



Sculpting global leaders

Online Advertising and Consumer Engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing.

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Abstract

This research studies the relationship between online banner advertising, consumer engagement dimensions and low and high involvement purchase decisions. Advertising influences customer engagement (Daven and Sari, 2021), and consumer engagement for online banner advertisements is expressed differently depending on purchase context i.e. high and low involvement products.

Marketers use a similar approach to advertise low and high involvement products online, without differentiating how affective and cognitive dimensions of engagement influence consumer purchase decisions for low and high involvement products. Using the elaboration likelihood model, the study proposes that online advertising and consumer engagement dimensions, specifically the cognitive and affective dimensions, affect low and high involvement purchase decisions significantly.

A self-administered survey designed on Qualtrics was distributed via online channels such as WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. Using a random snowball sampling method, a total of 305 responses were collected. The study tested 8 hypotheses and data from the study was analysed using structural equation modelling on SPSS.

The results of the study indicate that online banner advertising has a significant relationship with cognitive and affective consumer engagement for high and low involvement products. The results also reveal that cognitive and affective consumer engagement has a positive relationship with both low and high involvement purchase decisions. The study confirms that dimensions of engagement do influence online advertising outcomes as well as purchase decisions for low and high involvement products.

This study contributes to theoretical literature on online advertising and dimensions of consumer engagement in low and high involvement purchase contexts, the study also has practical implication in that it broadens marketers' awareness of cognitive and affective engagement influences on high and low involvement purchase decisions, specifically for online banner adverts.

Keywords: online advertising, high involvement products, low involvement products, consumer engagement

Declaration

I, Nontu Mhlaba, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted to fulfil the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other University.

Nontu Mhlaba Signed at Boksburg. On the 27 day of February 2024

Dedication and acknowledgements

Most importantly, I would like to thank God for giving me the vision to start this journey, for paving my way and giving me the strength required to see this through.

Thank you to Wits University for facilitating this process, through the school, I have met so many wonderful people who have become lifelong connections. Thank you to my supervisor, Dr Saini for instilling a deep knowledge of research and for the guidance.

To my management team for the support, I could not have done this without your support and understanding.

Lastly, to the most important people in my life, my husband, my mother and my 2 beautiful kids, Masana and Nhenha. I could not have possibly done this without your love, belief in me, words of affirmation and hugs. Thank you so much! To God be the glory.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, key themes relating to the study are discussed. Section 1.1 introduces the background of the study, section 1.2 confirms the purpose of the study, section 1.3 provides information on the context of the study, section 1.5 covers the problem statement, sub problems and research questions, and section 1.6 discusses the significance of the study. Section 1.7 to 1.11 covers the study delimitations, definitions, abbreviations, and study assumptions.

1.1 Background of study

Online advertising and consumer engagement have been proven to predict purchase decisions, statement is derived from a study by Clarence and Keni (2022) investigating digital marketing, consumer engagement, brand preference and purchase intention. Liu-Thompkins (2019) studied over 300 journals in a space of 10 years, focusing on online advertising in its holistic format, covering topics such as the effectiveness of online advertising, the use of creative elements, personalisation, and search advertising. In all the research papers that were explored, a literature gap was identified relating to online advertising, consumer engagement dimensions (cognitive and affective) in low and high involvement purchase decision scenarios.

This study seeks to delve deeper into understanding online advertising by differentiating between two dimensions of consumer engagement; cognitive and affective dimension, as well as expand on consumer engagement dimension outcomes in low and high involvement purchase decisions. The two dimensions of consumer engagement which will be in focus for this study are derived from Hollebeek et al.'s (2014, 2022) consumer brand engagement model.

It has been reported that online advertising revenue stood at an unprecedented \$679.8 billion in 2022, and that number is expected to grow to \$876 billion dollars by 2026 (Datareportal, 2023). The increased use of online advertising shows that marketers consider it a worthy channel to promote products and services, for products that require both high and low involvement. In a recent study by Terblanche et al., (2023), studying consumer cognitive and affective attitudes and purchase intention based on product involvement in cause-related marketing campaigns, results indicated that both cognitive and affective responses are influenced by product involvement. An earlier study by Nizam and Jafaar (2018) explored the effectiveness of online advertising and the study shows ad recall, overall attitude towards

adverts and clicks strongly influenced purchase decisions, this indicates a cognitive and affective influential component from consumers, that is expressed when consumers engage with an online advert. Online purchase decisions are strongly affected by consumer engagement, for example clicks on online adverts are a consumer engagement metric. This study explores the above topics with additional detail focusing on the identified constructs.

1.2 Context of Study

This study explores online advertising and consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions. Consumer engagement in this study is viewed in cognitive and affective dimensions of consumer engagement. Hollebeek et al., (2014, 2022), proposed a consumer engagement model with 3 main dimensions of consumer engagement, namely, cognitive, affective, and behavioural. This study will focus on the impact of cognitive and affective dimensions of consumer engagement, without the behavioural component, with a specific focus on the South African audience and their online user behaviour.

The number of consumers using the internet daily has grown and continues to grow year on year, it has been reported that there is an annual internet use growth rate of 4.1% per year, with over 5 billion people using the internet daily (DataReportal, 2023). In South Africa, over 27 million e-commerce users were recorded in 2023, and 43 million South Africans use the internet (Statista, 2023). Online advertising has been on an upward trajectory, with more money and ads placed on platforms like Google and Facebook for advertising purposes, Google reported a growth of 15.4% in Q1 of 2024 when compared with the same period in 2023. Grossing a total advertising revenue of \$80.5 billion from \$69.7 billion. The digital advertising platform saw a boost in popularity and recognition as an effective channel to attract consumer attention, this growth shows a clear increase in the popularity of online advertising. Covid-19 was reported to have accelerated the relevance of digital interactions and lifestyle (Amankwah-Amoah et al., (2021). This study draws in the on the recent growth of digital advertising and the projected future growth of online advertising, the focus of the study is to carve an opportunity to rethink online banner marketing approach for low and high involvement products, by understanding CE dimensions and how they play a role in consumer purchase decisions.

Cognitive and affective dimensions of consumer engagement contribute to how a consumer processes advertising messages and both dimensions influence purchase decisions. Antecedents of behavioural engagement include liking, sharing and commenting (Onofrei et al., 2023), the behavioural component has been argued by academics to be a practitioner's approach to understanding online engagement and requires consumer participation, i.e., likes, reshares, clicks (Rogers and Thorson, 2000). The behavioural dimension is also referred to as 'activation' (Rogers and Thorson, 2000), because of the way in which engagement is expressed, it is expressed in activities and consumer participation, this study focuses on processing cues, which exclude behavioural engagement.

Consumers' information search behaviour differs with their product involvement – high and low involvement (Lin & Zhou, 2023). Previous researchers (Terblanche et al., 2023) have proven that purchase intention of a product is strongly influenced by product involvement. It is with this understanding that high and low involvement were selected as constructs for the study. A consumer's decisions to purchase a product is primarily driven by a consumer's understanding of product suitability and needs through the information provided (Terblanche, Boshof, Human-Van Eck, 2023). High involvement products are complex, and consumers rely on factors such as experience, knowledge, and cost to decide whether to engage further with the advert. This study proposes that online advertising requires cognitive engagement for high involvement purchase decisions and minimal affective engagement which would be a negative relationship with online banner advertising. Low involvement products carry less risk and can be impulse purchases, which we argue can easily lead to easier cognitive and affective engagement and quicker purchase decisions, where online advertising is more effective.

1.3 Purpose of study

This research aims to fill an existing gap relating to studies investigating the relationship between online advertising, two dimensions of consumer engagement (CE); cognitive and affective dimensions of consumer engagement, in high and low involvement purchase decisions. Liu-Thompkins (2019) researched online advertising from 2009 to 2019, with the aim of recording the evolution of online advertising after seeing the substantial increase in spend, even with this knowledge, academic research in this space is still maturing. Processing of online adverts is one of the gaps identified by the researcher. Marketers have a fixated focus

on impressions and clicks as the measurable outcome in online banner advertising (Statista, 2023). This study evaluated multiple research papers (Wuisan and Hendra 2023; Hollebeek 2022; Wang et al., 2023), and discovered there is a limitation of available research that explains whether online banner adverts for high or low involvement products require a specific dimension of consumer engagement, either cognitive or affective in high and low involvement purchase decisions.

Wuisan and Handra (2023) define online advertising as an information medium that is created to draw in an audience, this is consistent with an earlier definition by Ha (2008) which defined online advertising as deliberate messages that are placed by the advertiser on online mediums for promotion. Marketers use a stock-standard approach to advertise online for both high and low involvement products, product involvement is an important variable in consumer studies (Te'eni-Harari et al., 2015).

This study presents an opportunity to study contributing dimensions of consumer engagement in high and low involvement purchase decisions. High involvement products have a defined purchasing process. Adverts for high involvement products do not always illicit an immediate response because they require individuals to know and research the product, a high involvement purchase is described by Mothersbaugh (2019), as a purchase decision that requires more research from the customer, customers prefer to do research on the product before purchasing it. High involvement purchases are very analytical and require analytical reasoning.

Products that require low involvement can be spontaneous purchases and can be a result of both cognitive and affective dimensions of CE. This study will analyse the extent to which banner online adverts and both dimension of CE influence consumer purchase decisions, in a low and high involvement context. This study will contribute to understanding how consumers engage with online banner adverts, by understanding CE dimensions of consumer purchase decisions in low and high involvement purchase decisions.

1.4 Problem statement

Consumer engagement for online banner advertisements is expressed differently depending on purchase context i.e. high and low involvement products, and yet marketing professionals use

the same approach to advertise products on online banner adverts. Consumer disposition can influence consumer engagement, (van der Shee and Peltier, 2020), Brodie et al., (2011) adds that the expression of specific engagement dimensions varies across contexts, and Van Doorn et al., (2010) confirms that online 'engagement' dimensions include active sustained cognitive processing, instrumental value, and experiential value- which is an affective view. There are various factors that can influence consumer engagement specifically for high and low involvement purchase decisions.

The research gap was identified by identifying that there is a high volume of literature explaining engagement as it relates to brand (Satar, Rather and Khan, 2023; Cantone, Testa and Marrone, 2023; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Studies investigating online banner advertising, cognitive and affective engagement by assessing involvement level were not identified.

In the context of online advertising, consumer engagement and high and low involvement purchase decisions, the literature is scattered. Previous studies have looked at the effectiveness of online advertising (Liu-Thompkins, 2019), the influence of personalised advertising copy on consumer engagement (Guo and bin Jiang, 2023) consumer engagement in the context of social media (Barger et al, 2016), engagement and purchase intention (Husnain and Toor, 2017), consumer empowerment in consumers of high involvement products, consumer brand engagement (Hollebeek, 2017), attitudinal perceptions on online advertising and purchase decisions (Ahmed 2019), ad appeal in low involvement product placement (Nuweihed and Trendel, 2023). Studies carried out to understand online advertising by looking at specific consumer engagement dimensions and the outcome in both low and high involvement purchase decisions are limited. This study looks to explore the relationship between online advertising and two dimensions of consumer engagement in the context of high and low involvement purchase decision-making.

A high involvement purchase for consumers, as identified by Mothersbaugh (2019) requires that a customer must first have recognised a need, there should be an inherent need identified by the consumer and a desire to fulfil the need, the customer does their own research to see which product best fits the desired need, thereafter the customer makes their product evaluation and then choice. These types of products carry a higher risk to buyers if they fail, the products are categorically complex, and/or have high price tags. Speciality products: cars, houses, are not purchased often.

Due to the varying levels of involvement, consumers differ in information search and decision-making process (Kumar et al, 2024). Nuweihed and Trendel (2023), explain low-involvement decisions as products that are relatively inexpensive and pose a low risk to the buyer if the buyer makes a mistake by purchasing them and generally need a lower cognitive relationship. Consumers often engage in routine response behaviour when they make low-involvement decisions; they make automatic purchase decisions based on limited information or information they have gathered in the past.

Investigating the relationship between dimensions of engagement and purchase decisions is an opportunity to add to the body of available research.

1.4.1 Sub-problems

This research explores 8 sub problems, identified as follows:

1. The first sub-problem is to study the relationship between online banner advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.
2. The second sub-problem is to discover the relationship between online banner advertising and cognitive engagement for low involvement products.
3. The third sub-problem is to study the relationship between online banner advertising and affective engagement for high involvement products.
4. The fourth sub-problem is to investigate the relationship between affective engagement and low involvement products.
5. The fifth sub-problem is to examine the relationship between cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions.
6. The sixth sub-problem is to study the relationship between cognitive consumer engagement and low involvement purchase decisions.
7. The seventh sub-problem is to review the relationship between affective consumer engagement and high involvement purchase decisions.
8. The last sub-problem is to investigate the relationship between affective consumer engagement and low involvement purchase decisions.

1.4.2. Research questions

Drawing from the sub-problems, the following research questions have been developed:

1. Is there a positive relationship between online banner adverts for high involvement products and cognitive consumer engagement?
2. Is there a positive relationship between online banner adverts for low involvement products and cognitive consumer engagement?
3. Is there a positive relationship between online banner adverts for high involvement products and affective consumer engagement?
4. Is there a positive relationship between online banner adverts for low involvement products and affective consumer engagement?
5. Is there a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement of online banner adverts and high involvement purchase decisions?
6. Is there a negative relationship between cognitive consumer engagement of online banner adverts and low involvement purchase decisions?
7. Is there a positive relationship between affective consumer engagement of online banner adverts and high involvement purchase decisions?
8. Is there a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement of online banner and low involvement purchase decisions?

1.4.3 Research objectives

Research objectives describe what the research aims to achieve and shares why the current research is being pursued (Kawulich, 2020). This research aims to develop an understand of the relationships that exist between the following constructs: online advertising, cognitive consumer engagement, affective consumer engagement, high involvement purchase decisions and low involvement purchase decisions. The following objectives have been developed:

1. To establish an understanding of the relationship that exists between online banner advertising (OA) and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products (CCE_H)

2. To determine the relationship that exists between online banner advertising OA and cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products (CCE_L)
3. To assess the relationship that exists between online banner advertising (OA) and affective consumer engagement for high involvement products (ACE_H)
4. To establish an understanding of the relationship that exists between online banner advertising (OA) and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products (ACE_H)
5. To prove the relationship that exists between cognitive consumer engagement (CCE_H) and high involvement purchase decisions (HIPI)
6. To show the relationship that exists between cognitive consumer engagement (CCE_L) and low involvement purchase decisions (LIPI)
7. To assess the relationship that exists between affective consumer engagement (ACE_H) and high involvement purchase decisions (HIPI)
8. To establish an understanding of the relationship that exists between affective consumer engagement (CCE_L) for low involvement purchase decisions (LIPI)

1.5 Significance of study

This research contributes to the body of knowledge relating to online banner advertising and the relationship those have with cognitive and affective consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions currently exists. High and low involvement products have different path to purchase processes (Kokemuller, 2018), product involvement determines how advertising influences consumers and serves as antecedent of purchase intention (Terblanche et al., 2023) and consumer engagement is contextual (Brodie et al., 2011). There are studies that explain different paths to purchase for both high and low involvement products (Principles of marketing, 2023), other studies have explored online advertising and the influence of online advertising on purchase decisions (Nizam and Jafaar, 2018), and as already mentioned, studies that have explored online advertising, cognitive consumer engagement, affective consumer engagement, high and low involvement purchase decisions are limited. The abovementioned topics will be a focus in this research.

With the projected growth of online advertising as a channel, there is an opportunity that marketers can unlock by understanding how to tackle online advertising by understanding

cognitive and affective consumer engagement (CE) in instances where low and high involvement products are advertised, and consumers are asked to make decisions.

This study aims to contribute to existing knowledge of online advertising, consumer engagement, as well as low and high involvement purchase decisions to equip marketers with a variation of approaches to tackle online marketing for products that fall into both categories and to contribute to the academic literature available.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The research has the following delimitations:

- The study did not refer to any specific brands when referencing high and low involvement products.
- Research method was distributed via snowball sample technique, using only online platforms on sites where online adverts are common, i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, WhatsApp
- Study focuses on South African residents only.

1.7 Definition of terms

This section shares referenceable definitions of the common terms that guide this research, i.e. online advertising, banner advertising, high involvement, low involvement, and consumer engagement.

Online advertising

Is an information medium that created to draw in an audience and persuade them in a way that the advertisers desire (Wuisan and Handra, 2023). Online advertising extends to; contextual ads on search engine results pages, banner ads, blogs, rich media ads, special networking advertising, interstitial ads, online classified advertising, advertising networks and e-mail marketing, including e-mail spam (Google, 2022).

Banner advertising

The most common form of online advertising, officially defined as rectangular advertisement on a webpage, that is clickable. (Kim and Moon, 2020)

Consumer engagement

Consumer engagement is often defined in marketing as “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object” (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Consumer engagement is a multidimensional construct; cognitive, affective, and behavioural. (Hollebeek, 2019)

High involvement

A high involvement purchase is defined as any product a customer purchases that has a high-risk potential, the decision needs to be thought through because a purchase mistake can cause dire strain and possesses a sometimes-complex buying process (Kokemuller, 2018). The emotional commitment required for high involvement purchases separates its differentiation from a low involvement product.

Low involvement

Low involvement products are bought frequently and have a minor impact on the consumers life. Low involvement purchases are normally impulse purchases. Purchases can be made instantly, making it easier for marketers to get the desired advertising outcome on digital platforms. (Kokemuller, 2018).

1.8 Abbreviations

OA – Online advertising

CCE – cognitive consumer engagement

CCE_L – cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement

CCE_H – cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement

ACE – cognitive consumer engagement

ACE_L – Affective consumer engagement for low involvement

ACE_H – Affective consumer engagement for high involvement

HIPI – High involvement purchase decisions

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The study assumes the following: respondents have a good idea of online banner adverts; they have seen them while surfing the internet. The study also operates under the assumption that respondents responded honestly to the questions and had sufficient understanding of the context in which the questions were asked, i.e. low and high involvement products.

1.10 Research structure

Chapter 1: This chapter introduces the significance of the study by detailing the research background and context of the study. It further discusses the problem statement, research sub-problems, research questions and research objectives. Delimitations of the study, abbreviations and assumptions are shared in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2 gives an overview of the literature explored while building a case for the study. This chapter highlights critical research in topics of online advertising, engagement, high and low involvement, and purchase decisions. This chapter also introduces the conceptual framework for the study.

Chapter 3: Chapter 3 shares a detailed report on the study methodology, research design, sample type, population, data collection process and data analysis process. In this chapter pilot study results are shared, confirming validity and of the study.

Chapter 4: Chapter 4 discusses research results from a total of 305 respondents.

Chapter 5: chapter 5 explores research finding for the 8 hypothesis that were tested, interpretation of the data and results are discussed in detail.

Chapter 6: This chapter covers the conclusion of the study, recommendations, limitations, and opportunities for future research.

1.11 Chapter summary

This chapter discuss the most important aspects of the research paper. It discusses in detail why the study investigating online advertising and consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions was proposed. In this chapter, an overview of the background of the study was shared, the context of the study was discussed. The chapter further elaborated on the problem statement, detailing the research sub-problems, objectives, and research questions. The chapter closes by sharing the significance of the study, the delimitations, and assumptions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review demonstrates knowledge and understanding of academic literature on a specific topic (Ridley, 2012). This literature review will expand on existing literature covering online advertising, with a specific emphasis on consumer engagement dimensions as a determinant of purchase decisions and low and high involvement purchase decisions. The study will delve deeper by explaining marketing, digital marketing, advertising, online advertising, the differences between traditional and digital marketing, how consumers make decisions, cognitive and affective influences, especially for decision-making, low and high involvement products, as well as supporting theories such as the elaboration likelihood model. The topics will be discussed to demonstrate the relevance of online banner advertising and consumer engagement in low and high involvement purchase contexts.

2.1 Literature review structure

For many years, online advertising has targeted consumers based on known interest (Statista, 2023), consumer interest is a contributing factor to successful consumer engagement for online adverts in both high and low involvement decision-making scenarios.

The structure of the literature review follows the recommended structure by the research theory and design lecture slides (Quaye, 2022).

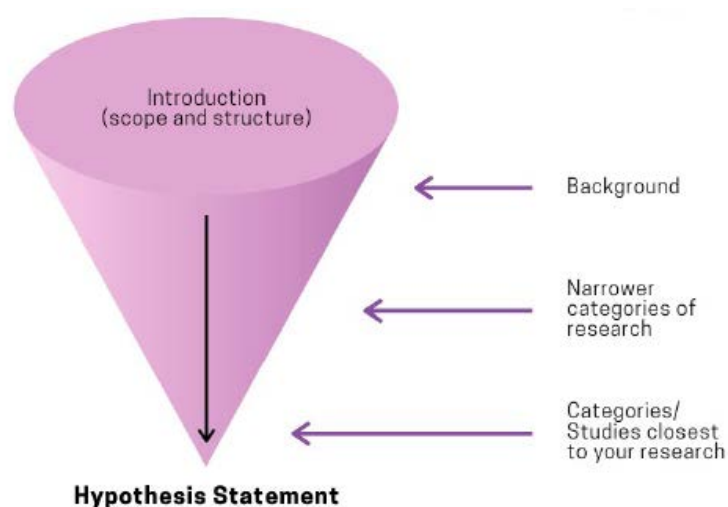


Figure 1: Literature review structure.

2.2 Marketing

Marketing as a discipline has seen changes in thought, practice, and approach over the last few decades (Kumar et al., 2021), the internet has fostered strategies and business management practises that has enforced changes to marketing practice (Peter and Vecchia, 2021). Marketing does not only lead consumer behaviour, but it also responds to consumer behaviour. Kumar (2015) references the resource conscious view as a leading contributor from 1996 to 2000. A resource conscious view assessed the following areas: client's potential value and building marketing strategies around the client's value. The main theme of thought refers to maximising the value of each customer, constantly changing the marketing approach for the individual and the targeted segment as well as allocating resources with a focus on individual customer profitability.

The earliest record of marketing as a practice and discipline dates to 1936 (Witkowski, 2010), the introductory phase of marketing looked at marketing as applied economics, marketing understanding was built through case studies. Marketing as a discipline continued to evolve into different themes, findings in research conduction by Pascucci, Savelli and Gistri (2023) proves that digital transformation marks a new era of marketing evolution, with the continuous aim to find balance between marketing theory and practice. From 2013 to present, the marketing focus has been on efficiency and effectiveness, which signifies the value generated by stakeholders, the changes of media usage and new media influences (Kumar et al., 2021), now more than ever, online advertising efficiency is highlighted as the main value derived from that form of marketing.

Marketing has remained with the same definition throughout the years, only the distribution methods and themes have changed. Marketing is defined as the promotion of goods and services to a well-defined target audience and an overriding business philosophy that helps define the companies' best opportunities and the best way to capture the opportunities (Kotler, 2009). In recent years, we have seen the definition progress because marketing channels continue to evolve, Stafford (2022) mentions that since 2017, websites, emails, social media, and targeted digital adverts are considered as the most effective and popular channels to reach audiences for the promotion of goods and services. This review will delve deeper into the digital marketing landscape and changes in the marketing approach since the introduction on digital touchpoints.

2.3 Advertising

Advertising as defined by Flosi et al. (2012) is a visual or oral message that is sent out to the public with the specific aim to make goods more visible and to drive sales, the Institute of Practitioners (2008) adds that it's a direct effort by marketers to introduce products (new and old) to new customers for a desired outcome. According to Kotler and Keller (2016) advertising is the promotion of goods, ideas, and services, the essence of advertising has not changed, in recent years, the addition of online advertising has brought a supplementary perspective to the definition, Wuisan and Handra (2023) say online advertising is an information medium created to draw in audiences and persuade them to a purchase choice.

2.4 Online advertising vs traditional advertising

Online advertising gives marketers an opportunity to market directly to a specific audience, advertisers can define their audiences and place adverts based on user assessed interest, research by Wuisan and Handra, (2023) confirms advertising online has favourable impact on purchase interest. In television, a repeated view of an advert, is argued to be most effective in traditional advertising and it has maximum effect (Carreonet al., 2019). Kwan et al., (2015) argues that mere exposure is not a strong determinant of purchase intention. This study draws an assumption that mere exposure to online adverts does not increase the probability of CE, in either cognitive or affective dimensions, and proposes that there's emotional and cognitive receptors that influence engagement, irrespective of exposure.

Before online advertising was introduced, advertising was commonly traditional, referring to a mix of print, broadcast, direct mail, outdoor billboards (Vaishnav and Ray, 2023). The marketing mix is a common matrix in traditional advertising; place, price, promotion and product, authors like Goi (2009); Batat (2024) reference the internet era as a disrupter to traditional marketing and the marketing mix. Managers had to learn how to use additional advertising channels and techniques that would work with the emergence of online channels. Advertising is a mass media distribution channel used by companies to build customer interest. Bezjan-Avery and Calder (1998) mentions that traditional advertising does not allow marketers an opportunity to choose their target audience, especially when compared with online advertising which offers niche advertising channels and targeting techniques.

Traditional marketing reaches a mass audience and has a perception of efficiency (Wuisan and Hendra, 2023) and is used to advertise high and low involvement products, deduction from the advertising revenue from Google (2023) and Meta (2023), marketers cast the net out as wide as possible, whether in print or television, traditional advertising caters for an audience that is unrestricted and isn't as defined as online advertising. Online advertising allows marketers to define the advertising parameters, individuals can choose which customer's attention they are interested in and cast the net only to those individuals.

Engagement is a term that has been met with lots of disagreements and debate (Kumar et al., 2021). Television as a medium has been viewed as a passive medium, that can generate emotive responses from consumers. However, television advertising is not a strong driver of engagement according to Askwith (2003), scholars have been debating how the effectiveness of traditional media can be measured (Fernandez-Alava, 2021), with recent research arguing that traditional media drives online search queries (Qing and Prado, 2020). In the context of this study, understanding the differences between online advertising and television advertising is important, especially when compared with desired engagement outcomes. In this context, the definition of engagement varies from mental availability to taking a specific action – clicking, liking, filling out a form. Engagement as a standalone concept will be explored further in this research.

