UNGERER, L.M. & JOUBERT, J.P.R. 2011. The use of personal values in living standards measures. *Southern African Business Review*, 15(2):97-121.

USTUNER, T. & HOLT, D. 2010. Toward a theory of status consumption in less industrialised countries. *Journal of Consumer research*, 37(1):37-56.

VANDANA, A. & LENKA, U. 2014. A review on the role of media in increasing materialism among children. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 133(4):456-464.

VANDERSTOEP, S.W. & JOHNSTON, D. 2009. *Research methods for everyday life. Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. San Francisco: McGraw-Hill.

VARNUM, M. E., NA, J., MURATA, A. & KITAYAMA, S. 2012. Social class differences in N400 indicate differences in spontaneous trait inference. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 141:518-526

VEBLEN, T.B. 1899. *The theory of the leisure class*. New York: Dover Publications.

- VELLA, M. 2008. "A Volvo with a Lot More Attitude." *BusinessWeek*.
- VERHALLEN, T.M. 1982. Scarcity and consumer choice behaviour. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 2:299-321.
- VIEIRA, V. & SLONGO, L. 2008. Testing a theoretical model of fashion clothing involvement. *Latin American Advances in Consumer Research*, 2(1):47-53.
- VIEIRA, V. 2009. An extended theoretical model of fashion clothing involvement. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 13(2):179-200.
- VIGNERON, F. & JOHNSON, L.W. 1999. A review and a conceptual framework of prestige-seeking consumer behaviour. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 3(1):237-261.
- VIGNERON, F. & JOHNSON, L.W. 2004. Measuring perceptions of brand luxury. *Journal of Brand Management*, 11:484-506.
- VLACHOPOULOS, S.P., THEODORAKIS, N.D. & KYLE, G.T. 2008. Assessing exercise involvement among participants in health and fitness centers. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 8(3):289-304.
- WANG, A. 2005. The effects of expert and consumer endorsements on audience response. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 402-412.
- WATTANASUWAN, K. 2005. The self and symbolic consumption. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 6(1):179-184.
- WIEDMANN, K.P., HENNIGS, N. & SIEBELS, A. 2009. Value-based segmentation of luxury consumption behaviour. *Psychology and Marketing*, 26(7):625–651.
- YAISH, M. & ANDERSEN, R. 2012. Social mobility in 20 modern societies: the role of economic and political context. *Social Science Research*, 41(1):527-538.
- YANG, J., HE, X. & LEE, H. 2007. Social reference group influence on mobile phone purchasing behavior: a cross-nation comparative study. *International Journal of Mobile Communications*, 5(3):319-338.

ZAICHKOWSKY, J.L. 1985. Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12:341-352.

ZEB, H., RASHID, K. & JAVEED, M.B. 2011. Influence of brands on female consumer's buying behaviour in Pakistan. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance*, 2(3):225-231.

ZHANG, B. & KIM, J. Luxury fashion consumption in China: factors affecting attitude and purchase intent. *Journal of Retailing and Customer Services*, 20(1): 68-79.

ZHOU, L. & WONG, A. 2008. Exploring the influence of product conspicuousness and social compliance on purchasing motives of young Chinese consumers for foreign brands. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 7(6):470-483.

ZIKMUND, W.G. & BABIN, B. 2007. *Essentials of marketing research*. Australia: Thomson South-Western.

ZIKMUND, W.G. & BABIN, J.B. 2010. *Essentials of marketing research*. 4th ed. Mason, South-Western: Cengage Learning.

ZIKMUND, W.G. 1999. *Essentials of marketing research*. Fort Worth: Dryden Press.

ZIKMUND, W.G. 2000. *Exploring market research*. 7th ed. Fort Worth: Dryden Press.

ZIKMUND, W.G. 2003. *Essentials of marketing research*. 2nd ed. South Western: Thomson.