An article by Harvard Business Review (2022) noted that there is an increase of marketers going back to traditional advertising, the paper reports that the last decade has seen a shift from marketers moving away from online advertising, but this is a contradiction to the data available and online advertising budget spend. There is a growing momentum of marketers trying to move away from the clutter of digital advertising, and consumers negatively respond to high intrusiveness of online ads (Senarathna and Wijetunga, 2024) and through surveys conducted, they have discovered that traditional advertising gets more engagement from consumers when assessed in watch time (Kumar, 2015). With traditional advertising, consumers cannot choose which ad to watch or skip. The cost of traditional advertising has, however, reportedly dropped (Hayes, 2023) which juxtaposes the increase in online advertising spend.

Digital advertising is also going through its fair share of reliability concerns, marketers have seen an increase in click and conversion fraud from digital advertising (Agrawal et al., 2023) because of the emphasis put on specific metrics, e.g. behavioural engagement. Opposing

arguments by (Ha, 2008) state that the cost of traditional advertising is still high, and that the results are harder to track on traditional channels, whereas result tracking is easily accessible on digital formats and ROI is slower on television when compared with online advertising. Marketingsherpa (2022), a research and training institute reports that over 80% of surveyed customers have a trust relationship with traditional advertising over digital advertising. The credibility of digital advertising over traditional advertising has lost its effectiveness over time.

2.5 Digital marketing

Digital marketing is also called online marketing, Kingsnorth (2019) explains digital/online advertising as a form of advertising where products and services are promoted using internet platforms, however, digital marketing is a broad topic, it includes search engine optimization; the process of improving website ranking on Google organically, websites, email marketing, influencer marketing, affiliate marketing and more (Varnali, 2021). Digital marketing equips organisations with the ability to effectively target potential consumers, improve customer experience and augment consumer engagement (Purnomo, 2023). Adverts are disseminated via digital marketing platforms and act as mediators between business and consumers. Some of the most popular platforms that serve as markets include Meta- which owns both Facebook and Instagram, Google, YouTube and browsers like Safari, Amazon, and Petal ads by Huawei. Paid, earned, and owned media is known as the digital marketing trifecta (Sringboard communications, 2018), online banner adverts are a form of digital marketing. For this research, the different categories of online adverts will be explored with a specific focus on online banner adverts will be explained.

2.5.1 Online advertising

Online advertising has been studied from various perspectives, multimedia, pictures, content, ad attractiveness, brand affinity and more, expressed in table 1. When consumers surf the internet, their primary desired outcome is not to find an advert, yet advertisers still solicit engagement. Advertisers rely on knowledge like consumer interest in relation to their product to solicit consumer responses on online channels (Wuisan and Handra, 2023). Technology has become unavoidable and as a seller, adapting to technological advertising advancements becomes crucial in operations, sales, and marketing (Salameh et al., 2022).

Online advertising is relatively new, the first visual reference of an online advert was a banner advert in 1994 (Hubspot, 2021). The first adopters of online adverts were A&T and at the time, the click-through rate was 44%, in 2022, the average click-through rate for a banner advert has reduced all the way down to 6.3% (Smartinsight, 2023). During that period, users were more curious to discover what information they could receive after clicking on the banner. There was an aspect of cognitive recognition that increased banner engagement because of its newness.

Banner adverts were used as a new way to market products but there was still no clarity on the tangible results that were driven by these ads. The early 2000's saw the introduction of pay-per-click and paid search advertising which was an offering designed to increase targeting efficiency and in 2023, paid search generates over 200 million in ad revenue with an estimated 20% growth in the next 2 years (Osborne, 2023).

Online advertising has grown but the threats on ad intrusiveness persist. Marketers need to understand how to market to consumers of low and high involvement products and the influence of cognitive and affective consumer engagement in getting the desired results, this study aims to fill this gap for marketers.

Table: 1 Online advertising constructs

Type	Summary	Author
Multimedia	Moving images (animation) on an online advert improves the look of the adverts and can persuade a consumer	Yoo et al (2004),
	Short videos improve brand favourability and brand awareness	Online Publishers Association (2008)
Pictures	Pictures (images) make an ad more attractive.	Taylor et al. (2008)
	Online adverts receive a better response with less text and are better understood	Kumar (2008)

	The use of celebrity pictures on online adverts can enhance perceived value and generate positive responses	Quester et al. (2007)
Content	Short and concise messages improve banner advertising effectiveness	Baltas (2003)
	Consumers are most likely to engage (click) on an advertisement that shows more details about the products and services	Adam (2003)
	Focusing on content – on online ads – will not attract a high consumer response rate	Armstrong (2001)
Affective and cognitive engagement	Online advertising alongside cognitive and affective consumer engagement has a positive relationship in high and low purchase decision contexts	(2023) Author's contribution

Table 1: Online advertising constructs

Online advertising comes in different variations and is still developing; search engine marketing, native advertising, display advertising, mobile advertising, social media advertising, video marketing, retargeting, and remarketing, email marketing, online banner advertising are the most common forms of online advertising (Varnali, 2021).

2.5.2 Native advertising

Native advertising is a type of online advertising that is created in a way that makes the content blend with the background, see figure 2. Native adverts are normally used in articles. The recorded benefit of native adverts is higher engagement and a higher click-through rate. The value of native advertising is that it borrows from the credibility of the publisher (Wojdyski and Golan, 2016). Native adverts are also viewed as a better type of online advertising because they are not invasive, they are incorporated in the body of the url page. Schauster, Ferrucci and Neill (2016) interviewed 56 industry representatives to discover perception around native adverts, and while it is regarded as more trustworthy than other forms of online adverts, native ads are considered as deceptive because they are not instantly viewed as paid media, and rather as part of the article.

The current literature around native advertising and online advertising as a topic is focused on defining the roles of the platforms (Aribarg and Schwartz, 2020) and not understanding how pre-existing consumer sentiment, e.g., affective vs cognitive engagement and high vs low purchase decisions play a role in the outcomes, i.e. purchase decisions, loyalty, repeat purchase and more.

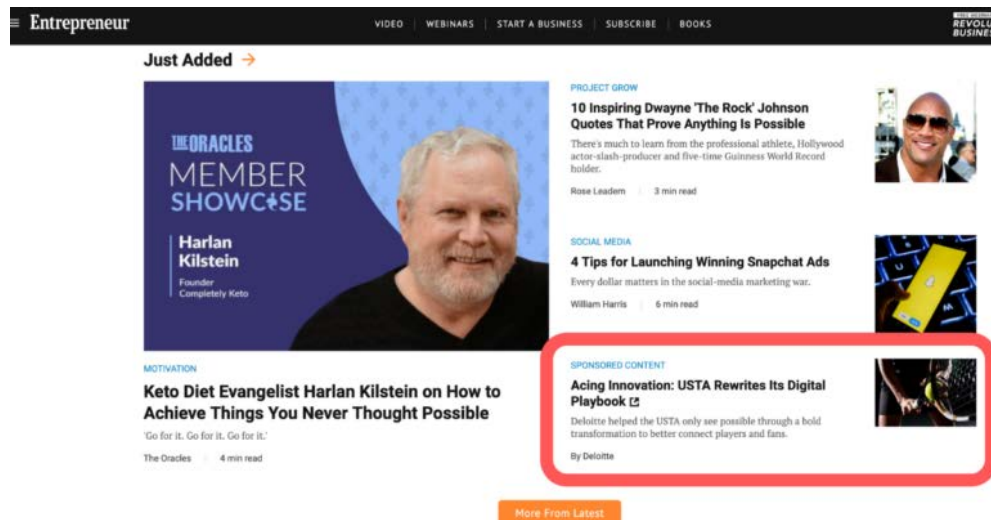


Figure 2: Native advertising (Hubspot, 2020)

2.5.3 Social media advertising

Social media is an area of online advertising that has been studied extensively, a quick search on Google Scholar returned over 63000 different topics exploring social media advertising in the last 3 years. Social media advertising is most effective for generating awareness and sourcing new potential clients (Deshpande, 2022). Social media advertising is a trusted avenue used to advertise and sell products. Over 200 million businesses across the globe use Facebook (Facebook, 2021), to sell products and it has high purchase rate; over 26% of users who click on Facebook ads go ahead to purchase the item advertised (Facebook, 2021). Facebook ads come in the form of static adverts, video ads or carousel ads as indicated in figure 3. This shows the efficacy of online advertising.

Social media is a tool that can be used by brands to grow their influence and sell products. The social media landscape is always developing, a study by Hutter (2013) studying social media activities and consumer involvement, discovered that social media involvement significantly influenced all three decision making stages: the cognitive phase (awareness and knowledge),

the affective stage (liking, preference, and conviction), and the conative stage (purchase and loyalty).

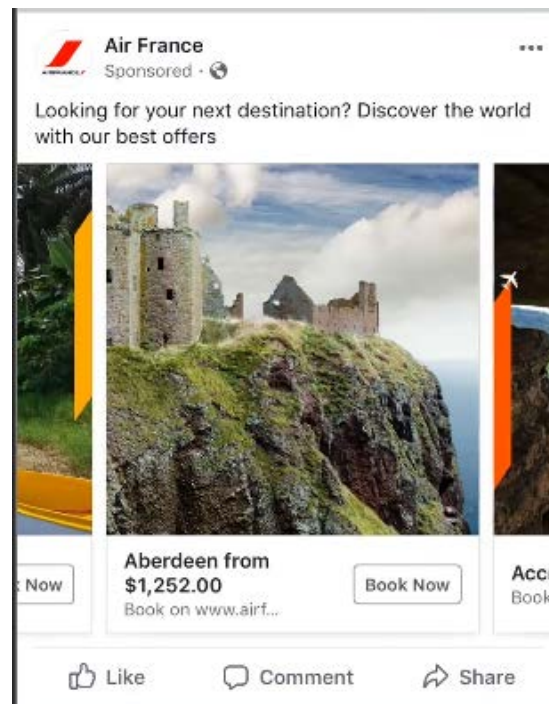


Figure 3: Social media carousel advert (Hubspot, 2020)

2.5.4 Retargeting and remarketing

The ability for marketers to remarket and retarget consumers is one of the biggest benefits of online advertising (Mohan, 2020) that is not available on traditional mediums. Retargeting and remarketing rely on website user activity. This can be tracked by analysis tools and adverts placed on 3rd party sites like Google and Facebook. Visitor information is stored by the website, and this allows advertisers to be more effective with their advertising efforts.

Remarketing aims to reconnect a business with individuals that have been identified as the actual customer and have categorically purchased something from the business previously. These types of customers have brand familiarity and are argued to have affective consumer engagement with the company's products (Yuksel, 2022).

Retargeting aims to attract customers by sharing adverts with an audience that has previously either visited a website or a social media platform (Yuksel, 2022). Targeting became increasingly popular from 1995 (Hubspot, 2023), as an attempt to improve conversions and

engagement by targeting clients based on user interest closest to the offering. Online adverts using a remarketing and retargeting strategy have a common goal of increasing purchases/sales.

2.5.5 Online banner adverts

Online banner adverts come in a variety of formats, a rectangular shape with brand messages and a call-to-action is commonly a banner advert. Investment in this ad format is predicted to grow, expressed in Figure 4. Persuasion knowledge theory posits that a change of meaning occurs when consumers see banner adverts with persuasive messaging (Harms et al., 2019). Change of meaning refers to consumer perception to the advert and the response (Radder) to the advert. It's important to note that consumer knowledge is built overtime and relies on the consumer's experience with the online advert, banner adverts are easily integrated in editorial content, which Boerman et al., (2017) argues to be more persuasive because of the subtle placement of the adverts. Consumers do not critically assess online adverts in the same way they would critically assess traditional messages, which leads to unaware persuasion. The persuasion theory, while relevant for understanding online advertising and consumer engagement, shows a stronger focus on consumer responses. The theory does not delve into consumer motivations and attitudes as antecedents to desired advertising outcomes.

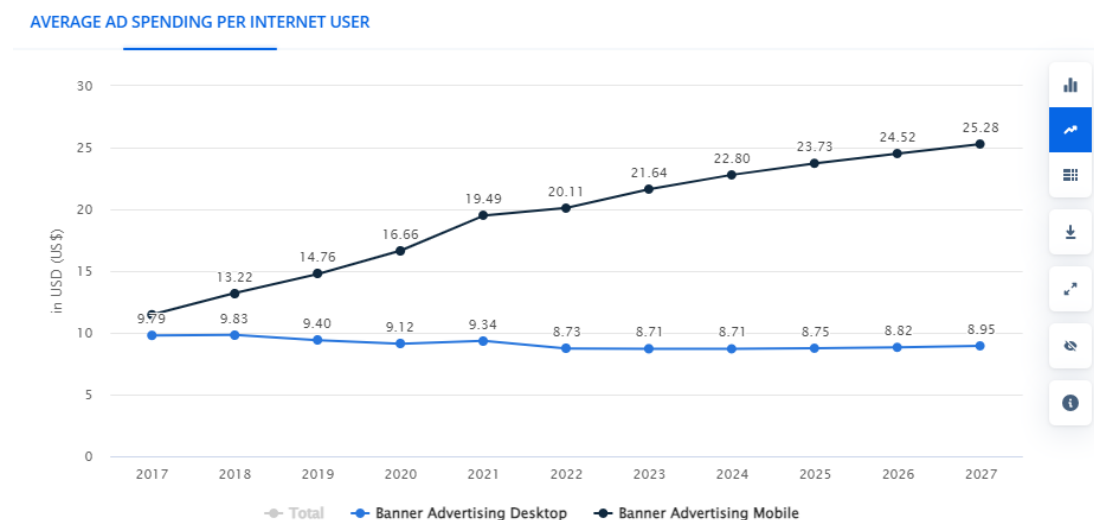


Figure 4: Online banner advertising ad spend

Online banner advertising is a type of advertisement that uses visuals rather than text to attract attention and has multiple benefits for advertisers, cost effectiveness, reach, interactivity

(Ekaputra and Sundjaja, 2023). Banner advertising is also the most common form of advertising. A study conducted by Kim and Moon (2020), explored 4 main features of online banner advertising: exposure, involvement, size, and competition. Exposure referring to the frequency of the advert placements, involvement referring to existing high affinity and the relationship between the user and the advertisement. These 2 factors are identified as factors that contribute to the click-through-rate. Users seeing banner online adverts are driven to click on advertisements, measured by the CTR, influencing factors include visual colours, the messages used on the banner, the position of the banner on the visited website and other visual factors (Quester et al., 2007). In this study, there is no focus on visual cues, but rather on the consumers engagement level, leading to purchase decisions of different involvement level products.

Banner adverts are on high rotation, a research firm (Yankelovich, 2022) estimated that the average person on the internet sees 6000 to 10 000 adverts daily. Mere exposure theory assumes exposure frequency plays a significant role in recognition memory and behaviour prediction. The theory argues that consumers get affected by mere exposure (Kwan et al., 2015), when consumers are unable to recognise messages/products they are exposed to, it increases their interest in advertising messages. There are competing psychological theories that explain mere exposure effect, and they both look at the role of cognitive and affective resonance but does not differentiate between cognitive and affective outcomes.

Winkielman and Cacioppo (2001) came up with the hedonic fluency model, which describes the role of mere exposure as an important component in developing an affective reaction from consumers. The model (figure 5) assumes that the more consumers are exposed to an online advert, the more confident they feel about the advert (Stafford and Grimes, 2012). The model suggests that experiential awareness is important to consumer processing in high and low contexts, relativity triggers affect and feeling which then influences judgement.

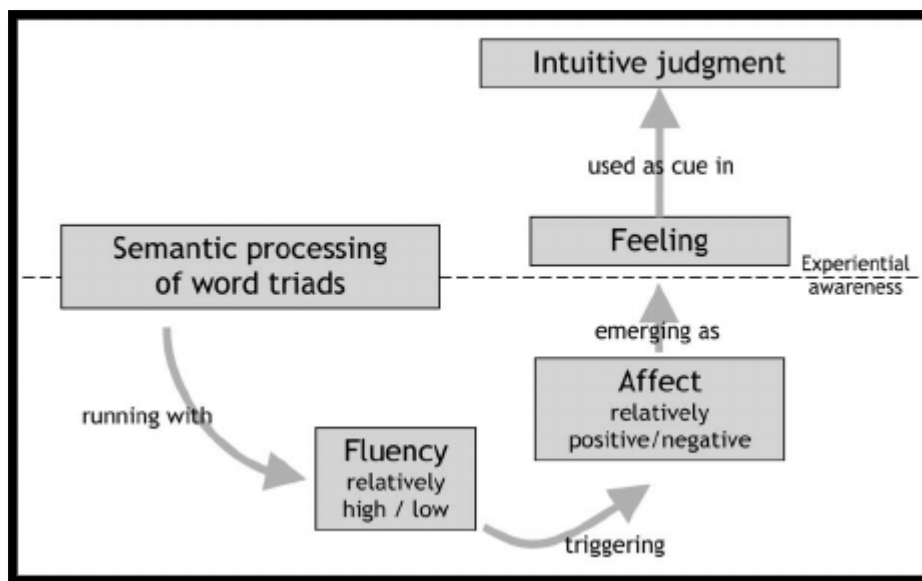


Figure 5: Fluency model

2.5.6 Mobile marketing

Mobile has reshaped how marketers interact with customers (Tong, 2019). Mobile advertising is said to be very effective; it gets more engagement because online ads that show up on mobile usually block the screen and remove clutter (Digital school of marketing, 2023). Consumers rely on their devices, Statista (2023) records show there are over 22 million South African with smartphones, that's a third of the South African population. Mobile advertising and banner online adverts have a very clear relationship, 61.95% of all ads are served on mobile (Google, 2023).

In a study by Iqbal et al. (2020) examining the impact of digital mobile advertising on purchase intention, the findings indicate that mobile advertising specifically is informative, personalized, entertaining and it helps customers narrow down a product they would like to purchase. The study is makes discoveries about the value advertisers receive from mobile advertising but there's still a gap in research, there isn't a clear study on that has clarified whether the level of involvement and type of engagement leads to a higher purchase rate or easier purchase decisions.

2.6 Engagement

There is minimal research on engagement as a standalone topic/concept, the definitions vary from study to study and the meaning is largely contextual, engagement refers to any form of interaction with a brand, on social media and it is measured in likes, comments, and shares (Hootsuite, 2023). In banner advertisements, when people are engaged, they are referred to as people having experiences with a brand or a product online. Engagement is a difficult term to define without context (Looysten et al., 2017). For example, when newsreaders are engaged this refers to how much time and attention readers are spending on an article, in social media, engagement is the act of responding to posts and any behaviour that can be measurable; a click, a reshare, a comment, in online advertising, engagement refers to the act of clicking on a banner to land on a desired landing page.

Mersey et al. (2010) describes engagement as a qualitative, holistic feeling that is experienced by the user and is hard to measure. It is in the consumer's beliefs and thoughts where true engagement takes place. In this study, engagement is viewed as a qualitative experience, where the outcome of the engagement is a click or interaction with an advert presented.

2.6.1 Engagement in different themes

Engagement has been studied in different themes namely, sociology, psychology, educational psychology, and organisational behaviour, one common theme identified amongst all the schools of thought confirm engagement to be multidimensional. A summary of authors and constructs can be found in appendix A.

In a study by Jennings and Zeitner (2003) about internet use and engagement, engagement is multi-dimensional and media attentiveness along with trust plays a role in engagement outcomes, Jennings and Zeitner give a sociological view to engagement.

In psychology, Achterberg et al., (2003) also see engagement as multidimensional, and regard factors such as the ease of interaction, the ease of fulfilling requested activities as key contributing factors to engagement outcomes.

On educational psychology, engagement is viewed as multidimensional as well, in this type of engagement, academic investment, a sense of belonging and academic involvement assists with the level of attentiveness the participant invests. (Fredericks et al, 2009)

2.6.2 Consumer brand engagement

The concept of engagement is argued by Appelbaum (2001) as one with a heavy focus on customer satisfaction and how consumers perceive quality, newer research by Vander Schee and Peltier, (2020) also confirms a view of engagement as a brand experience, and this is not sufficient to determine consumer behaviour in instances where brand is not an influencer of engagement. Research by Hollebeek (2014) advocates that consumer engagement is a relationship marketing outcome and is centered around co-creative interactions and consumer's interactive participation.

This research studies low and high involvement purchase decisions within the context of cognitive and affective engagement. Hollebeek's CBE (2019) concept focuses on the interactions between a customer's cognitive and affective response to a particular brand (Hollebeek, 2011). While this study does not look at brand alone as a construct, Hollebeek's CBE concept addresses 'customer engagement behaviours' which this study explores by referencing the same concepts. Consumer engagement references interactivity as a core requirement, engagement cannot happen without consumer participation, this requires marketers to understand consumer behaviour.

2.7 Marketing to consumer

Marketing to consumer is the process of strategically selling services or goods, using data for personalised experience forms part of this process (Adobe, 2022). In a study conducted by Srinivasan and Pauwels (2016) assessing the impact of online consumer activity, paid media had the highest elasticity leading to sales- which speaks directly to online banner adverts and how they contribute to purchase decisions. As online advertising continues to grow, marketers and advertisers need to drilldown further into understanding how consumers respond to products in different involvement categories, to expand on the body of work available to understand online advertising as an advertising channel.

2.8 Consumer behaviour

Marketers invest in various media platforms to influence consumer behaviour. Consumer expectations have changed, Salesforce (2023) a leading customer relationship management

platform states that customers now have higher expectations; quality service and fair pricing are not the only customer interest points, modern consumers look for proactive service, personalised interactions, and a connected experience across all digital channels, Dwivedi et al., (2021) also add that consumer behaviour has drastically shifted because of advancement of digital technologies and innovation.

Consumer behaviour in academic studies stands in the middle of psychology and marketing science. Academic literature on consumer behaviour studies how consumers behave, and marketers interact (Foxall, 2021). Consumer behaviour studies uncover how naturally occurring instances in humans lead to purchasing, saving, brand choice and consumption. The approach academics have taken to understand consumer behaviour is largely cognitive, there is no further research that was uncovered that successfully argues consumer behaviour as a non-cognitive effort, it is for this reason that this study uses cognitive cues as an acceptable behavioural indicator.

A study by Sama (2019) investigated the impact of media advertisements on consumer behaviour; and identified 5 main stages of consumer behaviour, namely awareness, interest, conviction, purchase, and post purchase. Sama (2019) studied different mediums, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and online advertising. The study by Sama critically examined 20th century media platforms and its influence on the 5 main sub-points of consumer behaviour. In consumer behaviour, attitude towards the advert, attitude towards the brand and purchase intent are commonly referenced outcomes to determine the effectiveness of marketing and influence of consumer behaviour. Newspapers were discovered to affect all the stages of consumer behaviour, and interestingly, TV and internet advertising were only effective in influencing 3 stages of consumer behaviour, namely, awareness, interest, and conviction.

Consumer buying behaviour has 5 widely accepted steps (Mothersbaugh, 2019); problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives and purchase decision and post-purchase behaviour, Mothersbaugh identifies one more step which is disposal of the product. Koller et al., (2017) argues that consumers don't always follow a straight path, some steps are skipped in the process. With the emergence of online advertising, more research pertaining to predictable user path to purchase processes need to be developed, this unknown gap between the 5 steps by Mothersbaugh and the argument relating to the path to purchase not being linear (Koller et al., (2017) needs further research.

2.8.1 Consumer decision-making process

Consumers have different decision-making processes and motivations that drive them to make specific purchase decisions. Consumer decision-making is a stand-alone discipline not to be confused with consumer behaviour. Research in this field spans across sociology, psychology, marketing, consumer behaviour, AI, and computer science (Mishra et al., 2021).

Traditionally, the main areas that influence a consumer's decisions are product, advertising, pricing, physical, distribution and display. In the context of this study, product type and pricing are the main differentiators between low and high involvement products.

The path to purchase is not linear for consumers, advertisers are faced with challenges in this process, competition for attention is one of the leading challenges faced by marketers (Gavilanes et al., 2018). Multiple factors influence a consumer's decision to purchase a product, specifically after seeing an online banner advert, Kumar's (2016) research outcomes show brand loyalty, visual merchandising, product attributes and discounts to be the main contributing factors to a consumers purchase decision. Te'eni-Harari et al., (2015) mentions age, product involvement and ad attractiveness as contributing factors in purchase decisions. Online advertising is considered an interactive advertising model, a two-way approach that allows consumers to engage directly (von der Osten, 2022) and different from traditional television advertising. Rodgers and Thorson (2016) studied how users perceive and process online advertising because of the way online ads solicit engagement, i.e., clicks, and they discovered that consumer motives while on the internet play a bigger role in driving engagement and ultimately purchase decisions. Consumer involvement also plays a strong role in influencing consumer decision-making.

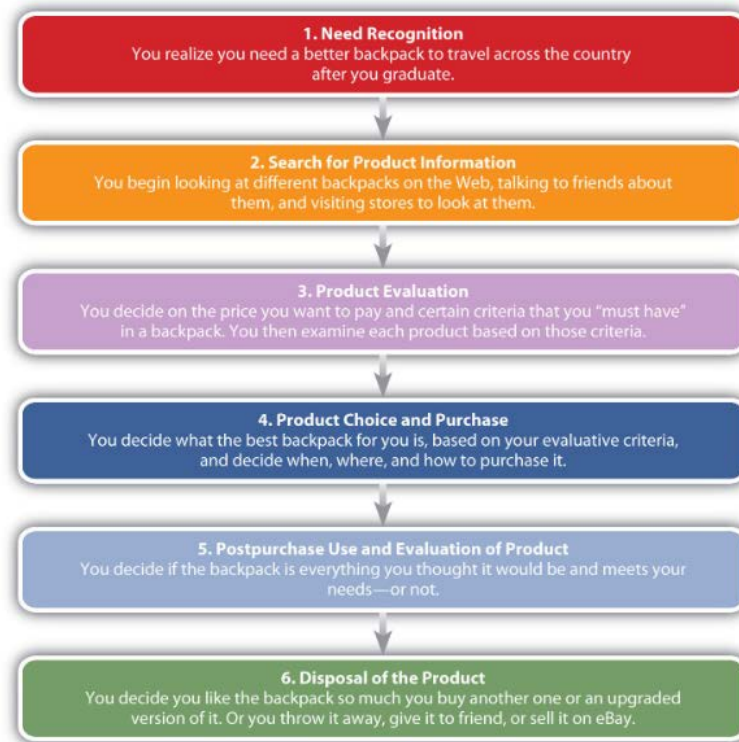


Figure 6: Buying process (Mothersbaugh, 2019)

2.9 Involvement

A consumer's involvement with any type of content or product is dependent on an existing relationship and consumers perception the relevance of an object based on their inherent needs, values, and interests (Leckie, 2016), this is a significant relationship to understand. Previous research cites personal factors as a leading indicator of involvement (Mcclure and Seock, 2020). These personal indicators are preferences, seasonal effects, price, brand.

Purchasing involvement is not only dependent on the product; there are products with a need for cognition (NFC) and enthusiastic purchases. Enthusiasm shopping is linked to the consumers enjoyment, and need for cognition is the tendency for consumers to engage in and enjoy thinking (Karaatli, 2015).

Involvement is a complex construct, Slama and Taschian (1985) cite that involvement influences attitudes and behaviours and consumers increase their engagement as the involvement level increases. Involvements is also influenced by situational circumstances, situational involvement suggests that people do not only react to high and low involvement

context but the current situation in which a decision is made plays a significant role (Haley and Pittman, 2022). Situational involvement is a developing concept that has not been researched extensively in consumer shopping behaviour, e.g. in highly involved purchases versus those with less involvement.

2.9.1 Consumer Involvement

Consumer involvement is linked to an internal state that indicates intensity, direction, and persistence (Vinearan and Oprean, 2021). Mitchell et al (2004), differentiates between low and high involvement via stimulus. In high involvement purchases, consumers are more likely to spot the difference between one product and another, there is less confusion in high involvement production. A highly involved consumer does extensive research to ensure that they have enough information to purchase the desired product, there is time investment, and consumers can spot ambiguous information or information that is contradictory (Agrawal, 2023). Kotler and Keller (2022) define the evaluation stage of any purchase as a critical stage where a consumer decides to make a purchase, based on a set of options that are at their exposure.

Low involvement products can be habitual purchases, consumers may not easily detect differences between products and do not typically spend the same amount of time researching a product as they would in a high involvement purchase.

According to the FCB grid designed by Foote, Cone and Belding in 1980, consumer behaviour is influenced by think-feel motives (Huang and Lin, 2022), which we refer to in this study as cognitive and affective dimensions. Huang and Lin (2022) state that consumer purchase decisions can be classified under 4 categories:

1. High involvement thinking
2. High involvement feeling
3. Low involvement thinking
4. Low involvement feeling

The consumers level of involvement, whether passive or active, will determine how the online banner advert is received. It is important for this study to explore the different dimensions of consumer engagement in high and low involvement purchase decisions.

2.10 Theoretical background

2.10.1 Elaboration likelihood model

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1980) is cited to be one of the earliest models created to explain persuasion and attitude change. This model has been studied in more than 125 articles in advertising and marketing (Varnali, 2019). ELM argues that there are two paths to persuasion: central and peripheral. For this study, the ELM was the most relevant model to explore because it recognises cognitive effort as a contributing factor on to how consumers receive messages. ELM also considers a human being's motivation and personal relevance, which recognises affective dimension. ELM argues that when elaboration likelihood is high, behaviour is more predictable, messages that a consumer might see on an online banner advert will occur via the central route. ELM also argues that when elaboration likelihood is low, messages are processed via the peripheral route, processing of messages on outlets like banner adverts is not easily predictable- more reliance is placed on affective hues. In this study, ELM assists in expanding thinking around high and low involvement decision-making as well as the importance of understand consumer engagement dimensions in behaviour prediction.

The ELM has received its fair share of critiques, Petty and Cacioppo's (2015) argue that the level of involvement and the subsequent predictable results are all based on assumptions without real basis. The argument looked at low level products and the ability for subjects to recall the ads as an indicator of high involvement.

The ELM model has a clear process which looks at firstly the message reception, secondly, attitude change and lastly, possible behaviour. This research makes the following links with the elaboration likelihood model; message reception; the distribution of online banner adverts with messages (inclusive of visual colours and call to action), attitude change; the role of consumer engagement (inclusive of two dimensions; cognitive, affective) and possible behaviour; low and high involvement purchase decisions.

A study conducted by Molesworth and Suortti (2007) confirms the elaborate likelihood model is a relevant reference to help marketers understand how consumers process messages with high and low involvement cues. The theory argues that low involvement uses the peripheral assessment and attitude change occurs based off cues, whereas high involvement decisions use the central route and consumers are take a great deal of precaution before deciding, attitude is reliant on information received by consumers.

Consumer behaviour theories seek to explain how customers primarily respond to messages. The mere exposure theory, an affective component theory looks at how consumers are most likely to positively react to something because of their repeated exposure to it, and how their familiarity towards a product is influenced by the frequency of seeing a specific product. Mothersbaugh (2019) argues that the mere exposure theory is most effective only in low involvement purchase situations. The elaboration likelihood model argues that different levels of purchase involvement (high or low) must have its own dedicated communication approach- it clarifies that people's attitudes change to messages based on the level of purchase involvement required and not on repeated exposure.

2.11 Online advertising and consumer decision making

Online advertising is complex, advertisers use various advertising platforms for attention and to be seen by the individuals they are targeting, as a result, there is a lot of clutter on online platforms which poses a threat to consumer engagement. Yoo (2009) argues that customers that see advertisements online see them by mistake which then poses the main question on their effectiveness. Bumping into the online advert disturbs many individuals from fulfilling their desired goal while searching the internet and because of this, there is a lower propensity to process the advertising stimuli, this concept was argued by Yoo (2009) and Bezijan-Avery and Calder (1998).

For advertising to be received, Mothersbaugh (2019) argues that there needs to be a perception that a customer holds about the product advertised. This is confirmed by the weak theory which argues effectiveness of advertising is achieved by the resharing and repeated exposure to adverts. Huang and Lin (2022) further reiterate that the buying funnel requires awareness, knowledge, linking, preference, conviction and then purchase is the most likely outcome, this is independent of product involvement.

In a study conducted by Zari (2021) investigating the effectiveness of digital advertising on consumer behaviour, results show that customers do prefer to shop online, and that digital advertising does influence consumer behaviour. Advertising avoidance is an emerging topic in digital advertising that has high potential to further compromise the effectiveness of digital advertising, and a topic for further research. In a study conducted by Johnson (2008), the key findings discovered that consumers are passive consumers of digital adverts, and furthermore, there are signs of many errors leading to wrong advertising targeting, which decreases a consumer's interest and trust, the author also explored consumer desires for targeting and most consumers considered it irrelevant.

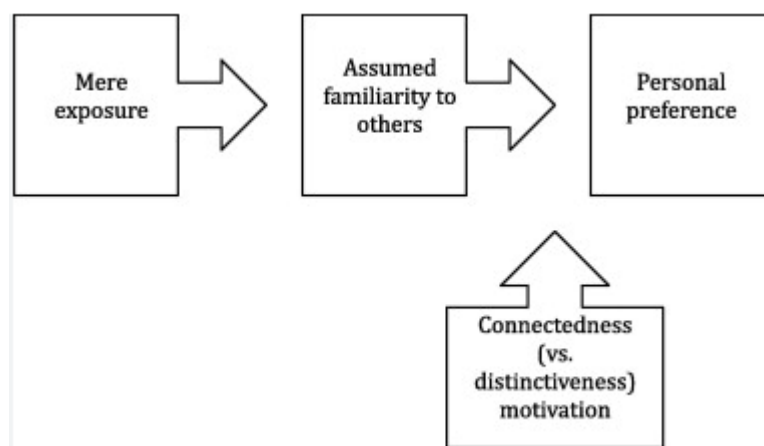


Figure 7: Mere exposure theory (Kwan et al., 2015)

There are two other theories in advertising that are relevant for online advertising, the weak theory and the strong theory; the weak theory argues that advertising should be used to refresh a prospects' memory of a product by continually showing adverts of the product, this theory was strengthened by a study conducted by Lee (2018) which empirically discovered that internet users recall the adverts on digital advertising platforms based on the number of times, a certain threshold, where internet users start to remember the ads, they have seen online. The strong advertising theory argues that advertising should be used as a persuasive tool, building "highly involved emotional loyalty from consumers" (Mothersbaugh, 2019) and convincing new prospects to switch to the advertised product or company.

2.12. Conceptual Hypothesis development

2.12.1 Online advertising and consumer engagement

Consumer engagement in its simplest definition is the physical, cognitive, and emotional connection a customer develops with a brand (Khairani and Fachira, 2014). In a study investigating the effectiveness of content personalisation in banner advertising, the result shows that banners were more effective when a consumer had visited the advertisers online store, the study also uncovered that perceptions of the advert informativeness and intrusion influenced the effectiveness of online banner advertising. (Varnali, 2019)

Further research has indicated that online advertising has changed how consumers interact with products (Varnali, 2019) and engagement outcome is influenced by different dimensions of CE (Vinerean and Opreana, 2021). Consumer behaviour refers to the actions and processes of people who buy products and services (Kumar et al., 2014). Another definition from Loudon and Botta (2017) refers to engagement as a way in which consumers engage with products and services; evaluating is one of the ways consumers engage with products and services, which refers to the cognitive dimension, other ways in which consumers engage includes acquiring, using, and disposing.

Consumer engagement has been studied from different standpoints, most of the studies identified engagement in a behavioural way, Reitz (2012) identified previous scholars such as Evans and McKee, 2010; Jaffe, 2005; McConnell and Huba, 2007; to have limited the definition of engagement as a behavioural only.

For this study, Hollebeek's (2019) consumer engagement dimensions; cognitive, affective, and behavioural are a point of interest, these dimensions influence a consumer's purchase process when they encounter online adverts. In academics, engagement refers to having a consumer's mind, attention, and energy (Reitz, 2012). Engagement also refers to customers becoming active participants rather than end points for advertisers.

Javornik and Mandelli (2013) argue that consumer engagement needs to be expanded from Hollebeek's 3 dimensions, Javornik and Mandeli (2013) studied all consumer engagement related literature, and their research study argues that there should be four dimensions of consumer engagement; behavioural, psychological, social, and multidimensional. Original

scholars of consumer engagement argue that consumer engagement cannot be multidimensional because it is based on context, depending on the object of engagement, i.e. banner advert, the brand, the website, level of involvement and other contextual influences. There is no clear consensus on which dimension of consumer engagement is a primary view of consumer engagement, other scholars have studied cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions individually and each see the different dimensions as standalone influence, and not multidimensional.

Harrigan et al. (2018) say there is a lack of concise definition of consumer engagement because it is largely contextual based. Studies with a specific reference to engagement with advertising show the process as linear, starting with positive perception, positive attitude, cognitive response advocacy and ultimately purchase (Hollebeek et al., 2022). Research also shows there is a positive relationship between online advertising, advocacy (engagement) and ultimately, purchase (Wuisan and Handra, 2023).

Engagement is strongly connected to context (Kuvykaite and Tarute, 2015), this study focuses on the dimensions of CE developed by Hollebeek et al. (2014) which form part of the context, as well as the involvement level required from the consumer, for the advertised product.

Online advertising directly targets consumers, and marketers target audience with a high propensity to convert to their product, engagement plays a key role in the full course of interactions. A study by Gavilanes et al., (2018) argues that it takes effort for consumers to click a call to action, but that action represents an emotional investment. The act of “clicking” or pressing “like” has been proven by Shao (2009) to be a moderate indicator of a positive emotional response to a brand and its content.

Online adverts carry call-to-action prompts. A call-to-action is described as a prompt, any design that is created to prompt an immediate response. Call-to-action prompts use a variety of terms and terminology to lead the desired response, they are incorporated in sales scripts, advertising messages and webpages (Rodgers and Thorson, 2000). Call-to-actions can include phrases like sign up, learn more, try now, read more, buy now and more.

Researchers agree that consumer engagement is multidimensional with multidimensional processing models. Namely, Cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. Consumers use similar processing methods and researchers have studied a variation of processing concepts to

understand how consumers respond to advertising cues. The interactive advertising model expressed in figure 5 by Rogers and Thorson (2000) discusses the importance of understanding the motives for internet use, consumer-controlled aspects and how marketers can better tailor their adverts to consumers to increase engagement. Engagement is a core result with which marketers can assess a consumers experience with a brand.

There are multiple ways to measure engagement for online banner advertising, it is important to note that measurement engagement metrics for online banner adverts are constantly evolving, the practitioner's engagement metrics can be highlighted below (Google, 2022):

1. Click-through rate- the number of people who clicked on the banner advert
2. Impressions- number of people who have seen the banner advert
3. Reach- number of unique users who have been exposed to the banner advert

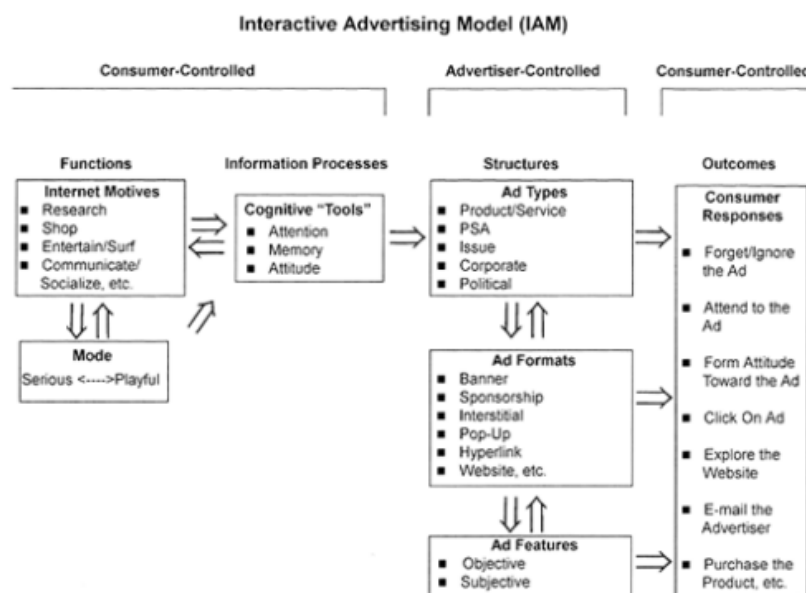


Figure 8: Interactive advertising model (Thorson, 2000)

Online advertising and consumer engagement have been proven to have a positive relationship (Zari, 2021), this research reinforces that online advertising and consumer engagement has a positive relationship, irrespective of involvement level or engagement dimension, to add to the body of knowledge available on online advertising, this study has expanded by examining

consumer engagement in 2 dimensions; cognitive and affective as well as involvement level; high and low, therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

H1a. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.

H1b. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products.

H1c. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for high involvement products.

H1d. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for low involvement products.

2.12.2 High and low involvement purchase decision

Purchase decisions indicate a customer's willingness to buy a product, when consumers make purchase decisions, the most ideal reaction marketers intend to solicit, is a customer with a clear intent to purchase a product. Purchase decisions are measured by seeking consumer response on whether they would consider purchasing a product (Martinez and Kim, 2019). Kotler and Keller (2009) make a clear distinction, between low involvement decision making and high involvement decision making. Online banner advertising is effective for awareness for both types of involvement products, low involvement purchase decisions are easier to commit to and can result in quicker purchase decisions, whereas high involvement products require a more rigorous decision-making process and can slow down purchase decisions, requiring a deeper cognitive response.

2.12.3 Cognitive consumer engagement and high involvement purchase decisions

Hollebeek (2014) identifies the cognitive dimension as a construct to determine processing, concentration, and interest in a specific object, from a consumer's perspective. High

involvement products require a high level of cognitive processing. The study therefore proposes that online banner adverts with high involvement products would require a high level of cognitive processing.

Patterson et al. (2006) identified the cognitive dimension as utilitarian, which says that consumers will engage with a cognitive response to items that are advertised with a specific utility purpose, after they have evaluated advantages of the online advert.

In a study conducted by Lin (2012) which explored how planned behaviour and perception influence high-involvement purchases. The results showed that brand value influenced perception and the follow-through from customers. In another Study conducted in India, Rekha Dahiya and Gayatri (2018) looked at how consumer buying behaviour has changed in the vehicle market in India, they discovered that car sales on digital platforms remain low and while customers say they would buy a vehicle online, it isn't something that is prominent in India yet. The study in India is consistent with a study that was undertaken in 2007 by Molesworth and Suortti, in the UK, the study looked at the adoption of the internet for high-involvement purchases like cars- which also discovered a low uptake of online vehicle purchases and cited the high involvement nature of purchasing a vehicle as a reason for the low uptake. The role of the level of involvement required in buying a car was also noted to be a factor.

The FCB grid (Figure 9) suggests informative advertising should be used in high involvement purchase scenarios and this will influence the cognitive dimension of consumer engagement. These purchases could be for a car, a house, furniture, or completely new products. The measurement test for the high involvement and cognitive portion of the grid is recall. Advertised media for high involvement products should show long copy and the creative should have specific information and demonstrate the use of the item advertised. With the above conditions met, cognitive consumer engagement is possible, therefore the following hypothesis is proposed.

H2. Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

The original Foote, Cone and Belding (FCB) grid by Vaughn (1980, 1970) explains both dimensions of consumer engagement (cognitive and affective) as well as low and high involvement responses. The FCB grid (figure 9) is a model designed to interpret consumer buying behaviour to assist marketers in developing suitable advertising strategies. In the high involvement and affective portion of the grid, the products linked with that type of purchase are completed out of habit. These products include food and household items. Low involvement cognitive purchases are suggested to be the most effective for small space ads like banner advertising and the creative should pose as a reminder to the customer, form the use of words and positions of text on the online advert. The FCB grid in figure 9 will be a recurring reference for the study.

		Rational / Think	Emotional / Feel
I N V O L V E M E N T	H I G H	1. Informative (Thinker) Car, house, furnishings Learn - Feel - Do Economic Theory	2. Affective (Feeler) Jewelry, cosmetics, fashion apparel, motorcycles Feel - Learn - Do Psychological Theory
	L O W	3. Habit Forming (Doer) Household items Do - Learn - Feel Responsive Theory	4. Self-satisfaction (Reactor) Cigarettes, liquor, candy Do - Feel -Learn Social Theory

Figure 9: FCB Grid (Yssel, 1996)

2.13.4 Cognitive consumer engagement and low involvement purchase

Researchers, Reitz (2012), Kunz et al., (2017) describe the cognitive dimension as the initial phase in advertising processing, in this phase, consumers are aware of the products recognition, they are interested in finding out more about the product; information search and are in the process of building their knowledge.

Low involvement purchases can also be impulse purchases. Purchases can be made instantly in low involvement scenarios, making it easier for marketers to get the desired advertising outcome on digital platforms. In cognitive consumer engagement, there are two measurement components that stand out: attention and absorption (Dessart, Veloutsou, and Thomas, 2015). Attention is mentioned in multiple theories as a strong desired reaction from consumers. In a

study by So (2014) researching hotel destinations, they found out that customers who were interested in specific brand activities could see new information, advertisements, and specials quicker. Absorption refers to the concentration level of the focal point/online banner advert. A high-level engagement showcases both attention and absorption level of the product advertised. Attention and absorption are motivational constructs of cognitive consumer engagement. In the context of advertising online, marketers desire both attention and absorption for cognitive engagement and low involvement purchase decisions do not require absorption and attention, but more repetition.

Measuring cognitive consumer engagement

a. Attention

Attention is a construct of consumer engagement; this is measured by the amount of time a consumer has spent thinking about a specific product advertised/the brand and their level of attention to be an engaging party (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas, 2016).

b. Absorption

The level of concentration a consumer shows when engaging with a business (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas, 2016), in this case the banner online advert. Media platforms like google have data that provides marketers with details of ads served and the level of engagement from the received parties.

Based on the insignificant need for absorption and attention in low involvement purchase decision, the following hypothesis is developed:

H3: Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products has a negative relationship with low involvement purchase decisions

2.13.5 Affective consumer engagement and high involvement purchase decisions

The affective dimension of consumer engagement focuses on the feeling the consumer associates with a purchase or product. The affective dimension is influenced by factors like preference, feelings, and loyalty. Research by Sohail (2021) confirms affective attachment significantly influences consumer engagement. At an affective level, a consumer's perception is influenced by how an online banner advert comes across as appealing and fascinating, previous experiences with the product on the display advert plays a role in desire to engage.

According to Malciute (2012) this dimension of consumer engagement is the most significant and drives the most engagement. It is non transactional and driven by the consumers sole motivation.

Previous studies show an affective/emotional connection from a consumer can motivate and persuade consumers and is recorded as the one dimension with the most impact in consumer purchase decisions. Important to note that the different dimensions of consumer engagement are interrelated, emotional engagement can intensify cognitive relation.

A high involvement purchase is defined as any product a customer purchases that has a high-risk potential, the decision needs to be thought through because a purchase mistake can cause dire strain and possesses a sometimes-complex buying process (Kokemuller, 2018). The emotional commitment required for high involvement purchases separates it from a low involvement product.

The FCB grid suggests that high involvement purchases like jewellery, cosmetics, fashionable clothes, and motorcycles are driven by a feeling. In these purchase scenarios, attitude change and emotional arousal lead to affective engagement. The creatives required to illicit affective engagement must be impactful, with executional excellence. This can be achieved by the type of creative on online banner adverts.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4. Affective consumer engagement has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

2.13.6 Affective consumer engagement and low involvement purchase decisions

The affective dimension of consumer engagement can be seen as the sense of pride associated with a product, in this case, this refers to the emotional connection a consumer has towards the online banner advert, based on the object on the banner. This dimension of consumer engagement has been argued by (Kuvykaite and Tarute, 2015) as subconscious construct, Abdul-Ghani et al. (2011) identifies this dimension of consumer engagement as hedonic and can be expressed by the simple enjoyment a consumer feels while surfing the internet.

By the simple act of a consumer visiting a website they enjoy, they can easily evoke positive responses from online banner adverts served on that site, for either low or high involvement. The consumer path to purchase isn't always a step-by-step process, as already indicated. Kotler et al. (2017) makes an example of a consumer buying bread, and how some steps indicated in figure 5 can be skipped, consumers can easily skip information evaluation and researching better alternatives. This indicates a low cognitive relationship for low involvement products and purchase decisions.

The FCB grid suggests low involvement and affective purchases are driven by self-satisfaction. These include cigarettes, alcohol, and sweets. Low involvement products for affective engagement drive sales in corporations and the ideal media include billboards, newspaper and point of sale stands. Digital marketing has advanced to offer a myriad of channels which fill the role of mass market channels like billboards and newspapers. The FCB grid suggests that online adverts for low involvement products do not incite affective consumer engagement.

Measuring affective consumer engagement.

a. Enthusiasm

Intrinsic level of enthusiasm and interest shown by the consumer and the advert displayed (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas, 2016). This can be measured in clicks and completed forms from the banner advert served.

b. Enjoyment

Enjoyment refers to the actual pleasure and happiness a consumer derives from the interaction. This can be measured by comments on a caption, direct responses to online adverts that are served.

Based on the insignificant need to appeal to any cognitive response in affective engagement, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5. Affective consumer engagement has a positive relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

2.14 Hypothesis development summary

This study tests the relationship between online banner advertising, consumer engagement dimensions; cognitive and affective as well as, the cognitive and affective dimensions of high and low involvement purchase decisions.

Previous research has already proven that online advertising and consumer engagement has a positive relationship. This study aims to add referenceable literature around online banner advertising, cognitive and affective consumer engagement for high and low involvement purchase scenarios. As such, the study has broken down online banner advertising and consumer engagement into four differentiable hypotheses:

Firstly, cognitive consumer engagement requires mental stimulation and the relationship with online banner adverts can be influenced by the cognitive appeal and level of involvement of the product advertised and therefore the 1st proposed hypotheses is:

H1a. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.

Secondly, cognitive consumer engagement requires absorption and attention (Hollebeek, 2014) while low involvement requires minimal cognitive engagement but adverts with low involvement products are easier to comprehend (Harris, 2015). This tests the relationship between online banner advertising and cognitive engagement for low involvement products.

H1b. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products.

Thirdly, this study tests online banner advertising and affective consumer engagement for high involvement products because consumers process messages differently, individuals with a high need for affect generally ask themselves how they feel about a product or an advert before engaging (Pham, 1998)

H1c. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for high involvement products.

The final hypotheses testing online banner advertising and consumer engagement assesses the relationship between online banner advertising and affective engagement for low involvement products. Low involvement products are easier to understand (Harris, 2015) and online banner adverts can serve for affective appeal.

H1d: Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for low involvement products.

Hypothesis H2, H3, H4, H5 test purchase decisions for low and high involvement product and the relationships that exists with cognitive and affective engagement. The study proposes that all relationships are positive apart from cognitive engagement and low involvement purchase decisions, this assumption is brought forward because low involvement purchase decisions are made routinely, without cognitive effort, the study proposes that consumers do not need cognitive engagement for low involvement purchase decisions.

H2: Cognitive consumer engagement has a positive relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

H3: Cognitive consumer engagement has a negative relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

H4: Affective consumer engagement has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

H5. Affective consumer engagement has a positive relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

2.16 Conceptual framework and hypotheses development

Online banner advertising solicits consumer engagement, the end goal for most online adverts is to achieve a level of engagement from the consumers to which the banners are served. High involvement purchase decisions require a person to thoroughly investigate a product before proceeding to develop a purchase decision (Mothersbaugh, 2019), low involvement purchase

decisions require minimum brand exposure, repetition, and research. Low involvement decisions can be more frequent and impulse purchases whereas high involvement decisions require more information and research.