ANNEXURE A: Questionnaire before pilot study



Faculty of Management Sciences

Department of Marketing and Sport Management

Dear Participant:

I am a Masters student enrolled at Vaal University of Technology studying under the supervision of Dr HB Mahlangu.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to research selected antecedents to approach status consumption among township youth consumers in the Sedibeng district. Youth refers to those individuals between the ages of 10 and 29 years. However, this study focuses on the youth who are between 18 and 24 years of age.

Please complete all questions in the enclosed questionnaire. I assure you that the information you provide will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. The responses will be used for academic purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Mr Nkosivile Welcome Madinga

MTech student at Vaal University of Technology

Cell number: 083 4759 734

Email: welcome.madinga@gmail.com

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

This section seeks some background information about you. It is important to obtain this information, as this will have a bearing on the results of the survey. Please indicate your answer by crossing (x) in the appropriate block.

A.1	Please indicate your gender	
	Male	Female

A.2	Please indicate your age							
	18 years	19 years old	20 years	21 years	22 years	23 years	24 years	Older than 24

A.3	Please indicate your level of your education				
	Primary School	High School	FET qualification	Undergraduate degree	Post-graduate degree

A.4	Please indicate your occupation					
	Employed	Self-employed	A student	Out of work and looking for a job	Out of work but not looking for a job	Housewife

A.5	Please indicate your average monthly income or pocket money					
	Less than R500	R500-1000	R1001-R1500	R1501-R2000	R2001-R2500	R2501-R3000
	R3001-R3500	R3501-	R4001-	R4501-	R5001-	R5501+

		R4000	R4500	R5000	R5500	
--	--	-------	-------	-------	-------	--

A.6	Please indicate at which location you are residing				
	Sebokeng	Evaton	Sharpeville	Boipatong	Bophelong
	Tshepiso	Ratanda	Impumelelo	Jameson Park	Kwazenzele
	Mamello	other			

If you indicated other, please specify_____

SECTION B: Fashion Involvement

(Fashion involvement is the extent to which a consumer views the related fashion clothing activities as a central part of their lives).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
B1	Fashion clothing means a lot to me.	1	2	3	4	5
B2	Fashion clothing is a significant part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
B3	I consider fashion clothing to be a central part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
B4	I am very interested in fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
B5	I think a lot about my choices when it comes to fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
B6	I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: Status Consumption

(Status consumption refers to the consumption of expensive products or services with the aim of displaying wealth).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I buy fashion brands:						
C1	To enhance my image	1	2	3	4	5
C2	To indicate a social status symbol	1	2	3	4	5
C3	As a symbol of success and prestige	1	2	3	4	5
C4	To indicate wealth	1	2	3	4	5
C5	To indicate achievement	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Materialism

(Materialism is the importance a person places on possessions and their acquisition as a necessary desirable form of conduct to reach desirable states, including happiness).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
D1	I usually buy only the things I need	1	2	3	4	5
D2	I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned	1	2	3	4	5
D3	The things I own are not all that important to me	1	2	3	4	5
D4	I enjoy spending money on things	1	2	3	4	5

	that are not practical					
D5	Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure	1	2	3	4	5
D6	I like a lot of expensive things in my life	1	2	3	4	5
D7	I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: Group Identity

(Group identity refers to a cluster of individuals that significantly influences a person's behaviour).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
E1	I often buy fashion brands that friends have told me about	1	2	3	4	5
E2	I place a lot of confidence in friends' opinions regarding buying fashion brands	1	2	3	4	5
E3	I often decide to buy fashion brands that I see my friends wearing	1	2	3	4	5
E4	After buying fashion brands similar to those my friends bought, I want to let them know	1	2	3	4	5
E4	I am often concerned with the impression friends may form of me because of the fashion brands I buy	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION F: Need for Uniqueness

(Need for uniqueness refers to individual's desire to be different from others through acquiring and utilizing particular goods with the aim of making and enhancing their social image)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
F1	I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special products or brands.	1	2	3	4	5
F2	Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assist me in establishing a distinctive image.	1	2	3	4	5
F3	The products and brands that I like best are the ones that express my individuality.	1	2	3	4	5
F4	I often think of things I buy and do interns of how I can use them to shape a more unusual personal image.	1	2	3	4	5
F5	I'm often on the lookout for new products or brands that will add to my personal uniqueness.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your cooperation!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

ANNEXURE B: Main study questionnaire



Faculty of Management Sciences

Department of Marketing and Sport Management

Dear Participant:

I am a Masters student enrolled at Vaal University of Technology studying under the supervision of Dr HB Mahlangu.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to research selected antecedents to approach status consumption among township youth consumers in the Sedibeng district. Youth refers to those individuals between the ages of 10 and 29 years. However, this study focuses on the youth who are between 18 and 24 years of age.