The hypothesis diagram for this research is an adaption from Harrigan, Evers, Miles, and Daly (2018), the author created a model to explain consumer engagement and the relationship between involvement, brand connection and usage intent. The hypothesis diagram has been adapted for this specific study, exploring the relationship between online banner advertising consumer engagement, cognitive and affective dimensions of consumer engagement and low and high involvement purchases.

Harrigan et al., (2018) explores brand connection and the effects of different levels of engagement on self-brand connection and brand usage and shows a significant influence of involvement for desired for both self-brand connection and brand usage intent.

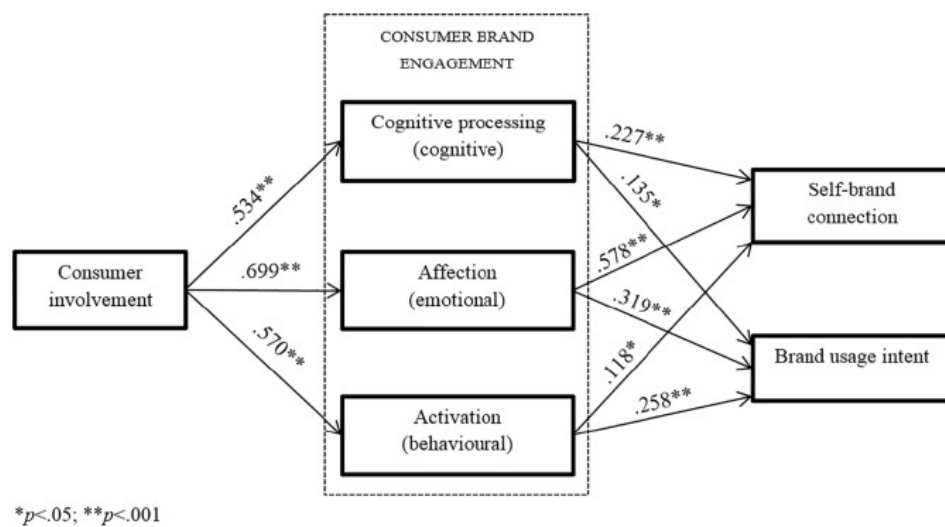


Figure 10: consumer engagement diagram (Harrigan et al., 2018)

2.16.1 Hypothesis diagram

The hypothesis diagram for this study proposes that two dimensions of CE as contributing factors to low and high involvement purchase decisions; cognitive and affective. Banner online advertisements and the dimension of CE influences either high involvement purchase decision or low involvement purchase decision. The study assumes that online banner adverts and the affective dimension of CE has a positive relationship with high and low involvement purchase decisions, and assumes because cognitive dimension demands more mental availability, it has

a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions and a negative relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

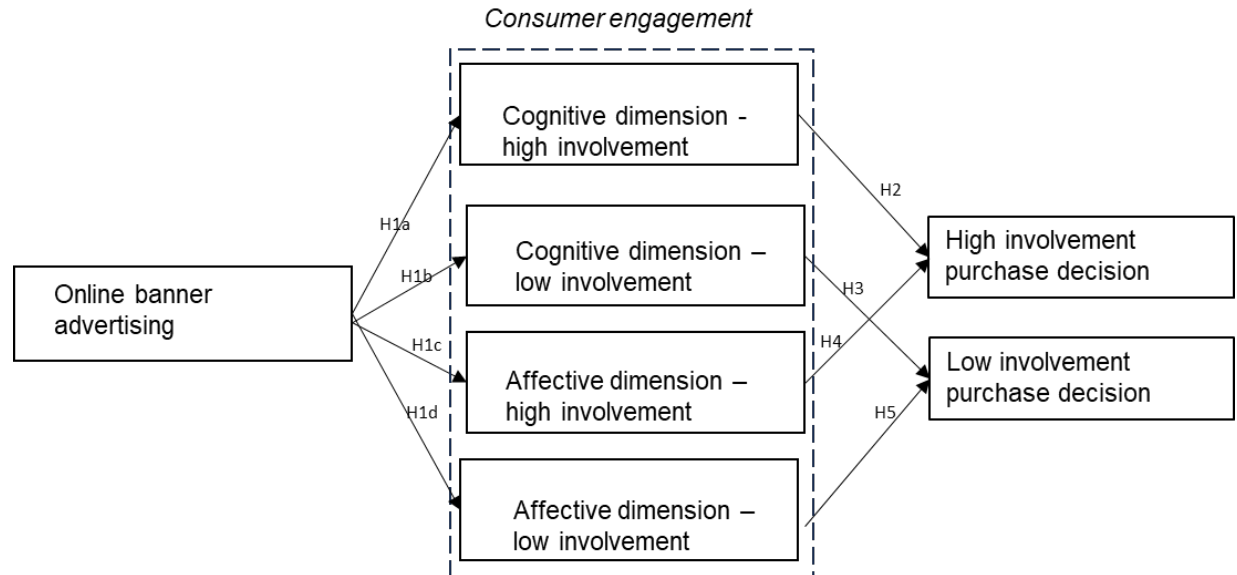


Figure 11: Author's own construction (2023)

The questionnaire available in Appendix C, used readily available scales from 3 authors, Kim and Ko (2012), who measured the effectiveness of online advertising by assessing mainly attitude towards online advertising. Vinearan and Opreana (2015) measured Cognitive and affective consumer engagement by assessing thinking, attention, interest and feeling and Chen and Teng (2013) for low and high involvement purchase decision.

2.17 Conclusion

Researchers have studied online advertising and consumer engagement extensively. Multiple definitions for consumer engagement currently exist and understanding consumer engagement in the context of the level of involvement has merit for further research. The literature review shows that mere exposure of online adverts does not necessarily lead to advertising recall or purchase intention. The Elaboration likelihood model shows recognition of both affective and cognitive components to decision-making and how both elements contribute to high and low involvement decision making. The FCB model clarifies the importance for marketers to

accurately differentiate between advertising messages and channels for low and high involvement products within the cognitive and affective context.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will cover a full review of the research technique, rationale for the research method, target population, and data analysis process. The chapter also details principles and research techniques that were used, drawing from existing literature and theoretical guidance.

3.1. Introduction

This study studies the relationship between online banner advertising, cognitive and affective consumer engagement, and high and low involvement purchase decisions. When developing the research design, all aspects of the research problems and constructs were taken to account. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012), mention that the research question, methodology and topic should all be consistent with what the study aims to achieve.

Mishra and Alok (2022) explain that a research method details the approach that will be taken to solve for the research questions. The major objectives for most research studies are the following:

1. To identify trends and draw opinions from the results.
2. To identify characteristics of a specific grouping
3. To explore and establish relationships; relationships which occur or are related with other constructs.
4. To test a hypothesis, a reasonable liaison between different variables

This chapter details the systematic approach that has been taken to accurately conduct the research in an ethical way.

3.2 Research Design

The research study took on a quantitative approach, which is a process of collecting and analysing numerical data, quantitative research method concerns itself with quantifying and analysing variables for results (Apuka, 2017). The purpose of quantitative research is to gather data and use that data to explain a phenomenon. Chapter 2 details different literature that was consulted addressing constructs that have been tested in this study: online banner advertising

(OA), cognitive and affective consumer engagement (CCE and ACE) and high (HIPI) and low involvement purchase decisions (LIPI). There is an opportunity to study the relationship between the different constructs in a measurable and reliable way.

Apuke (2017) makes the following distinctions between quantitative and qualitative, which were referenced during the process of selecting the methodology that best fits the desired study outcomes:

- a. The purpose of a quantitative study is to test a hypothesis, make prediction, look at cause and effect, whereas qualitative study aims to understand and interpret social interactions.
- b. In quantitative design studies, researchers study specific variables, whereas in qualitative design studies, researchers do not examine variables.
- c. Quantitative data collects numbers and statistics and required precise measurements and qualitative uses words, images, or objects.
- d. In quantitative data the researcher must be objective, and the researchers' biases are not known, whereas qualitative only requires subjectivity and the researcher bias may be known.
- e. Quantitative research views human behaviour as regular and predictable, with a single reality, whereas qualitative research views human behaviour as dynamic and situations with multiple realities.

This study utilised research scales adapted from existing studies. All the scale items requested respondents to select the most appropriate answer on a 5-point Likert scale, "Likert-scale items allow for more granularity – more finely tuned response" (Lumen Learning, 2023) . The constructs measured in the questionnaire are online banner advertising, consumer engagement, cognitive consumer engagement, affective consumer engagement, high involvement purchase decision, low involvement purchase decision. Using scale items from existing literature improves the reliability of the research outcomes.

According to Statista (2023), individuals aged between 25 and 34 years make up a third of online users worldwide. Website visitors in this age bracket constituted the biggest group of online users worldwide. Also, 18 percent of global online users were aged 18 to 24 years. The global digital population aged 65 or older represented approximately 5.5 percent of all internet

users worldwide. In South Africa, 43.48 million internet users have been registered since January 2023 (Datareportal, 2023). In line with the global data, this research focused on respondents in age 18-36 as a primary audience for a reliable outcome.

The study uses a quantitative method, by use of a survey, quantitative studies require a sample selection. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) argue that sampling techniques come with a level of error, sampling error, that is unavoidable. The quantitative research provides important statistical information that needs to be decoded. Descriptive analysis uses raw data and turns it into interpretable data. The study has decoded and packaged information in a way that shows statistical responses. The researchers provided participants with a questionnaire designed on Qualtrics. The questionnaire contained 26 questions and 6 sections, with adapted questions addressing each construct.

3.3 Rationale for research design selection

This study tests the relationship between OA, CCE, ACE, HIPI and LIPI. Seeing that the study tests hypothesis with specific variables and views human behaviour as predictable and regular where the researcher's bias is not known. Quantitative research design was the most effective for the study.

Previous studies such as Cheung et al., (2021) and Vinearan and Opreana (2015) testing similar relationships used quantitative design.

3.4 Research Method

This research adopted a positivist/post-positivist approach which seeks to understand human nature, and how people are most likely to respond in situations where an online banner advertisement is presented before them. This research referenced questions from previous authors who have used a quantitative method to analyse topics on online advertising, cognitive and affective engagement as well as purchase appeal.

Table 2: Study measures

Construct	Supporting literature	Measurement
Online Advertising	Kim and Ko (2012); Ahmed and Zahid (2014)	Attitude towards online banner adverts
Cognitive CE	Vinearan and Opreana (2015)	Thinking, attention
Affective CE	Vinearan and Opreana (2015)	Interest, feeling
Low involvement purchase decision	Chen and Teng (2013)	Purchase appeal
High Involvement purchase decision	Chen and Teng (2013)	Purchase appeal

To adequately measure online advertising, cognitive and affective consumer engagement on low and high involvement purchase decisions, respondents were presented with a set of high involvement products, which are products that must be researched and evaluated before any action towards a purchase can be taken, respondents were also presented with a set of low involvement products, products where impulse purchases are common. The study then assessed the different dimensions of consumer engagement and the role each of the dimensions play in both scenarios. The positivist epistemological approach says knowledge can be observed and observed knowledge can be considered as true (Park, 2020).

To assist respondents in identifying low and high involvement products, the questionnaire included the following set of images.

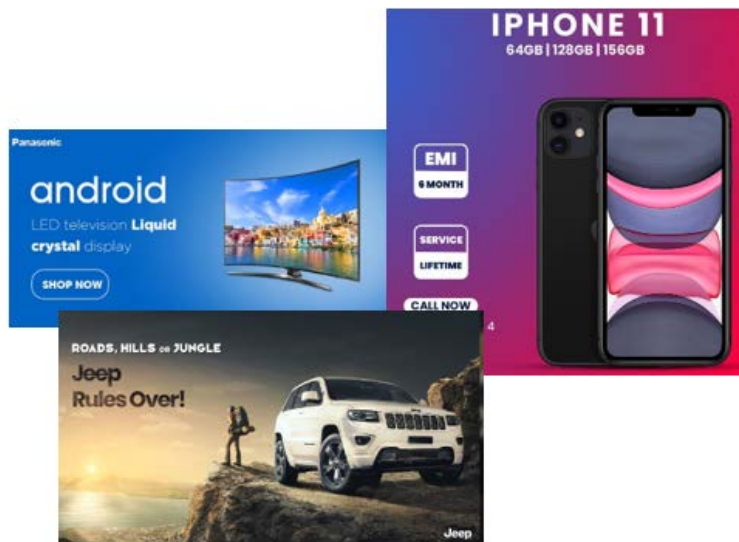


Figure 12: High Involvement products

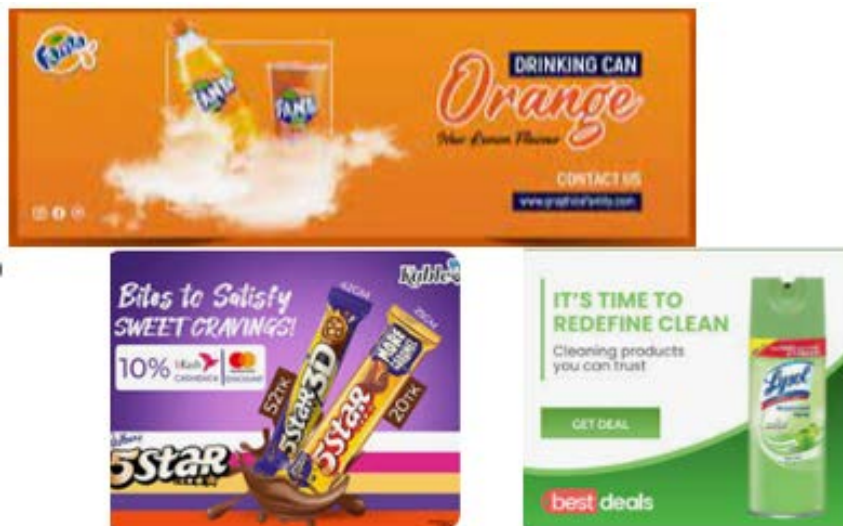


Figure 13: Low involvement products

3.4 Target population

3.4.1 Sample size

A good sample is a representative of the population, corresponding to its population (Pandey and Pandey, 2015). To determine the adequate sample size, the study used Raosoft, which is a sample size calculator used in survey research to determine the number of respondents needed

to achieve a desired level of accuracy (Gardener, 2010). According to Raosoft (2023), for a population size with 43.48 million internet users, the recommended target population is 285 to achieve a respondent confidence level of 90%. This study generated 314 responses, with 305 responses eligible for the study, reaching the desired confidence level.

3.4.2 Sample method

The study used convenience sampling technique, convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method, there's a variety of sampling techniques that are available for quantitative studies, non-probability, simple, random, cluster snowball, convenience sampling. For this research, the snowball method was used. Non-probability sampling was used to distribute the survey.

This study focuses on people who have access to the internet, who live in South Africa and spend a fair amount of time on the internet. The researcher distributed a link to the questionnaire on Qualtrics on online sites like WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook, to better target an audience that is familiar with internet usage.

Random snowball sampling of individuals over the age of 18 and have access to the internet was a core focus for this study. The study received 314 respondents, which is above the recommended sample size for sufficient data analysis.

Internet usage differs by age, according to Statista (2024) the largest group that uses the internet is ages 18-24 and closely followed by age group 25-34. South African internet users were grouped in ages 18-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54 and 55+ to determine any familial trends with online exposure within these age groups.

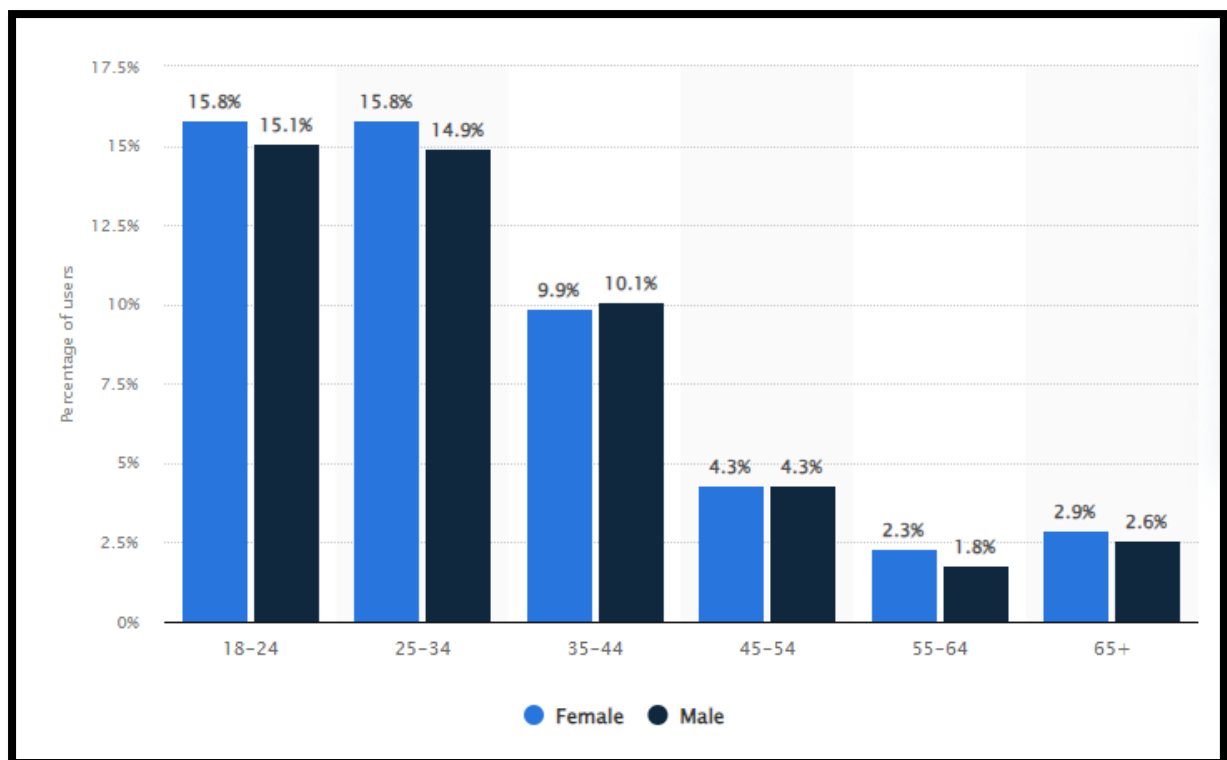


Figure 14: distribution of internet users In South Africa (Statista, 2024)

3.5 Data collection and analysis

Data processing refers to collecting information that can be used and transformed into legible information (Apuke, 2017). Data collected for this study is primary data; this is data that has been collected by the researcher (Wagner, Kawulich and Garner, 2012). The research instrument (Questionnaire) used to collect data was shared with respondents by means of a snowball method, using only online channels, WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

By using the snowball method, the study benefited from acquiring most respondents through referrals, which improved the overall research response rate.

The researcher collected as many responses as possible to have enough data to sift through, for only relevant responses for reporting. The technique of data analysis used for this study is structural equation modelling (SEM). Structural equation modelling is a multivariate technique used to test and evaluate multivariate causal relationships (Fan, Yi, et al., 2016). SEM was selected as the most relevant technique to test and evaluate the relationships in the study.

3.5.1 Data collection process

1. Consumers were asked to consent to be a participant in the study.
2. Exclusion rules for individuals who do not reside in South Africa and do not spend any time on the internet were implemented in the questionnaire set up on Qualtrics.
3. Exclusion rules were added for individuals who do fall within any of the stipulated age groups.
4. Questionnaire was distributed to respondents via online platforms.
5. Respondents were requested to complete the survey on their own, ensuring completion of all questions.
6. The study cleaned the data after downloading the excel document and removed all blank and incomplete responses from the final data set.

An online self-administered questionnaire method has advantages (Kwambe, 2016) such as cost saving, it is efficient in that multiple people can receive the questionnaire without intense administrative time and the respondents remain anonymous.

3.6 Measures

To conduct quantitative research, researchers use numerical measurements and record information as part of the research process and to report on the received data. Measurement of constructs is important to ensure reliability of the study. Stevens (1946) originally identified four generic types of rating scales for scientific measurements, namely nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio scales.

Table 3: Scale measures

Scale	Central Tendency	Statistics	Transformations
Nominal	Mode	Chi-square	One-to-one (equality)
Ordinal	Median	Percentile, nonparametric statistics	Monotonic increasing (order)

Interval	Arithmetic mean, range standard deviation	Correlation, regression, analysis of variance	Positive linear (affine)
Ratio	Geometrics mean, harmonic mean	Coefficient of variant	Positive similarities (multiplicative, logarithmic)

For this study, an interval scale with a central tendency inclusive of mean, range, standard deviation measures dispersion. Correlation, regression, and analysis of variance are permissible statistical analyses.

To develop the questionnaire for this research, we relied on previously measured constructs as a guide. An adaptation of previously measured scales from existing studies that explored the various constructs under research. The study's questionnaire has a set of questions derived from Hollebeek et al.'s (2014) CBE scale, Vinearan and Opreana (2015) affective and cognitive measurement, and Peng and Teng's (2013) purchase intention scale.

When designing the questionnaire, the researcher considered the desired research outcomes. The proposed questionnaire references the three-factor CBE scale by Hollebeek et al. (2014, 2022) for affective and cognitive consumer engagement. The Questionnaire consists of 6 sections, A, B, C, D, E and F. Background information is addressed in section A. Section B-F addresses online advertising, consumer engagement and low and high purchase decisions.

The researcher distributed a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, which consists of the below rating scales – (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree. The research instrument: questionnaire, is attached as Appendix C.

Section A: Descriptive survey covering age, gender, level of education and the amount of time spent on the internet.

Section B to F consists of questions exploring the relationship between research questions on online banner advertising, CE dimensions, and low and high involvement purchase decisions.

To test the measurement model, the study conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis using AMOS. Descriptive statistics and Cronbach alpha for reliability test was conducted on SPSS. Data fitness confirmation includes relative chi-square (CMIN/DF), Goodness of Fit (GFI),

comparative fit index (CFI) and root mean square residual (RMR) were calculated on AMOS software.

A descriptive analysis was conducted to understand respondent profiles. A descriptive analysis can be used to measure frequency, variation, dispersion, and central tendency (Fan, Yi, et al., 2016). There are many advantages of using descriptive analysis, some of which include the ability for a researcher to deduce objectivity and neutrality, it requires more effort from researchers to ensure the information is properly decoded but, this type of analysis is considered as “a better method for collecting information that describes relationships as natural” (Rawat, 2021).

3.7. Ethical considerations

The researchers conducted the study with a consideration of humans and sensitivity to respondent information. No information collected will classify individuals negatively. Transparency and confidentiality are a priority and were to be carried throughout the study.

The study requested every respondent to clarify that they are willing participants in the study, and we captured this information in a consent form. Once the study is complete and has reached a satisfactory outcome for all responses, collected data will be deleted. Furthermore, a clearance certificate from the University of Witwatersrand Ethics committee was received confirming ethical conduct of proposed collection method.

3.8 PILOT STUDY

3.8.1 Introduction

A pilot study, as defined by Lowe (2019), is a small feasibility study designed to test aspects of a larger investigation. The primary purpose of this pilot study was to prevent errors that could arise from launching the full study without adequately testing the proposed methods.

A pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the questions. Noonan (2023) explains a pilot study as a small-scale study that is conducted to inform, predict, and direct an intended future full-scale study.

The researcher sent the pilot study to select individuals, including post-grad students, professionals working in digital advertising, and internet users. 40 responses were collected, after cleaning the data, only 38 responses were eligible for analysis. The pilot was conducted with a 10% sample size, sampled from 300 total respondents expected for the final study.

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the validity of the constructs while Cronbach alpha assessed the validity. Questionnaire for the pilot study was set up on Qualtrics and ring-fenced to South African residents only. A 5-point Likert scale was used to rate questions from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

3.8.2 Results from Pilot study

Descriptive analysis

Using Power BI, a Microsoft product that transforms unrelated sources of data into visually interpretable information and enables interactive insights (Microsoft, 2023), we completed the descriptive analysis for the pilot study.

Age influences overall internet usage, while this is the main criteria for the study, it does assist with interpretation of results. Ages 26-35 contributed 43% of all responses, followed by age group 36-45 (35.9%) and 18-25 (15%). In terms of gender, 62% of all respondents were female, and 28% were male.

The study respondents had to be identified as individuals who spend a fair amount of time on the internet, respondents who selected “I do not spend time on the internet” were immediately disqualified and dropped from the study. Of the responses received, 41% indicated that they

spend over 5 hours per day on the internet, which is an important metric to ensure reliability of the study, only 2% indicated less than 1 hour spent on the internet daily.

Education level was important to determine as one of the , according to the Bureau of Labour statistics (2001) individuals with a higher education were said to be most like to spend more time on the internet and are said to have an overall positive view of the internet, the questionnaire explores attitude towards online advertising as a contributing factor to consumer engagement, adding to this previous research (Gosh, 2019) has indicated that overall perception of the internet can influence overall engagement.

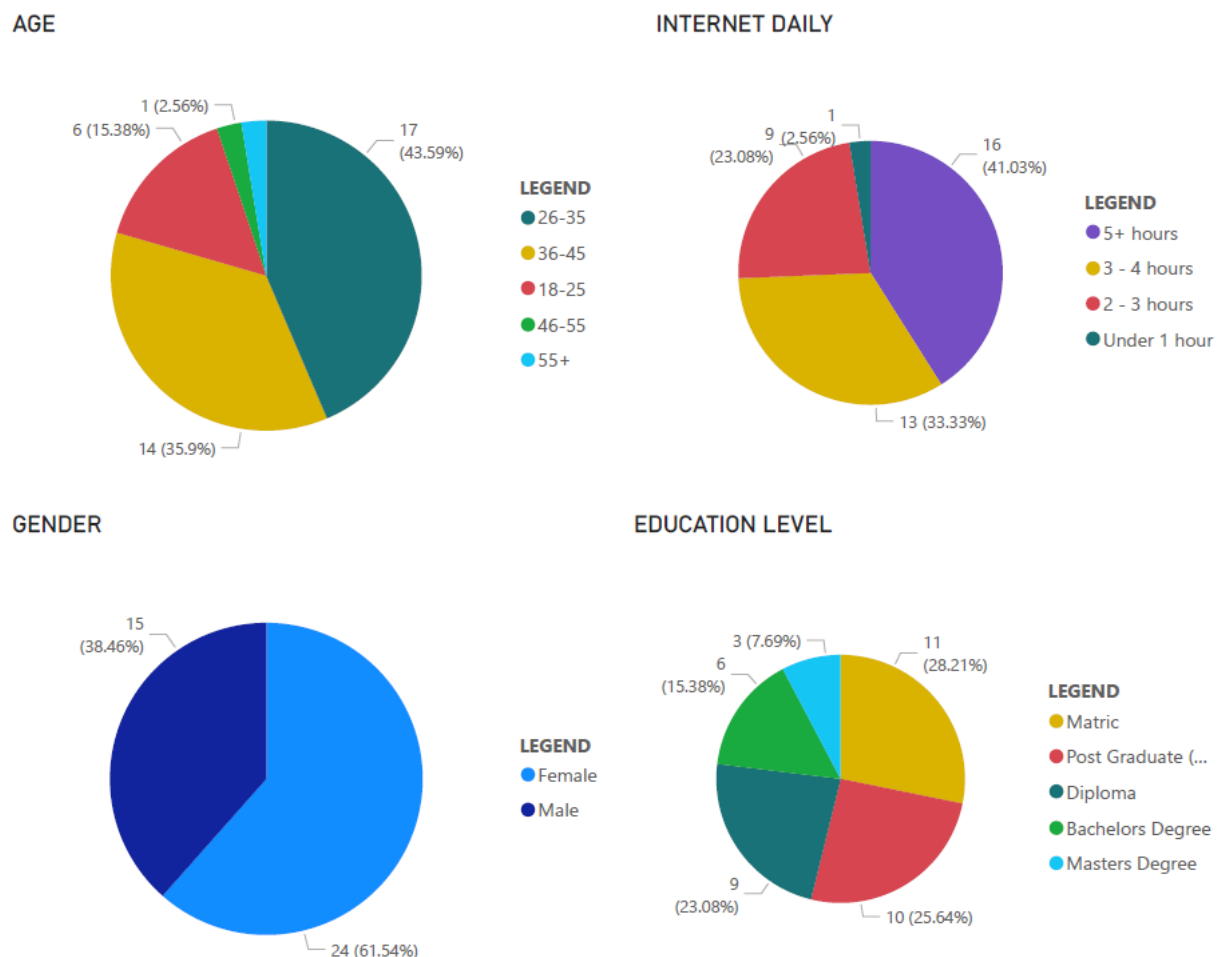


Figure 15: Pilot study for Descriptive analysis

3.8.3 Pilot study reliability results

For the pilot study, the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach alpha and inter-item correlation were tested for reliability. The main reason a pilot study is conducted is to identify any potential weaknesses in the study and to test whether the questions that are asked are comprehensible for the study outcomes.

Table 4: Pilot study reliability results

Construct	Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's Apha	Inter-item correlation
Online Advertising (OA)	4	14.05	4.448	0.881	0.651
Cognitive CE High Involvement (CCE_H)	3	8.68	3.222	0.829	0.630
Affective CE High involvement (ACE_H)	3	10.00	3.564	0.923	0.802
Cognitive CE low involvement (CCE_L)	3	10.47	3.790	0.943	0.849
Affective CE Low involvement (ACE_L)	3	10.89	3.203	0.906	0.770
High Involvement purchase decision (HIPI)	3	8.39	3.276	0.935	0.836
Low involvement purchase decision (LIPI)	3	9.68	3.129	0.940	0.844

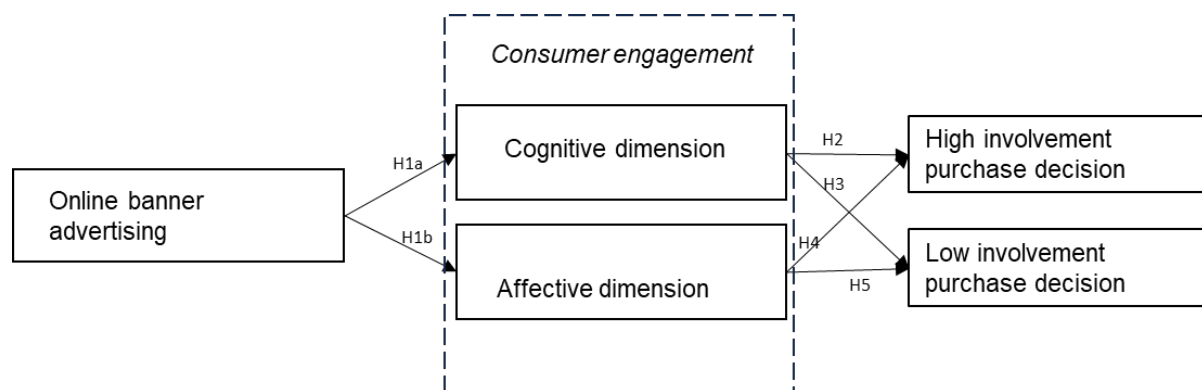
To assess the reliability of the study before sending out the final study, results from the pilot study was assessed with Cronbach alpha, a reliability assessment formula that compares the number of shared variables, or covariance in a construct. Reliability is proven by a clear indication of a great deal of covariable among the items to the variable (Collins, 2007). Collins (2007) further identifies the internal consistency measurement in the following way A Cronbach alpha of over 0.9 is excellent, in this pilot study, constructs such as ACE_H, CCE_L, ACE_L, HIPI and LIPI all scored a Cronbach alpha of over 0.9 OA and CCE_H is still within

an acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha of over 0.8. Based on the pilot study results, the data indicates that the study is reliable and consistent and can therefore continue without any changes to the instruments.

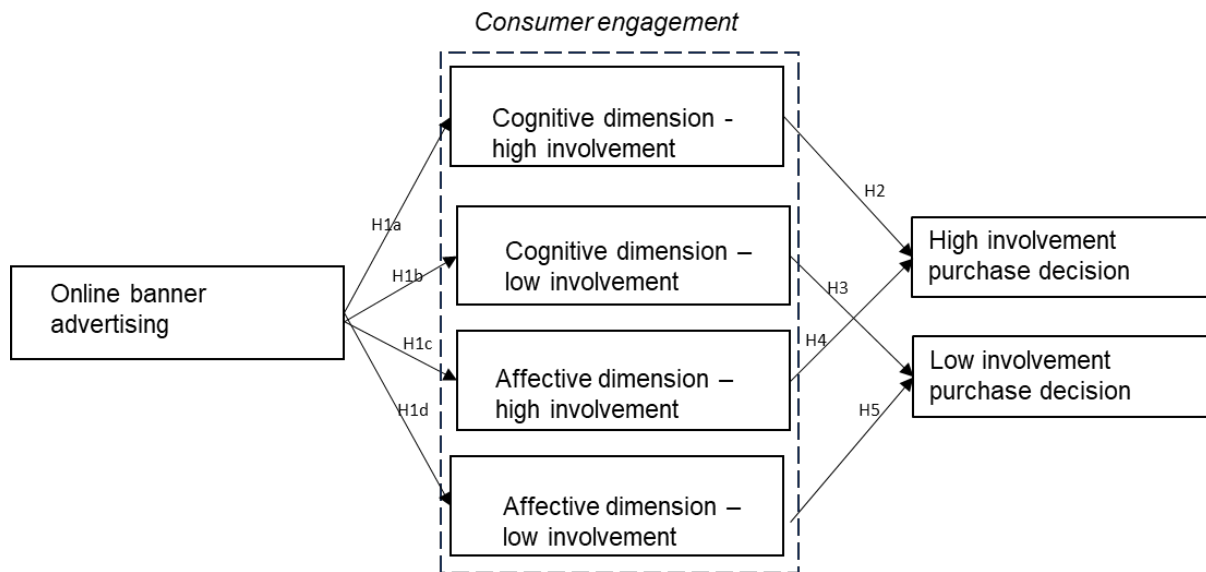
3.8.4 Pilot study conceptual framework update

During the pilot study analysis on AMOS, the path analysis diagram had to be reworked to analyze the final data. The initial framework proposed H1a – exploring a relationship between online banner advertising and cognitive engagement, and H1b – exploring a relationship between online banner advertising and affective consumer engagement. Upon further analysis, the path diagram indicated an opportunity to analyze both cognitive and affective dimensions with specific mention to low and high involvement products. The conceptual framework was formally updated for the final study without any change to the instruments, updating the conceptual framework assisted with drawing clear relationships for the analysis.

Proposed conceptual framework:



Revised conceptual framework:



3.8.5 Descriptive analysis – pilot study

During the pilot study, respondents were asked to indicate their education level. The study differentiated between 6 different education levels, namely, matric, diploma, postgraduate, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and PhD. Feedback received was to use post-graduate degree as one grouping for quicker responses and to make better correlations with the broader data. 2 selections were removed for the final study, namely PhD and Masters, and were grouped under one selection: post-graduate. Overall feedback from pilot study participants was positive, all the questions were easily understood.

3.9 Conclusion

The research design and research method are important in ensuring correct data is collected and the correct results are attained. This study is a quantitative study with a focus on internet users in South Africa. Random sampling was conducted to collect data for analysis, structural equation modeling is how the study has been analyzed using online software such as SPSS and AMOS. Ethical considerations were observed during the completion of this study.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents overall research results from the study. Data for this study was collected via the Qualtrics platform, after ethical clearance from the Wits University human research ethics committee was received. The questionnaire was open for public responses from 11-31 December 2023. Invitation to participate in the study was shared via personal WhatsApp channel, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. This chapter will detail the descriptive results from the survey, reliability, and validity results, as well as hypothesis testing results.

4.2 Demographic and Profile of the respondents

The study received a total of 314 responses. Respondents who indicated that they are not residents in South Africa were excluded from the study, as well as other respondents who indicated that they do not spend any time on the internet. Of the 314 respondents, only 305 respondents were eligible for the study.

4.2.1 Gender

Gender (Figure 17) was important to clarify for adequate interpretation of the study, Tannenbaum (2016) states that gender influences human options, conditions and experiences and gender influences decision-making. As indicated in figure 17, 61% of the study participants are female, 37.7% are male and less than 3% of respondents preferred not to share their gender denomination. The significance of the descriptive data will be discussed in chapter 5.

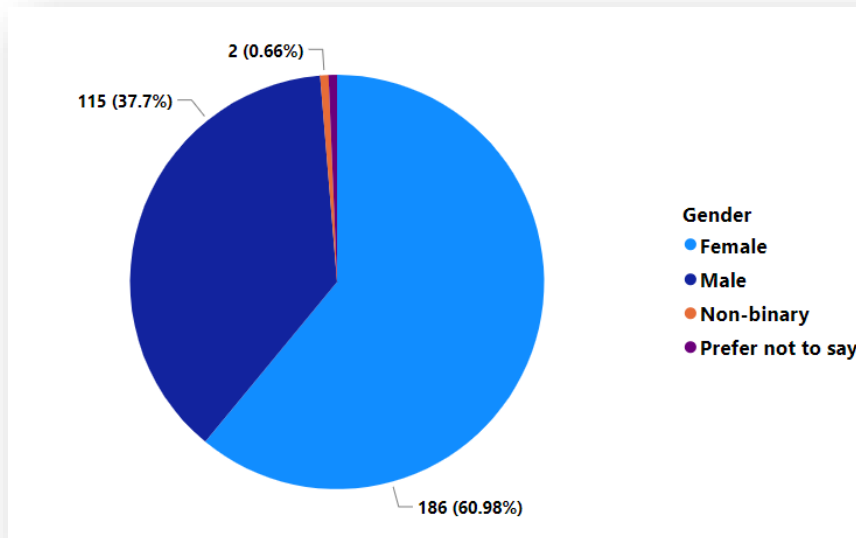


Figure 16: Gender

4.2.2 Age

Internet usage by age differs, according to Statista (2023), the age group with the highest internet usage is between 18-49, and people aged 50 and up showed lesser participation. For this study, represented in figure 18, 43% of all participants fell under the 26-35 age group, followed by the 36-45 age group accounting for 28% of all participants, age group 18-25 accounted for 13% of all participants, age group 46-55 accounted for 10% of all participants and 55+ accounted for 6% of all respondents.

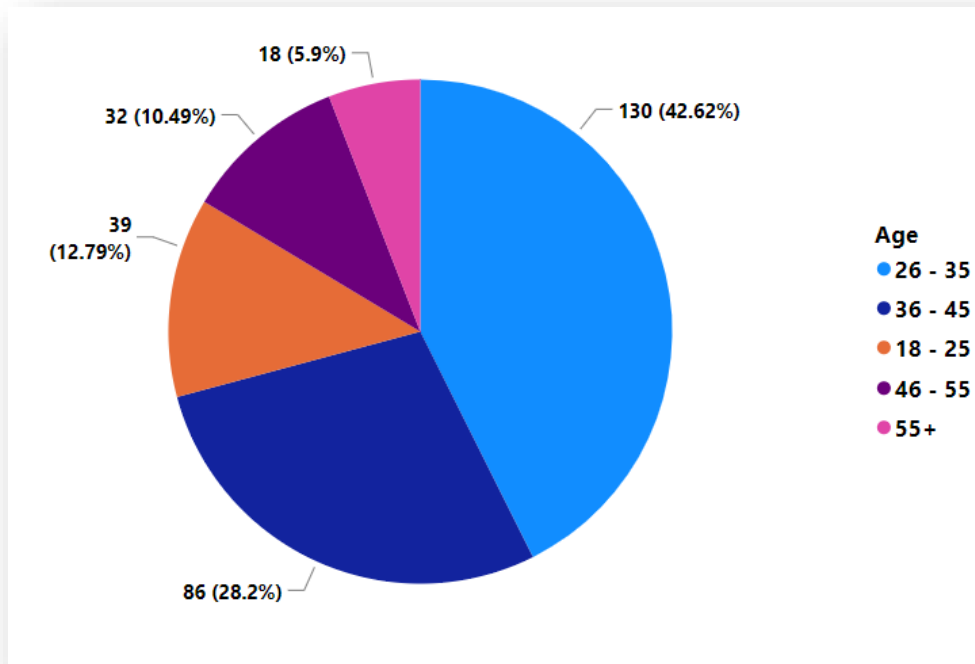


Figure 17: Age

4.2.3 Education level

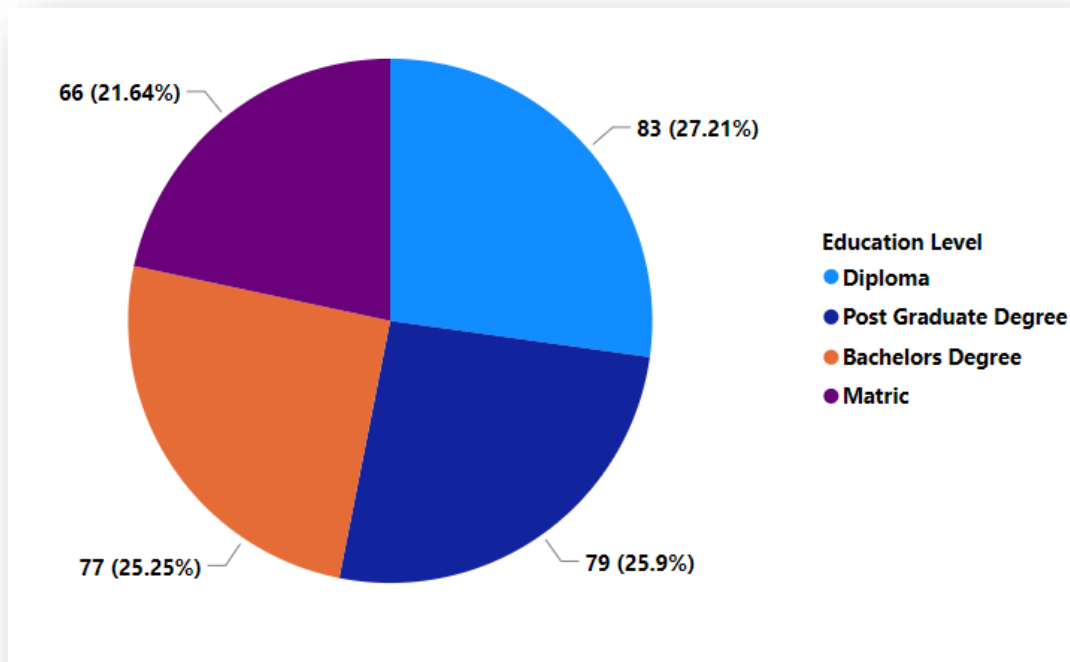


Figure 18: Education level

In a study conducted by Ganayem (2012) exploring internet usage and education level, her research uncovered that education was a predictor of internet usage. For this research, there is a fractionally even split between the 4 categories, 27% of all participants recorded to have a diploma, 26% have post-graduate degrees, this includes a Btech degree, honours degree, master's degree, and a PhD, 25% of the respondents recorded to have a degree and 22% have matric.

4.2.4 Daily Internet usage

Uncovering the amount of time respondents spend on the internet daily was an important metric, specifically to bolster the validity of the study. Participants who responded that they do not spend any time on the internet were removed from the study. Of the respondents, 37% indicated that they spend more than 5 hours a day on the internet, 28% indicated they spend between 2 and 3 hours daily on the internet, 24% of the respondents indicated that they spend between 3 and 4 hours daily. The smallest group, 11%, showed to only spending less than one hour daily on the internet.

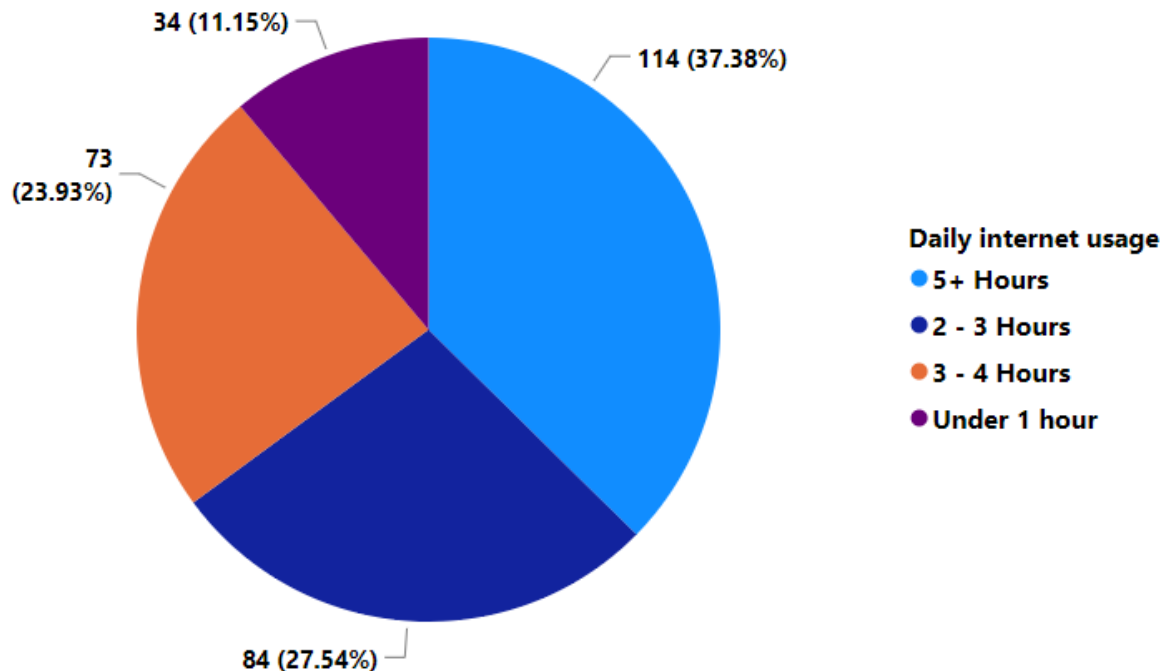


Figure 19: Daily internet usage

4.3 Descriptive statistics: Measurement scales

The following section illustrates the results per construct collected from the participant response. Respondents were asked to rate their honest answers on a Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Below discusses the results in detail.

4.3.1 Online Advertising – results

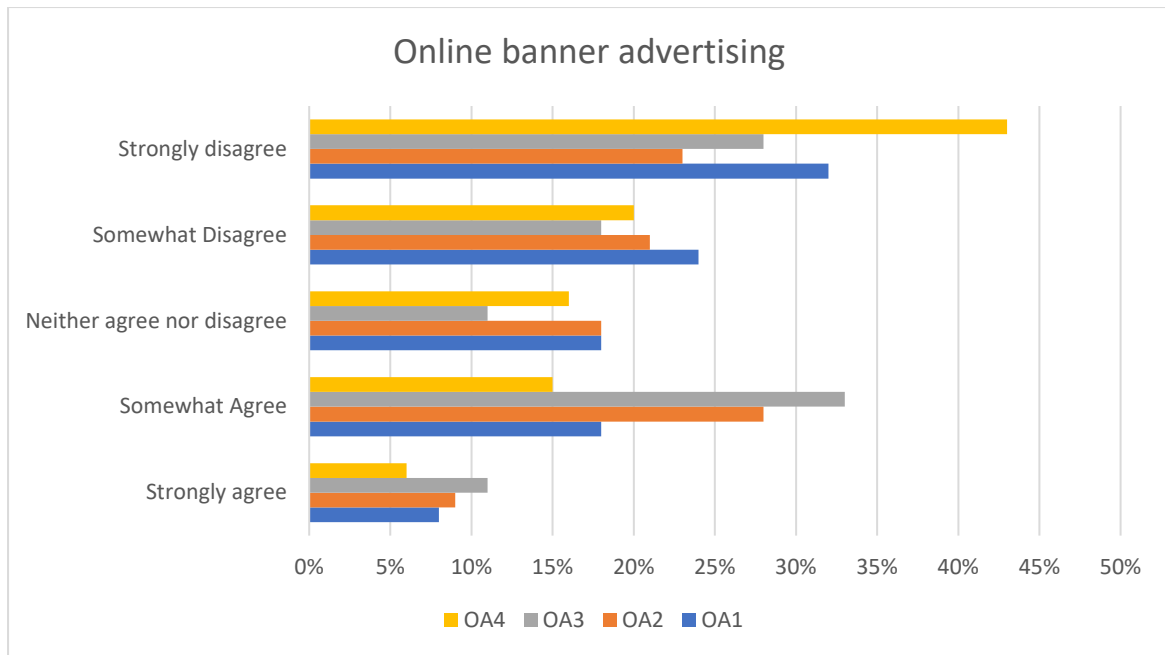
The first section explored online advertising, mainly attitudes towards online advertising that could affect engagement with online adverts. This section covered the following 4 questions:

1. **OA1:** I like engaging with online banner adverts I see while surfing the internet.
2. **OA2:** I find content on online banner adverts interesting.
3. **OA3:** I sometimes click on online banner adverts I see while surfing the internet.
4. **OA4:** I enjoy seeing online banner adverts when I surf the internet.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
OA1	8%	18%	18%	24%	32%
OA2	9%	28%	18%	21%	23%
OA3	11%	33%	11%	18%	28%
OA4	6%	15%	16%	20%	43%

Table 5: Online advertising respondents- table

Graph 1 is a visual representation showcasing that a large portion of respondents strongly disagree that they like to engage with online banner adverts while they surf the internet.



Graph 1: Online banner advertising – graph

Indicated in table 4, 32% of respondents indicated that they strongly disagree when asked if they like engaging with online banner adverts while surfing the internet, while 28% of respondents said they somewhat agree that content on banner adverts is interesting. 33% of respondents indicated that they sometimes click on online banner adverts while surfing the internet, showing a positive relationship with overall engagement with online adverts. 44% of respondents indicated that they do enjoy seeing online adverts, with only 6% agreeing that they enjoy online adverts. Online advertising shows a positive relationship with overall consumer engagement, even though the affective experience of enjoying seeing online adverts is negative.

4.3.2 Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions – results

The set of questions in this section explores cognitive consumer engagement and high involvement products with the following questions:

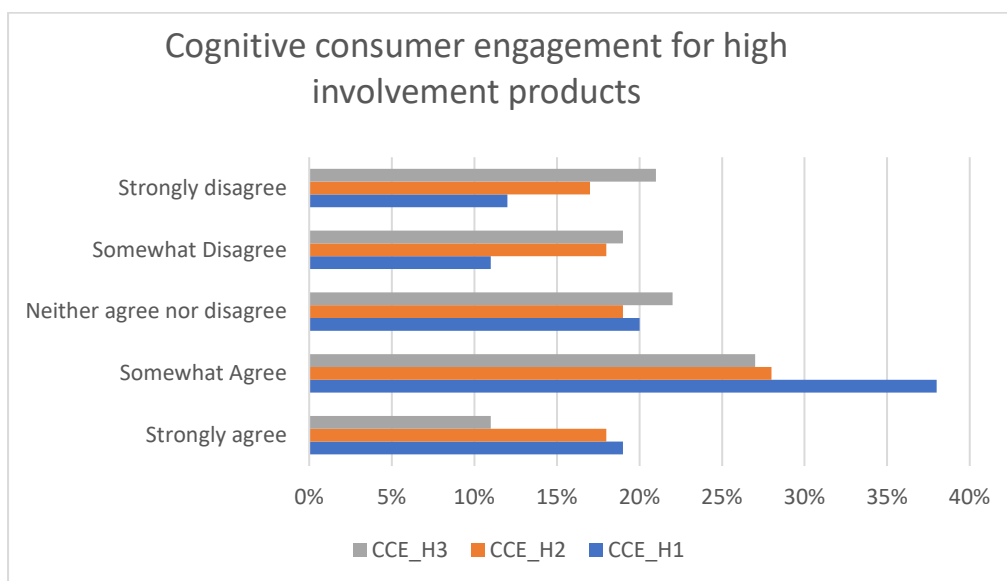
1. **CCE_H1:** Online banner adverts for high involvement products are memorable (easy to remember).