Please complete all questions in the enclosed questionnaire. I assure you that the information you provide will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. The responses will be used for academic purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Mr Nkosivile Welcome Madinga

MTech student at Vaal University of Technology

Cell number: 083 4759 734

Email: welcome.madinga@gmail.com

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

This section seeks some background information about you. It is important to obtain this information, as this will have a bearing on the results of the survey. Please indicate your answer by crossing (x) in the appropriate block.

A.1	Please indicate your gender	
	Male	Female

A.2	Please indicate your age							
	18 years	19 years old	20 years	21 years	22 years	23 years	24 years	Older than 24

A.3	Please indicate your level of your education				
	Primary School	High School	FET qualification	Undergraduate degree	Post-graduate degree

A.4	Please indicate your occupation					
	Employed	Self-employed	A student	Out of work and looking for a job	Out of work but not looking for a job	Housewife

A.5	Please indicate your average monthly income or pocket money					
	Less than R500	R500-1000	R1001-R1500	R1501-R2000	R2001-R2500	R2501-R3000
	R3001-R3500	R3501-	R4001-	R4501-	R5001-	R5501+

QUESTIONNAIRE

		R4000	R4500	R5000	R5500	
--	--	-------	-------	-------	-------	--

A.6	Please indicate at which location you are residing				
	Sebokeng	Evaton	Sharpeville	Boipatong	Bophelong
	Tshepiso	Ratanda	Impumelelo	Jameson Park	Kwazenzele
	Mamello	other			

If you indicated other, please specify_____

SECTION B: Fashion Involvement

(Fashion involvement is the extent to which a consumer views the related fashion clothing activities as a central part of their lives).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
B1	Fashion clothing means a lot to me.	1	2	3	4	5
B2	Fashion clothing is a significant part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
B3	I consider fashion clothing to be a central part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
B4	I am very interested in fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
B5	I think a lot about my choices when it comes to fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
B6	I am very much involved in/with fashion clothing.	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION C: Status Consumption

(Status consumption refers to the consumption of expensive products or services with the aim of displaying wealth).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I buy fashion brands:						
C1	To enhance my image	1	2	3	4	5
C2	To indicate a social status symbol	1	2	3	4	5
C3	As a symbol of success and prestige	1	2	3	4	5
C4	To indicate wealth	1	2	3	4	5
C5	To indicate achievement	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Materialism

(Materialism is the importance a person places on possessions and their acquisition as a necessary desirable form of conduct to reach desirable states, including happiness).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
D1	I usually buy only the things I need	1	2	3	4	5
D2	I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned	1	2	3	4	5
D3	The things I own are not all that important to me	1	2	3	4	5
D4	I enjoy spending money on things that are not practical	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTIONNAIRE

D5	Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure	1	2	3	4	5
D6	I like a lot of expensive things in my life	1	2	3	4	5
D7	I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: Group Identity

(Group identity refers to a cluster of individuals that significantly influences a person's behaviour).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by ticking (✓) the corresponding number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
E1	I often buy fashion brands that friends have told me about	1	2	3	4	5
E2	I place a lot of confidence in friends' opinions regarding buying fashion brands	1	2	3	4	5
E3	I often decide to buy fashion brands that I see my friends wearing	1	2	3	4	5
E4	After buying fashion brands similar to those my friends bought, I want to let them know	1	2	3	4	5
E4	I am often concerned with the impression friends may form of me because of the fashion brands I buy	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your cooperation!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!