2. **CCE_H2:** Online banner adverts stimulate my interest to learn more about the high involvement product advertised.
3. **CCE_H3:** I think about the high involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
CCE_H1	19%	38%	20%	11%	12%
CCE_H2	18%	28%	19%	18%	17%
CCE_H3	11%	27%	22%	19%	21%

Table 6: Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions

Graph 2 is a visual representation showcasing that a high number of respondents agree that online banner adverts for high involvement product do stimulate their interest to learn more about the product.



Graph 2: Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions

Indicated in table 5, there is a tendency for respondents to lean towards somewhat agree for most of the questions in the measurement scale. 38% of the respondents agree that online banner adverts for high involvement products are memorable, and 28% of the respondents agree that seeing online adverts of high involvement products spikes their interest to learn more about the online advert that's being advertised. 27% indicated that they think about the high

involvement products that they have seen on online banner adverts long after they have seen the advert. 21% of the respondents indicated that they strongly disagree and do not think about high involvement products they have seen online. CCE_H1 and CCE_H2 show a positive response towards cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions, with over 50% of the responses distributed between strongly agree and somewhat agree.

4.3.3 Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions – results

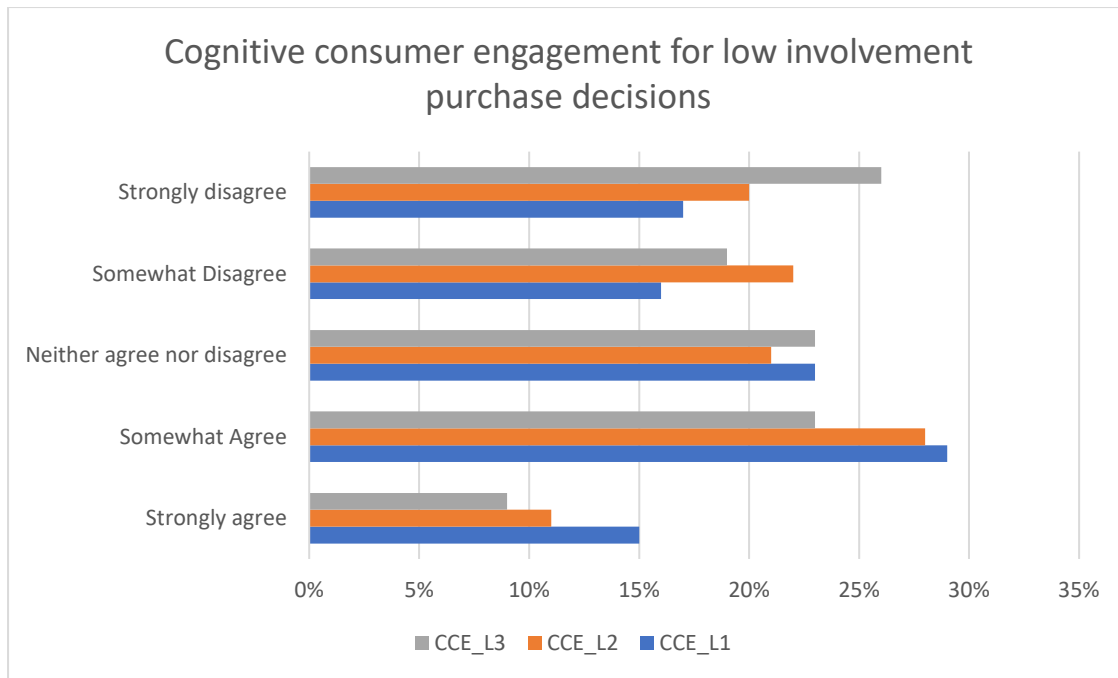
The set of questions in this section explore cognitive consumer engagement and low involvement products with the following questions:

1. **CCE_L1:** Online banner adverts for low involvement products are memorable (easy to remember).
2. **CCE_L2:** Online banner adverts stimulate my interest to learn more about the low involvement product advertised.
3. **CCE_L3:** I think about the low involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
CCE_L1	15%	29%	23%	16%	17%
CCE_L2	11%	28%	21%	22%	20%
CCE_L3	9%	23%	23%	19%	26%

Table 7: Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions

Graph 3 is a visual representation showcasing that a large portion of respondents somewhat agree that online banner adverts for high involvement product are memorable – proving a cognitive response.



Graph 3: Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions- graph

Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products had the same set of questions to assess the difference between low and high involvement cognitive engagement. Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products shows that consumers have a different relationship with low involvement products. 29% of respondents somewhat agree and 15% strongly agree that low advertised products are memorable, while 17% strongly agree and 16% strongly disagree. A larger majority disagree that low involvement online adverts stimulate interest, 22% strongly disagree and 20% somewhat disagree that online adverts for low involvement products stimulate them to learn more about the advertised products. When asked if they think about the online adverts advertising low involvement products after they have seen the advert, 45% disagree (19% somewhat disagree, 26% strongly disagree) and only 32% agree (9% strongly agree, 23% somewhat agree).

4.3.4 Affective consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions – results

The set of questions in this section explore affective engagement and high involvement products with the following questions:

ACE_H1: Affective engagement I feel positive about online banner adverts which promote high involvement products.

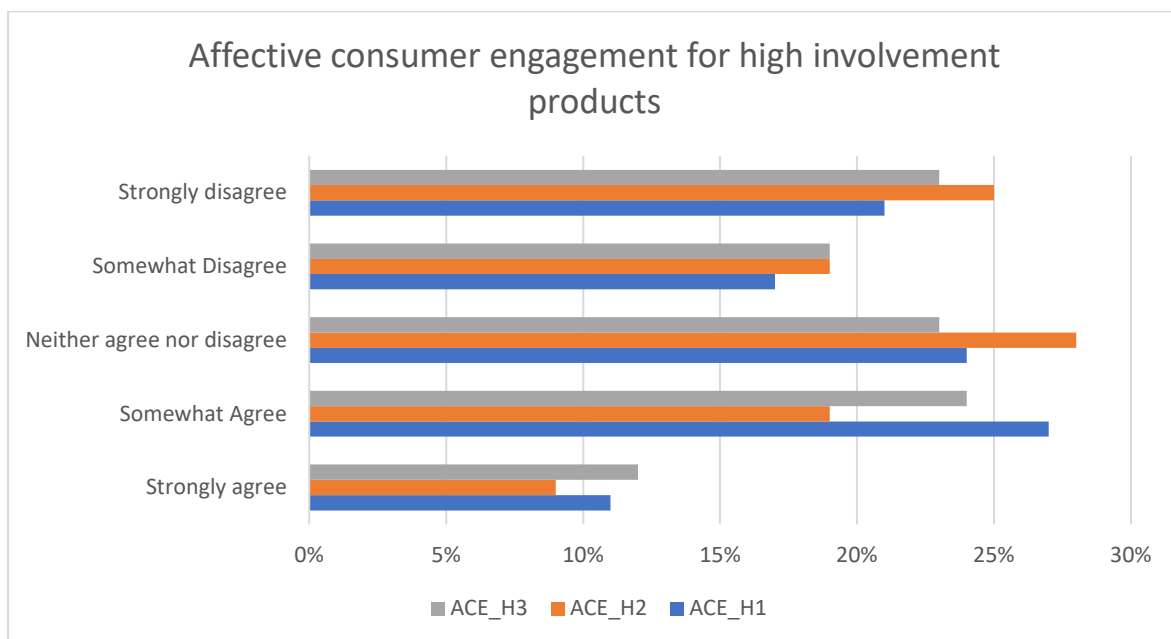
ACE_H2: Seeing banner adverts that promote high involvement products makes me happy.

ACE_H3: I feel good when I encounter an online banner advert promoting a high involvement product.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
ACE_H1	11%	27%	24%	17%	21%
ACE_H2	9%	19%	28%	19%	25%
ACE_H3	12%	24%	23%	19%	23%

Table 8: Affective consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions – table

Graph 4 is a visual representation showcasing that a high number of respondents neither agree nor disagree that seeing online banner adverts for high involvement products makes them happy.



Graph 4: Affective consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions – graph

Affective consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions explored the emotional relationship consumers have with online adverts for high involvement products. 27% of respondents somewhat agreed that they have an overall positive feeling about online adverts that advertise high involvement products while 21% strongly disagreed. When asked if seeing low involvement products makes them happy, a large portion of the respondents disagreed (25% strongly disagree, 19% somewhat agree). When asked if they feel good when they encounter an advertisement, 42% disagreed (19% somewhat agree, 23% disagreed) whereas only 36% agreed (12% strongly agree, 24% agree).

4.3.5 Affective consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions – results

The set of questions in this section explore the relationship between affective engagement and low involvement products with the following questions:

ACE_L1: Affective engagement I feel positive about online banner adverts which promote low involvement products.

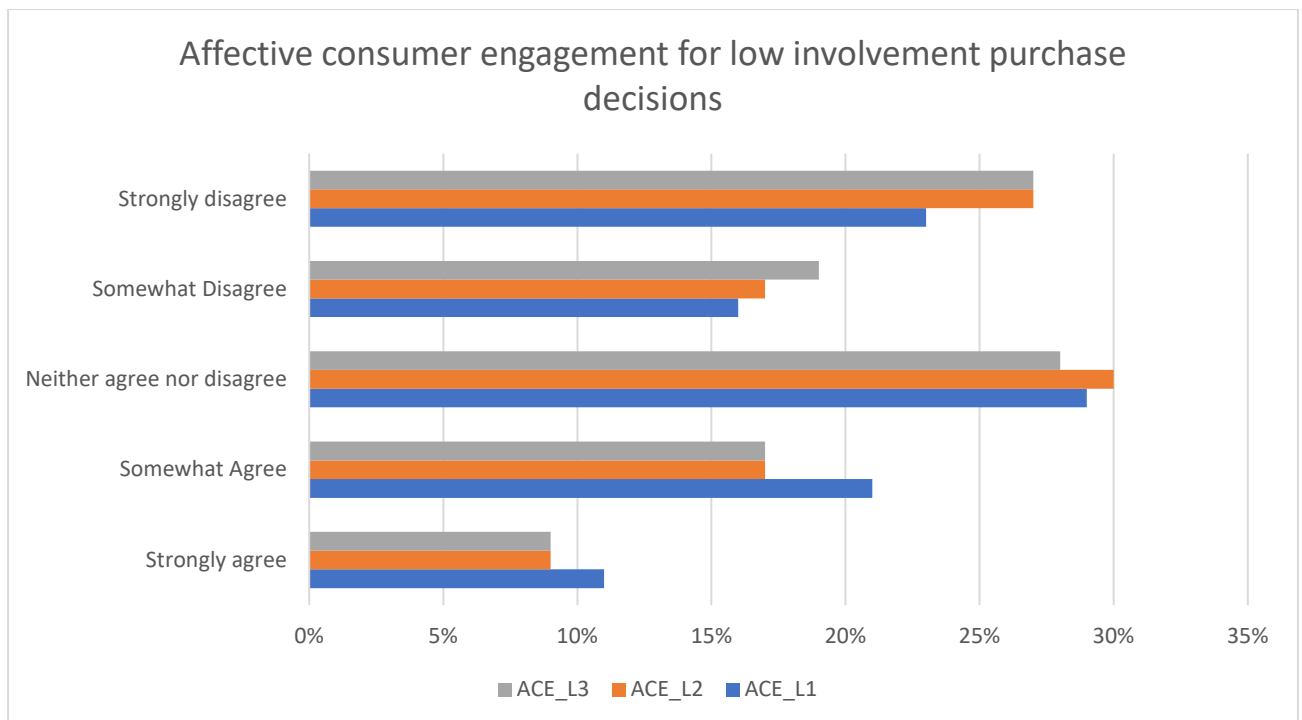
ACE_L2: Seeing banner adverts that promote low involvement products makes me happy.

ACE_L3: I feel good when I encounter an online banner advert promoting a low involvement product.

Table 9: Affective consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
ACE_L1	11%	21%	29%	16%	23%
ACE_L2	9%	17%	30%	17%	27%
ACE_L3	9%	17%	28%	19%	27%

Graph 5 is a visual representation showcasing that a high number of respondents neither agree nor disagree that seeing online banner adverts for low involvement products makes them happy, showing a neutral response to affective response.



Graph 5: Affective consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions

Affective consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions saw more respondents disagree with the statements that they were asked to rate. 39% of respondents disagreed when asked if they feel positive about low involvement products promoted on online banner adverts while 29% remained neutral. 44% of respondents disagreed that banner adverts showing online banner adverts make them feel happy and 30% remained neutral and only 26% agreed that they get happy feelings from low involvement products promoted on online banner adverts. 46% of respondents disagreed that they feel good when they encounter an online banner advert, 28% remained neutral and only 16% agreed that they feel good about online banner adverts that promote low involvement products.

4.3.6 High involvement purchase decisions – results

This section explored consumer relationships with online advertising and high involvement purchase decisions. Consumer's level of involvement plays a crucial role in influencing consumer product selection activities (Liu et al., 2020).

HIP11: I am positive towards buying high involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

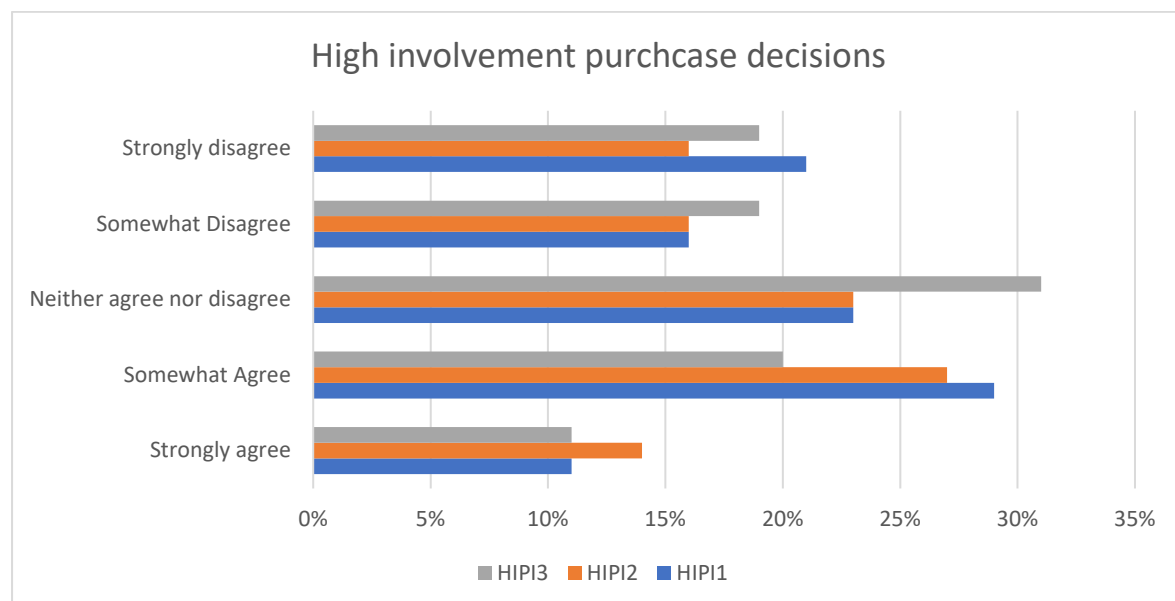
HIPI2: The thought of buying high involvement products I see on online banner adverts is appealing to me.

HIPI3: I think it is a good idea to buy high involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

Table 10: High involvement purchase decisions

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
HIPI1	11%	29%	23%	16%	21%
HIPI2	14%	27%	23%	16%	16%
HIPI3	11%	20%	31%	19%	19%

Graph 6 is a visual representation showcasing that a highest number of respondents neither agree nor disagree that they find the idea of purchasing high involvement products they see on online banner adverts appealing.



Graph 6: High involvement purchase decisions

High involvement purchase decisions are said to have the potential of creating post purchase dissonance if customers are unsure of having multiple similar products to choose from (Kotler, 2015). 40% of the respondents agreed that they are positive about buying high involvement products online and 37% disagreed. 41% of respondents said purchasing high involvement

products they have seen online is appealing and 32% disagreed that this would be appealing. Interestingly, when respondents were asked if they think it is a good idea to buy high involvement products online, 31% agreed and 38% disagreed.

4.3.7 Low involvement purchase decisions – results

Low involvement purchase decisions are more routine-based and are quicker purchases when compared with high involvement purchases. Jain (2019) mentions 2 main characteristics of low involvement purchase decisions, firstly, they are relatively inexpensive and are low risk.

LIPI1: I am positive towards buying low involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

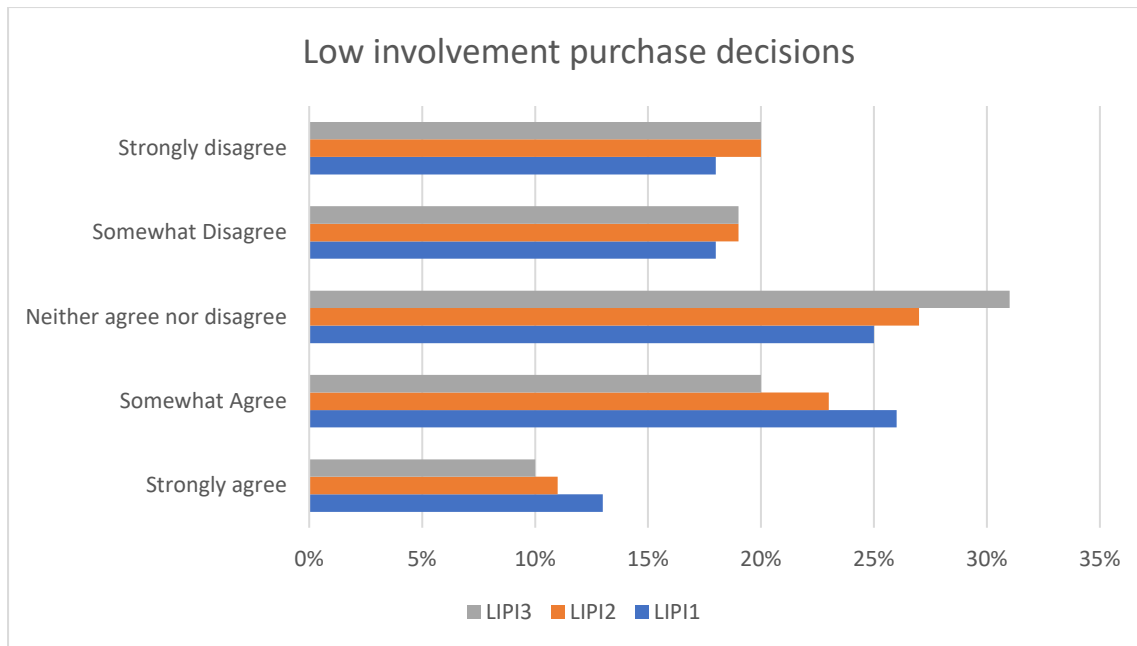
LIPI2: The thought of buying low involvement product I see on online banner advert is appealing to me.

LIPI3: I think it is a good idea to buy low involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly disagree
LIPI1	13%	26%	25%	18%	18%
LIPI2	11%	23%	27%	19%	20%
LIPI3	10%	20%	31%	19%	20%

Table 11: Low involvement purchase decisions

Graph 7 is a visual representation showcasing that a high number of respondents neither agree nor disagree that they find the idea of purchasing low involvement products they see on online banner adverts appealing.



Graph 7: Low involvement purchase decisions

36% of respondents indicated that they are not positive about buying low involvement products online, 36% disagreed and 39% agreed that they are positive about purchasing low involvement products online. 34% of respondents indicated that the thought of purchasing low involvement products from online banner adverts is appealing, while 39% disagreed. Interestingly, the final question asking if it is a good idea to purchase low involvement products from online adverts, 39% of respondents disagreed and only 30% agreed,

4.4 Testing reliability and validity

Testing the validity of the study entails measuring the validity of the scale, validity measures the behaviour or quality of the scale and items that are measured, to fully test measurement of the instrument. Validity and reliability are important to measure, for measurable instruments, if a study is conducted and does not have reliability and/or validity, the study will not yield beneficial results. (Sürücü and Maslakci, 2020).

Validity and reliability may be closely related, but they express different properties of the measuring instrument, Sürücü and Maslakci (2020) mention that an instrument can be reliable without being valid and if it is valid then it is highly likely that it is reliable.

For this study, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the reliability and validity of the model. Sürücü and Maslakci (2020) indicate that CFA is one of two most popularly used analysis techniques. CFA is valuable to test the accuracy of a previously validated scale or model. To test reliability of the scale, Cronbach Alpha (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) calculations were conducted.

4.4.1 Cronbach Alpha

Calculating the Cronbach alpha test's internal reliability (Al Hamid et al., 2017). Reliability levels of between 0.70 to more than 0.90 are considered good, any result below 0.70 is considered questionable, poor, and unacceptable for a study to be considered reliable. All the variables for this study achieved 0.850 and above, which translates as an excellent reliability level. Thus, it has been established that the questions in each variable showed a high internal consistency. Displayed in table 12, the following is confirmed; Online advertising had a Cronbach alpha of 0.939, Cognitive consumer engagement for low high involvement products had a Cronbach alpha of 0.876, Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products has a Cronbach alpha of 0.911, affective consumer engagement for high involvement products has a Cronbach alpha of 0.914, affective consumer engagement for low involvement products has a Cronbach alpha of 0.944, high involvement purchase decisions has a Cronbach alpha of 0.941 and low involvement purchase decisions has a Cronbach alpha of 0.939.

When the table is examined, the AVE value is greater than the lower threshold value of 0.5 (AVE = 0.512), and the CR value (CR = 0.903) is greater than the AVE value. Findings show that the scale has convergent validity. Also, the fact that the CR value is greater than the lower threshold of 0.7 indicates that the scale is reliable. To ensure convergent validity, AVE values must be less than the Composite reliability and AVE must be greater than 0.5.

Table 12: Cronbach Alpha

Research Construct		Descriptive Statistics			Cronbach's Test		C.R. Value	AVE Value	Factor Loading
		Mean Value		Standard Deviation	Item - total	α value			
OA	OA1	3,530	3,433	1,318	0,826		0,939	0,815	0,884
	OA2	3,210		1,327	0,820				0,875
	OA3	3,190		1,419	0,709				0,750
	OA4	3,800		1,296	0,781				0,849
CCE_H	CCE_H1	2,580	2,857	1,241	0,848		0,876	0,838	0,791
	CCE_H2	2,870		1,355	0,798				0,879
	CCE_H3	3,120		1,314	0,823				0,843
CCE_L	CCE_L1	2,910	3,120	1,311	0,897		0,912	0,866	0,826
	CCE_L2	3,140		1,295	0,839				0,922
	CCE_L3	3,310		1,310	0,879				0,891
ACE_H	ACE_H1	3,090	3,203	1,313	0,935		0,943	0,913	0,904
	ACE_H2	3,330		1,287	0,890				0,939
	ACE_H3	3,190		1,341	0,917				0,916
ACE_L	ACE_L1	3,190	3,317	1,302	0,948		0,944	0,915	0,877
	ACE_L2	3,370		1,271	0,878				0,954
	ACE_L3	3,390		1,278	0,911				0,932
HIPI	HIPI1	3,080	3,100	1,314	0,905		0,942	0,912	0,935
	HIPI2	3,050		1,339	0,896				0,944
	HIPI3	3,170		1,257	0,939				0,877
LIPI	LIPI1	3,030	3,130	1,294	0,911		0,940	0,908	0,921
	LIPI2	3,160		1,282	0,888				0,949
	LIPI3	3,200		1,249	0,933				0,876

4.4.2 Composite reliability

Composite reliability (CR) is a reliability test to measure internal consistency. A strong reliability outcome includes any measure above 0.70 (Netemeyer, 2003). For this study, all measured variables have an acceptable CR above 0.7, illustrated in table 14.

The formula for composite reliability is (Raykov, 1997):

$$CR = \frac{(\sum \lambda_i)^2}{(\sum \lambda_i)^2 + (\sum \epsilon_i)}$$

Equation 1: Composite reliability formula (Raykov, 1997):

Indicator variables on the latent variable need to have a shared variable to achieve an acceptable CR. *Online advertising* has 4 indicators with a CR value = 0.939, *cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products* has 3 indicators with a CR value = 0.876, *cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products* has 3 indicators with a CR value = 0.912, *affective consumer engagement for high involvement products* has 3 indicators with a CR value = 0.943, *affective consumer engagement for high involvement products* has 3 indicators with a CR value = 0.944, *high involvement purchase decisions* has 3 indicators with a CR value = 0.942 and *low involvement purchase decisions* has 3 indicators with a CR value = 0.940.

4.5 Construct Validity measures

Construct validity is a test conducted to check how the variables accurately measure what has been indicated to support the purpose or theory of the study (Middleton, 2023). There are two main construct validity measures, namely convergent and discriminant.

Convergent validity – this validity measure shows how close the variable are the construct items to that latent variable – it is between item variables.

Discriminant variable – this validity measure shows how far they are from the other latent variables. The average value extracted must be above 0.5.

4.5.1 Convergent validity

Convergent variables are variables that indicate how strongly they relate to the latent variable, in convergent validity tests, Nikolopoulou (2023) explains that measurement outcomes should prove that the items being examined are in fact intricately linked, for a positive validity result and a factor loading above 0.5 is essential.

For the current study, the items loaded range between 0.750 to 0.959, see table 12 where all factor loadings for each item on each scale have been details, which is considered sufficient to suggest a convergent validity (Nikolopoulou, 2023).

4.5.2 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity assesses if the correlation between research constructs is less than 1. Discriminant validity ensures that the measures of the constructs do not measure other related variables (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The degree of correlation is measured using Pearson's r and the rule states that the correlation coefficient will always range between 1 and -1. Indicated below is a summary of the Pearson correlation (Byrne, 1994)

$r = 1$: indicated a positive correlation

$r = 0$: indicate no correlation at all

$r = -1$ indicates a perfect negative correlation

Table 13 shows correlation calculations between the latent variables. Study indicates the relationship between the paired latent variables as greater than 0.5, an indication of a strong positive relationship. Confirming the existence of discriminant validity.

Table 13: Correlation matrix

	OA	CCE_H	ACE_H	CCE_L	ACE_L	HIPI	LIPI
OA	1						
CCE_H	.690**	1					
ACE_H	.767**	.823**	1				
CCE_L	.625**	.591**	.600**	1			
ACE_L	.650**	.637**	.691**	.824**	1		
HIPI	.695**	.758**	.806**	.540**	.634**	1	
LIPI	.602**	.550**	.580**	.777**	.793**	.608**	1

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

4.5.3 Highest shared value

Discriminant validity is confirmed when the AVE value is greater than the highest shared value (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table 14 shows that the highest shared value is greater than the AVE, the items highlighted in bold indicate the highest correlation shared by two variables.

Hamid et al., (2017) say latent constructs should explain the variance of its own indicator and that the square root of each construct's AVE should have a greater value than the correlations with other latent constructs. In table 14, the constructs highlighted in bold are:

- 5 Online advertising and affective consumer engagement for high involvement products, with a correlation of 0.767.
- 6 Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products and affective consumer engagement for high involvement products with a correlation of 0.823.
- 7 Affective consumer engagement for high involvement products and high involvement purchase decisions, with a correlation value of 0.806.
- 8 Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products with a correlation value of 0.824.
- 9 Low involvement purchase decisions and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products, with a correlation value of 0.793.

Table 13: Highest shared value

	OA	CCE_H	ACE_H	CCE_L	ACE_L	HIPI	LIPI
OA	1	.690	.767	.625	.650	.695	.602
CCE_H	.690	1	.823	.591	.637	.758	.550
ACE_H	.767	.823	1	.600	.691	.806	.580
CCE_L	.625	.591	.600	1	.824	.540	.777
ACE_L	.650	.637	.691	.824	1	.634	.793
HIPI	.695	.758	.806	.540	.634	1	.608
LIPI	.602	.550	.580	.777	.793	.608	1

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

4.6 Model fit assessment

A model fit assessment is conducted to assess if the designed model fits the data sufficiently. Marcoulides, Foldnes, and Grønneberg, (2020) say it is important to assess the fitness of a proposed model in structural equation modeling (SEM). Results for the model fit assessment are below.

Model Fit Index	Acceptable Threshold	Results	Accepted/not accepted
CMIN/DF	<3	2,024	Accepted
GFI	>0,900	0,900	Accepted
NFI	>0,900	0,950	Accepted
RFI	>0,900	0,938	Accepted
IFI	>0,900	0,974	Accepted
TLI	>0,900	0,968	Accepted
CFI	>0,900	0,974	Accepted
RMSEA	<0,080	0,058	Accepted

a. Chi-squared/Degrees of Freedom (CMIN/DF)

Chi-squared assessment checks for overall fit and discrepancy between the sample and covariance metrics and should not exceed 3 (Byrne, 1994). The chi-squared result for this study is 2,024, which indicates an acceptable level.

b. Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)

The *Goodness of fit* index shows how well the sample size fits the distribution within the population, it measures how the actual data in the population would be represented (Byrne, 1994). An acceptable GFI should match or exceed 0.900, this study recorded a GFI of 0.900.

c. Normed Fit Index (NFI)

NFI is a *Normed Fit Index* is an incremental index of goodness of fit (Ulman, 1996). An acceptable NFI should match or be greater than 0.900. This study recorded a NFI of 0.950, indicating a good fit.

d. Relative Fit Index (RFI)

The *Relative Fit Index* is indicated by an index close to 1. This study recorded an RFI of 0.938, which is close to 1, indicating a good fit.

e. Incremental Fit Index (IFI)

Incremental fit index adjusts the NFI for sample size and degrees of freedom (Byrne, 1994). An index above 0.90 indicates a good fit. This study recorded 0.974, indicating a good fit.

f. Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)

A Tucker Lewis Index is similar to the NFI (Byrne, 1994), but works better for smaller samples. The index should not exceed 1 and an index above 0.900 is considered a good fit. This study recorded a TLI of 0.968, indicating a good fit.

g. Comparative Fit Index (CFI)

Originated by Bentler in 1990, a CFI indexes the goodness of fit of the hypothesized model when compared to the baseline model. A comparative fit index that is equal to or above 0.9 indicated a good fit. For this study, the CFI is 0.974, which is an indication of a good fit.

h. Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA)

A RMSEA under 0.08 is considered a good fit. The RMSEA for this study is 0.058, which is an indication of a good fit.

Standardized estimate

Standardized estimated for this study were calculated on AMOS, a statistical software, factor loading values shows the correlation between the items on a scale and the factors. A factor loading of more than 0.30 shows a moderate correlation, 0.40 is considered acceptable and 0.2 or lower is considered poor. Standardized estimates are also called regression coefficients.

4.7 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Figure 20 illustrates the CFA model, a confirmatory factor analysis is considered as an important analysis tool especially in social and behavioral sciences (Mueller and Hancock, 2001). It is part of structural equation modeling, which forms the core of the analysis design

for this study. The CFA investigates casual relationships among latent and observed variables. The CFA diagram below was created to test theory. The bigger ovals represent the latent variable, and the square represents the observed variable, and the smaller ovals are error terms and intercepts. The bidirectional arrows show a causal link between latent variables.

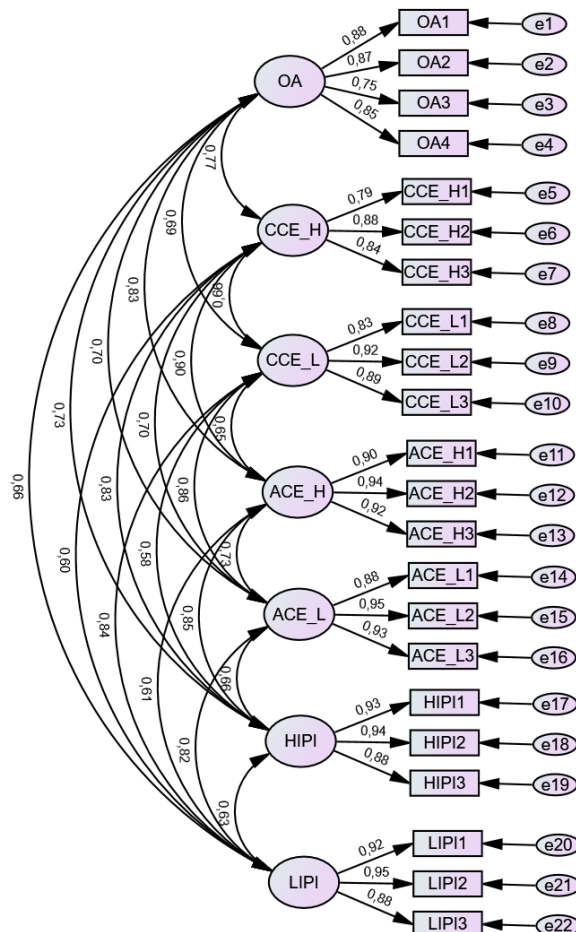


Figure 20: CFA model

4.8 Path analysis

The path analysis was conducted to graphically test any direct or indirect relationships between online advertising (OA), cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement (CCE_L), cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement (CCE_H), Affective consumer engagement for low involvement (ACE_L), Affective consumer engagement for high

involvement (ACE_H), High involvement purchase decisions (HIPI), Low Involvement Purchase Decisions (LIPI).

For effective testing of the model and variables, the path model diagram had to be adapted from the hypothesis diagram for accurate measurement. Cognitive dimension for low involvement products and cognitive dimension for high involvement were measured as separate latent variables for the benefit of analyzing the results against high and low purchase decisions. Affective dimension for low involvement products and affective dimension for high involvement were measured as separate latent variables for the benefit on analyzing the results against high and low purchase decisions. Figure 21 is the hypothesis diagram formally introduced in Chapter 2 and Figure 22 is an adaptation of the hypothesis diagram for accurate measurement of the latent variables.

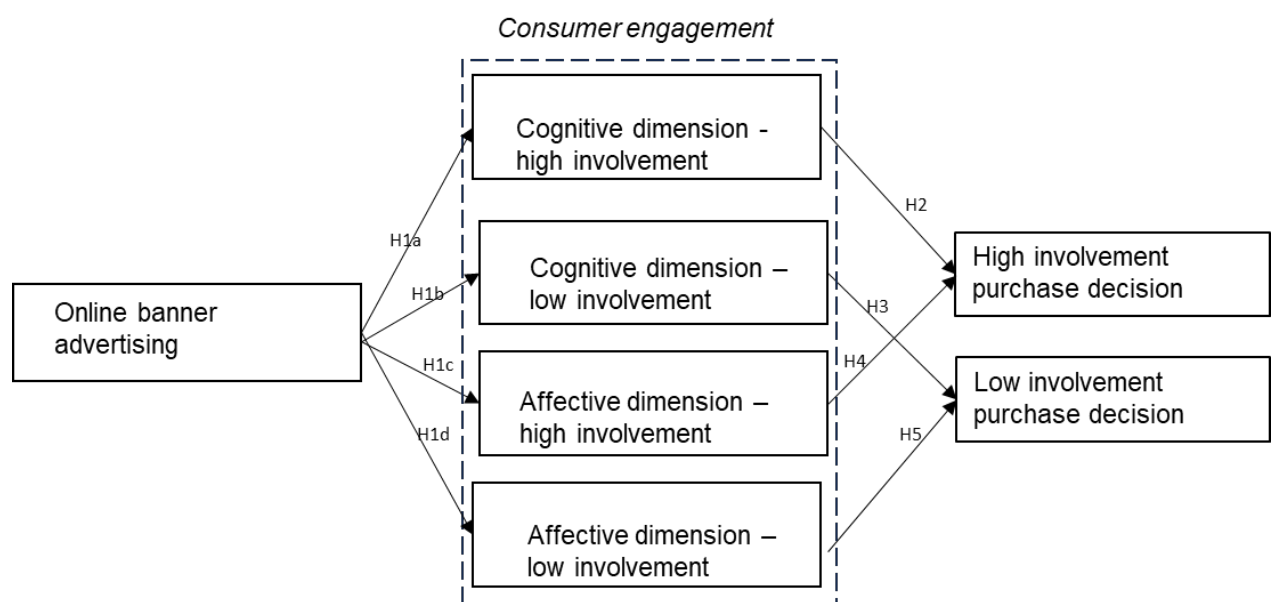


Figure 21: hypothesis diagram

The path model diagram in figure 22 shows the causal relationship between the variables of interest for this study. A path model deals with mainly observed variables. Mernard (2010) identifies the various benefits of running a path analysis; Firstly, path analysis shows a graphical example of the variables that are tested and provides a statistical summary. Secondly, it gives the researcher an opportunity to see the impact of a predictor and other relationships

that are indirect or spurious. Thirdly, the researcher can briefly see which relationships are stronger, and which are weaker.

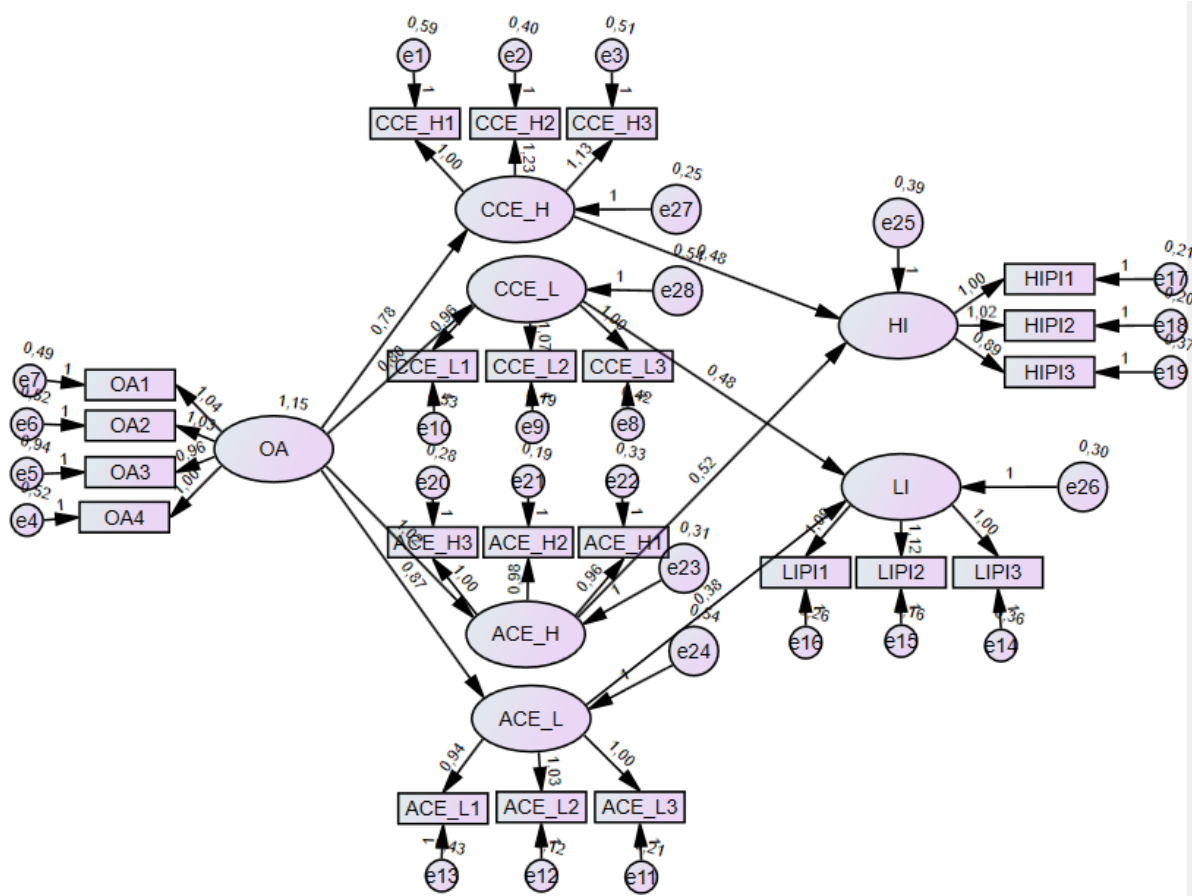


Figure 22: Path diagram

An analysis of the path coefficient was conducted on AMOS. Results for the hypothesis test are presented in table 14. All tested relationships indicated a significant relationship and support the hypothesis. The path coefficient ranges between -1 and 1, a strong positive relationship is observed when a path coefficient value is closer to 1 and a negative relationship is observed when a coefficient is closer to -1.

4.9 Hypothesis results

Table 14: Hypothesis result

PATH COEFFICIENT	HYPOTHESIS	ESTIMATE	P-value	RESULT
Online advertising → cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products	H1a	0.859	***	Significant and supported
Online advertising → cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products	H1b	0.760	***	Significant and supported
Online advertising → affective consumer engagement for high involvement products	H1c	0.786	***	Significant and supported
Online advertising → affective consumer engagement for low involvement products	H1d	0.890	***	Significant and supported
Cognitive consumer engagement → high involvement purchase decisions	H2	0.385	***	Significant and supported
Cognitive consumer engagement → low involvement purchase decisions	H3	0.429	***	Significant and supported
Affective consumer engagement → high involvement purchase decisions	H4	0.528	***	Significant and supported
Affective consumer engagement → low involvement purchase decisions	H5	0.523	***	Significant and supported

H1a: Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.

The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products with a path coefficient value of $P=0.859$.

H1b: Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products.

The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products with a path coefficient value of 0.760.

H1c: Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for high involvement products.

The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between online advertising and affective consumer engagement for involvement products with a path coefficient value of 0.786.

H1d: Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for low involvement products.

The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between online advertising and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products with a path coefficient value of 0.890.

H2: Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

The results indicate a positive and moderate relationship between cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products and high involvement purchase decisions with a path coefficient value of 0.385.

H3: Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products has a negative relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products and low involvement purchase decisions with a path coefficient value of 0.523.

H4: Affective consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between affective consumer engagement for high involvement products and high involvement purchase decisions with a path coefficient value 0.528.

H5: Affective consumer engagement for low involvement products has a positive relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

The results indicate a positive and moderate relationship between Affective consumer engagement for low involvement products and low involvement purchase decisions with a path coefficient value of 0.429.

4.10 Conclusion of chapter 4

This chapter detailed responses from 305 total participants, the descriptive analysis broke down the respondent profiles, namely, age, gender, and education level. This study also indicated the education level of respondent profiles. Validity and reliability tests were conducted to test the validity and reliability of the study, which all returned results proving reliability and validity of the study. Hypothesis results were also shared per construct.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will cover the discussion of the research results. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between online advertising, consumer engagement and high and low involvement purchase decisions. In chapter 1, the study clarified the research questions, research background, and problem statement. In chapter 2, literature relating to online advertising, consumer engagement and high and low involvement purchase decisions were explored and rationale for hypothesis development was clarified, chapter 4 provided full analytical data, respondent profiles and well and reliability and validity testing results. This chapter will share dissect research results from chapter 4.

5.2 Demographic profile of respondents

This study investigates online user behaviour, by looking at online advertising, consumer engagement and high and low purchase decisions in relation to online behaviour. As such, demographic profiles had to capture firstly, age; multiple researchers have seen research confirmation that younger people record more as early adopters of technology and overall online usage (Faverio, 2023). Secondly gender: in a study by Goodrich (2014) it is shared that women have a lower attention thresholds and little attention is required to trigger elaboration in females whereas males when compared to men, therefore understanding gender in responses is imperative in this study which references the elaboration likelihood model as a contributing theoretical perspective of the study. Lastly, education level can influence digital adoption and internet trust (Ahlluwalia and Singh, 2023). The above demographic results have the potential to influence online user behaviour

5.2.1 Demographics profile

Table 15: Demographics overview

Gender	Count
Male	115
Female	186
Non-binary	2
Rather not say	0
	305
Age	Count
18-25	39
26-35	130
36-45	86
46-55	32
55+	18
Total	305
Education level	Count
Matric	66
Diploma	83
Bachelor's degree	77
Post graduate degree	79
Total	305

5.2.1 Gender

In a study by Goodrich (2014) studying brain processing differences in sexes and how they shape attitudes about online advertising, males showed the most favourable attitudes in low attention scenarios while females showed a more favourable attitude in high attention scenarios. This proves that gender does impact outcomes on online advertising, with this understanding, data on gender differences had to be recorded. In this study, 2 additional options were added, namely, non-binary and prefer-not-to-say. Only 1% of respondents recorded they

identify as non-binary which does not steer the study in preference of gender outside of male and female categories. 61% of respondents were male and 38% were female.

Female respondents covering 61% of all respondents was much higher than male respondents at 38%, according to Statistics South Africa (2022), the country has more females than males, as of 2022, 51.5% of the population were recorded as female and 48.5% male. The sampling technique of the study reached more female than male respondents, especially since the researcher is female and used personal online platforms to reach the relevant target audience.

5.2.2 Age

Previous research has been conducted to investigate online usage and age (Ahluwalia and Singh, 2023); age has been found to have a significant effect on consumer attitude towards online advertising. This study's focus is to uncover aspects of online usage tendencies, it is therefore important to determine age for accurate analysis. According to Statista (2023), females between the ages of 16 and 24 years are the demographic group recorded to spend the most time online, male users from the same age group also spent a lot more time online, both recording an average of 7 hours daily.

In Chapter 3, Figure 14, a pie chart from Statista (2023) specified the age distribution of internet users online and indicated that the age group with the highest percentage for online usage was the age group 25-34 at 33.8%, followed by age group 18-24 with 22.8%, then 35-44 with 18.6% and age group 45-54 at 11.9%, with age group 55+ coming last recording 12.8% (Statista, 2023).

In this study, the age group with the highest response rate, is age group 26-35 with 43% of all responses coming from that age group. This mirrors the global internet usage average indicating that age group 25-34 has the highest online usage patterns. Age group 36-45 was recorded as the second biggest response group, and this was influenced mainly by the researcher's access to the age group. Personal online channels were used to distribute the questionnaire using Snowball method. Age group 36-45 is recorded as the 3rd biggest age group when it comes to online usage adoption (Statista, 2023). The age group 18-25 covered 16% of all responses and the last two are ages 46-55 with 10% and 55+ covering 6% of all responses. The responses largely mirror the global internet usage distribution recorded by Statista, except for age group 36-45 being second in this study, versus third in global rankings and age 18-25

being third versus second in this study. This is due to the sampling technique used to collect data for this study.

5.2.3 Education level

It was important to determine education level for this study, Ahlluwalia and Singh (2023). Cites a study by Dutta-Bergman (2006) that indicated that less educated people trusted the internet more than educated people. In South Africa, matric is baseline education represented as NQF 5, diploma is on a different scale and is represented as NQF6 a degree is NQF7 and post-graduate degrees range between NQF 8 and 10, the higher the NQF level, the more educated a person is. According to Ahlluwalia and Singh (2023), individuals who are more educated have a more negative relationship with advertising. In this study, there was a fair level of educated respondents ranging from NQF5 to NQF 8,9,10.

In this study, there was a relatively equal number of respondents from the categories available for selection; diploma with 27% of all respondents, post graduate degree being the second highest with 26% of respondents, bachelor's degree with 25% of all respondents and matric, which indicated the lowest education level out of the available selections with 22% of all respondents. Education level leaves space for the researcher to assume none of the questions that were posed to the respondents were misunderstood.

5.2.4 Amount of time spent on this internet.

The study focused on online advertising, which can only be seen or interacted with if a respondent spends time on the internet. The platforms where the questionnaire was shared were all strictly online to ensure relevance and to target the correct audience. With the highest age group responses coming from age group 26-35, the expected amount of time spent daily on the internet was over 5 hours. The study results show that 37% of respondents indicated that they spend over 5 hours a day on the internet, which was expected when linked with the global age group most familiar with internet usage in Figure 14. 26% of respondents recorded that they only spend between 2 and 3 hours a day, 24% said they spend between 3 and 4 hours a day with the minority, 11% indicating to spending less than an hour on the internet daily.

As indicated, most of the respondents spend a lot of time on the internet. With high daily internet usage, the probability of a respondent seeing an online advert increases, therefore, it

was important to determine the amount of time respondents spend daily on the internet. LinkedIn (2023) recorded that because of the rise in internet usage, online advertising has also increased, and this allows businesses the opportunity to increase their brand visibility and the reason more brand prefer online advertising over traditional forms of advertising.

5.3 Discussion and interpretation on findings

The fundamental research problem in this study is to determine the relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement in low and high involvement decisions. In chapter 4, the results indicated that all relationships that were explored were supported and significant. In the hypothesis development, literature support was used to assume that out of the 6-hypothesis developed, cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions would be negative because of the little cognitive effort that goes into purchase low involvement decisions.

Online advertising and consumer engagement (OA – CE)

The study set out to understand the relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement as a first step. The assumption was as follows; online advertising has a positive relationship with consumer engagement as already researched by multiple scholars (Reitz, 2012), this assumption included both cognitive and affective dimensions as well as low/high involvement products. Contributing background to this assumption include, firstly, the projected increase in online advertising spends, this indicate that marketers find value in advertising online and secondly, the internet has been recorded as the latest and most contemporary media for communication, which is why it has seen such astronomical growth (Ahluwalia and Singh, 2023). Ahmed (2019) highlights that consumers respond to visual depictions of products and that visually appealing images create positive emotions, with more people spending time online, engagement online should also increase. 4 sub-hypotheses were developed to accurately measure the relationships in an intricate manner relating to cognitive and affective dimensions of consumer engagement for high and low involvement products and to add the body of knowledge of engagement dimension in low and high involvement product scenarios. The following hypothesis was developed.

H1a. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.

H1b. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products.

H1c. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for high involvement products.

H1d. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for low involvement products.

Online banner advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products

Hypothesis proposed: H1a. Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.

The relationship between online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products was positive with a path coefficient of 0.859. Cognitive engagement is concerned with consumer behaviour, viewing consumers as rational thinkers looking for maximum utilization (Kuvykaite and Tarute, 2015), Consumers perception of online advertising requires cognitive practice (Ahluwalia and Singh, 2023). In one study, researchers found that evaluating cognitive availability improved the attitude towards online adverts (Wang 2006). To determine the relationship between the 2 constructs, respondents had to indicate whether they enjoy seeing online banner adverts when they are online, whether they find the content interesting and if they like seeing online banner content when they are surfing the internet. This suggests that when respondents are online, they have a positive cognitive relationship with high involvement products that are advertised on online platforms.

In another study by Ahmed (2019) researching consumer online motivations and how consumer attitudes mediate online purchase intention from social media adverts, the utilitarian motive had the biggest influence, encouraging product-thinking which improves the cognitive engagement process. Online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement has a

significantly positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products.

Online banner advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products

Hypothesis proposed: H1b: Online banner advertising has a positive relationship with cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products.

The process of determining the relationship between online advertising and cognitive engagement for low involvement products was like that of online advertising and cognitive engagement for high involvement products. Respondents had to indicate their level of cognitive engagement when low involvement products are advertised on online banner adverts. The relationship was recorded as positive and significant with a path coefficient 0.760.

While this relationship is also statistically significant, it scores lower than the relationship between online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products. The following assumptions can be made, respondents have a better cognitive engagement rate to online banner adverts with high involvement products, low involvement requires less thinking and more ‘doing’ and the general images for low involvement products serve as reminders to habitual purchases rather than demonstrative in high involvement purchases (Haley and Pittman, 2022). Consumer engagement for low involvement products also has a positive relationship with online advertising and this is strengthened by the previous research, in a study by Yoo et al, (2006) images were said to improve the look of the adverts and can persuade a consumer, irrespective of involvement level. Taylor et al. (2008) discovered that pictures make an advert more appealing. The FCB model (Vaughn, 1980) educates that low involvement online advertising should use colour and images to increase recall. This means online banner adverts can be used to advertise low involvement products by following a design element relevant to the involvement level required. ‘Content is king’ is a common term used to explain the phenomena of good content and how good content can be “engaging”. Online banner advert attractiveness can influence a positive relationship irrespective of involvement level.

Online banner advertising and affective consumer engagement for high involvement products

Hypothesis proposed: H1c: Online advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for high involvement products.

Online banner advertising has to do with displaying an advert to a targeted audience, that is accompanied by an image. Affective engagement involves emotions, feelings, and mood (Coetzee and Pourfakhimi, 2020). In this study, affective consumer engagement for high involvement product showed a very positive and significant relationship with online advertising with $P=0.000$.

In previous research affective engagement has shown a better response rate to general advertising (Coetzee and Pourfakhimi, 2020). Affective engagement related with attachment to specific products, for example, if a consumer sees a television by a brand with family traditions, the propensity to engage increases. This result indicates that online adverts with high involvement products need cognitive engagement, online adverts can have successful results with affective engagement of high involvement products. Consumers make decisions on high involvement products based on feeling. Haley and Pittman (2022) cite situational thinking as a missing gap in literature that explores high and low involvement thinking and decision-making. This means advertising responses in both high and low involvement product scenarios can be determined by the individual's situation at the time of surfing the internet.

Online banner advertising and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products

Hypothesis proposed: H1d: Online advertising has a positive relationship with affective consumer engagement for low involvement products.

Results for online advertising and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products indicates a positive relationship with a coefficient of 0.786. The positive relationship between online advertising and affective consumer engagement shows that there are

unique mental processes based on the consumer's experience (Haley and Pittman (2022)). The FCB grid by Vaughn (1980), chapter 2 image 7, posits that affective responses in low involvement situations include products that cater to self-satisfaction mainly, items such as alcohol and sweets fall into that category. Adverts for low involvement products calling for affective engagement mainly call for attention, which indicated a use of cleverly crafted content and tone, short and concise messages improve banner advertising effectiveness (Baltas, 2003). Online banner adverts for low involvement products benefit from affective engagement because of the ease in which consumers consume the adverts.

Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products and high involvement purchase decisions

Hypothesis proposed H2. Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

This study proposed that there is a positive relationship between cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products and high involvement purchase decisions. The results indicate that this is true with a path coefficient of 0.385. There's abundant research available that indicates that high involvement products require a rational component (Asadollahi, 2011).

Researchers such as Reitz (2012), Kunz et al., (2017) describe the cognitive dimension as the initial phase in advertising processing, in this phase, consumers are aware of the products, they are interested in finding out more about the product; information search and are in the process of building their knowledge, which on its own indicates a high cognitive investment.

The FCB grid indicates that high involvement decision-making takes on a more informative approach, there is an intentional effort to show specific information and demonstration, high involvement may require thinking and extensive decision-making and comparison (Haley and Pittman, 2022). This relationship is significant and supported. Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

Cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products and low involvement purchase decisions

Proposed H3. Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products has a negative relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

The study proposed that cognitive consumer engagement has a negative relationship with low involvement purchase decisions. This hypothesis was proposed because of the routine nature relating to low involvement purchases are made. The assumption proposed by the study was the less cognitive effort required to make the decisions, the less effective cognitive engagement will be for low involvement purchase decisions.

The study did, however, show a positive and significant relationship between cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products and low involvement purchase decisions with a coefficient of 0.385. A research study refers, to explain the positive relationship between CCE_L and LIPI, Vaughn (1980) notes that low involvement cognitive purchases are most effective for small space ads like banner advertising because these types of ads normally serve as a reminder to the customer. Therefore, the final hypothesis result is that cognitive engagement for high involvement products does in fact have a positive relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

Affective consumer engagement for high involvement products and high involvement purchase decisions

Proposed hypothesis: H4 Affective consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

The study proposed that affective consumer engagement for high involvement products has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions. The result of the hypothesis test indicates that the relationship is significant and supported. Haley and Pittman (2022) state that not all highly involving purchase decisions are motivated predominantly by rational components, individuals can be driven by emotion or feeling while making a highly involving decision.

Studies by Akter and Sultana (2021) that explain that online advertising can trigger every stage of the decision-making process for high involvement purchase decision but does not make distinction on the role of affective engagement. Studies on affective consumer engagement for different involvement levels is not advanced. Therefore, the final hypothesis result is that affective consumer engagement for high involvement products does has a positive relationship with high involvement purchase decisions.

Affective consumer engagement for low involvement products and low involvement purchase decisions

H5. Affective consumer engagement for low involvement products has a positive relationship with low involvement purchase decisions.

The results from the study indicate a significant and supported relationship between both constructs with a path coefficient of 0.

Affective consumer engagement is indicated by enthusiasm and enjoyment, in the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate if they have an overall positive attitude towards purchasing low involvement products online, if they find the idea of purchasing low involvement products online appealing and if they associate purchasing of low involvement products a good decision, the results indicate a positive response with the affective engagement for low involvement purchase decisions. Nizam and Jafaar (2018) explored the effectiveness of online advertising, without reference to involvement context, and the study shows ad recall, overall attitude towards adverts and clicks strongly influenced purchase decisions. Research on affective consumer engagement and purchase decisions is limited. In other studies, by Geuens et al., (2011) emotional advertisements were found to be more effective for low involvement and hedonic items, than for high involvement or utilitarian products.

Vineran and Opreana (2021) studies the effects of affective dimension of consumer engagement in social media interactions for mainly brand loyalty, the emotional component was recorded as the third strongest dimension, affirming emotional attachment, interest, pleasure, and fun as having a strong attachment to consumer behaviour. Not a lot of authors have researched affective consumer engagement relating to low and high involvement purchase decisions, this study will contribute to bolstering up available academic references.

5.4 Conclusion

In Chapter 5, demographic profiles were discussed in detail. Results from the study confirm a higher female participation rate when compared to male participants. Discussion for each proposed hypothesis was laid out with supporting basis from previous studies. Each of the hypotheses proposed were recorded as positive and significant; H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H2, H3, H4 and H5.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The current study was developed to test the relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement in high and low involvement decision contexts. The objective of this chapter is not only to conclude the research paper, but to also share additional enlightenment on the outcomes of the study and deductions that can be made from the results. The study will detail recommendations, limitations, and opportunities for further research.

6.2 Synopsis of findings and study conclusion

The study set out to investigate the relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement in low and high involvement purchase decisions. There are no studies available that indicate the cognitive and affective engagement aspects in processes where products require either low or high involvement. The study proposed a total of 8 hypotheses, all hypothesis results confirmed a positive and significant relationship with the constructs being tested. The study initially proposed that CCE_L (cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products) would have a negative relationship with LIPI (low involvement purchase decisions) and the result showed that CCE_L and LIPI have a significant and positive relationship.

6.3 Online advertising and consumer engagement

The study proposed 4 hypotheses for online advertising, by differentiating between cognitive/affective engagement and low/high involvement, the following hypothesis were proposed: online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions, online advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions, online advertising and affective consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions as well as online advertising and cognitive consumer

engagement for high involvement purchase decisions. Important to note that this relationship has been researched extensively and has been proven as positive and significant.

1. Online banner advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement products: The relationship between OA and CCE_H is supported and significant. This means advanced levels of online advertising and greater levels of cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement problems. Cognitive engagement means to commit with effort and purpose in the learning or discovery of a product (Arora and Singer, 2009) and online banner adverts have the option to include a variation of text, sharing detailed enough information to evoke cognitive consumer engagement.

2. Online banner advertising and cognitive consumer engagement for low involvement products

The relationship between OA and CCE_L was supported and significant. Low involvement products are typically identified by their inexpensive and low risk nature (Niosi, 2019). While low involvement products generally require very little cognitive effort, the use of relevant colour and messaging on the banner adverts confirms cognitive engagement can also be achieved for low involvement products.

3. Online banner advertising and affective consumer engagement for high involvement products

OA and CCE_H confirmed a positive and significant relationship. This means online banner adverts with low involvement products can appeal to affective engagement. Affective engagement is characterized by the emotional connection a consumer has with a product, in this case, the online banner advert showcasing the product. Emotional connections take place irrespective of price or informational availability. This confirms the proposed hypothesis.

4. Online banner advertising and affective consumer engagement for low involvement products

OA and CCE_L confirmed a positive and significant relationship, indicating that online banner adverts for low involvement products have a positive effect on affective consumer engagement. Low involvement products.

5. Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions and high involvement purchase decisions.

The relationship between CCE_H and HIPI was confirmed as positive and significant. This confirms that the greater the cognitive engagement for the high involvement product advertised on the online banner advert, the more likely a high involvement purchase decision will take place.

6. Cognitive consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions and low involvement purchase decisions.

The relationship between CCE_L and LIPI was confirmed as positive and significant. This confirms that the greater the cognitive engagement, the more the high involvement purchase decision is most likely to take place.

7. Affective consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions and high involvement purchase decisions.

The relationship between ACE_H and HIPI was confirmed as positive and significant. This confirms that the higher the affective engagement for high involvement products, the more likely a high involvement purchase decision will be carried out.

8. Affective consumer engagement for low involvement purchase decisions and low involvement purchase decisions.

The relationship between ACE_L and LIPI was confirmed as positive and significant. This confirms that the higher the affective engagement for low involvement products, the more likely a low involvement purchase decision will be carried out.

6.4 Implications of study

The current study identifies the following implications: Theoretical implications and practical.

6.4.1 Theoretical implications

The findings in this study contribute to the academic body from a literature perspective. This study has extended the body of literature available referring to the relationship between online advertising, cognitive and affective consumer engagement in low and high involvement purchase decisions.

Studies by Hollebeek et.al, (2014) studied consumer engagement from a brand perspective. A variation of the studies available, discussed in chapter 2, indicate that cognitive and affective consumer engagement takes place primarily in a brand setting. This study has empirical evidence that involvement level also has a cognitive and affective dimension that influences purchase decision outcomes.

Multiple researchers, including Clarence and Keni (2022) and Reitz (2012), have studied online advertising numerous times and confirmed the existing relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement. The relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement, however, has not been previously differentiated by categories like engagement dimension or low and high involvement. This study has contributed to the understanding that online banner adverts can have engagement responses from either cognitive or affective dimensions.

Overall, through the findings of this research, additional knowledge concerning the 5 main constructs: online advertising, cognitive consumer engagement, affective consumer engagement, high involvement purchase decisions and low involvement purchase decisions have been added. Literature around these topics has been broadened to inform practical practitioners, such as marketers and theoretical practitioners such as researchers.

6.4.2 Practical implications

The practical implication for the study outcome is relevant for marketers. Online advertising will continue to grow as predicted in figure 12. Marketers need to better position their campaigns for effective purchase decision outcomes.

The empirical findings in this study have shown that consumers respond to/engage with online banner adverts from different engagement dimensions; mainly cognitive and affective. Marketers who work in firms that primarily advertise high involvement products online, or those who advertise low involvement products online need to understand the type of content that evokes these responses.

The findings from this study confirm that consumers engage from both affective or cognitive dimensions and the involvement type of the product matters in consumer responses, i.e. decision-making.

Marketers need to be aware of how to advertise their products on online banner advert. The study confirms that if marketers are looking to advertise a high involvement product and are looking for cognitive engagement, information on the advert plays a role, and if they are looking to advertise a low involvement product information and advert visual design matters in achieving the desired goal. For affective engagement, the product involvement level matters but also there must be an intentional effort to add language on the banner advert to evoke emotion.

6.5 Recommendations

By assessing the research results from the hypothesis test, the study proposes the following recommendations.

6.5.1 Online advertising and consumer engagement - recommendations

This study aimed to explore the relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement. Within consumer engagement, the study set to uncover the relationship between cognitive and affective consumer engagement in low and high involvement products. The findings highlight that consumers do respond with specific cognitive and affective responses to adverts based on the involvement level.

Consumer engagement is not only a result of clicks and comments but also the amount of attention a consumer gives to an advert and the general enjoyment a consumer experiences while looking at the advert. The awareness cognitive and affective influences do influence engagement with online adverts.

Marketers need to set clear communication plans for online banner advertising for low and high involvement products and consider cognitive and affective efforts required for the effective outcome of influencing consumer purchase decision.

Marketing messages have the potential to shape a consumer's affective or cognitive engagement with an advert and this consciousness from marketers must be prevalent when setting up online banner adverts. Online banner adverts are said to have multiple benefits for advertisers, cost effectiveness, reach, interactivity (Kim and Moon, 2020), which should encourage marketers to have extensive knowledge on potential hinderances to these benefits.

6.5.2 Cognitive consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions – recommendations

H2 and H3 were supported and significant, there is a clear relationship between CCE_H and CCE_L. Cognitive consumer engagement in both low and high involvement contexts has a better response rate when more information is shared. Need for cognition is a researched concept that Cacioppo and Petty (1982) have argued suggesting that people have existing motivation to participate in exercises that require them to think. In online advertising, the search functionality has been strongly linked to cognitive online cognitive behaviour (Mwaba, 2016).

Online banner adverts allow for a variation of formats, this means products in low and high categories can be adapted for maximum cognitive effect.

This understanding is also important for marketers. Marketers can set objectives for online banner campaign based on desired engagement outcome. For cognitive engagement, more text and information should be available on the online banner advert.

6.5.3 Affective consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions – recommendations

H4 and H5 were supported and significant. There is a clear relationship between ACE_H and ACE_L. There are studies that confirm that affective consumer engagement responds best to visual stimuli (Mwaba 2016). The Elaboration likelihood model suggests that likelihood is low, messages are processed via the peripheral route, processing of messages on outlets like banner adverts is not easily predictable- more reliance is placed on affective hues.

Affective consumer engagement has limited past research, what is clear is that it is less predictable than cognitive consumer engagement. Consumers base their engagement on motivations and message relevance at the time in which they see the advert. In these scenarios, targeting consumers based on relevance could potentially increase affective engagement.

For affective appeal, marketers need to understand how to evoke emotions from consumers and understand the ELM's explanation on how information processing takes place when consumers have low involvement, vs when they have high involvement.

6.6 Limitations and suggestions for future research

The study identified the following limitations:

1. Research technique; snowball method. During data collection, responses from the researcher's network could respond first. The data is skewed towards majority female because of the network selection and instrument distribution method. Future research should aim to have a male to female ratio target. Existing research has proven that males and females use the internet differently, and data could be skewed if an overwhelming majority are female respondents, especially in a study that requires both male and female responses.
2. Limited research studying affective engagement and involvement levels; one of the study objectives was to understand how cognitive and affective dimensions influence high and low involvement purchase decisions as well as engagement. Research looking into affective engagement is minimal. Future research papers should invest in

understanding the role of affective engagement in purchase intent by measuring enjoyment and appeal.

6.7 Conclusion

In summary, there is an existing relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions. Online banner advertising is a valuable advertising format to cater for both cognitive and affective cues. Banner advertising allows for marketers to adapt advertising messages for either cognitive appeal by adding more information, or affective appeal, by using design elements for maximum visual appeal and retargeting. This chapter also summarized research limitations as well as suggestions for future research.

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Appendix A - Consumer engagement constructs

Discipline	Author	Constructs
Sociology	Jennings and Zeitner (2003)	Multidimensional; media attentiveness, trust, political involvement
Psychology	Achterberg et al. (2003)	Multidimensional; ease of interaction, ease of doing planned activities, pursuing involvement, cognitive, emotional and behavioural
Educational psychology	Fredricks et al. (2009)	Multidimensional; academic investment, academic motivation, comfort with the school, a sense of belonging
Organizational behaviour	Bejertholm and Eklund (2006)	Multidimensional; absorption, dedication, vigor, interpretation

Appendix B – Cover letter



Cover letter

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study that seeks to investigate the relationship between online advertising and consumer engagement in low and high involvement purchase decisions.

This research is part of my project for completion of my master's of management dissertation at Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand. Your confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed and any information shared will only be used for the purpose of the current study.

The questionnaire has 6 sections (A - F) and consists of a total of 27 Questions. Your participation is voluntary, and the questionnaire will take about 5-10 minutes to complete.

We want to assure you that your privacy and anonymity are of utmost importance to us. We are committed to safeguarding your personal information and ensuring that your identity remains confidential throughout the research process. Your participation in the study is voluntary.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge: You are 18 years of age. You are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation at any time for any reason.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me via email: 2613241@students.wits.ac.za.

I appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey.

Yours sincerely,

Nontu Mhlaba

Appendix C – Questionnaire

Online advertising and consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions

Start of Block: CONSENT

CONSENT Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study that seeks to investigate the relationship between **online advertising and consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions**.

This research is part of my project for the completion of my Master's of Management dissertation at Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand, under the supervision of Dr Yvonne Saini. Your participation is voluntary, and the questionnaire will take about 5-10 minutes to complete.

We want to assure you that your privacy and anonymity are of utmost importance to us. We are committed to safeguarding your personal information and ensuring that your identity remains confidential throughout the research process.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge: You are 18 years of age. You are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation at any time for any reason.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me via email: 2613241@students.wits.ac.za.

I appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey.

Yours sincerely, Nontu Mhlaba

☐ I consent (1)

☐ I do not consent (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Dear Participant, Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study that seeks to investigate the... = I do not consent

End of Block: CONSENT

Start of Block: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Q1 SA RESIDENT Do you reside in South Africa? (If no is selected, the study will be terminated immediately)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No, thank you for participating (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Do you reside in South Africa? (If no is selected, the study will be terminated immediately) = No, thank you for participating

Q2 AGE Please specify your age?

☐ 18-25 (1)

☐ 26-35 (2)

☐ 36-45 (3)

☐ 46-55 (4)

☐ 56+ (5)

Q3 GENDER Please specify your gender?

☐ Male (1)

☐ Female (2)

☐ Non-binary / third gender (3)

☐ Prefer not to say (4)

Q4 EDUCATION LEVEL Please indicate your education level?

- ☐ Matric (1)
- ☐ Diploma (2)
- ☐ Bachelors degree (3)
- ☐ Post graduate degree (Hons/Btech/Masters/PhD) (4)
-

Q5 INTERNET DAILY Please indicate the average amount of time you spend on the internet **daily** (social media, personal browsing)?

- ☐ I do not spend time on the internet (1)
- ☐ >1 hour (2)
- ☐ 2-3 hours (3)
- ☐ 3-4 hours (4)
- ☐ 5+ (5)

Skip To: End of Survey If Please indicate the average amount of time you spend on the internet daily (social media, persona... = I do not spend time on the internet

End of Block: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Start of Block: Section B: Online advertising and consumer engagement

Q6 OA and CE1 In this section, we explore your **attitude** towards engaging with online banner adverts. Please complete all the questions in this section.

I like engaging with online banner adverts I see while surfing the internet.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q7 OA and CE2 I find content on online banner adverts interesting.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q8 OA and CE3 I sometimes click on online banner adverts I see while surfing the internet.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

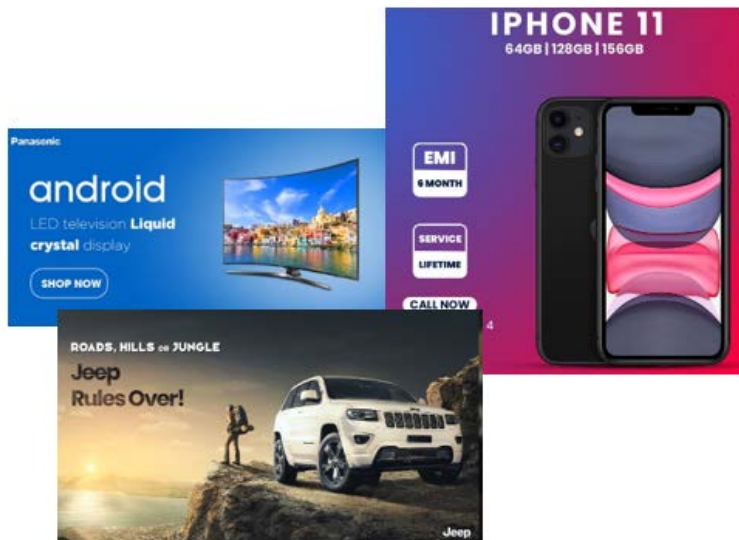
Q9 OA and CE4 I enjoy seeing online banner adverts when I surf the internet.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: Section B: Online advertising and consumer engagement

Start of Block: High Involvement and cognitive

High Involvement The following 2 sections explore online banner adverts, ***cognitive and affective consumer engagement for high involvement purchase decisions***. High involvement products refer to items that are not bought frequently and are typically expensive; TV's, cars, expensive jewellery, houses, etc.



Q10 H_COG1 ***Cognitive engagement***

Online banner adverts for high involvement products are memorable (easy to remember).

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q11 H_COG2 Online banner adverts stimulate my interest to learn more about the high involvement product advertised.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q12 H_COG3 I think about the high involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Page Break

Q13 H_Aff1 ***Affective engagement***

I feel positive about online banner adverts which promote high involvement products.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q14 H_Aff2 Seeing banner adverts that promote high involvement products makes me happy.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

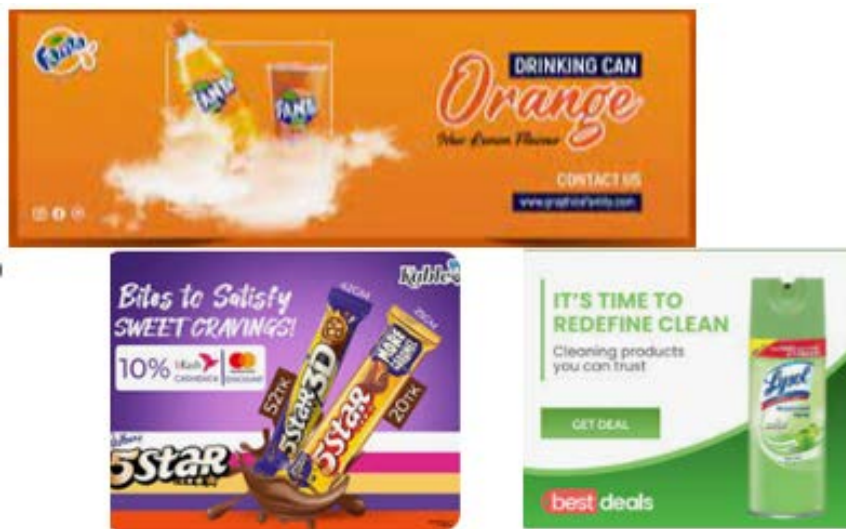
Q15 H_Aff3 I feel good when I encounter an online banner advert promoting a high involvement product.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: High Involvement and cognitive

Start of Block: Low involvement and cognitive

Q18 The following 2 sections explore online banner adverts and ***the role of cognitive and affective consumer engagement for low involvement*** purchase decisions. Low involvement products refer to products that are bought frequently, with minimum thought and effort, for example; cleaning products, chocolate, bread, etc.



Q16 L_COG1 ***Cognitive engagement***

Online banner adverts for low involvement products are memorable (easy to remember).

- ☐ strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

Q17 L_COG2 Online banner adverts stimulate my interest to learn more about the low involvement product advertised

- ☐ strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q18 L_COG3 I think about the low involvement products I see on online banner adverts

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q19 L_Aff1 ***Affective engagement***

I feel positive about online banner adverts which promote low involvement products

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q20 L_Aff2 Seeing banner adverts that promote low involvement products makes me happy

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

Q21 L_Aff3 I feel good when I encounter an online banner advert promoting a low involvement product

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: Low involvement and cognitive

Start of Block: OA_CE and HI

Q22 OA_CE HI1 This section explores your ***purchase decision process*** for ***high involvement products on online banner adverts***. Please complete all the questions in this section.

I am positive towards buying high involvement products I see on online banner adverts

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q23 OA_CE HI2 The thought of buying high involvement products I see on online banner adverts is appealing to me

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q24 OA_CE HI3 I think it is a good idea to buy high involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

Page Break

Q25 OA, CE_LI1 This section explores your ***purchase decision process*** for ***low involvement products*** on online banner adverts. Please complete all the questions in this section.

I am positive towards buying low involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q26 OA_CE_LI2 The thought of buying low involvement products I see on online banner adverts is appealing to me.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (5)
-

Q27 OA_CE_LI3 I think it is a good idea to buy low involvement products I see on online banner adverts.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

End of Block: OA_CE and HI

Appendix D – Ethics clearance certificate

Graduate School of Business Administration
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg



Wits Business School Ethics Committee
Constituted under the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical)

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Ethics protocol number: WBS/SM2613241/162

This certificate is only valid with a legitimate ethics protocol number and signed by the Researcher (below)

Project title	Online advertising and consumer engagement for low and high involvement purchase decisions
Investigator / Researcher	Mrs Nontuthuko Mhlaba
Nature of Project	MM (Strategic Marketing)
Decision of the Committee	Approved, provided stakeholders and participants are guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality.
Issue Date of Certificate	2023/11/30
Expiry date	Date of submission of the project / research report
Chairperson	Dr Pius Oba +27 11 717 3976 +27 82 733 6587 pius.oba@wits.ac.za

Declaration by Researcher

One copy must be signed by the Researcher and returned to the Chairperson of the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

13/12/2023

Date: