The role of emotional brand attachment in creating long lasting consumer brand relationships.

A dissertation submitted by
Fanisile Mabuza
Student number: 358433

Submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
In fulfilment of the requirements of a Master of Commerce in Marketing

Supervisor: Dr Abigail Chivandi
Department of Marketing
School of Business Sciences
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management

DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO INDEPENDENT WORK

I, Fanisile Cebisile Mabuza, student number 358433 do hereby declare that this research project submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand is my own independent work and where other sources are used, authors have been acknowledged. This study was handed in the completion of the requirements for the master's degree in the field of Marketing at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. I or any other person in fulfilment of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification at any institution has not submitted this work before.

I therefore further recognize that it was my responsibility to conduct this research in an ethical manner and in according to the guidelines of the University of the Witwatersrand, and according to any laws or legal frameworks that may apply in the country where my research was conducted which is South Africa, as well as according to the norms and expectations of the Marketing discipline.

According to my knowledge and understanding, this research has satisfied all the statutory requirements and I have abided by all the laws and regulations that are may apply when such phenomena are carried out.

Signature: _________________ Date: _______31/08/2020________

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the following contributors for having made this dissertation a successful and memorable piece of work.

- God, whom I trusted from the very onset when I decided to further my postgraduate studies and He has seen me through till the completion of this research.
- My supervisor, Dr. Abigail Chivandi who took me on as a student and made this a reality through her support and professional advice and words of encouragement when I was not coping.
- My mother, Rachel Mabuza and my father, Fairlie Mabuza who have always believed in me and have been nothing but patient with me through the course of obtaining this degree.
- I would also like my boss Mr. Caswell Rampheri for allowing me to give my all to my research and my colleague Lumka Mabeqa for her support.
- Finally, I would like to thank my siblings Mkhulisi and Mbongiseni, rest of my family and friends for their constant motivation. In particular, Thandeka Khumalo who has been a pillar through-out this process.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is premised on Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) stimulus-organism-response (SOR) paradigm. More specifically, the study proposed and tested a conceptual model, aimed at understanding the ***role of emotional brand attachment and its influence on brand repurchase intention*** in the mobile phone category. Mobile Phones are the 21st century invention that has resulted in a change in the way the world operates and functions daily. The mobile phone industry in South Africa is the second biggest mobile market in Africa. (Business Tech, 2017). Due to consumers ever changing lifestyles, there is an increase in the demand for mobile devices that can meet their needs and wants. The many functions that mobile devices have nowadays has resulted in an increased dependency on them. Modern consumers have developed an **emotional connection** to brands. Customers are repeatedly attracted towards a brand based on **the brand self-connection** (Chaplin & John, 2005) . One of the challenges faced by marketers today, is ensuring consumers repurchase in an era of saturated markets and fierce competition between brands. In the search for profitable organic growth, marketers are creating and cultivating positive emotional brand attachment for customers to increase the loyalty to a brand. The thesis proposes a model where customer brand self-connection influences emotional brand attachment which is hypothesized as a key mediator in the relationship between brand loyalty, brand trust, brand love and brand repurchase. This study followed a positivist research philosophy (Thomas, 2011), and undertook a deductive, descriptive research design using a quantitative approach with a survey method to deliver needed results. A questionnaire was distributed to a stratified random sample of **300** students from Witwatersrand University in Gauteng, South Africa. The primary objective of this study is therefore to determine the ***influence of emotional brand attachment on brand love, brand trust and brand re-purchase intention in the mobile phone industry among millennial students*** within the Johannesburg metropolitan area and how this creates long-lasting brand-consumer relationships. The results of the study show that emotional brand attachment was found to have a ***positive influence*** on brand love and brand trust, all factors that showed a positive relation to brand loyalty. Brand loyalty was then determined to have a positive influence on the intention to repurchase by consumers, a fact that is instrumental in the building and maintaining of long brand-consumer relationships.

The implications of the findings are discussed, and limitations and future directions are suggested as well. Key recommendations are made, which provide marketers with significant insights into the effectiveness of emotional brand attachment in connecting with Millennials.

Keywords: Brand self-connection, brand trust, brand love, brand loyalty, customer loyalty, emotional brand attachment, mobile phones, millennials.

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"Consumers do fall truly, madly, deeply in love" - Brown (1998)

1.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research topic by firstly focusing on the background of the study, secondly, the problem statement and research gap, thirdly, the purpose statement of the study, followed by the research objectives and research questions. The significance and contribution of the study is discussed, followed by the study's theoretical framework, definitions and conceptual model and hypotheses statements. The research design and methodology are discussed, followed by ethical considerations. It culminates with the thesis structure and chapter conclusion.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The role played by emotions in the marketing space has developed over time, long gone are the days where marketing professionals view emotions as a secondary influencing factor in whether a consumer purchases a product or not (Veloutsou, 2015 ; Esch , Langner, Tobias ,Bernd & Geus , 2006). The role of emotions in the Marketing industry has become one of the most used tools in advertising (Karjaluoto., Munnukka & Kiuru,2016; Albert, Merunka & Florence,2008). The majority of brands strategically set out to market by positioning their brands in such a way that this develops a strong emotional bond with the target consumers *(Janiszewska & Insch, 2012).*

Psychologists, such as Mehrabian and Russell (1974) , have stated that people's emotions and feelings ultimately determine what they do and how they do it (Kraft, Reinero, Kelley, Heberlein , Baer & Riess ,2017;Ruben , 1993) . Emotional reactions have also been found to play a significant role in the developed marketer-consumer relationship (Katherine N. Lemon & Peter C ,2016; Bagozzi, Richard; Gopinath, Mahesh; Nyer, Prashanth, 1999). The nature of emotions is said to be either discrete or specific, depending on the profile of cognitive evaluations known as appraisals (So, Jane; Achar, Chethana; Han, DaHeen; Agrawal, Nidhi, ,2015). According to psychological definitions, the main emotional experience in human life is referred to as Basic Emotions *(Walinga, 2012)*.

Academic researchers and practitioners in marketing have shown significant interest in studying the emotions that lead to consumers' attachment to brands (Park, MacInnis; Priester, J; Eisingerich, & Dawn, 2010). They have examined attachment in interpersonal contexts and the research in marketing suggests that consumers can also develop attachments to: market-place entities, including product brands and celebrities (Dwivedi, Abhishek; Johnson, Lester ; Wilkie & Luciana De , 2019 ; Watson, Beck, Henderson, 2015 ; Kleine & Baker , 2004).This discovery has been at the core of transforming the marketing world (Hoffman & Novak , 2017).

A brand is defined as a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination of these, intended to identify the goods and amenities of sellers and to distinguish them from those of their competitors *(PAR Marketing Services, 2017)*. Theoretically speaking, whenever a new name, logo or symbol is created by a marketer, a brand is created *(Shestakov, 2012)*. However, many marketing professionals refer to a brand as more than just an identity – but as something that has created a certain amount of mindfulness, reputation, and distinction in the marketplace (Schivinski & Dabrowski 2016; Keller, 2009).

It is imperative to also understand the difference between a brand and a product. A product is whatever we can offer to a market for acquisition or consumption that might satisfy an apparent need *(Shestakov, 2012)*. However, a brand is much more than a product because it can have dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products in the same category designed to satisfy the same need *(Shestakov, 2012)*. These dimensions may be sensibly and perceptibly related to the product performance of the brand, or more symbolically, emotionally and imperceptibly - related to what the brand epitomises *(Shestakov, 2012)*. These dimensions are what distinguishes a brand from other unbranded commodities in the same category and gives it equity. Essentially, a brand is the total of consumers' perceptions and feelings about a product's qualities and how it performs, the chosen brand name and what it stands for and represents to them, and the company associated with that brand. As a result, brands develop something that far more resembles a personality that exceeds and surpasses a product's actual attributes *(Shestakov, 2012)*.

The consumer–brand relationship therefore depends largely on the successful establishment of the brand identity in the minds of the consumers (Ansary & Hashim, 2017). The different facets that make up the brand identity include brand personality, brand association, brand attitude, and brand image (Ansary & Hashim, 2017). This brand identity and impressed meaning can be formed directly from the consumer's experience with that specific brand. Brand knowledge (or brand meaning) is always linked to brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand attitude, brand personality, and brand image (Franzen, Giep; Kappert, Cees; Schuring, Jan 1999). Researchers have discovered that the modern consumer can develop a deep emotional attachment to brands and products, resulting in many consumers falling in love with brands (Riivits-Arkonsuo & Leppiman, 2015).

Brand attachment

Work on relationship marketing suggests that developing strong relationships between consumers and brands is important because of the implications on customer loyalty and possible generated revenues (Park, et al., 2008). Although consumers interact with thousands of products and brands in their lives, they develop an intense emotional attachment to only a small subset of these objects and brands (Loureiro, Kaufmann, Vrontis & Demetris, 2012). The likelihood that consumers can develop a strong emotional attachment to a brand stimulates interest to relevant marketers because attachment theory in psychology suggests that the degree of emotional attachment to an object or brand predicts the nature and extent of an individual's interaction with that object or brand (Park, et al., 2008). For example, persons who are strongly attached to an individual are more likely to be committed to, invest in, and make sacrifices for that person. Comparably, consumers' emotional attachments to a brand might predict their commitment to that brand (i.e., brand loyalty) and their willingness to make financial sacrifices to obtain it (Park, et al., 2008). Commitment is defined as the degree to which an individual views the relationship from a long-term viewpoint and is inclined to stay with the relationship even when things are tough (Thomson, MacInnis, Park & Whan, 2015). A commonly used indicator of commitment in the marketing world is the extent to which the individual remains loyal to the brand (Park, et al., 2008). As such, one might propose that a valid measure of emotional attachment should predict the consumer's commitment to the brand and consequently, the strength of emotional attachment to an object or brand may also be associated with the readiness to forego instant self-interest to maintain that relationship (Thomson, et al., 2005).

Brand Attachment is the emotional connection between individuals and brands – the strength of the bond connecting the consumer to the brand (Thomson, et al., 2005). Emotional attachment to a brand can result in a consumer developing a loyalist mentality towards that brand (Thomson, et al., 2005) and as a construct that describes the strength of the bond, attachment is critical because it affects behaviour that directly influences brand profitability and customer lifetime value (Fedorikhin, Park, Whan & Matthew , 2008). Consumers' emotional ties to brands are based on the satisfaction that brands provide for the consumer (Dwivedi, et al., 2019). Consumers can be connected to a brand because it represents who they are (e.g., an identity basis) or because it is meaningful, considering their goals, personal concerns, or life projects (Mittal, 2006).

1.2.1. BRAND ATTACHMENT FORMATION

Humans have a biological predisposition to form attachments to social partners, and they seem to form attachments even towards non-human and inanimate targets (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012). Hwang and Kandampully (2012) also surveyed younger consumers of luxury brands and concluded that emotional attachment is a significant result of self-brand connection. Through brands and products being integrated into a consumer's everyday life, consumers find themselves developing attachment to these products (Loureiro, 2012). Influenced by various factors ranging from personal needs to societal factors, including easier access, emotional brand attachment commences (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

The ability of brands to carry or embody distinctive personalities like human beings has led to consumers projecting their own character onto a brand that they are using and thus creating an emotional bond with that brand that succeeds the brand's functionality (Malar, Krohmer, Hoyer & Nyffenegger , 2011) . This emotional bond affects consumers' purchase behaviour, empowering a brand to establish customer-brand loyalty features that result in the consumers repurchase of that brand's products (Whan Park, et al., 2010). Brand attachment has been gaining its value due to the strong emotional bond between the consumers selves and a brand and the resulting behaviours thereof (Malar, et al., 2011). Brand attachment also holds marketing value because it helps consumers choose a brand from a list of available brands in a certain market as it is based on emotional bonds between the consumers self and the consumers perceived representations of brand's personality (Whan Park, et al., 2010). Consumers tend to make emotional bonds with brands and in some cases, these bonds can be very strong, especially when the consumer's self is reflected in the brand image (Fournier, 1998).

1.2.2. RESEARCH CONTEXT: THE MOBILE PHONE INDUSTRY

Research has estimated that at least 70% of the Japanese population and 62% of U.S. inhabitants used mobile phones in 2005 and 81% of the population used mobile phones in Australia, in the same year (Takao,Takahashi, & Kitamura, 2009). The number of smartphone users in South Africa in 2017 was estimated at 18.48 million and is expected to reach over 25 million by 2022. In 2017, the number of smartphone users worldwide was estimated to be approximately 2.32 billion and could grow to 2.87 billion by 2020 (Statista, 2014).

The mobile phone industry in South Africa is the second biggest mobile market in Africa, second only to Nigeria (Business Tech, 2017). South Africa has a higher mobile penetration rate than the West African nation (Business Tech, 2017). As of the year 2016, South Africa has 37.5 million unique mobile subscribers, a 68% penetration rate to the country's total population, in comparison to Nigeria's 86 million mobile subscribers, representing only 45% of the population (Business Tech, 2017). As evidenced by the growing strength of the mobile phone industry, consumers are growing to be more attached to their mobile phones than ever before. The table below shows the dominant mobile phone brands in South Africa.

Dominant Mobile Phone Brands	***Percentage allocation of the South African Market***
Apple iPhone	10%
Huawei	9%
Samsung	40%
Other (Sony, Blackberry, LG)	26%

Table 1.1: Dominant mobile phone brands in South Africa (MyBroadband, 2017)

Millennials are the biggest market for the cell phone industry and one of the reasons for this high percentage of mobile ownership is the influence of peers (Smetana, Barr, Metzger, & Aaro, 2006). In addition, mobile phones reflect the individual's self-identity through personalised ring tones, screen savers. The feeling of higher social status is evoked through owning cell phones (Srivastava, 2010). The mobile industry was selected for this study because of the emotional attachment consumers exhibit towards their mobile phones. About two thirds of mobile users report distress on being separated from the phone (either when left at home or if it has run out of battery), a phenomenon called nomophobia which is even more evident in young adults(Fadzil, Noorshahira ,Abdullah, Mohd & Mohamad , 2016). The mobile industry plays a major role in the daily lives of consumers, the number of active mobile subscriptions exceeds the total world population (Ericsson, 2014). In recent days, a mobile device has moved from being a luxury want to a vital need. The expanding coverage and growing interaction between users and mobile devices show that emotional brand attachment can be more easily observed in this industry.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH GAP

Modern culture and the existing market ecosystem are structured around the consumption of goods and the climate of the current consumer culture is one of intense competition for all products and brands in the market. Research in this area to date has been sparse and focused mostly on AEs about purchase, but not nonpurchase (Bagozzi , 2016) To differentiate their brands and products from others in the same competing category, companies are shifting their focus on distinguishing their brands based on distinctive emotional, rather than functional, characteristics (Bagozzi, 2017) When well established, emotional brand attachment is an influential tool for the building of brand equity and influencing the purchasing decisions of consumers . Emotions impact consumer decisions through cognitive appraisals. (Achar, 2016). Thomson et al. (2005) propose that emotional attachment consists of three dimensions: affection, passion and connection and then proceeds to show that these dimensions predict brand loyalty in a manner consistent with attachment theory. Although researchers conducted a study on the attachment construct, they mainly focused on attempting to address the major driving force that results to attachment, stating that attachment to a brand is a result of brand satisfaction. The present study aims to provide a deeper understanding of consumers' emotions (Das, 2017). This has since been disproved and there is a need for further research into the factors that contribute to brand attachment and how, in turn, this translates to long lasting consumer-brand relationships.

Additionally, regardless of earlier research; the role of how emotional attachment influences the consumers' decisions to purchase a brand is still left with some grey areas and needs further research focus (Murray, 2013). Present research suggests that consumers can become emotionally attached to consumption objects, including brands (Thomson, et al., 2005). However, a scale to measure the strength of consumers emotional attachments to brands has yet to be devised. These theories fail to explain emotional appeal effectiveness in changing consumption behaviour over time (Paolo, 2015).

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

1.4.1. PRIMARY OBJECTIVE(S)

Research objectives are two-fold, comprising both theoretical and empirical (Abdu-Raheem & Adekunle, 2013). The primary objective of this study is therefore to determine the influence of emotional brand attachment on brand love, brand trust and brand re-purchase intention in the mobile phone industry among millennial students within the Johannesburg metropolitan area and how this creates brand re purchase intention.

The objectives are:

1) To conduct a comprehensive literature review on
2) To empirically test the proposed conceptual model to investigate the relationships between
3) To statistically analyse the data using RMSEA software.
4) To provide marketing practitioners with insight and direction.

1.4.2. Secondary Objective(s)

The secondary objectives for this study are:

- To investigate the formation of emotional brand attachment and the influences involved in the formation process.
- To gain insight into how emotional brand attachment relates to brand love, brand trust and brand re-purchase intention.
- To investigate the influence of brand prominence on emotional attachment.
- To investigate the influence of emotional brand attachment on brand loyalty.
- To investigate the influence of brand love on brand loyalty.
- To investigate the influence of brand trust on brand loyalty.
- To examine the relationship between brand loyalty and brand repurchase intention.
- To gain insight into the mobile phone industry in South Africa and to determine how emotional brand attachment influences the current market ecosystem.
- Contribute to the current marketing literature on brand love. This will solidify brand love as a viable marketing tool with significant influence on consumer behavioural intention.

1.5. Research Questions

1.5.1. Main Research Question

What is the influence of emotional brand attachment on brand love, brand trust and brand re-purchase intention in the mobile phone industry among millennial students within the Johannesburg metropolitan area and how does this create long-lasting brand-consumer relationships?

1.5.2. SUB-QUESTIONS

- What encompasses the formulation of emotional brand attachment?
- To what extent does brand self-connection and brand prominence influence brand attachment?
- To what extent does emotional brand attachment influence on brand love, brand passion, brand trust and brand loyalty?
- To what extent does brand love, brand trust, and brand loyalty influence repurchase intention of mobile devices among South African Millennials consumers/individuals?
- What is the current climate of the mobile phone industry in South Africa?
- What role has emotional brand attachment played in the brand – consumer relationships in the South African mobile industry?

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Research is the constructive act of studying or investigating an area of interest extensively to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the subject matter that can then be practically applied in society for the benefit of many (Naidoo, 2011). The main purpose of research is to inform action and improve decision making by stakeholders in that field of interest and for that reason; it is not only a valuable tool for academics and ques, but for professionals across the board (Kapur, 2018). Businesses across the world employ research and development units within the company and externally to gather facts and uncover new realities that will help the business stay afloat and progress further (Wise Step, 2019). This holds true for this research where the significance and contribution of this study are twofold: theoretical and practical.

1.6.1. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

Very few studies have examined how the consumer's brand attachment is related to repurchase intention. This thesis provides an integrated examination of adult attachment and its role in creating long lasting brand-consumer relationships. More recently, Fournier (1998) proposed an integrated framework for brand-consumer relationships, categorizing relationship quality as love/passion, commitment, and intimacy, categories that correspond to the proposed dimensions of Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of interpersonal love. Although these studies show the possibility of a romantic consumer-product relationship, none have attempted to link theories of interpersonal love with love toward a product. Additionally, researchers have conducted studies on the attachment construct, mainly addressing the major driving force that results in attachment, brand performance satisfaction, which has since been disproved (Whan Park, et al., 2010). There is now a need for further research on the factors that contribute to brand attachment and how, in turn, this translates to long-lasting consumer-brand relationships. This study expands on branding constructs that have not been used holistically in a theoretical framework and their relation to repurchase intention. The study adds to existing literature by providing empirical evidence regarding emotional marketing, consumer emotions and brand love theory and consumer behavioural intention.

1.6.2. PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION

This research aims to add to the past work on consumers' love for products by providing a more direct application to marketing theory and practice. In general, knowledge about satisfied consumers' brand love is expected to enhance both understanding and prediction of their post-consumption behaviour (Blackwell, et al., 2006). Brand love has an influence on both brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth in a population of satisfied consumers. For the purposes of this research, the focus is on brand loyalty - this approach contributes to the establishment of new marketing approaches and the creation of innovative methods to attract consumers as well as retain them (Achar , So, Agrawal, Nidhi & Duhachek, 2016) . The findings of this study may assist marketers in crafting strategies to capture the emotional aspect of consumption to enhance their brand value and help to develop a strong emotional bond with the customers. Marketers will be able to develop and implement strategies that are appropriate in meeting the needs of the Generation Y group of consumers. With fresh revelations, managers will be able to enhance the quality of their product, create competitive advantage, and eventually, generate more money. Lastly, the findings provide managers with guidelines to enhance comprehension of brand customer connections, which will consequently, facilitate the development of operational marketing strategies.

1.7. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this research is limited to undergraduates at the University of the Witwatersrand regarded to have formed a part of millennials in the School of Economic and Business Sciences. This decision was based on the variety of Gen Y and Millennials who are studying at the university, within this faculty. Due to the different cultural backgrounds of the sample population, the research is unbiased. The University of the Witwatersrand is one of the most prestigious institutions in South Africa, found in Johannesburg – the economic centre of

Gauteng Province, specifically, and the broader Southern Africa. It is because of this that the students at University of the Witwatersrand are likely owners of a mobile phone brand that they have had for a certain period.

1.8. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.8.1. FOUR THEORIES

1.8.1.1. ATTACHMENT THEORY

Over the past decade, attachment theory has undergone an intense expansion. Bowlby's original description occurred during a period of behaviourism and an emphasis on the strange situation and secure base behaviours, which then gave way to a dominance of cognition and an emphasis on attachment narratives and reflective capacities (Schore & Schore, 2008). Bowlby's basis of attachment focused primarily on the infancy stage and the attachment theory has now been expanded to adults, known as the Modern Attachment theory (Schore & Schore, 2008). Modern attachment theory can thus be incorporated into the core of social work theory, research, and practice.

The current energisation of modern attachment theory is now being expressed in the updating and deepening of its underlying theoretical concepts; its expansion to connections in other disciplines such as psychoanalysis, neuroscience and marketing (Schore & Schore, 2008). From its very beginnings, attachment theory has shared with clinical social work a common biopsychosocial perspective. Bowlby (1969) stated that attachment behaviour was based on the need for safety and a secure base (Schore & Schore, 2008).

The Formulation of Attachment Theory and the First Attachment Study

Bowlby's (1951) first formal statement of attachment theory, building on concepts from ethology and developmental psychology, was presented to the British Psychoanalytic Society in London in three now classic papers (Bretherton, 1992): *"The Nature of the Child's Tie to His Mother"* (1958), *"Separation Anxiety"* (1959), and *"Grief and Mourning in Infancy and Early Childhood"* (1960). By 1962, Bowlby had completed two further papers (never published; 1962a and b) on defensive processes related to mourning. These five papers represent the first basic blueprint of attachment theory (Bretherton, 1992).

1.8.1.2. CLASSICAL ATTACHMENT THEORY

Bowlby's attachment theory (1969, 1982, 1973, 1980) has its origins in observations of the devastating effects of maternal deprivation in both human and non-human animals (Bretherton, 1992). In the 1940s, several clinicians observed that institutionalised infants would fail to thrive, both physically and psychologically, despite having their physical needs met (e.g., Bakwin & Bakwin, 1942; Spitz, 1945, 1947).

These infants had received little affectionate caregiving (and in some cases, no human touch) as well as prolonged separation from their caregivers. Converging with these observations, Bowlby's (1951) initial studies of juvenile delinquents and homeless children after WWII also pointed to the adverse psychopathologic effects of early and prolonged maternal separation (Hertenstein, 2002). Bowlby was furthermore influenced by research emerging from the fields of ethology and comparative psychology that similarly showed the adverse effects of maternal deprivation in other mammalian species, on which Bowlby built his theory of attachment (Bretherton, 1992).

Drawing upon evolutionary theory, as well as an ethological perspective, Bowlby (1969/1982) contended that behaviour needs to be studied in their environment of evolutionary adaptedness to shed light on the biological problems (Bretherton, 1992). This led Bowlby to propose that attachment behaviour in humans likewise serves the important biological function of safety regulation, which includes physical protection from threats as well as emotion regulation when distressed (Bretherton, 1992). Attachment behaviour notably manifests in situations of alarm as infants instinctively seek out their older, stronger and more able caregivers for protection and comfort (Hertenstein, 2002). Therefore, at its fundamental level, attachment behaviour is proposed to be evolved, adaptive, and serves to enhance the chances of survival (Bretherton, 1992).

1.8.1.3. TRIANGULAR LOVE THEORY

The triangular theory of love (Stenberg, 1986) holds that love can be understood in terms of three components that together, can be viewed as forming the vertices of a triangle. The triangle is used as a metaphor, rather than as a strict geometric model. These three components are intimacy (top vertex of the triangle), passion (left-hand vertex of the triangle), and decision/commitment (right-hand vertex of the triangle) (Stenberg, 1986). The figure below depicts the phenomenon.

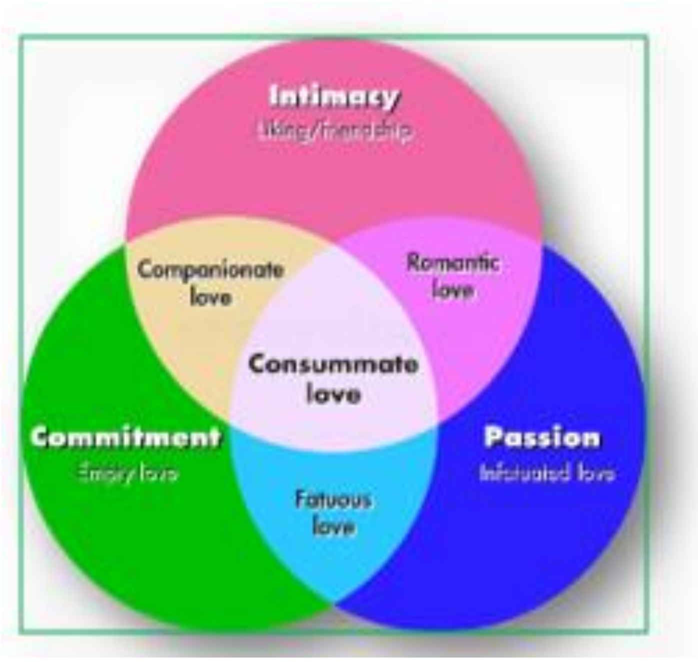


Figure 1.1: Stenberg’s Triangular Theory (Stenberg, 1986)

Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) reported that Lee’s (1977) typology showed the most independency among the six purported styles of love. The triangular theory of love (Stenberg, 1986) and the Relationship Rating Form (Davis & Todd, 1985) showed significant interdependency among dimensions. By contrast, the Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield & Sprecher 1986) and Attachment Styles (Shaver & Hazan 1987; Hazan & Shaver 1987) were unidimensional, resulting in a single factor. Because of the high level of independency, Lee’s structural typology of readily distinguishable love styles was chosen to assess consumers’ love toward a product.

The three components described by Sternberg have appeared in various other theories of love, and moreover, appear to correspond rather well to people's implicit theories of love (Aron & Westby, 1996). Each of these three terms can be used in many ways, so it is important to clarify their meanings in the context of the present theory. The three components of love in the triangular theory are intimacy, passion, and decision/commitment. Each component manifests a different aspect of love (Stenberg, 1986).

Intimacy

Intimacy refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness and bondedness in loving relationships. It thus includes within its purview those feelings that give rise, essentially, to the experience of warmth in a loving relationship (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008). Sternberg and Grajek (1984) cluster-analyzed data from the loving and liking scales of Rubin (1970) and a close-relationships scale of Levinger, Rands and Talaber (1977), as a result of which they identified 10 clusters in intimacy: (a) desire to promote the welfare of the loved one; (b) experience happiness with the loved one; (c) high regard for the loved one; (d) being able to count on the loved one in times of need; (e) mutual understanding with the loved one; (f) sharing of one's self and one's possessions with the loved one; (g) receipt of emotional support from the loved one; (h) giving of emotional support to the loved one; (i) intimate communication with the loved one; and (j) valuing of the loved one in one's life (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008).

Passion

Passion refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation, and related phenomena in loving relationships (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008). The passion component includes within its purview those sources of motivational and other forms of arousal that lead to the experience of passion in a loving relationship (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008). It includes what Hatfield and Walster (1981) refer to as `a state of intense longing for union with the other'. In a loving relationship, sexual needs may well predominate in this experience. However, other needs, such as those for self-esteem, nurturance, affiliation, dominance, submission, and self-actualisation, may also contribute to the experiencing of passion (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008).

Decision/Commitment

Decision/commitment refers, in the short-term, to the decision that one loves a certain other, and in the long-term, to one's commitment to maintain that love (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008). These two aspects of the decision/commitment component do not necessarily go together, in that one can decide to love someone without being committed to the love in the long-term, or one can be committed to a relationship without acknowledging that one loves the other person in the relationship (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008).

The three components of love interact with each other, for example, greater intimacy may lead to greater passion or commitment, just as greater commitment may lead to greater intimacy, or with less likelihood, greater passion. Although all three components are important parts of loving relationships, their importance may differ from one relationship to another, or over time within a given relationship (Sterberg & Sternberg, 2008).

1.8.1.4. INTERPERSONAL THEORY

In the field of the dyadic relationship between brand and consumer, extant studies use a relationship metaphor from interpersonal relationship theory (Sweeney, 1990). According to Fournier's (1998) brand relationship quality model, there are six dimensions, including attachment (love / passion and self-connection), behavioural ties (interdependence and commitment) and supportive cognitive beliefs (intimacy and brand partner quality) (Sweeney, 1990). These dimensions are based on theories such as the ***interdependence theory*** and theories of attraction (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Hinde, 1979; Kelley, 1979). Several studies suggest that emotional attachment is formed between human beings and animals, places, destinations, special objects, brands, according to Richins, (1994; Schouten and McAlexander, (1995); Price et al., (2000); Yuksel et al., (2010), and even human brands or celebrities (Thomson, 2006). The interdependence theory states that the level of interaction between persons influences the behaviour and outcomes of individuals. Persons As actions influence the behaviour of Person B and the outcome (Sweeney, 1990).

1.8.2. CONCEPTUAL MODEL THEORETICAL GROUNDING

A conceptual model refers to a representation of a system that is made up of small, interlinked components that all contribute to the full understanding of the system in question (Batra, 2005). These components are the guides used to investigate the system for better understanding of what it encompasses and the significance thereof (Batra, 2005).

1.8.2.1. STIMULUS-ORGANISM-RESPONSE (SOR): (THE MEHRABIAN-RUSSELL MODEL)

Mehrabian-Russell (1974) produced the M-R model, based on a stimulus-organism-response (SOR) paradigm. The SOR model states that stimuli play a major role in influencing consumers' emotions and behaviour (Bakker, et al., 2014). The model posits that emotional response mediates the relationship between environmental stimuli and human behaviour. Mehrabian-Russell (1974) suggests that the environment is the stimulus (S) that leads to an emotional reaction organism (O) by giving environmental and atmospheric cues and causes customers' behavioural response (R). These emotional responses lead to two contrasting consumer behaviours: approach or avoidance. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) indicate that stimuli can affect the emotions of individuals, which can in turn, influence their responses

(Bakker, et al., 2014). As pointed out by Vermaak and De Klerk (2017), stimuli in a product and environment not only influence the consumer's senses, but also play an important role in the consumer's emotional experience. The brand stimuli constitute the major source of internal consumer responses, which is conceptualised as brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009).

1.8.2.2. PLEASURE-AROUSAL-DOMINANCE (PAD)

The theory is based on environmental psychology; Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) theory in the organism (O) condition describes three situational descriptors of emotions (PAD: pleasure, arousal, and dominance), and is a suitable theory for this study as it was designed to capture emotional responses to environmental stimuli (Bakker, Voordt, Van der; Boon, & Peter, 2014) In line with previous studies using the PAD theory, pleasure refers to the degree to which a person feels good, joyful, happy, or satisfied in a situation. Arousal refers to the degree to which a person feels stimulated, active, or alert, and it can be considered as an indicator of web site "motivational power" (Bakker, et al., 2014). Dominance refers to the degree to which a person feels controlling, influential, free, or autonomous and it can be considered as an indicator of "consumers controlling power" of the website (Mazaheri, Richard & Laroche, 2012). As stated in Hosany and Gilbert (2010), the PAD scale is a popular measure among researchers to assess the impact of emotional experiences on shopping behaviours such as patronage, repurchase intentions, and satisfaction.

By means of a conceptual model, the following is proposed:

Firstly, emotional brand attachment represents the predictor variable, with brand repurchase intention as the outcome variable. There are four mediators: brand love, brand trust, brand passion and brand loyalty. It is therefore proposed that emotional brand attachment has a positive influence on the three mediating variables, which in turn, has a positive influence on brand repurchase intention.

In practice, this means that when marketers create stimuli that are inclusive of emotions, this will have a positive effect on consumers' brand love, brand trust, brand passion and brand loyalty. The conceptual model is grounded using the theories of psychology such as the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) SOR paradigm which provides a solid foundation for the current study. Figure 1.2 depicts this conceptualized research model. The hypothesised relationships between the research constructs are discussed later.

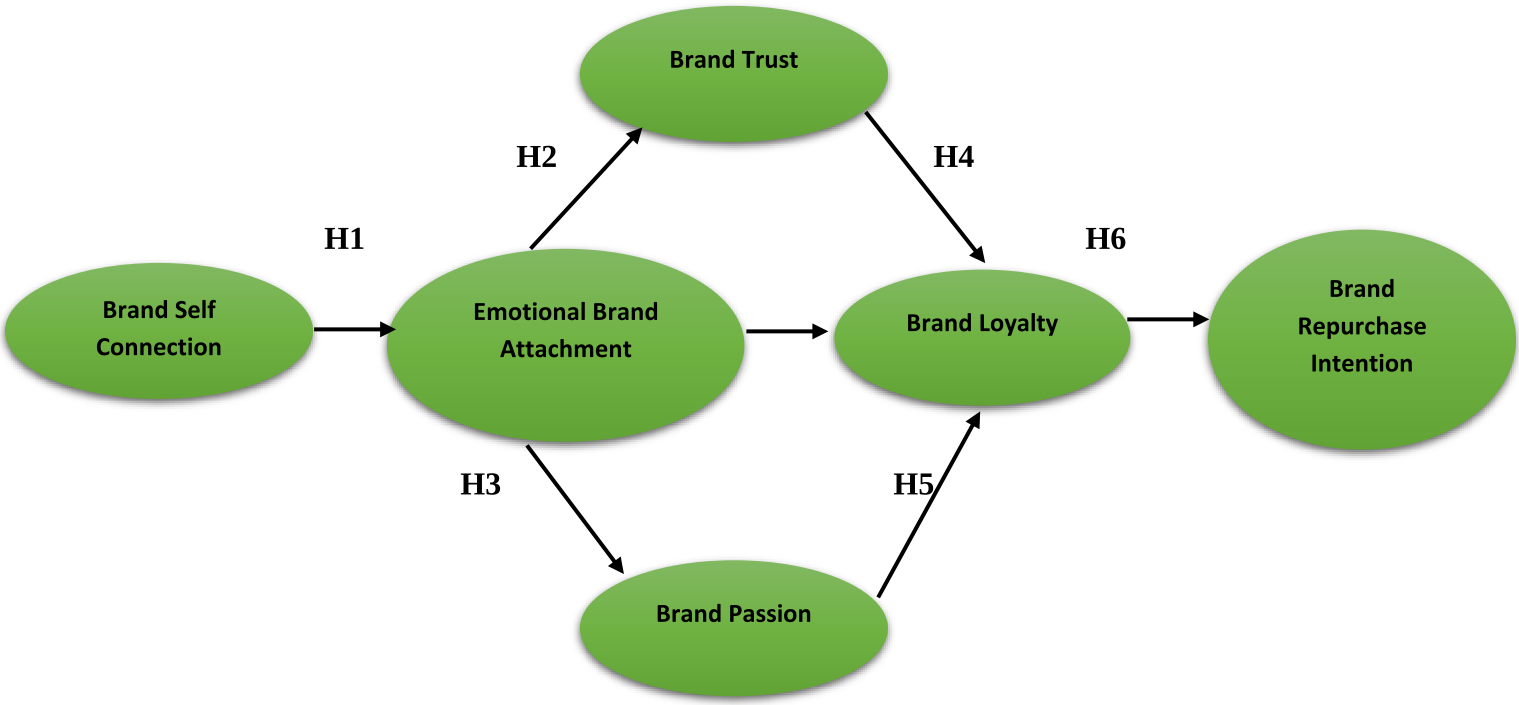


Figure 1.2: Proposed Conceptual Model

In this study, the researcher presents the following hypotheses statements considering the conceptual framework:

- Brand Self connection leads to positive Emotional Brand Attachment
- Emotional Brand Attachment leads to Brand Trust
- Emotional Brand Attachment leads to Brand Passion
- Brand Trust leads to Brand Loyalty
- Brand Passion leads to Brand Loyalty
- Brand Loyalty leads to Repurchase Intention

1.9. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section outlines **hypothesis development** of the study.

Hypothesis 1: Brand Self connection positively influences Emotional Brand Attachment

In consumer behaviour homophily is called self-congruence, that is, the extent to which the brand is congruent with the consumer's self (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill , 2006). Literature denotes that the extent that the consumer 'sees themselves' at the current state or where they 'aspire to be' greatly influences the relationship to be developed with that brand (Bagozzi, 2017). While it remains up to the individual marketer which perspective to embrace given the observed gains reported herein, the present research also supports the notion that the addition of hedonic attitude forms and/or AEs can offer an overall net gain for many marketers (Taylor , Ishida & Donovan , 2016). The relation between types of emotions (e.g., anger, pleasure) and intention to purchase has been studied in the past (Koo & Ju, 2010; Pappas et al., 2014; Verhagen & van Dolen, 2011). Therefore, based on the above discussion this study hypothesizes that: ***H1: Brand Self connection positively influences Emotional Brand Attachment***

Hypothesis 2: Emotional Brand Attachment positively influences Brand Trust

Trust has been well-defined by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) as the "willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function". Brand trust arises after consumers' evaluation of companies' offerings; and if the company provides beliefs of safety, honesty and reliability about their brands to consumers, brand trust will be generated subsequently (Kabadayi & Kocak, 2012). This proposition stems from the emerging theory of brand commitment (similar to brand loyalty) in relationship marketing (Fournier 1998; Gundlach, Achrol, and Mentzer 1995; Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande 1992; Morgan and Hunt 1994; Webster 1992). Brand trust and brand affect appear to serve as key determinants of brand loyalty or brand commitment, consistent with the concept of one-to-one marketing relationship. Therefore, based on the above discussion this study hypothesizes that: ***H2: Emotional Brand Attachment positively influences Brand Trust***

Hypothesis 3: Emotional Brand Attachment positively influences Brand Passion

Brand passion has been found to be more about the measuring of the volume of social content or sentiment and the intensity of passion and feeling (Edwards & Day, 2007). Brand passion is like a fuel that propels consumers towards specific brands from a place of deep emotional connection and drive (Edwards & Day, 2007) and it makes plausible sense that this factor would be influenced by another emotional factor; brand attachment. Passion-driven behaviors: The consumer has a high level of (i) things done in the past (aka past involvement and interaction) with the love object, (ii) a current passionate desire to use it and (iii) a willingness to invest resources such as time and money in it (Aaron C. Ahuvia) . Brand attachment has been described as the emotional closeness between the consumer and the brand, where, in the absence of the brand, consumers have a negative feeling (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Therefore, based on the above discussion this study hypothesizes that: ***H3: Emotional Brand Attachment positively influences Brand Passion.***

Hypothesis 4: Brand Trust positively influences Brand Loyalty

Brand trust leads to brand loyalty or commitment because trust creates exchange relationships that are highly valued (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Brand trust is a part of personal trust and is influenced by the consistent delivering of the brand on the agreed upon service at the agreed upon quality standard. Consumer satisfaction with a brand has a direct and indirect effect on brand loyalty (Setyawan & Imronudin, 2015). Satisfaction is a matter of a promise from a service provider to their consumer (Setyawan & Imronudin, 2015). It gives a suggestion to a brand to fulfil their promise to consumer. Therefore, based on the above discussion this study hypothesizes that: ***H4: Brand Trust positively influences Brand Loyalty.***

Hypothesis 5: Brand Passion Positively Influences Brand Loyalty

Brand passion has already been described to be more about the measuring of the volume of social content or sentiment and the intensity of passion and feeling (Edwards & Day, 2007). Brand loyalty, on the other hand, can be understood as the tendency of consumers to continuously purchase one brand's products over another brand offering a similar product and functionality (Setyawan & Imronudin, 2015). According to Dharmmesta (1999), there are four stages of loyalty based on attitudinal and behavioral approach. The four stages are cognitive, affective, conative, and behavioural loyalty. Cognitive stage using information base which point on a single brand. Brand loyalty only happen based on cognition. If consumers register a positive intense feeling (passion) for a brand, logic follows that they remain loyal to that brand, that managed to invoke those positive emotions in them and keep the cycle going. Therefore, based on the above discussion this study hypothesizes that: ***H5: Brand Passion Positively Influences Brand Loyalty.***

Hypothesis 6: Brand Loyalty positively influences Repurchase Intention

Brand loyalty is a favouritism of brand by conducting a repeat buying. (Assael, 1998). Nenadal (2015) and Lau and Lee (2000) mention that loyalty is a behaviour of buying intention and suggests other to do the same thing. According to Oliver (1997), customer's loyalty is "a deep held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to cause switching behaviour" (Habib & Aslam, 2014). Therefore, based on the above discussion this study hypothesizes that: ***H6 Brand Loyalty positively influences Repurchase Intention.***

1.9.1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND PLAN

Research design refers to the action plan that will aid the researcher in answering the research question posed by the paper (Virginia Tech, 2018). The research plan or method refers to the processes and instruments used for all the relevant information (Thomas, 2011). Qualitative research refers to data that is best observed and not measured, while thrive research refers to data sets that is best represented numerically with figures and statistics (Thomas, 2011). This study followed a positivist research philosophy, and undertook a deductive, descriptive research design using a quantitative approach with a survey method to deliver needed results. Quantitative research involves quantifying data which typically applies statistical analysis (Malhotra, 2010). Hence, as quantitative research is essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a phenomenon, questions seem directly appropriate to being answered using quantitative methods (Kent, 2015). This study was quantitative in nature. The primary data was collected by means of self-administered questionnaires and the data gathered underwent a process of statistical analysis (Malhotra, 2010).

1.9.2. POPULATION SAMPLE

The sampling method most appropriate for this research was probability sampling, as it provides every unit within the population an equal chance to be sampled (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). The probability sampling method employed was the simple random sampling method. The proposed six steps in selecting a simple random sample, which include, first: defining the target population; second: identifying a sampling frame of the target population; third: evaluating the sampling frame for under-coverage, coverage, multiple coverage and clustering and to make adjustments accordingly; fourth: assigning a unique number to each element in the frame; fifth: determining sample size, and lastly, the sixth step, which is to randomly select the targeted number of population elements (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). For this research, students in the School of Economic and Business Sciences at the University of Witwatersrand were selected. This decision was based on the diversity of the learners who are studying at the university and within this faculty.

Sample size determination is crucial in planning a statistical study and is challenging as well (Taherdoost, 2017). The sample size was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator. Raosoft considers the following factors: the margin of error, the confidence level, the population size, and the response distribution. Default settings on Raosoft were utilised to calculate sample size and had a margin of error of 5%, confidence level of 95%, population size of 30 833 (which is from the university records), and a response distribution of 50 percent. Raosoft then calculated that the sample size needed for the survey would be 380 respondents.

Using the above estimation as a guideline, total of 300 questionnaires were handed out and were used for analysis. The aim is to obtain an above 90% response rate. This sample size is consistent with sample size requirements for SEM (e.g., minimum of 10 respondents for each item in the survey instrument) (Chin, 1998). The study sample included those who are between the ages of 18 and 25 among full time students, who own a mobile phone. Potential respondents were made aware of the fact that participation in the study was voluntary and were assured of confidentiality. Informed consent to participate was provided by each respondent.

1.9.3. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

This study made use of questionnaires to collect all relevant data. Screening questions were included to ensure that respondents were eligible to take part in the study. The questionnaire initially asked respondents whether they owned a mobile phone and those who answer affirmatively were then asked how long they had used that brand. The study employed a probability sampling method using a stratified sampling technique, in which respondents were selected across campuses randomly. The study was undertaken at the University of the Witwatersrand.

A pilot study was conducted with about fifty university (50) students in a university class where actual users of different mobile brands were to identify unclear or hard-to-understand questions. Data was collected through a self-administered, cross-sectional survey. The measuring instrument was designed from previously validated scales, proper modifications were made to fit the current research context and purpose. Apart from demographic variables, all the other variables were measured using a seven-point Likert type scale. Seven-item Likert scales were customised depending on the question from the following pre-existing scales and were modified to suit the context of this study.

The first and second construct adapted is "*brand self-connection*", by categorising the brand as part of the self, a consumer develops a sense of oneness with the brand, establishing cognitive links that connect the brand with the self; the second construct was "*brand prominence*"; the third construct is "*emotional brand attachment*" that encompasses the four sub-constructs adapted from a scale by Park, MacInnis, and Priester (2006). Secondly, on the constructs, '*brand love, brand trust, brand passion'* - consumers do not necessarily become passionate about all brands. According to Thomson, MacInnis and Park (2005), people build up long-lasting high emotional relationships only with a few selected brands. As reported by Hoyer and MacInnis (2001), humans engage in passionate relationships and even religious practices with unique brands because of the desire to overcome feelings of self-uniqueness and affiliation to their in-group. *'Brand Love'* encompasses sub-constructs (sensuality, intimacy, mystery) adapted from a scale by Caroll and Ahuvia's (2006). Thirdly, '*Brand Loyalty'*, in respect of Emotional Brand Attachment and Brand love, this was measured firstly, dealing with the attachment the customer feels towards the brand, then secondly, dealing with the brand trust and Brand Love. The current study conceptually follows the notion of brand romantic love as suggested by several studies such as Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, (2010); Pawle and Cooper, (2006); Sarkar, 2011) to measure love; for the fourth construct "*brand love",* a scale by Rageh and Spinelli (2012) was adapted. There are three items to measure love; two of the items were adopted from Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen (2010) and the third item was adopted from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and represented the pleasure of love or the "joy of love" in using the brand.

Finally, the items measuring the '*brand repurchase intention'* scale were adapted from Maxham and Netemeyer (2002), purchase intent is consumers' likelihood of purchasing a particular brand in future. Numerous studies suggest that having a strong positive attitude toward a brand is an important determinant of purchase behaviour (Albrecht et al, 2011).

This study used Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach – confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) to investigate the proposed relationships. The data was captured, coded, cleaned and analysis was conducted using SPSS

23 and AMOS 23 software. Through structural equation modelling (SEM), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and path modelling were performed. Reliability of the measurement instrument was tested using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, Composite Reliability Index and the Average Value Extracted (AVE). To ensure validity, the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and the Average Value Extracted (AVE) were observed. In addition, model fits were evaluated; the Goodness of fit index (GFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI), Incremental fit index (IFI), Comparative fit index (CFI) and Normed fit index (NFI); and the Random measure of standard error approximation (RMSEA). Overall, the findings of this study relating to reliability tests, model fit statistics, convergent and discriminant validity tests provided evidence that the measurement model was satisfactory.

1.10. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

Chapter one details the rationale, background, objectives, and significance of the study, this includes the introduction, problem statement, purpose of the study, research objectives.

Chapter 2: Literature Review, Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Development

Chapter two details the literature review of the grounding theory as well as that of the research constructs and is concerned with conceptualising the research model as well as the hypothesis development.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design

Chapter three deals with the research methodology and design of the study.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Chapter four covers data analysis as well as the interpretation of the results.

Chapter 5: Conclusion, Recommendations, Ethical Considerations and Limitations of the Study

Chapter five deals with the discussion of the findings, formulating a conclusion as well as providing recommendations, ethical considerations, and the limitations of the study.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW, CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The previous chapter provided the background and the introduction to the study. The literature is a particularly important section of the study. A literature review allows the researcher to develop an understanding of research conducted before (Boote and Beile, 2005). It also allows the researcher to align the background of the study and justification for the research (Bruce, 1994). The structure of this chapter includes the breakdown of the research context (Brand Attachment, Consumer Brand – Relationship, History of Mobile Phones both Globally and in the context of South Africa and Generation Y), theoretical grounding, hypotheses development.

2.1. BRAND ATTACHMENT

Having been described as the emotional connection between humans and brands, brand attachment has become an integral area of interest for marketing houses in most industries (Park, et al., 2008). Results from numerous studies have shown that humans have the ability to form the same relational attachment to 'things' as they do other humans and animals (Park, et al., 2008). Sciarrino described the emotional elements involved in the formation of brand attachment in content marketing as the following (Sciarrino, 2015):

- ***Affection***: Usually this element involves the brand arousing personal emotions from the potential buyer that appeals to an area in their life they are already most fond of. This could be their childhood, family or even aspirations. The quickest way brands can evoke such a reaction from the buyer is by the name (Sciarrino, 2015).
- ***Connection***: After the affection has been evoked, it will need to be maintained by the brand through consistent and reliable practices that further persuade the buyer to maintain their buying of the brand or item (Sciarrino, 2015). This develops into a kind of connection or 'relationship' (Storm, 2015).
- ***Passion:*** After the establishment of the relationship between the buyer and the brand, most buyers develop feelings of growing 'passion' for these brands (Sciarrino, 2015). Passion can be defined as a strong and sometimes uncontrollable emotion, that finds root in a human and that can prove to be difficult to convince against (Storm, 2015).

When these three emotions are at play, it becomes possible that there is attachment being formed. Beyond brand loyalty, brand attachment becomes a part of the human, a part of their identity and an integrated influence on their actions (Bagozzi, 2017). Brand attachment can therefore be further pronounced as the strength of the cognitive and emotional bond connecting the brand with the buyer (Park, et al., 2008). This characterisation involves the vital elements of the connection between the brand and the buyer and additionally, the cognitive and emotional bond, which is what evokes the readiness from the buyer to invest their resources on the brand (Park, et al., 2008).

Brand-buyer connection addresses the extent to which the brand is associated or linked to the buyer, while carrying out its intended purpose to the gain of the buyer (Park, et al., 2010). Similar to how human infants grow attachment to their mothers from their mothers tending to and meeting their needs (comfort, food, warmth, presence), buyers develop attachments from brands' reliability to fulfil their needs (Thomson, 2005). Simply put, buyers develop attachment to brands that can be trusted to fulfil needs that gratify the buyer in one way or the other (Bagozzi, 2017). The needs of a buyer can be broken down into the following consumption categories.

- ***Experiential consumption:*** with the fundamental shift occurring in consumer values towards experiences over things; more consumers have been found to spend more on travel, leisure and products that evoke an emotional reaction over the hard defined 'shopping for what you need' (Lofman, 1991). Consumers can shop for brands that gratify them and make them feel 'a certain way' while eradicating any negative feelings (Ramirez & Merunka, 2019). Brands can play a powerful role when they can be consistently relied on to provide gratification through the channel of visually appealing or hedonic elements that have instant mood-altering properties (Lofman, 1991). The gratification from such brands can be delivered through the combination of visual, auditory, thermal experiences that also have the double effect of negating any existing negative emotions (Aureliano-Silva & Strehla, 2018). This addresses experiential consumption as being heavily linked to 'mood lifting' brands that increase the buyer's ability to cope with their daily life struggles and to maintain emotional and mental stability. A brand being able to meet the buyer's need for self-gratification and succeed in the eradication of undesired emotions, thoughts and mood consistently can result in the formation of an attachment.

- ***Functional consumption:*** this is the oldest of the types of consumption recognised today as it addresses consumers who shop for brands to meet their needs or for the enablement of their functionality (Rhajbal, et al., 2017). A brand being able to continuously meet this need and essentially support the day-to-day function of that buyer's life, can result in the formation of an attachment. Strong bond attachments result from the brand creating a sense of efficiency and capability on the part of the buyer, enabling the buyer to pursue goals and tasks. Product performance enables the self (Lofman, 1991).

- ***Symbolic consumption:*** this consumption type refers to the choice to purchase a product or brand made by a buyer because that brand has a symbolic meaning for them that others may not share (Hirschman, 1981). This meaning can be invoked by their childhood, aspirations, affiliations and background (Prónay & Hetesi, 2014). The main three ways that brands promote symbolic consumption are by representing one's ideal past. In this case, the brands enable brand-buyer connections by fostering one's ideal past, origin or core self; providing a sense of belonging, security and comfort (Hirschman, 1981). The brand evokes feelings of nostalgia and deep-rooted memories that protect buyers from the growing and sometimes unsettling need for change or growth by keeping the buyer's past alive (Hirschman, 1981). Marketers can promote a brand to symbolic buyers by using a symbolic angle to target a group of people directly linked to that choice of symbol and use this external appeal to entice purchase (Prónay & Hetesi, 2014). The second way brands can enrich the buyer is by symbolically representing the buyer's current self by adequately reflecting who the buyer is and what they believe and stand for (Rhajba Khouilid, Saligane & Chakor, 2017). Brands have managed to display buyer's stances on the environment, climate change, animal, and nature preservation and more by simply aligning themselves to these causes and attracting all the likeminded to purchase. The brands provide the buyer's ideal selves by representing their values and beliefs and making their purchase more than just the acquiring of a product but additionally, taking a stand and publicly declaring their alliance (Bagozzi, 2017). Finally, brands can reflect the buyer's aspirations and ideal future self (Bagozzi, 2017). The buyers often feel personally enriched after this purchase, appealing to an internal need to have their experiences or backgrounds validated – which can result in the formation of an attachment.

With increasing research indicating a positive relation between emotional brand attachment and brand loyalty, more companies are now looking into how to make the consumers invested in the product they are selling. 'Ideal self' and 'Actual self' are two of the most common approaches used by marketers to make the buyer identify with the product (Han, et al., 2018).

The more the brand can create the experiences that lead the buyer into feeling united and unanimous with the brand, the stronger the connection becomes. The more the buyer views the brand as an extension of themselves, the more the idea of losing the brand causes distress and the more the buyer goes out of their way to ensure continued supply of the brand and sustained resources to source the brand (Hollenbeck, 2012).

A stronger attachment between the brand and buyer can result in a higher unit price for the brand, therefore reiterating that a buyer's attachment to a brand is directly related to the buyer's willingness to pay the price (Hollenbeck, 2012). Once this attachment is established, concurrent devaluation of competing brands occurs, the willingness to forgive mistakes grows and the readiness to stay in the relationship grows. These factors influence the brand stability and significantly lower any costs related to customer retention. Buyers are willing to promote the product for free by virtue of word of mouth, engage in brand display and bringing loved ones into the fold (Han, et al., 2018).

2.1.1 Cognitive and Emotional Brand Attachment

The bonds that form the connection between the brand and buyer are both emotional and cognitive (Park, et al., 2007). Personalised experiences and tailored memories of the brand can awaken rich cognitive linkages that connect the brand with the personal elements of the buyer (Park, et al., 2007). Since these linkages are inherently intertwined with one's personal self and experiences, these bonds connecting the two are also emotional. This emotional aspect of the bond is what evokes the 'hot effect' as defined by Mikulincer, Gillath & Halevy (2001). This is defined as the stimulant to the longing for the brand, gratification and satisfaction at the point of acquiring it, displeasure at not attaining it and fear over the potential loss of the developed relationship and the hopeful attitude of attaining it in the future (Mikulincer, et al., 2001). Emotional brand attachment can therefore be described as the representation of the commitment in buyer-brand relationships that defines the strength of the bond between the buyer and the brand, and the extent to which the buyer remains loyal to that brand (Thomson, et al., 2005). Buyer-brand relationships entail several factors that include love, commitment, closeness with passion and dedication; however, attachment is the 'core of all strong brand relationships' (Fournier, 1998).

The strength of the cognitive and emotional bonds between the buyer and the brand have two effects. Firstly, brand related feelings and spirits become highly accessible and easily retrievable from memory at the pleasure of the buyer (Van Jaarsveld, 2010). Secondly, the brand, having become self-relevant and having identified itself closely with the identity of the buyer – becomes a prime candidate for any of the buyer's resources (Van Jaarsveld, 2010). This indicates that the buyer is more willing to allocate resources (money, time, etc.) to the procuring of the brand and in instances, over other choices. As a result, Choo et al. (2012) deduce that the emotional closeness a consumer feels towards the brand is the determinant factor on what brand they might select from the shelf.

Current studies have endeavoured to discover the several prominent determinants of emotional attachment. Japutra et al. (2014) conclude that concepts such as self-agreement, reputation, and trust act as antecedents of emotional attachment, whereas some variables, including intention to recommend, resilience to negative information and defending the brand are considered outcomes. A survey conducted in 2012 by Kandampully on luxury brands concluded that emotional attachment is crucial in the resulting effect of buyer-brand connection (Pourazad & Pare, 2014).

Figure 2.1 represents a summary view of the brand attachment elements and how they all build together to lead to the final stage of brand attachment, the brand evangelist. This is the stage where the consumer is a vocal advocate for the brand and publicly declares the brand to be an extension of themselves. The entire process begins with the brand gaining the consumer's attention, mostly through targeted and skilled marketing. This then further leads to the consumer's attraction to the brand after the initial assessment of functionality relevance and relatability. After the consumer picks up the brand, the experience factor comes in; in sensory, emotional, and symbolic feelings. The experience of the brand is what will determine whether the user will adopt the brand into their lives and return to purchase it again at a later stage.

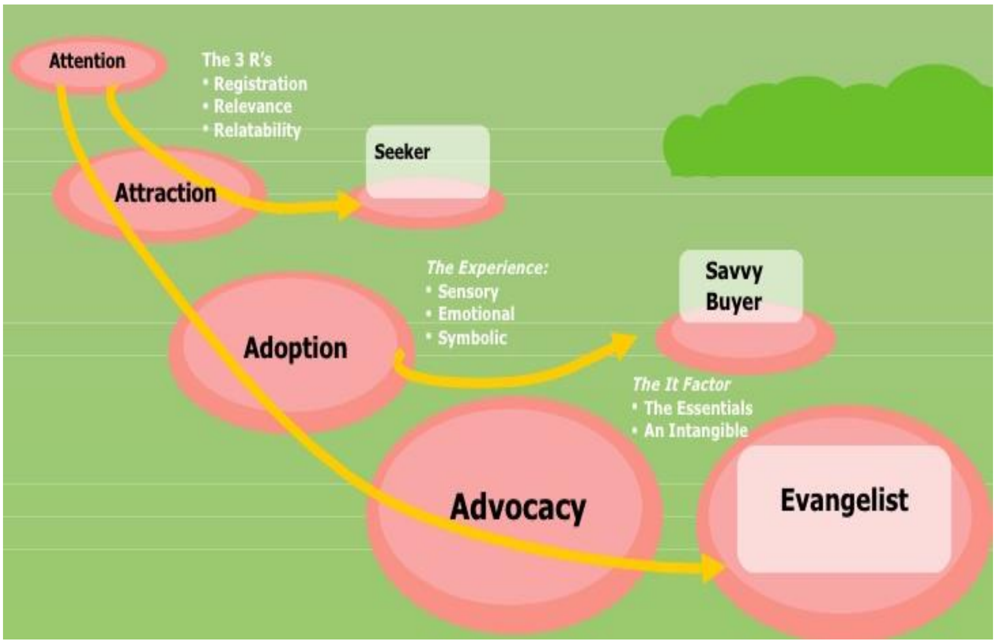


Figure 2.1: Brand Attachment model (KC Healthcare Communications, LLC, 2008)

2.1.2 The Results of Brand Attachment

The results of brand attachment can be described as the resulting behaviours from the buyer's established attachment to that brand in question. The consequences are described below:

- ***Brand Passion:*** passion was first discovered in interpersonal relationships in the beginning of the 1990s but only recent brand marketing research has included passion as an outcome of brand attachment (Loureiro, 2012). Passion can be described as a state of intense longing for union with another and has also been included in Sternberg's (2011) triangular theory of love. In brand marketing, however, passion has been described as a primarily affective and positive attitude towards a specific brand (Bauer, Heinrich & Isabel, 2007). More studies have recognised the causes of brand passion to be brand self-expression, brand trust and brand identification (Methaq & Sallam, 2018). Moreover, more causes have been found to be brand individuality and brand status and respect in the eyes of the consumer (Methaq & Sallam, 2018). Albert, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2008) have detailed that brand passion is made up of two components: the brand being on the buyer's mind and the romanticism and idealism of the brand by the buyer. In addition, the buyer feeling a sense of closeness to the brand and identifying him or herself with the brand positively influences the emotional attachment to the brand developed (Pourazad & Pare, 2014). It is because of this that it is sensible to deduce that when a consumer is emotionally attached to a brand, the sense of self-brand connection and apparent affiliation with brand image produces passionate feelings.

- ***Positive Word of Mouth:*** Consumers can be the key representatives and advertisers for brands (Fullerton, 2005; Harrison-Walker, 2001). Anderson (1998) describes the concept of Word of Mouth as casual communication without formal structure amongst consumers concerning their assessments of and experience with the brands (Pourazad & Pare, 2014). This casual communication comprises sharing positive and optimistic or negative experiences and recommendations with others around their circle of influence. Sundaram et al. (1998) have accounted the buyer's involvement in the brand production and performance (an expressed personal interest that results from the possession of the brand and the use of it) as an important motive for positive word of mouth communication (Pourazad & Pare, 2014). Therefore, the buyers who perceive a brand to have prestigious value as of their assessment, will display a higher degree of personal interest and develop optimistic spirits and feelings for a brand, which in turn, will lead to an increased positive word of mouth communication (Pourazad & Pare, 2014).
- ***Purchase intentions:*** Maxham and Netemeyer (2002) stated that purchase intention and determination is the buyer's probability of purchasing a brand again in the future. Several studies suggest that having a durable positive and optimistic attitude toward a brand is a significant factor that determines purchase behaviour (e.g. Albrecht et al, 2011; Miniard, Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). A study conducted by Ilicic and Webster in 2011 examined consumer–celebrity attachment within multiple endorsement deals and advertisement circumstances. They found that purchase intention is most likely to occur when buyers are strongly attached to the celebrity endorsing a brand. Additionally, existing literature reports observed support for a positive relationship between emotional attachment and consumers' intention to buy and the positive impact of affective attitudes on purchase intentions for luxury brands (Pourazad & Pare, 2014).
- ***Pay the Premium Price:*** Preceding studies have implied that the degree to which a buyer links high value with a brand governs the extent to which they are willing to pay a higher price for that specific brand (Starr & Rubinson 1978; Thomson et al., 2005). Luxury and extravagant brands are frequently associated with higher value in the eyes of the consumer (Pourazad & Pare, 2014). The principle is that the premium brands offer symbolic benefits which relate to the formation of an emotional bond between

consumer and the brand (Pourazad & Pare, 2014). Consumers associate premium prices to brands to which they feel emotionally connected and brands that allow them to express themselves (Kim & Sullivan, 2019). Consequently, it can then be suggested that emotional bonds lead to higher allocated value for a brand by the consumer (Kim & Sullivan, 2019). Additionally, recent experimental findings deliver support for the concept that emotional affection toward a brand influences consumers' acceptance of a high price (Pourazad & Pare, 2014).

- ***Devaluation of Alternatives*:** In previous psychology literature, whilst studying the dynamics of interpersonal relationships, Lydon et al. (2003) determined that commitment encourages negative appraisals of attractive alternatives and replacements (Pourazad & Pare, 2014). Earlier studies concluded that individuals who are more committed to their relationships with brands and products tend to view possible substitute partners in less favourable terms (Loureiro, 2012). Their favour for the chosen brand goes beyond a liking towards the said brand but a direct dislike for any competing brands in that product space. For these consumers, the negative evaluation of the substitute partner is a matter of upholding their chosen commitment to the chosen brand and consolidating the chosen partnership (Loureiro, 2012).

2.2 CONSUMER BRAND RELATIONSHIPS

Consumer brand research grew in popularity in the late 1990s and as more companies and brand owners grew in the desire to know how consumers relate to brands, the more this research has taken the focal point in the marketing industry (Gómez-Suárez, Martínez-Ruiz & Martínez-Caraballo, 2017). Brands and companies want to learn more about why consumers choose one brand over the other, why they pay what they pay for brands and why they keep coming back for more of that brand. There has been earlier research done in the field of consumer brand relationships that aimed at understanding buyer feelings towards brands, their personalities, characteristics and brands as a relationship counterpart to the buyer (Ambroise, Ferrandi & Merunka, 2005). The understanding of consumer-brand relationships has unearthed research in the fields of brand commitment, brand attachment, brand trust, brand loyalty and brand love (Ghani & Tuhin, 2018). Considering these factors, it is therefore clear that consumer-brand relationships are multidimensional and comprise different elements all working together for the final consumer-brand relationship result (Papista & Dimitriadis, 2012).

The first researchers to introduce the concept of consumer-brand relationships were Shimp and Madden in 1988, where they published a paper focusing on the '*Triangular theory of love'*

(Abdghani & Tuhin, 2016). The researchers defined consumer brand relationships as the relations developed by consumers with their respective consumption objects. These relations are governed by various aspects that range from feelings of antipathy, fondness and even, love (Abdghani & Tuhin, 2016). Further on, Fournier (1998) stated that a brand may become an active relationship partner for the consumer and provide meanings in a social context. Kumar in 2006 defined brand relationships to be the act of knowing how people make long-term commitments to objects that they buy and utilise on a common basis and use that knowledge to better sell and distribute the brand in question (Melewar, et al., 2017). In 2015, Blackston and Lebar further extended the Fourier theory developed in 1998 in the definition of brand relationships by including the effects of organisational and internal culture in the alignment of these relationship principles. A further definition given for consumer brand relationships has been by Keller (2001), who stated that this relationship describes the extent to which the consumer feels they are in tune with the brand on a personal level.

Fournier's 1998 research on consumer-brand relationships considered data sourced from 112 participating consumers. The study identified seven theoretical consumer-brand relationship scopes (Abdghani & Tuhin, 2016):

- Voluntary vs imposed
- Intense vs superficial
- Positive vs negative
- Symmetric vs asymmetric
- Enduring vs short-term
- Public vs private
- Formal vs informal

Additionally, based on the principles of interpersonal relationships, further research was conducted by Degon in 2000, where he proposed three consumer-based relationships dimensions; these being assistance relationships, pedagogical relationships and authority relationships (Ghani & Tuhin, 2016). Assistance relationships entail the brand adjusting its functions, specifications and design to help the consumer and cater to the needs of that consumer (Ghani & Tuhin, 2016). The second is pedagogical relationships and this relationship type considers the unequal contribution to the livelihood of the consumer by the brand in a way the consumer can never return to the brand (Abdghani & Tuhin, 2016). This relationship mirrors that of a toddler and their parent where the toddler is actively dependant on the parent until he/she is old enough to fend for themselves at the different stages of growth (Blackwell, et al., 2006). The last consumer-brand relationship described by Degon is the authority relationship; where the brand imposes its authority and personality onto the consumer and the consumer essentially, follows the lead of the brand (Ghani & Tuhin, 2018).

Figure 2.2 below gives a summary of the dynamics that define consumer-brand relationships as describes by Judhie Setiawan (2010)

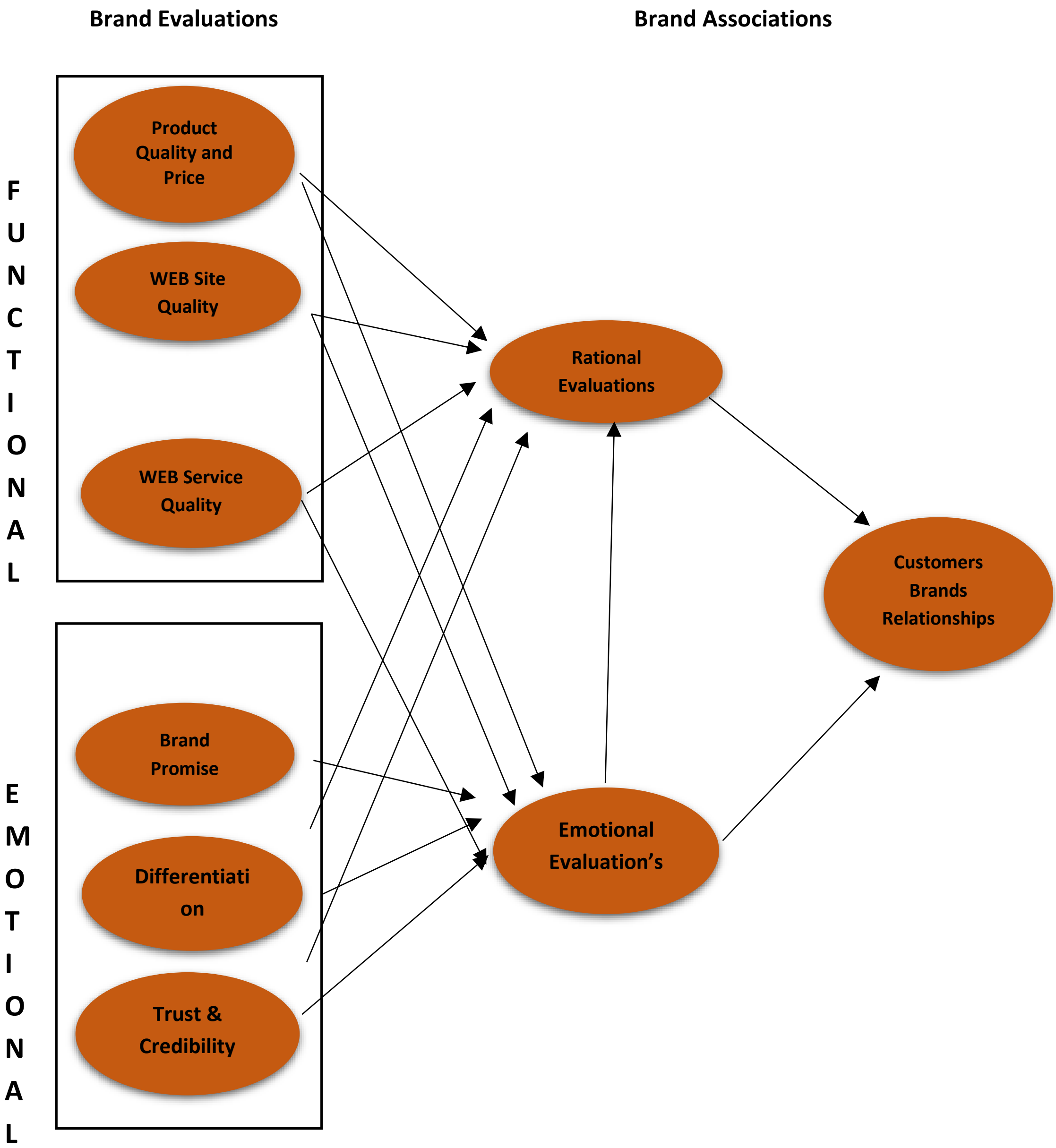


Figure 2.2: Customer-Brand Relationships explained (Setiawan, 2010)

Figure 2.2 denotes all the different facets that go into the building of a consumer-brand relationship and shows how all these angles affect and influence each other to make it to the result. The functional and emotional evaluations of brands, although different, both work in arousing rational and emotional evaluations from the consumer that eventually lead to the formation of the consumer-brand relationship and the relationship's upkeep (Setiawan, 2010). Under the functional sensory is the product quality and price and the service delivery quality. Under the emotional sensory is the brand promise, differentiation from other brands and the consumer's belief in the brand's credibility (Setiawan, 2010). All these facets cross functionally build into rational and emotional evaluations. This summarises the formation of consumer-brand relationships and all the facets involved.

2.3 Theoretical Grounding

Brand love

The 'brand love' construct is a relatively recent marketing tool that applies to products with a major hedonic component. Although there is no universally accepted definition of love, anyone knows when s/he is in love with another being or object (Albert & Merunka, 2013). However, the interest in brand love arises not only as concept on its own but also as a dimension within other concepts, such as the relationship of brand quality and emotional brand attachment (Batra & Ahuvia, 2012).

Batra and Ahuvia *(*2012) also emphasise the importance of brand love within the area of consumer behaviour and linking this with important concepts such as higher prices, loyalty, communication and word-of-mouth (Batra & Ahuvia, 2012). The existing studies on brand love indicate that it has an important influence on several marketing variables (Batra & Ahuvia, 2012). In addition, it offers a subtle understanding of the different facets of the other brand-related constructs, many of them related to social identification and consistency of the image of the self (Whan Park, et al., 2010). Research done by Belk (1988) suggests that the possession of an object is an extension of the 'self' and that an interpersonal relationship can exist between brands and individuals (Belk, 1988). The concept of brand love can be defined as the degree of emotional attachment and love that a satisfied consumer feels regarding a brand (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

Brand love includes the following aspects: passion about the brand, the connection/attachment to the brand, the positive evaluation of the brand, positive emotion in response to the brand and the declaration of love for the brand (Whang ,Allen, Sahoury & Zhang, 2004). The brand love involves integration of the brand into the consumer's identity (Whang, et al., 2004). Brand love is not just an emotional response more intense than the connection to the brand because it involves integration of the brand with the consumer's identity and makes it difficult for consumers to have negative feelings towards the brand (Arruda-Filhoa, Cabusas, Dholakia, & Nikhilesh , 2010). Love is an outcome of bi-directional interaction between two partners, yet its highly dynamic interactivity makes it challenging for researchers to study (Whang, et al., 2004).

A summary of five prominent theories and their dimensions or styles of love that have been the foundation of the theories used in this research is shown in the table below and shows the structure of a romantic consumer-brand relationship.

Style	Definition	Description
Eros	Romantic, Passionate	The search for a beloved whose psychical presentation of self-love embodies an image already held in the mind of the lover.
Ludus	Game-Playing love	Playful or game love. Permissive and pluralistic. The degree of 'involvement' is shallow Playing carefully controlled, jealousy is eschewed, and relationships are often multiple and Love relatively short-lived
Storage	Friendship- Love	Based on slowly developing affection and companionship, a gradual disclosure of self, love an avoidance of self-conscious passion, and an expectation of long-term commitment.
Mania	Possessive Dependent Love	An obsessive, jealous, emotionally intense love style characterised by preoccupation. Dependent with the beloved and a need for repeated reassurance of being loved.

Agape	All-giving, Selfless Love	Altruistic love, given because the lover sees it as his duty to love without expectation. Selfless of reciprocity. Gentle, caring, and guided by reason more than emotion.
Pragma	Logical "Shopping List" Love	Conscious consideration of 'vital statistics' about a suitable beloved. Education, vocation, religion, age, and numerous other demographic characteristics of the potential beloved are considered in the search for a compatible match.

Table 2.1: Descriptions of Each of Lee's Love Attitude Styles (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986)

Brand attachment

Bowlby's (1982) work on attachment in the context of parent–infant relationships defined an attachment as an emotionally distinct bond between a person and a specific object. The bond varies in its strength, with some persons displaying a frail bond with an attachment object and others displaying a strong bond (Whan Park, et al., 2010). Emotions are often evoked when attachment is strong because emotions are inherent to brand–self connection and prominence factors. Emotional connection to a brand is based on a deep attachment (Batra & Ahuvia, 2012). The idea that attachment involves a bond (with the brand included as part of the self) suggests that a critical aspect of attachment involves the cognitive and emotional connection between the brand and the self, defined here and elsewhere as brand-self connection (Chaplin & John, 2005). The figure below shows the contributors to the brand-self connection and the result thereof.

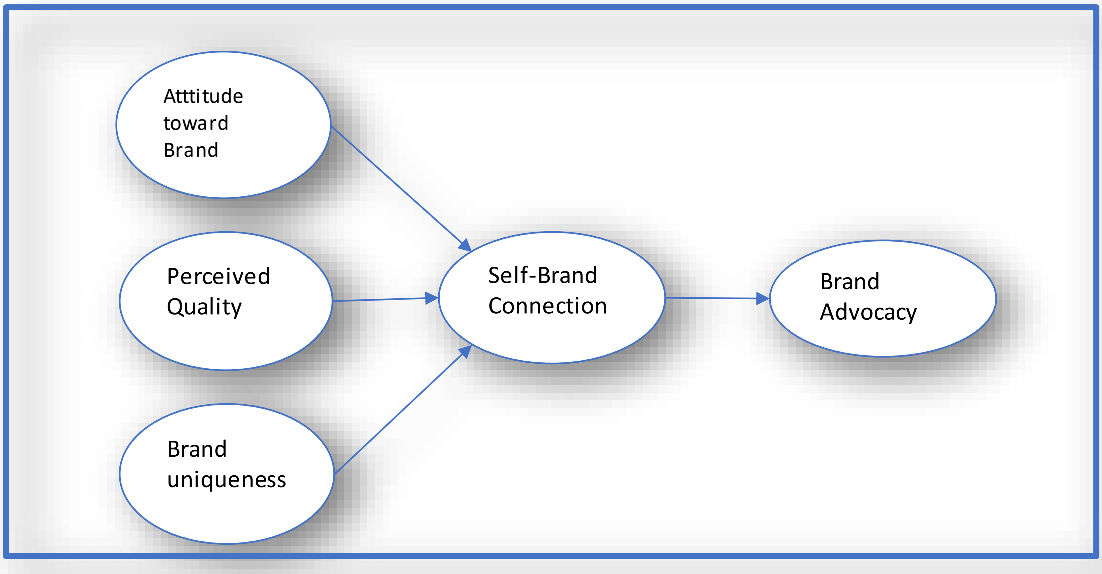


Figure 2.3: Self Brand Connection (Chaplin & John, 2005)

Perceived quality is the consumer's subjective assessment about a product's overall excellence (Zeithaml, 1988). Several factors can influence a consumer's assessment of quality including: personal product experience, special needs and consumption (Yoo, et al., 2000). The mobile industry motivates consumers to purchase mobile devices based on several reasons, including the quality of the products. High perceived quality will motivate a consumer to choose a brand over competing products (Netemeyer, et al., 2004). Brand uniqueness on the other hand, is determined by consumers' assessments of features that distinguish brands from each other (Chaplin & John, 2005). In the mobile phone industry, the key features are emphasised to the consumers during advertising. Brand uniqueness is often established through advertising claims or from past experiences with the brand (Netemeyer, et al., 2004). Unique aspects of brands may impact both consumer preferences and their willingness to pay higher prices (Chaplin & John, 2005).

In addition to brand–self connection, previous research suggests that the extent to which positive feelings and memories about the attachment object are perceived as 'top of mind' also serves as an indicator of attachment. According to Mikulincer (1998) and Collins (1996), positive memories about the attachment object (another person) are more prominent for people who are highly attached to an attachment object than for people who show weak attachment – brand prominence therefore makes up a significant part of this ecosystem (Chaplin & John, 2005). The notion that brand–self connections develop over time and through experience suggests that brand-related thoughts and feelings become part of a person's memory and vary in the perceived fluency or the ease with which they are suggested. This component is called brand prominence (Chaplin & John, 2005). Prominence reflects the salience of the cognitive and affective bond that connects the brand to the self. This salience is reflected by the perceived ease and frequency with which brand-related thoughts and feelings are recalled. Thus, consumers' attachment in relation to two brands with the same degree of brand–self connection is greater for the brand that they perceive as more prominent (Whan Park, et al., 2010).

2.4 History of Mobile Phones

This section details the historical revolution of mobile phones and how they have come to be as known today. This literature study encompasses both the global and African context.

2.4.1 Global History of Mobile Phones

The history of mobile phones cannot be discussed without the first mention of Mr Graham Bell's invention of the telephone. Dreams of direct communication over electric wires seemed impossible and farfetched when the Ancient Greeks introduced the thought and possibility (Mead, 2015). Mr Bell came as the first hope that the possibility of a telephone could be a reality when he invented the electric-speaking telephone in 1876 (Beauchamp, 2010). Even though its invention had been anticipated for a long time, it arrived without a clear and agreed purpose, and was received simply as a curiosity (India Today, 2018).

History shows that society's adoption of the mobile phone was like that of the fixed-line telephone; in the early days of the mobile phone, the media showed the same lack of interest as they did in the fixed line telephone (Clark, 2012). The earliest trace of the mobile phone is found in the United States of America (Clark, 2012). As early as 1939, the New York World Fair issued an article on an exciting new technology with a promising future (Clark, 2012). The evolution of mobile phones and their success can be attributed to the introduction of radio frequency; which was introduced first and progressed to the first experiment with mobile frequencies in 1971 (Farley, 2007).

The delay in the progression of wireless technology can be attributed to many factors, including; lack of technical resources, discouraging lukewarm reaction, and to some extent; excessive regulation also contributed to this delay in progression (Goldsmith, 2005). The adoption by society of new technological devices usually takes time and any new technology must be given time for the public to fully accommodate it (Brown, 2001). New developments in technology usually means that the old is being done away with and the new is taking over that space and this transformation can challenge social norms and social practices (Kasavana, 2005). The wireless revolution began only after low cost microprocessors and digital switching became available, which eliminated the technical and monetary limitations researchers at the time were experiencing (Goldsmith, 2005)

The telephone use, like the use of other technological objects; is a constructed combination of habits, beliefs and procedures embedded in elaborate cultural codes of communication (Brown, 2001). The uses are a distribution of competences and performances between people and devices, the result of how people project their respective social worlds onto technologies and what their justifications and fears are (Hamill, 2005).

2.4.2 History of Mobile Phones in the African Market

Africa's communication landscape has undergone tremendous change since the introduction of mobile telephony. As the statistics show, mobile phones have spread remarkably fast across the African continent- one in fifty Africans had access to a mobile phone in the year 2000 and by year 2008 the figure was one in three (Bruijn, et al., 2009). This is a revolution in terms of voice communication, especially for areas where land lines were still rare at the end of the 20th century (Bruijn, et al., 2009). Studies continue to show how this new cellular technology is shaping social realities in African societies, and how Africans and their societies are, in turn, shaping the technologies of communication (Bruijn, et al., 2009). Technologies are not seen as determining society as such, and there is no one-way direction in the relationship between technology and society. On the contrary, society and technology have proven to be interdependent entities, each influencing the other's direction and progression (Bruijn, et al., 2009).

The expansion of mobile phone use in Sub-Saharan Africa has been remarkable when considering the speed of adoption, spatial penetration and the fact that this is an essentially spontaneous development firmly embedded in private sector activity (Porter & Hampshire, 2012). In 2006, Africa already had an estimated 192.5 million mobile phone users, compared to the registered 25.3 million in 2001, and it had increased further to 280 million by 2008 (UNCTAD, 2010). Country-level adoption and usage rates suggest that in many countries, mobile phone use, even in poor households, is rapidly becoming an everyday part of life

(Porter, et al., 2012). Much of this use is based on shared access, rather than ownership, but for millions of very poor children and young people, the mobile phone is now perceived as an essential requisite: an object of desire and a symbol of success (Porter & Hampshire, 2012). The demand for mobile phones in Africa in the last few years has been more than what most people expected and continues to expand; operators have traditionally targeted urban areas, but the demand from rural and low-income areas have exceeded all expectations (Scott, et al., 2014). The use of phones has already become part of African culture and as the urban market has already become saturated, the next saturated demographic of phone users will be rural-based (Scott, et al., 2014).

Numerous literatures show how the uptake of mobile phones in Africa is already generating economic growth and offers many potential developmental opportunities from job searching, trade networks, mobile banking and remittance oversight, to health management, m-learning, community development and election monitoring, all with potential implications for young lives (Porter & Hampshire, 2012). Social uses, such as keeping in touch with family and friends, has also contributed to the societal integration and livelihood improvement that mobile phones have introduced (Scott, et al., 2014). An expansion of this livelihood improvement considers a sense of well-being, improved income (e.g. arranging cash transfers from family members), and reduced risk (e.g. call for assistance) (Scott, et al., 2014). There is a growing body of evidence of the indirect impact of mobile phones on the poor arising from improvements in the delivery of pro-poor services that can be achieved through mobile phone-based applications (Scott, et al., 2014).

2.4.3 History of Mobile Phones in South Africa

The first recorded telephonic company in South Africa is in 1878, where Adolph Boetter, a Cape Town native, imported telephones from Siemens and Halske for his interest and to trade (MyBroadband, 2015). The imported telephones were used experimentally as a link between the Telegraph’s Chief Clerk and the St George Street Post Office (MyBroadband, 2015). These telephones were used between the period of 1878-1882 and worked over private wires and were mainly referred to as Bell telephones. It was only in the latter half of 1882 that a telephone exchange was established in Port Elizabeth and this subscription has 20 subscribers signing up that year (MyBroadband, 2017). This led to the first switchboard exchange that was a cross-bar return Schwizer Commutator, which utilised the Gower-Bell instruments for their implementation (MyBroadband, 2015).

Figure 2.4: The original telephone used in Cape Town to conduct the first speech test in SA in 1878 used by Boettger (MyBroadband, 2015)

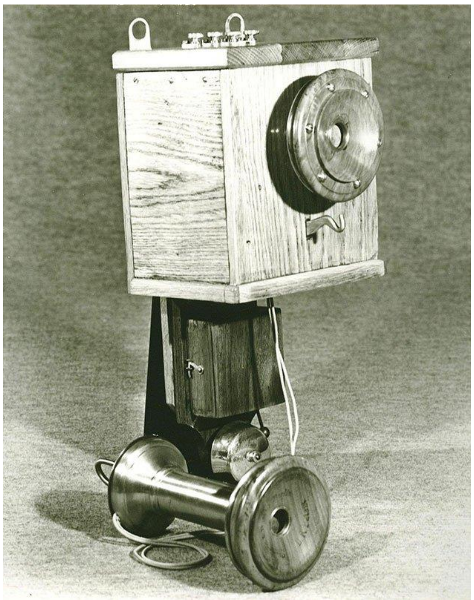


Figure 2.5: Siemens and Halske phone, which was the first ever telephone import into South Africa

2.5 The Mobile Phone Industry

The mobile phone has grown from being a nice-to-have luxury and into a need for most consumers and economies; at present, it is an integral part of everyday life, it is only found bizarre when it is absent (North, et al., 2014). As stated by Katz and Aakhus (2002), “the spread of mobile phones is affecting people’s lives and relationships and affects how people interact, do their business, travel etc.” Figure 2.6 shows all the different social components that contribute to the overall use and need for a phone by consumers (Katz & Aakhus, 2002) .

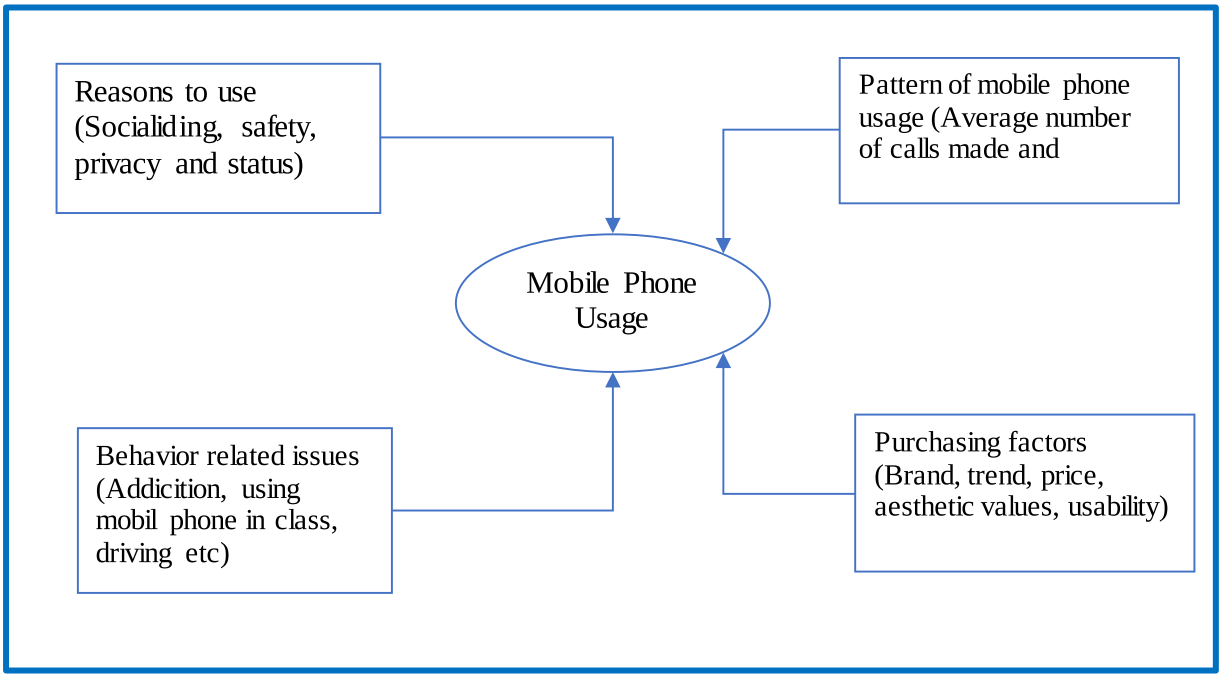


Figure 2.6: Social components that contribute to mobile phone usage (North, et al., 2014)

The mobile phone industry in Africa is therefore becoming increasingly more important because of the following components:

- ***Infrastructure***: as an infrastructure service, mobile phones are improving efficiency of markets, promoting investment, reducing risk from disasters, and contributing to empowerment (North, et al., 2014);
- ***Economic sector***: as a stand-alone economic sector; mobile operators (sellers, distributors) can make big profits, and pay taxes, contributing to the economy (Katz & Aakhus, 2002);
- ***Development tool***: case studies present innovative applications where mobile phones have increased the efficiency of service delivery to the poor (e.g. weather information,

market prices), or opened opportunities for new services e.g. tracking of diseases (Katz & Aakhus, 2002).

- ***Financial services provider:*** as a household expenditure tool that maintains social capital and contributes to economic management (North, et al., 2014).

Research further shows that in 'typical' rural districts of Africa, up to 80% of households make regular use of phones (Katz & Aakhus, 2002). One of the key features driving growth in mobiles is that they are mobile, and inherently suited to remote areas with poor infrastructure (Katz & Aakhus, 2002). In addition, the prepaid system of low denomination scratch cards is perfectly matched to the economic situation of many Africans, and it is recognised that mobiles offer potentially cheap means of communicating, especially using SMS and 'beeping' (Katz & Aakhus, 2002). We can conclude from the above that phones (especially mobiles) are already part of African culture and are not just for the elite.

The Modern smartphone

There is a big difference on the hardware introduced by brands in 2007 and the phones in the market today (Andrew, 2018). The smartphones on offer today offer bigger storage capacity, better cameras, faster processor, streaming services, social networking applications capability and faster browsing capacity (Andrew, 2018). The popularity of the smartphone has grown steadily over time and has become a steady need for the consumer. Figure 2.7 shows this growth over a period in the United States.

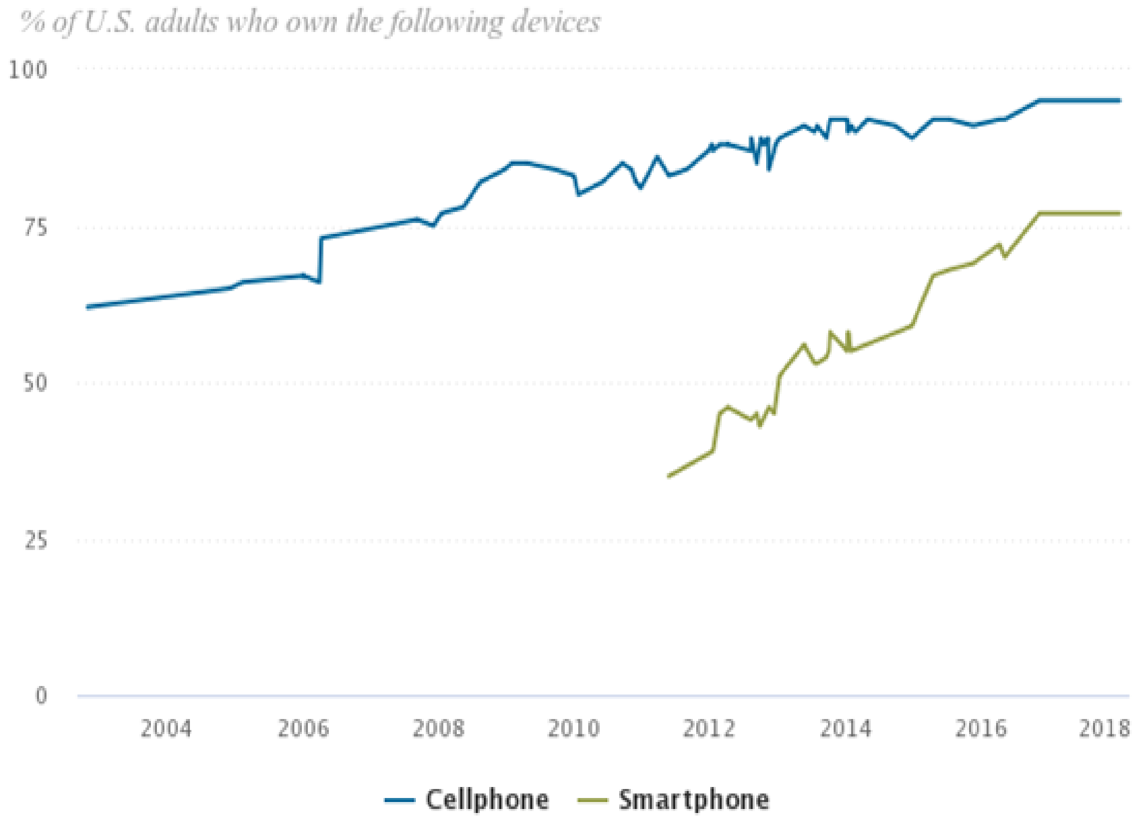


Figure 2.7: Cell phone vs Smartphone growth over time (Andrew, 2018)

Additionally, as smartphones become more advanced, they need just as advanced operating systems to help to function at absolute optimal. The growth of operating system companies over the years has reflected the growth in mobile devices as the demand grew together. Stat counter, in 2018, reported that the Android operating system was the most used operating system in the world on mobile devices, followed by the Microsoft Windows system. Full operating system usages are detailed below.

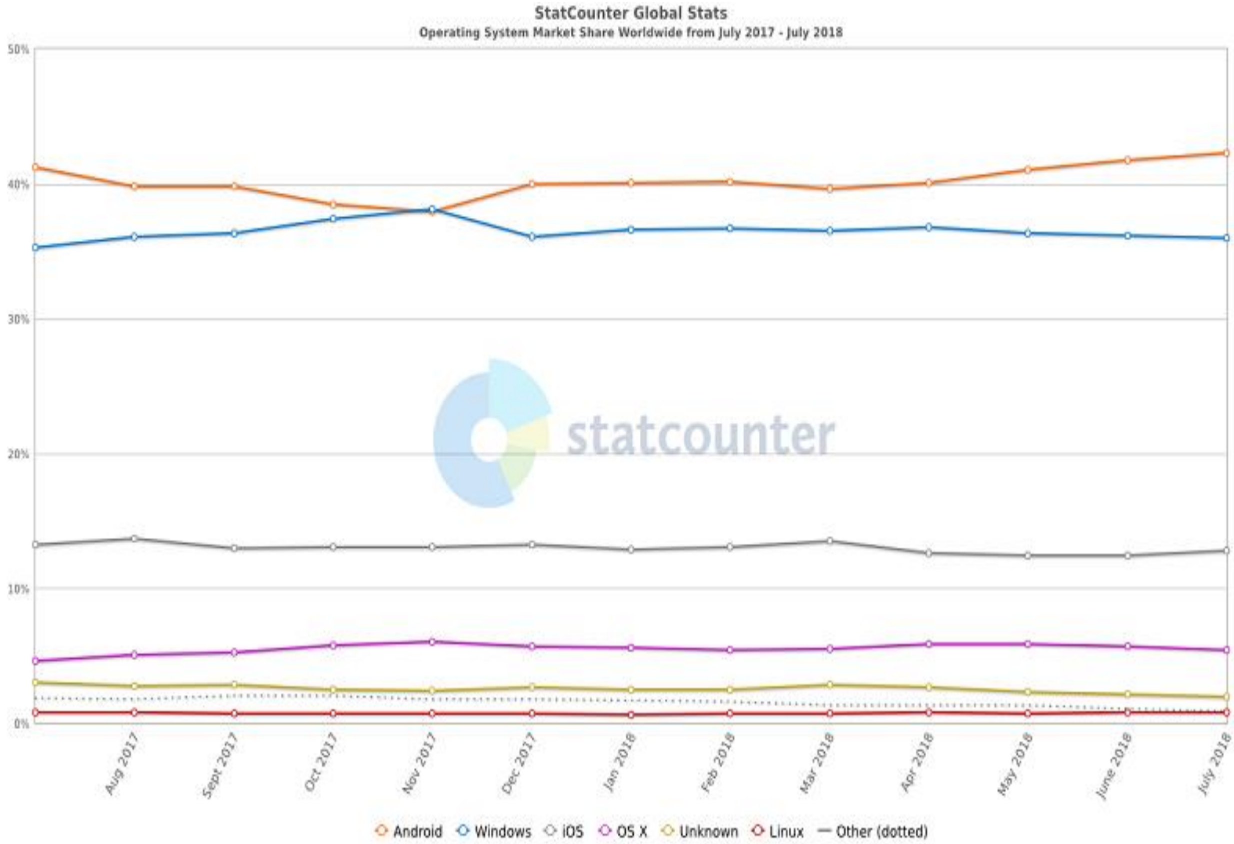


Figure 2.8: Top operating systems in the smartphone business (Andrew, 2018)

2.5.1 Mobile Phone Industry in South Africa

The mobile phone coverage in developing countries has grown tremendously in the last ten years (Scott, Batchelor, Ridley & Jorgensen, 2004). Most of the countries in the developing parts of the world have skipped fixed line infrastructure and have moved directly into mobile technology (Rashid & Elder, 2009). This has led to mobile telephones being the principal mode of communication and the one growing at the highest rate (Rashid & Elder, 2009). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the average number of mobile phones per 100 in the population of the then developing Asia, Latin America and Caribbean has risen by 100-400% over a period of as little as five years (Rashid & Elder, 2009). Today in Africa, every one in five Africans owns a cell phone and the number is growing and although this is technically behind the high-income countries in the world, the mobile phone is the most accessible and affordable means of communication in that region (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). In 2008, 60% of the African population, comprising 477 million people, could get a signal, translating to a 11.2 million square kilometre mobile phone coverage (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). In South Africa, MTN and Vodacom launched their mobile services in 1994, thereby enabling the production and use of mobile cell phones (Aker & Mbiti, 2010).

There are several reasons in the developing world why mobile phones have proven to be important. Firstly, beyond the basic ability to connect to other phones, mobile phones offer mobility and security to owners; a convenience phones before did not offer (Rashid & Elder, 2009). Owners had to carry wire cables to connect at their destinations and had no chance of connectivity whilst in transit (Rashid & Elder, 2009). Secondly, because of its design and ability, the mobile phone makes use of radio spectrums. This eliminates the need for physical infrastructure like roads and wires and can be powered using individual power sources as provided by the owner (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). Thirdly, mobile phones only require basic literacy, with no need for mathematical languages and coding, therefore making it user friendly to the majority of the population (Rashid & Elder, 2009). Additionally, mobile phones have technologically advanced to further allow the transfer of data between users on top of the voice (voip)communication that comes standard with the package (Rashid & Elder, 2009). This offering allows for better transfer of information in ways that far exceed mere communication between two parties. Additionally, due to increased competition and innovative payment methods, mobile phones have become affordable and therefore can be accessible to the lower economic class of the economy and therefore can be used as a mechanism to ensure participation in the economy by all levels of society (Rashid & Elder, 2009).

With the increase of mobile phones and users in developing countries, the research of growing mobile phones in developing countries has grown as well (Andrianaivo & Kpodar, 2012). Studies in this area have generally focused on the different aspects of the adaptation and usage of mobile phones by the population, although the evidence of mobile cell phones contributing to the development of the countries has not yet been adequately proved due to the difficulty in measuring the tangible impact of mobile phones on an economic and social level (Rashid & Elder, 2009).

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) in 2019, released a new report that aimed to detail the current status and activity in the Information, Communication and Technology sector (Gilbert, 2019). They reported that as of 2019, the smartphone penetration in South Africa has grown to 82%. This number grew rapidly from the previously recorded 74.2% in September of 2017 and the preceding 43.5% back in September 2016. The total number of smartphone subscriptions recorded in numerical value is 46.9 million in 2018 (Gilbert, 2019).

Considering that the population of South Africa as of 2018 was estimated by Statistics South Africa to be 57.7 million, having 46.9 million smartphone subscription shows the extent at which mobile phones have penetrated every level of society and dictated the mode, direction and pace of communication and the access of data.

Figure 2.9 shows the growth of smartphone subscription in South Africa over the three years from 2016. The growth smartphone usage in the nation continues to the present day (Gilbert, 2019).

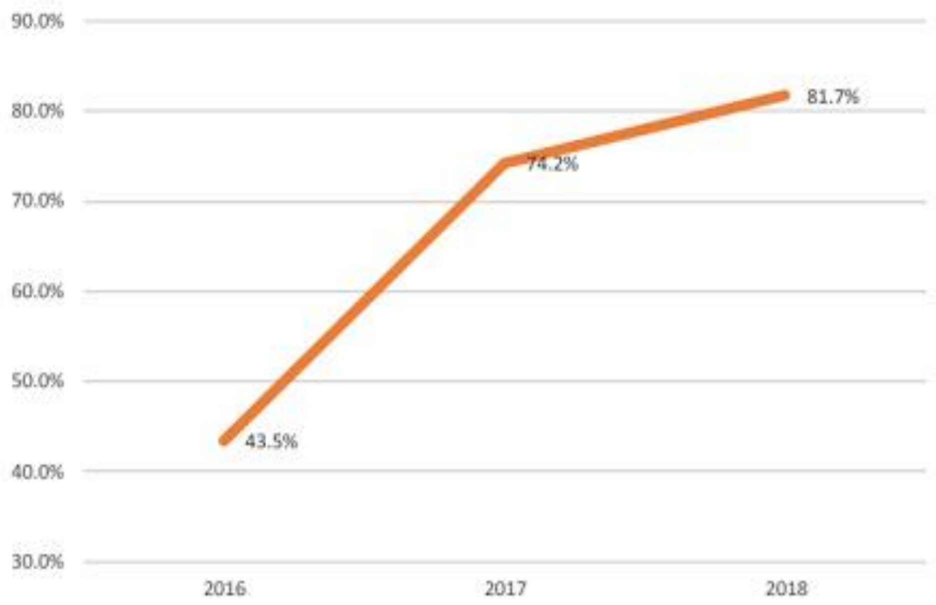


Figure 2.9: Year vs Percentage population penetration of smartphones in South Africa (Gilbert, 2019).

2.5.2 Global Usage of Mobile Phones

As of 2015, the world number of mobile subscriptions had superseded the world's population (Ritcher, 2015). Ericsson's published report in 2015 stated that there were currently more cellphone subscriptions than the owners of the mobile phones; a factor that could be influenced by any or more of the following variables:

- ***Customers owning more than one mobile cell phone:*** there is a growing trend of cellular owners purchasing and utilising more than one cell phone at a time (Silver, 2019). This could be a factor influenced by their need to compartmentalise their life and separate their communication trails for different occasions and purposes. For example, many of the younger generation will keep a personal mobile phone and number that will be exclusive to a smaller group of individuals and a number that will serve as their primary contact option (Deloitte, 2017).
- ***Business purposes:*** For the sake of employees adequately performing their expected business functions, companies may opt that specific roles in the company should come with company phones (Deloitte, 2017) . This will then lead to individuals using more than one mobile subscription for this purpose, and because this cell phone remains the property of the company, even in events of vacant job posts – the subscription is often kept active (Pitichat, 2013).
- ***ICT based companies and businesses:*** As a result of the boom of the information age, there have been many businesses that have been born to service this industry and many others using cellphones (Schubert, et al., 2007). For example, airtime, electricity, etc., selling vendors use mobile devices to transact for customers, the devices have become a part of their business tools and for usage, they require active subscriptions.
- ***Inactive users not closing their mobile subscriptions:*** Many users will lose their mobile sim cards and without deactivating them, go on to purchase another – an act that will result in the double counting of active subscriptions (Ritcher, 2015).
- ***Security:*** In the event a user loses their primary mobile phone, many like to keep another handy in order not to leave them without a phone. This helps them keep in touch with their social circles and business partners (Deloitte, 2017).

A graph depicting how the mobile subscriptions have grown larger than the world's population is shown in Figure 2.10.

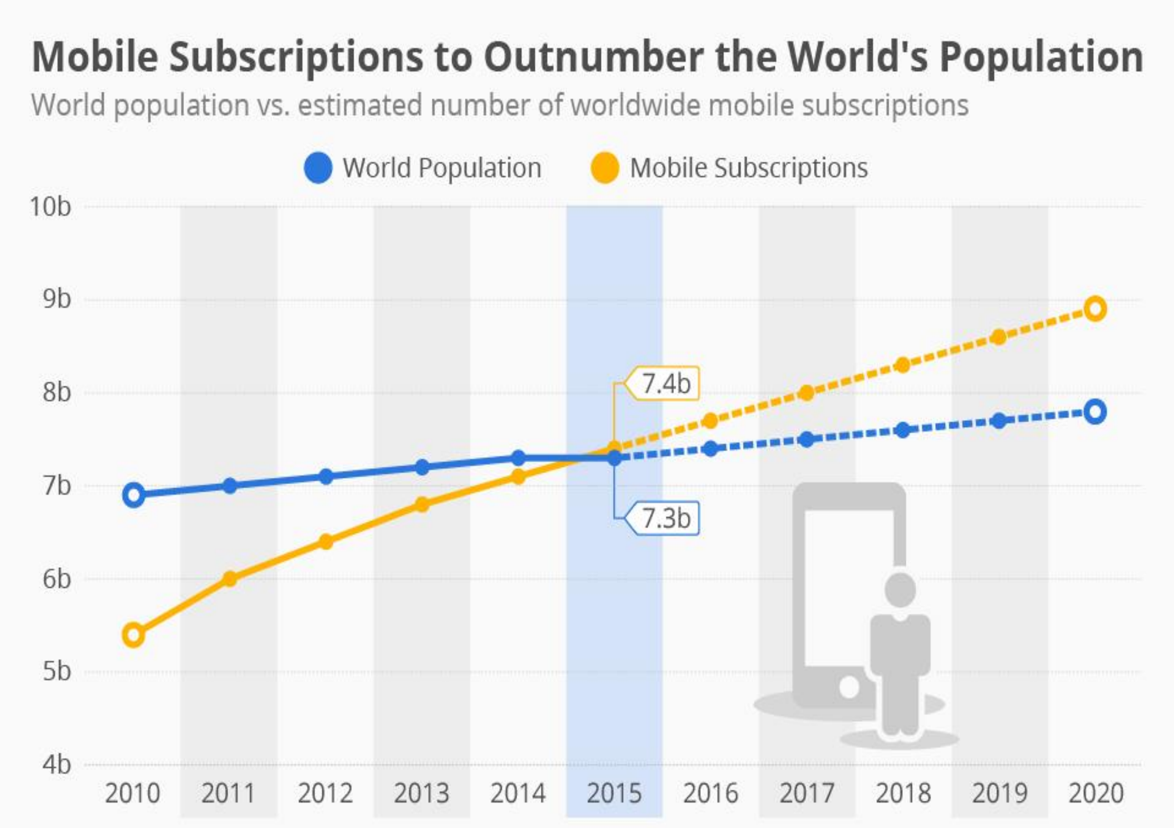


Figure 2.10: Mobile population vs Mobile subscriptions over the years (Ritcher, 2015)

Supporting the numbers and trends shown in Figure 2.10, the majority of adults in each of the 11 developing and emerging countries surveyed report owning their own mobile phone and having a circle of people who also owned mobile devices(Silver, Smith, Johnson, Jiang & Jingjing, 2019). Possession levels are the highest in Vietnam, where virtually all adults (97%) own a mobile device, while about 90% or more also own one in Jordan, Tunisia, Colombia, Kenya, Lebanon and South Africa (Silver, et al., 2019). This phenomenon can be best seen in Figure 2.11, where the median for all the countries considered was 89% in reported ownership, 7% reporting to sharing the mobile device and a final 6%, reporting to not owning a mobile device at all.

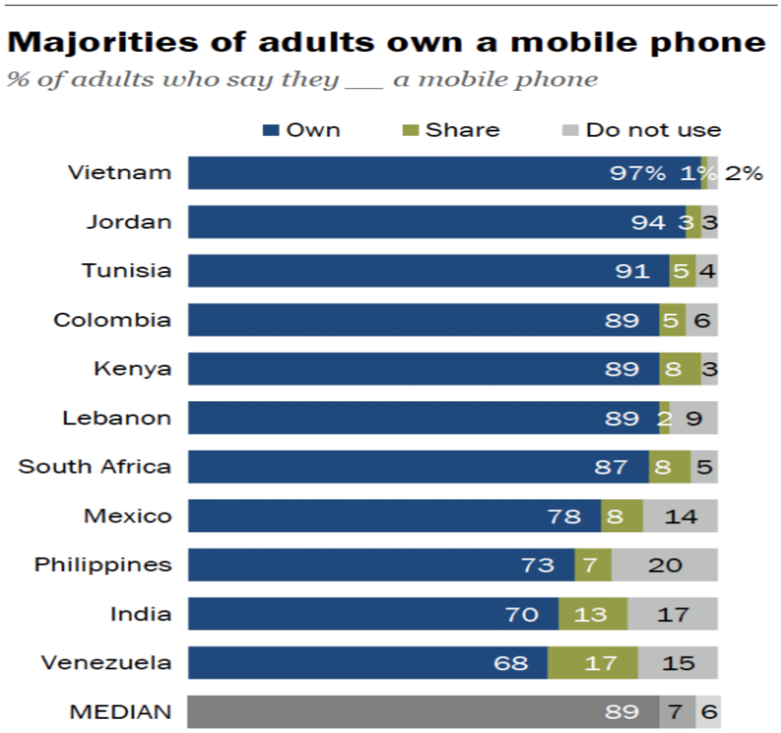


Figure 2.11: Ownership of mobile phones in the top ten developing countries (Silver, et al., 2019)

2.5.3 Contributions to the South African economy

South Africans bought 3.2m smartphones in the first quarter of 2018, a 12.4% increase year on year, according to data released by market research firm GFK (Tech Central, 2018). The value of the smartphone segment increased by 22.8% as sales of entry-level devices to low- and mid-income consumers continued to drive the market (Tech Central, 2018).

South Africa's data reveals that telecommunications retail enjoyed a strong start to the year 2018, with revenue growing 22.4% year on year between 2017 and 2018 (Tech Central, 2018). In addition to the exchange rate, the introduction of popular new mid-tier devices by several leading vendors helped to drive higher retail revenues in the telecommunications market (Tech Central, 2018). The growing popularity of tablets and higher unit prices (as a result of a weaker rand) helped to drive this increase in revenue against a backdrop of low or negative growth in many segments of the consumer technology market (Tech Central, 2018).

"The mobile device market showed good growth in the quarter, despite rising prices," said Norman Muzhona, solutions specialist for telecoms at GfK South Africa in a statement (Tech Central, 2018).

2.5.4 Global mobile usage by university students

Previous literature findings on the topic of mobile usage by university students have focused on the actual use of the mobile phones and all the contributing actors to this action, and how this mobile phone usage was perceived by the university students (North, et al., 2014). It is acknowledged that it is difficult to draw conclusive arguments of mobile phone use as culture, values, and belief systems differ around the world and play a part in the perception and use of this personal technology (North, et al., 2014).

Apart from being a communication device, the mobile phone is used by university students all over the world for many other functions; such as alarm clock, camera, music player, diary and phonebook (North, et al., 2014). University students in the United States of America (USA) said that owning a mobile phone is essential for keeping in contact with their parents, to ask for advice or get emotional support (North, et al., 2014). University students in America and South Africa access websites through mobile phones, especially amongst the lower income youth who do not own computers (Brown, et al., 2011). Therefore, students are spending an ever-increasing amount of time on their phones, replying to the increased sources of communication (North, et al., 2014).

Almost all university students in New Zealand own a mobile phone and most New Zealand students purchased a new mobile phone, not because they wanted a new model, but mainly because their old phone was no longer functional (Dresler-Hawke & Mansvelt, 2008). When purchasing a mobile phone, university students in Taiwan were less interested in the practical functions (e.g. battery life) and more interested in the functions related to entertainment, such as taking pictures easily (Tsai, 2012).

2.5.5 Mobile phone etiquette by male and female students

It has become evident over the years that phone calls in lectures divert students and lecturers' attention and this can translate to a bigger productivity issue (North, et al., 2014). It is commendable that most students do not report using voice communication in class, but most of the respondents admit to sending text messages in lectures and in doing so, this negatively affects the learning abilities of the students and can lead to agitation on the educator's side (North, et al., 2014). In a study conducted by David North, Kevin Johnston, and Jacques Ophoff

(2014), the male respondents were found to be a lot more likely to talk on their mobile phone while driving than the female respondents. It was also found in that same study, that female students, although being more likely to adopt mobile phone addiction, may have better mobile phone etiquette as they are less likely to talk loudly on their mobile phone whilst in public than the male students (North, et al., 2014). This finding is in line with Dresler-Hawke and Mansvelt (2008) who found that female university students in New Zealand were more likely to adopt mobile phone addiction, but also had better mobile phone etiquette than male university students. Baron and Campbell (2010) also found that female university students in the USA had better courtesy norms than male university students.

There is a positive correlation, in South Africa, between owning a mobile phone and academic performance (Kreutzer, 2009). Within South Africa, research done by Kreutzer (2009) focused on the use of mobile phones by low-income youth. Apart from a study by Chigona, Kamkwenda and Manjoo (2008) which focused on the use of mobile Internet, no definitive literature on how South African university students use and perceive mobile phones has been found (North, et al., 2014). A study on the reasons to use mobile phones by Chigona, Kamkwenda and Manjoo (2008) showed a consensus of socialising, safety, and privacy. The high emphasis on socialising is in line with the literature which states that the most commonly found reason for owning a mobile phone by university students was the convenience of being able to contact others and be contacted, regardless of time and location (Walsh, et al., 2010).

Robbery and crime are prevalent in South Africa (Schönteich & Louw, 2011), therefore it is not surprising that students regard safety as one of the primary reasons for using a mobile phone, in order to contact someone in an emergency (Walsh, et al., 2010). As for privacy, the literature has shown how mobile phones provide freedom to university students, it provides a direct access to their friends without having to filter through parents or siblings as with a landline phone (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012). Chigona, Kamkwenda and Manjoo (2008) found that University of Cape Town (UCT) students do not consider their mobile phones as a status symbol, which disagrees with literature from Malaysia, the Netherlands and the USA (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012), but is in line with the literature from New Zealand and the USA which says that mobile phones are no longer considered as a status symbol but as an essential tool (Dresler-Hawke & Mansvelt, 2008).

2.5.6 Gender Analysis

With an economy similar to South Africa, India has been found to present unequal access to mobile, the fourth highest gender gap behind Bangledash, Pakistan and Uganda (Shah, 2018). Figure 2.12 shows the difference countries against their gender variance to mobile phone ownership.

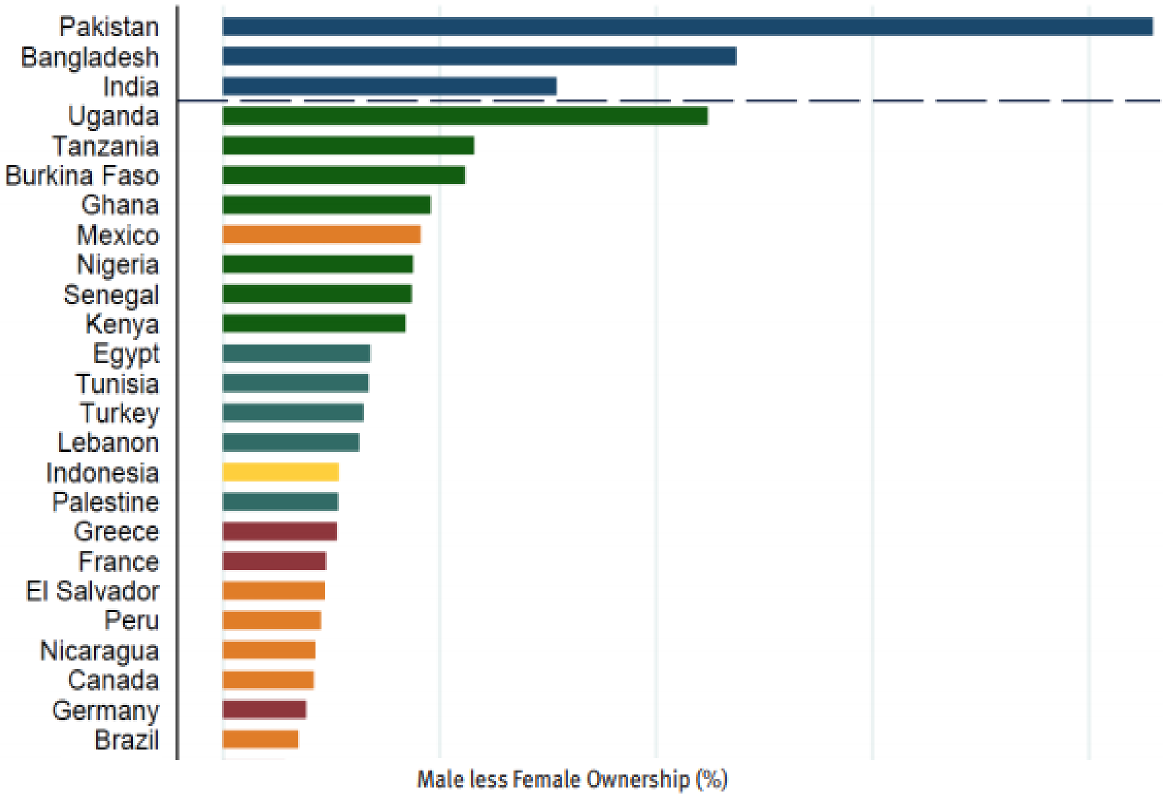


Figure 2.12: Male vs female mobile phone ownership in the different countries (Shah, 2018)

Additionally, an analysis done on the Indian population showed that 47% of the women who essentially had access to a mobile phone were merely "phone borrowers rather than owners, as compared to only 16% of men". The practice of limited ownership and only regulated and granted access imposes practical barriers on diversification and independence.

The study continued to show how this usage of phones by the genders varied with age and with the women marrying. Figure 2.13 shows the results:

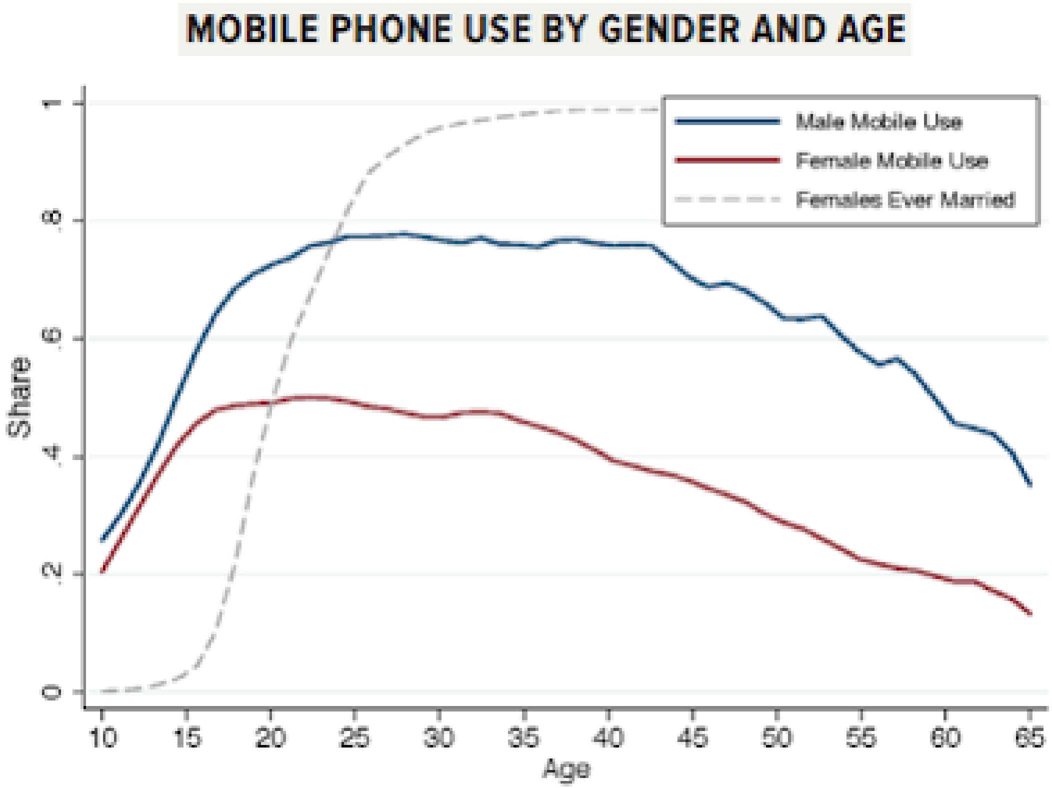


Figure 2.13: Gender variances in mobile phone use vs age of user (Shah, 2018)

Gender variance in students

North, Johnston, and Ophoff (2014) conducted a study that showed that UCT female students emphasised more on all the major reasons to use mobile phones; socialising, privacy and safety and this was coherent with the literature which states that female students feel stronger ties to their mobile phones than male students (Carbonell, et al., 2013). The female students showed a greater concern for safety than the male students, similar results were reported in the literature as female students are more vulnerable than male students and therefore rely on their mobile phones to contact people in an emergency (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012; Dresler-Hawke & Mansvelt, 2008; Walsh, White, & Young, 2010). The female respondents showed a greater interest in socialising with their mobile phones than the male respondents which was similarly found to be true in the literature when researching mobile phone usage patterns (North, et al., 2014). Female university students in the USA were found to have more conversations over mobile phones, and Malaysian university students were found to have lengthier conversations on their mobile phones than the male students (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012). North, et al (2014) also found female students to have an increased mobile phone usage for safety and socialising, a higher interest in brands and trends, as well as higher signs of addiction. These findings could prove beneficial to marketers, mobile phone developers, universities, parents, and researchers exploring mobile phone adoption and usage pattern in a developing country, such as South Africa (North, et al., 2014). Research done in the USA and Malaysia found that female university students are more likely to keep in contact with their family members, to share experiences and seek emotional support while male university students only contact their parents “to keep them happy” (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012).

Male and female students differ significantly in some areas of mobile phone use (North, et al., 2014). The female respondents to North, et al. (2014) were found to have lengthier phone conversations and they made calls to maintain their social network and relationships (i.e. calling to say hello), whilst the male respondents made calls that were shorter and more directed towards making, cancelling and confirming appointments or events (North, et al., 2014). The same results were found in the USA and Malaysia where females generally have lengthier conversations than males and males generally make calls to plan, whilst females are more likely to make calls for a social chat (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012).

2.5.7 PURCHASING REASONS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

North, et al. (2014) found the mobile purchasing factors to mostly boil down to usability and price; these were the elements most UCT students considered before purchasing a mobile. Brand and aesthetic values were considered of above average importance, whilst trend was not an important purchasing factor to the students (North, et al., 2014). The most common brand of mobile phone purchased by the students are Blackberry, Samsung and Apple, which were at the time the top three brands in the smartphone market, signifying that brand is important to the students (North, et al., 2014). Tsai (2012) and Balakrishnan and Raj (2012) state that usability is not a factor taken into consideration by university students in Taiwan and Malaysia respectively, and that students are more interested in the entertainment features. For UCT students, the opposite is true, usability (i.e. ease of use and comfortable to hold) is the most important purchasing factor (North, et al., 2014). This is particularly important to understand the behaviour of the demographic of students in South Africa. Half of the sample of students reported that they purchase their own mobile phone out of their pocket money; this may be the reason why price is a major factor for the students when purchasing a new mobile phone (North, et al., 2014).

2.5.8 Mobile Phone Usage Pattern

Figure 2.14 from the North et al. (2014) UCT study shows the average usage of their mobile phones by the participants. Forty-seven percent (47%) of the respondents received one call per day, and 42% made one call per day, and 46% made between two and four calls per day, and 41% received between two and four calls per day (North, et al., 2014). Figure 2.15 showing the approximate number of calls made and received per day for all the respondents to the North, et al. (2014) study. Most of the calls were made to or from family (57%), with the other calls being made to friends (37%) and business (6%). The average length of calls varied amongst the respondents. The most frequent average call length was 1-2 minutes (27%), closely followed by 2-4 minutes (25%), 0.5-1 minute (18%), 4-8 minutes (13%), 9+ minutes (12%) and 0-30 seconds (6%) as shown in Figure 2.16. The average length of calls is shown in Figure 2.16.

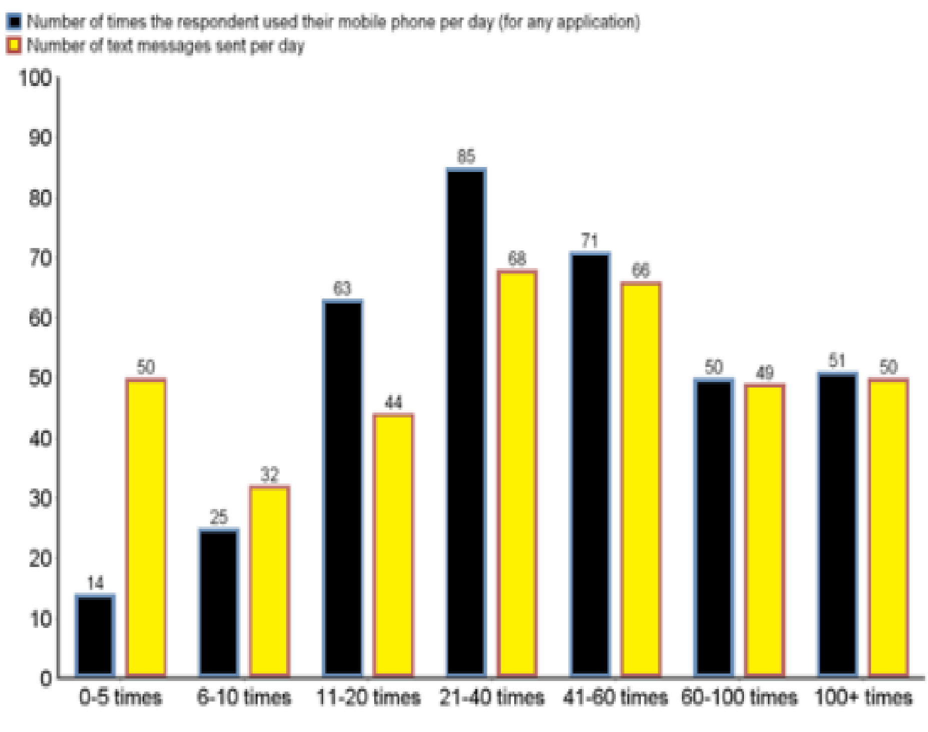


Figure 2.14: The number of times respondents used their mobile phone (North, et al., 2014)

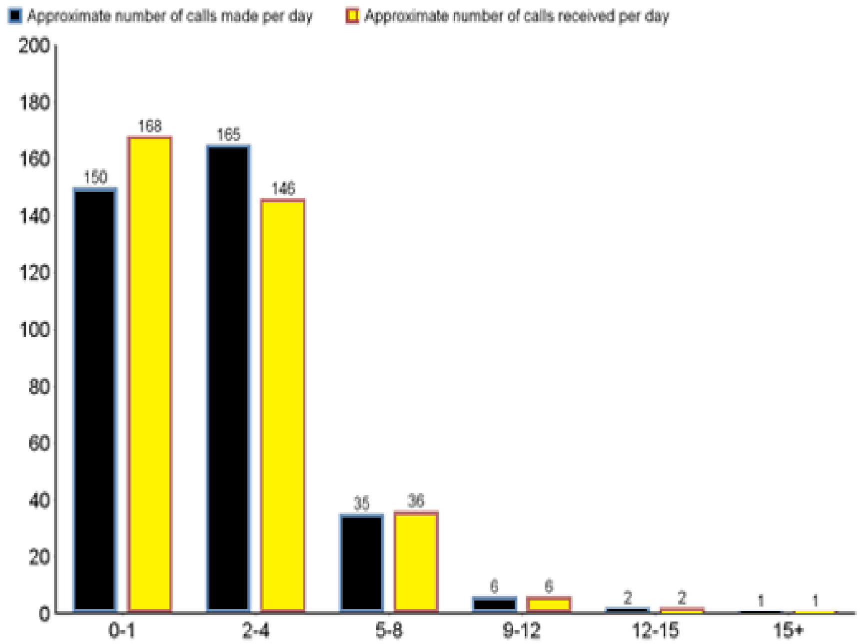


Figure 2.15: Approximate number of calls made & received per day for respondents (North, et al., 2014)

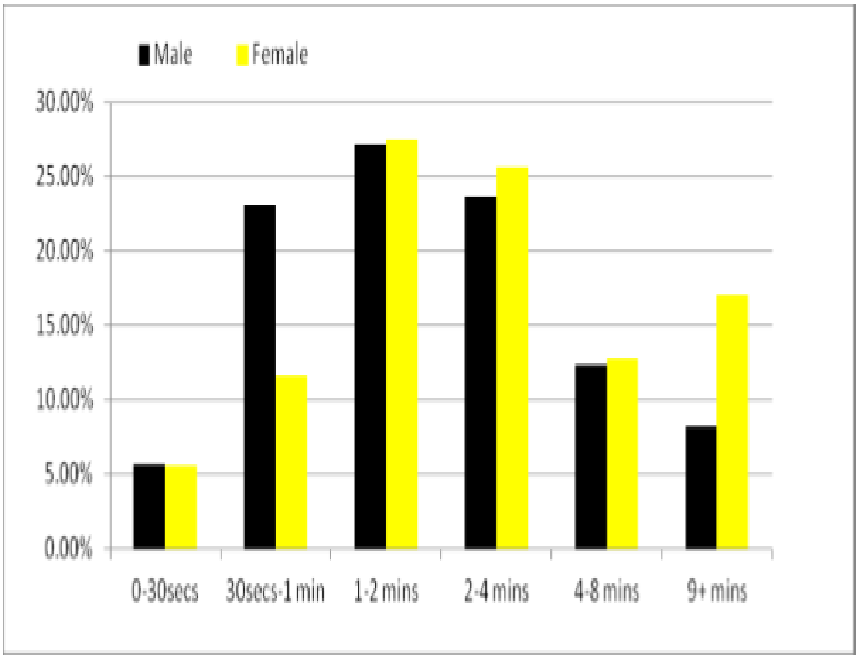


Figure 2.16: Bar showing average length of calls by male & female respondents (North, et al., 2014)

2.6 GENERATION Y

Generation Y or the Millennial Generation exerts a peculiar fascination on both managers and academics. In what has become common parlance, members of Generation Y are called Digital Natives, rather than Digital Immigrants (Bolton, et al., 2013). Generation Y is broadly defined as all people born between 1981 and 1999 – regardless of their circumstances (Bolton, et al., 2013). They are the first generation to have spent their entire lives in the digital environment; information technology profoundly affects how they live and work (Wesner & Miller, 2008). Generation Y actively contributes, shares, searches for and consumes content – plus works and plays – on social media platforms. Service managers and researchers are interested in Generation Y's social media usage because it may be a harbinger of how people will behave in the future (Bolton, et al., 2013).

Brosdahl and Carpenter's (2011) categorisation of generations used the following birth dates for each unit of the generations: The Silent Generation (1925-1945), the Baby Boomers (1946-1960), Generation X (1961-1981) and Generation Y (born after 1981). Other categorisation schemes have been proposed because researchers do not agree on precisely what life events distinguish one generational group from another (Zemke, et al., 2000). Hence, Gen Y's features are sometimes seen in overly broad, even sweeping, terms.

2.6.1 SIZE OF GEN Y MOBILE MARKET

Gen Y represents the younger group of consumers while baby boomers represent the older group of mobile service consumers (Ordun, 2015). Generation Y (consisting of individuals born between 1980-2000), is slowly becoming the largest consumer segment in history, with a tremendous impact on the global mobile economy, due to its number of representatives and their increasing spending power – across all product ranges and industries (Ordun, 2015). This makes Generation Y an extensively covered subject in the literature of fields such as economics, sociology, psychology and human resources (Ordun, 2015). Generation Y is also one of the most challenging consumer segments to target in marketing practice as their unique outlook and demands is nothing close to the other generations (Ordun, 2015). In this context, a question arises: which are those distinctive Generation Y characteristics that have turned this generation into such an interesting research topic and marketing challenge?

Gen Y consumers were born between 1980 and 1994, with the youngest being 24 years old and the oldest being 39 years old as of 2019. Gen Y-ers are an important consumer segment as they represent over 66% of the South African population and the largest standing generational group alive today in the country (Thompson, 2018). Age differences in mobile retail matters to marketers because of the impact that they have on their families' purchase decisions (Akkucuk & Turan, 2015). Gen Y-ers are often early adopters of new technologies and are extensive users of the internet and subsequently, they are substantial users of mobile services (Akkucuk & Turan, 2015). In terms of mobile service usage, a recent study reports that more than 50 percent of US consumers in the age group of 15-24 own a mobile phone and these users outnumber all other users in terms of minutes used, number of calls placed, messages sent/ received and wireless data transmitted/received (Kumar & Lim, 2008).

Gen Z takeover

Different in significant ways from the millennials, this age demographic brings a different mindset that has changed every industry, including the mobile industry. Gen-Z is defined as those born between the years 1997 and 2015 (Sterling, 2017). While members of Gen-Z appear and, in some cases, act like millennials from an overall device ownership perspective, there are some crucial differences. For starters, Gen Z spends less time on their laptops and more on their mobile phones, where they operate applications the older generation would access via laptops (Sterling, 2017). One of the most notable differences in how the Gen Z demographic uses their mobiles is reflected in their shopping habits and styles (Gassam, 2018). The fact that this demographic is now the largest populated age group at 26%, any shift in behaviour on their part will make shifts in the actual market and the way businesses structure themselves (Gassam, 2018). Since most of this generation now prefers to do everything on the tip of their fingers. Figure 2.17 shows how Gen Z has changed the retail industry, for example.

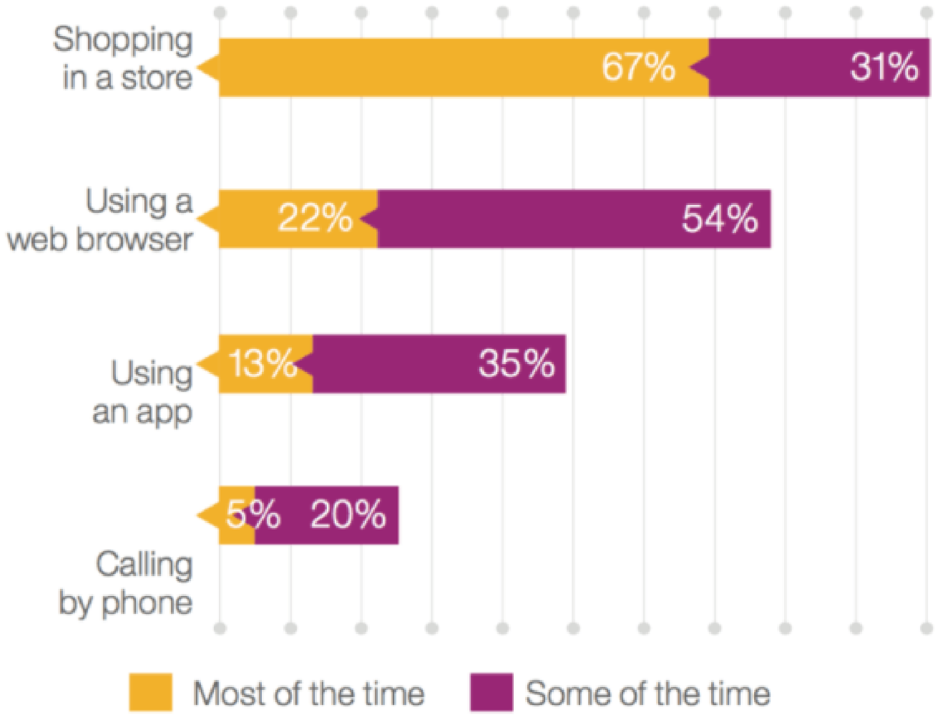


Figure 2.17: Gen Z retail habits and the influence of their mobile phones (Sterling, 2017)

2.6.2 Early and frequent exposure technology

Each generation forever shares a common perspective (Mannheim, 1952; Simirenko, 1966). As a generation matures, it develops characteristics that differentiate it from previous generations: personality traits, work values, attitudes, and motivations (Smola & Sutton, 2002). A key formative characteristic for Gen Y is early and frequent exposure to technology, which has advantages and disadvantages in terms of cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes (Bolton, et al., 2013). Gen Y seemed to lack a "significant emotional event as tumultuous as the depression of 1929 -1940 to serve as a rallying point" for their behaviour (Bolton, et al., 2013). However, members did experience an era of economic uncertainty and violence during the 2008 recession period, the worst global recession since 1929 and these external events have shaped Gen Y and influenced their social media use and buying behaviour (Bolton, et al., 2013). Gen Y consumers have benefited from the increased availability of customised products and personalised services (Ansari & Mela, 2003).

2.6.3 EMOTIONS

They ‘‘want it all’’ and ‘‘want it now,’’ particularly in relation to work pay and benefits, career advancement, work/life balance, interesting work and being able to make a contribution to society via their work (Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons, 2010). They are often characterised as being more sceptical, blunt, and impatient relative to their predecessors – arguably, due to being raised in an environment of information transparency and dominated by technologies that offer instant gratification (Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels & Kabadayi , 2013). Cross-generational surveys conducted by Twenge (2007) suggest that Gen Y has a greater sense of entitlement and a tendency to reject social conventions compared to Baby Boomers at similar ages. Findings from an historical survey of college students showed systematic differences in personal values between Gen Y and their predecessor cohorts – e.g., a significantly greater proportion of Gen Y students stated that being wealthy was very important to them, and values such as developing a meaningful philosophy of life were not (Bolton, et al., 2013). Due to exposure to rapidly changing technology, accessible education, and highly supportive families, Gen Y members are considered to be more open to change, technologically savvy, better learners, more tolerant of diversity, and efficient multi-taskers (Bolton, et al., 2013).

3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Holden and Lynch (2004) characterised reasoning as the standard by which information is accumulated, examined, and applied to comprehend marvels throughout everyday life. From that definition, there are two sorts of research methods of reasoning: abstract metaphysics and target cosmology; the way of thinking is trailed by the epistemology – nature of information to be specific; interpretivism, positivism and authenticity.

- ***Positivism***: positivists holds that the world is outer and objective, in this way its epistemology depends on the conviction that eyewitnesses are autonomous, and that science is sans esteem (Carson, 2001).
- ***Interpretivism;*** this reasoning is motivated by a progression of subjective ideas and approaches; moreover, it permits the focal point of research to be on understanding what is going on in each setting (Carson, 2001).
- ***Realism***; perceives just a single reality seen from various bearings and points of view (Carson, 2001).

From the chosen research theory, there are options at hand for the investigation to follow. With the end goal of this investigation in mind, the positivist methodology was chosen, which means positivism. (Sourced from Professor Richard Chinomona, 2018 slide introduction).

Utilising this methodology is accepted when looking for objectivity and using balanced and coherent methodologies. Only marvels and consequently information affirmed by the faculties can truly be justified as information (the rule of phenomenalism). The reason for the hypothesis is to produce theories than can be tried and that will in this way, permit clarifications of laws to be evaluated (the standards of deductivism). Knowledge is lauded through the social occasion of certainties that give the premise to laws (the rule of inductivism). Science must (and apparently can) be led in a way that is without esteem (that is, objective). These are two kinds of research, inductive and deductive methodology.

Deductive methodology is an essential type of substantial thinking, it begins with a general explanation or speculation and looks at the potential outcomes to arrive at an obvious result (Bradford, 2015). Inductive methodology is contrary to deductive methodology, it considers speculation from the particular to the general (Bradford, 2015). The exploration reasoning likewise goes about as a guide with respect to which the research ought to follow. Positivism educates that we follow the deductive hypothesis approach since they work together as the meaning of inductive methodology unmistakably states. This prompts the following inquiry quantitative or subjective?

3.1.1 Subjective versus quantitative

Subjective Research is fundamentally exploratory research. It is utilised to increase a comprehension of basic reasons, feelings, and inspirations by giving bits of knowledge into the issue (Wyse, 2011). Subjective information assortment strategies include centre gatherings, singular meetings, investment/perceptions. Subjective example size: example size is normally small, and respondents are chosen to satisfy a given requirement.

Quantitative Research: is utilised to evaluate the issue by using methods for creating numerical information or information that can be changed into useable insights. It is utilised to measure demeanours, sentiments, behaviour, and other characterised factors and sums up results from a larger sample size (Wyse, 2011). Quantitative information assortment strategies incorporate review, up close and personal, interviews, phone interviews, longitudinal investigations, site interceptors, online surveys, and orderly perceptions (Wyse, 2011). It can be concluded that quantitative research is indicated here.

3.2 Research strategy

Research strategy is the plan of action that guides and helps the researcher to answer the research questions. A research strategy effectively helps the researcher to choose the best research method to conduct the research most effectively. The objectives and questions of the research guide the selection of the best research strategy to be used (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

3.2.1 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders et al. (2009), research philosophy revolves around the nature and development of knowledge. Philosophical assumptions look at a set of basic beliefs which show a world view and explain the relationship between the researcher and the world. The paradigm guides the researcher in choosing a research method. The paradigm values are ontological, epistemological and methodology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Item	Positivism	Post-positivism	Critical Theory	Constructivism
Ontology	Naïve realism - "real" reality but apprehendable	Critical realism – "real" reality but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehendable	Historical realism – virtually reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and gender values; crystallised over time	Relativism – local and specific constructed realities
Epistemology	Dualist/objectivist; findings true	Modified dualist/ objectivist; critical tradition/community; findings probably	Transactional/subjectivist; value – mediated findings	Transactional/subjectivist; created findings
Methodology	Experimental/manipulative; verification of hypotheses; chiefly quantitative	Modified experimental/manipulative; critical multiplism; falsification of hypotheses; may include quantitative methods	Dialogic/dialectical	Hermeneutical/dialectical

Table 3.1: Research Philosophy, cited from Guba and Lincoln, (1994; 109), cited in Ebrahim (2013)

A researcher following positivist assumptions aim is to study a social phenomenon to find regularities and causal relationships. This method uses the research objectives and adopts a deductive approach which depends on existing theories to develop and test hypothesis relationships (Ebrahim, 2013). Considering this research, a positivism approach has been adopted as its best suits the nature of the study in accordance with Table 3 above.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is the strategy one selects to bring together different accepts of the study in a coherent and logical way to achieve success in addressing the research problem. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2003), research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data with economy and procedure. Creswell (2013) stated that there are five approaches to research design which include case study, cross-sectional design, comparative design, longitudinal design, and experimental design. This study used a cross-sectional design approach, which studies a phenomenon through looking at the relationships of variables at a single point in time.

3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

The two main research approaches are deductive and inductive, and these define the relationship between the research and theory. In deduction, one develops a theory then designs a research strategy which tests the theory's hypothesis. Induction involves collecting data, after conducting data analysis, the researcher is able develop a theory from the findings. The deduction approach is more centred towards a positivism philosophy and induction is more interpretivism in approach (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). This study used a deductive approach.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the format in which a research is to be carried out, to assure that the researcher can answer his or her research questions (Antwi & Kasim, 2015). Qualitative research is an unstructured research approach which gives a deeper understanding on situations which are challenging in nature. Qualitative research makes use of interviews, focus groups, documentary analysis, narratives, and participant observations to collect data; the results are mostly descriptive in nature (Antwi & Kasim, 2015).

This research will be quantitative in nature according to Golafshani, (2003) "researchers who use logical positivism or quantitative research employ experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypothetical generalisations", while they measure the causal relationships between the variables. Quantitative research gives the researcher the chance to familiarise him/herself with the problem being studied and may be able to generate a hypothesis to be tested.

3.6 SAMPLING DESIGN

Bajpai (2011) stated that sampling design is a five-stage interlinked process. These stages are target population of the study, the sample frame, which is to be determined, the sampling technique to be used, the sample size to be drawn and lastly, the sampling process to be employed.

3.6.1 TARGET POPULATION

Target population is the total number of elements from which the sample will be drawn from (Bajpai, 2011). Target population is the total number of elements from which the sample will be drawn from (Bajpai, 2011). In this study, the target population was the millennial students studying at the University of the Witwatersrand. The students were selected as the target population as it is assumed that they are most likely to use spend large amounts of time on their mobile devices (Lepp, Barkley, Karpinski, 2014). The target population source was obtained from Wits facts 2014.

3.6.2 SAMPLE FRAME

According to Stephanie, (2014) a sample frame is a list of everyone or elements which one intends to study. The sample frame is derived from the target population.

The sampling frame is a section of the target population which is accessible and from which one can draw the sample (Bhattacherjee, 2012). This information is used to draw inferences about the population. The subset of units that are selected is called a sample. In the case of this study, four aspects will be included in the sampling design: target population, sampling design, sample size, and the sampling method.

3.6.3 SAMPLE METHOD

There are two main sampling techniques which are probability and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, every element of the population has an equal chance of being selected into the main sample, while Stephanie (2014; par1) stated that "Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique where the odds of any member being selected for a sample cannot be calculated". Random sampling method is most used for statistical research, however, in situations where random sampling is not feasible to use, non-random sampling method is adopted. In Figure 3.1 below a list of the different sampling methods is illustrated.

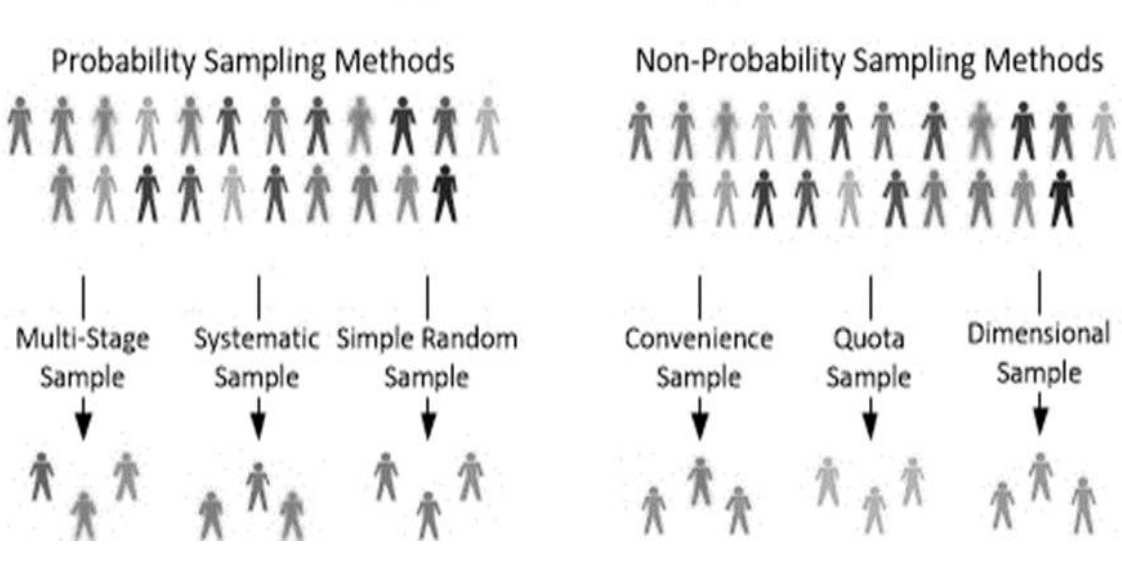


Figure 3.1: Sampling (Learn Marketing, 2018)

Convenience sampling was used for this study as it allowed the researcher to select respondents based on their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher.

3.6.4 SAMPLE SIZE

Lavrakas (2008) alluded to the fact that sample size is the number of elements that are chosen from which the research data is to come. To calculate the sample size for this research the from a target population of 30 833 students enrolled at Witwatersrand University (Wits, 2017) the Raosoft online sample size calculator was used at a margin of error of 5% and confidence level of 90% a sample size of 380 respondents was recommended (Raosoft, 2018). Therefor this study used a sample size of 380 respondents.

The sample size to be used is 200 SMMEs. This is in conjunction with the study. Maziriri, E.T & Chinomona (2016) where a sample size of 231 of SMMEs was used. A sample can be defined as an act of choosing the number of observations or replicates to include in a statistical sample (Nomura & Hamads, 2017). Khalilzadeh and Tasci (2017) define sample size as an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample. A sample size consists of the number of elements to be included in the research study (Malhotra, 2010).

3.6.4.1. DETERMINING THE SAMPLE SIZE

Therefore, deducing from the above table, the historical evidence approach was used to determine the sample size for this research. The sample size of 360 was chosen which is consistent with other studies that have focused on small and medium enterprises in South Africa.

3.6.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling technique is defined as introducing control into the selection of n out of N sampling units when it increases the probabilities of selection for preferred combinations of units (Goodman & Kish, 2016). There are two methods of sampling, one yields probability samples in which the probability of selection of each respondent is assured. The other yields non-probability samples in which the probability of selection is unknown (Polit & Hungler, 2015).

3.6.6 Probability Sampling Technique

For this study a quantitative research method, simple random probability sampling will be used. This technique best suits the study since it will provide a fair opportunity for each respondent to be chosen

3.7 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was made of seven sections which ranged from section A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Section A was made up of the population's demographic and background information. Section B (Self Brand Connection), Section C (Emotional Brand Attachment), Section D (Brand Trust), Section E (Brand Passion), Section F (Brand Loyalty) and Section G (Brand Repurchase Intention). A five-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree; the Likert scale was used for the measurement instruments for section B, C, D, E, F and G.

3.8 Pre-testing the instruments (Piloting)

Piloting is essential in testing the measurement instrument as it will give one feedback on whether the questionnaire is appropriate for the study (Golafshani, 2003). Pre-testing the pilot is used to correct the questionnaire by removing any problems that may render the questionnaire invalid and unreliable. Through pre-testing the researcher can ensure that the questionnaire will be able to answer the research questions. According to Barker (1994), an appropriate sample size for running a pilot was between 10-20% of the sample size of the study.

A pre-test was conducted to refine the research instrument with marketing academics. Participants' suggestions (e.g., wording changes) were incorporated accordingly in the revision of the questionnaire. Scales were purified as some wording was slightly modified for clarity; the changes improved the intended meaning of the questions.

In this study, the pre-testing pilot was conducted on respondents, the instrument had a few areas it needed adjustment on, however after the corrections, it was valid and reliable.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Research participants were not put in any form of danger or harm, whatsoever. Participants' dignity was prioritized. Full consent was obtained from the participants before commencing the study. All responses given by the participants were kept confidential and safe. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the research and the name of the researcher. Anonymity of individuals and organizations participating in the research was ensured (Bryman, 2007).

3.10. Data Coding

The first step in data coding and cleaning is to ensure that the questionnaire is edited for clarity, consistency and that it is complete A questionnaire may be rendered not acceptable for the following reasons; when a respondent does not complete answering a section in the questionnaire, and when the questionnaire is answered by someone who is not within the research frame. Missing data, according to Hair et al. (2010), if it is below 10% for a questionnaire, is not a serious problem. Hair et al. (2010) stated that when there is missing data, it is important to consider the type of data which is missing, the extent of missing data, how random the missing data is diagnosed. In this study, data was first input into Excel, then transferred into SPSS for cleaning and was lastly, transferred to Amos for analysis. Figure 3.2 below shows the data analysis path.

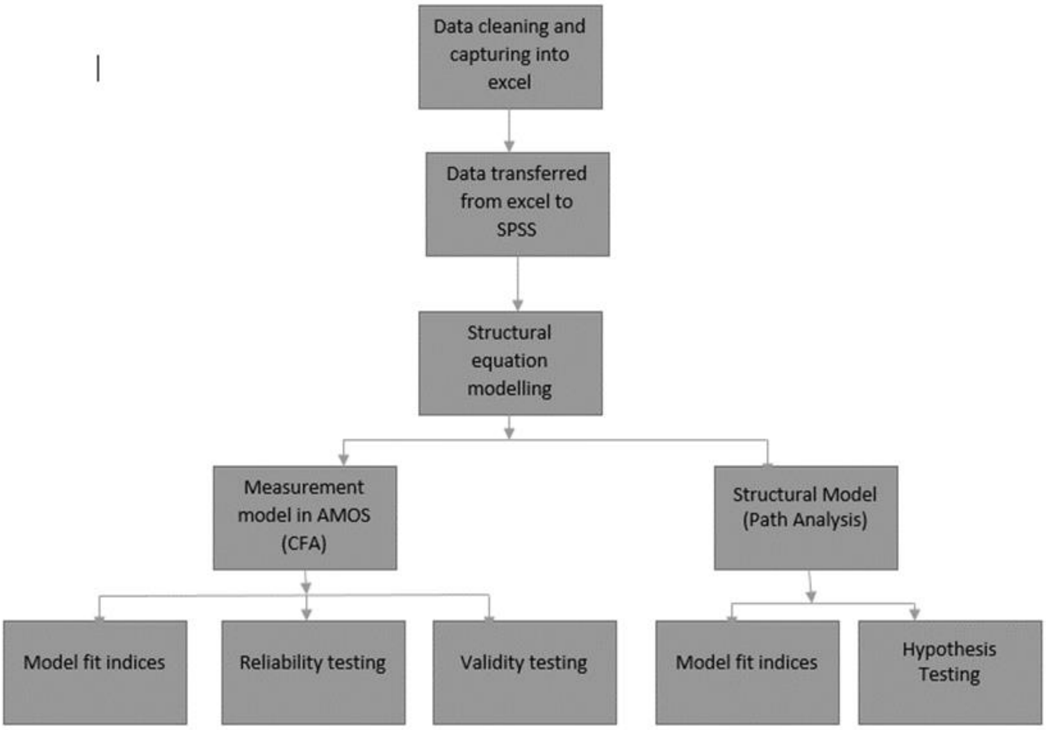


Figure 3.2: Data analysis path

3.11 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistic are values that are used to summarise large volumes of data and it is used when there is a large amount of data that must be interpreted and analysed (Hebl, 2017). Through descriptive statistics, information is gathered with regards to the individuals from whom the data was collected, it gives the mean and standard deviation values of the data. In this study, descriptive statistics were used to give detailed information regarding the demographic characteristics of the researched sample size.

3.12 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING

"Structural equation modelling (SEM) is a statistical multivariate analysis technique used by social, behavioural, and educational scientists as well as biologists, economists, marketing, and medical researchers" (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006:1). Structural equation modelling allows for testing of hypotheses and relationships between observed and latent variables. The main function of SEM is to test the amount of covariance and variance that is there between measured variables. SEM uses Factor Analysis and regression in its analysis of data. Confirmatory factor analysis is first done to test whether the hypothesis framework of the study has a goodness of fit for the data. This helps to view whether there is a relationship between the observed variables and their latent variable. The structural model follows confirmatory factor analysis which is used to test goodness of fit, chi-squared, and other measures to analyse the research model (Suhr, 2006).

3.13 Measurement model

Bollen (2001) stated that "measurement models refer to the implicit or explicit models that relate the latent variable to its indicator". The measurement model tested for validity with the use of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which was dependent on an acceptable goodness of fit and validity of the construct. The measurement model for this study was run through Amos and tested for goodness of fit and validity.

3.14 Structural model

Structural model follows the measurement model which used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The structural model was used to analyse hypothesis testing. Structural model goes from identifying relationships between observed and latent variable to analysis of the relationship between constructs (Hebl, 2017).

3.15 Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA)

CFA enable the relationship that was hypothesised in the research to be tested; it is used as a tool to accept or reject hypothesised theories. CFA tests the validity of the research instruments; validity is important as it validates that an instrument is able to measure what it sets out to measure. For this study, CFA was conducted to ensure validity. An indicator of a strong association in the relationship between variables is when the standardised factors loading values are greater than 0.6 (Hair et al., 2010).

3.16 Model indices

There are many indicators of goodness-of-fit; it is recommended to use more than one indicator to validate model fit (Golafshani,2003). These indicators are explained in the following section.

3.16.1 Chi square

Chi-square is used to test the mode fit; it specifies the amount of variance that is between observed and expected covariances. Holtzman and Vezzu (2011) state that when a chi-square value is nearer to zero and the p- value is greater than 0.05, this shows that there is a small variance between expected and observed covariances and shows that there is goodness of fit. A good fit is reflected by Chi-square which falls below the threshold of 3 as stated by

Chinomona (2011). However, Chi-square is problematic in that it is extremely sensitive as when the sample size is too large, it will reject the model.

3.16.2 Goodness of fit (GFI)

Goodness of fit index may be used in place of the Chi-squared test. It is also used to test model fit and it ranges from 0 to 1, a greater GFI value shows a better model fit. An acceptable value is one which is greater than 0.9 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

3.16.3 Normed Fit Index (NFI)

Normed fit index is also used along with Chi-square, it ranges from 0 to 1, values which are greater than 0.9 show that there is goodness of fit (Moss, 2009).

3.16.4 Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)

Tucker-Lewis index is viewed to be similar to NFI, however TLI is less sensitive when it comes to sample size as compared to NFI. An acceptable TLI is greater or equal to 0.9 for there to be a good model fit (Moss, 2009).

3.16.5 Incremental Fit Index (IFI)

Incremental Fit Index makes use of the Chi-square value to make comparisons between the null model to the hypothesised one. IFI is also sensitive to the sample size; an acceptable value is equal or greater than 0.9 (Moss, 2009).

3.16.6 CFI: Comparative Fit Index

Comparative fit index compares the model, which is being studied to an alternative, for example to the null hypothesis model. CFI ranges between 0 and 1. The greater the CFI value is an indicator of good model fit; CFI is also a modified version of NFI, and it can be used in structural equation modelling despite the sample size in use. CFI equal or greater than 0.9 is accepted as it reflects model fit (Holtzman & Vezzu, 2011).

3.16.7 Relative Fit Index (RFI)

McDonald and Ho (2002) stated that an acceptable RFI is one that is equal or greater than 0.9, as it shows model fit.

3.16.8 Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)

RMSEA is used in testing the covariance of models, and RMSEA values range between 0 and 1. When RMSEA is lower, it reflects better model fit, an acceptable RMSEA is that which is equal or lower than 0.5, however a value below 0.8 is still acceptable (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008)

3.17 RELIABILITY

Reliability was checked through using the Cronbach's alpha test (Cronbach α), composite reliability test (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Both SPSS and AMOS software were used to assess reliability. However, despite an instrument that may show reliability, it does not necessarily mean validity; despite reliability being of importance, it is not a requisite of validity (Moss, 2009).

3.17.1 CRONBACH ALPHA (CRONBACH A)

Cronbach alpha was used to test reliability of the instruments. Cronbach's coefficient alpha is the value which reflects the reliability of the instruments. When the coefficient is higher, it reflects good reliability. An acceptable Cronbach alpha is greater than 0.7 and above (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

3.17.2 COMPOSITE RELIABILITY (CR)

Composite reliability (CR) tests the total reliability of a group of instruments loaded on an unobservable construct. CR is used when internal reliability of the instruments needs to be tested. CR ranges from 0 to 1; when CR is greater than 0.7, it reflects good reliability however 0.6 to 0.7 is also considered acceptable (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

Composite reliability is equal to CR= CRη = (Σγyi) 2 / [(Σγyi) 2 + Σεi]

This is interpreted as CR = (square of the summation of factor loadings)/ {(square of the summation of factor loadings) + summation of the error variances)} (Hair et al., 2006).\

3.17.3 AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED (AVE)

Bove, Pervan, Beatty, and Shiu, (2009) stated that "the AVE estimate is the average amount of variation that a latent construct is able to explain in the observed variables to which it is theoretically related." For a construct to be viewed as reliable, AVE must be greater than 0.5 (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011).

Average Variance is calculated as AVE = Vη=Σλyi2/ (Σλyi2+Σεi)

This is interpreted as AVE = (summation of squared factor loadings)/ {(summation of squared factor loadings) + (summation of error variances)} (MacKenzie et al., 2011).

3.18 VALIDITY

Construct validity is the extent to which a test or measurement instrument measures what it claims or is supposed to be measuring (Brown, 2000). This study used convergent and discriminate validity to assess for validity.

3.18.1 CONVERGENT VALIDITY

Convergent validity reflects if there is a high correlation which is present between two or more constructs which are using the same measurement. Therefore, convergent validity is there when each measurement item correlates greatly with its theoretical construct. Convergent validity should be greater than 0.5 for validity to be acceptable (Awang, 2014).

3.18.2 DISCRIMINATE VALIDITY

Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) stated that “discriminant validity ensures that a construct measure is empirically unique and represents phenomena of interest that other measures in a structural equation model do not capture.” In other words, discriminate validity is the extent in which one variable is unique from another construct, it is also viewed by observing the correlation matrix (Awang, 2014).

3.18.2.1 INTER-CONSTRUCT CORRELATION MATRIX

The inter-construct correlation matrix shows discriminate validity; a correlation value between constructs which is less than 1 is recommended as it shows discriminate validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015).

3.19 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter three discussed the research strategy, research philosophy, research design, research approach, research methodology, sample design, target population, data collection method, questionnaire design, ethical considerations, data coding and cleaning, structural equation modelling, measurement modelling, confirmatory factor analysis, model indices, reliability and validity used in the study.

Chapter four discusses the data gathering and analysis.

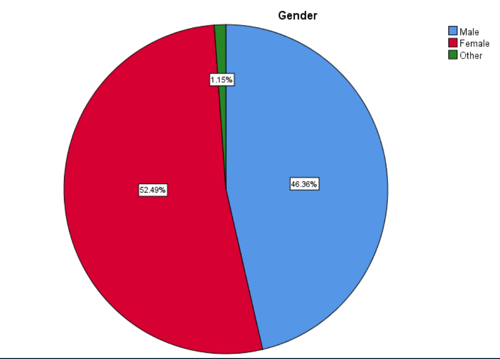
4. CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This segment of the chapter primarily tests for the reliability and validity measures, different strategies to set up unwavering quality were utilized. For unwavering quality measures, Cronbach's Alpha, the Composite Reliability (CR) calculation, and the Average Value Extracted (AVE) calculation were utilised; while for legitimacy, corroborative factor investigation was utilised to check reliability and validity of the instruments, where CFA alteration was connected to survey for proof of discriminate validity. This segment is followed by an introduction of the measurement models fit. Having different measures, such as the chi-square esteem, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), were utilised to determine whether the model fits the data.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

This segment contains the statistical profile of the respondents for the conducted study and research. A discourse of their sexual orientation, age, dimension of training and money-related circumstance are displayed, just as an outline of the type of cell phone they utilise every day. Figure 4.1 shows that there was an almost even split of sexes in the respondents, with 52.5% reporting as female and 46.4% as male. This reflected that females were more responsive to the survey.

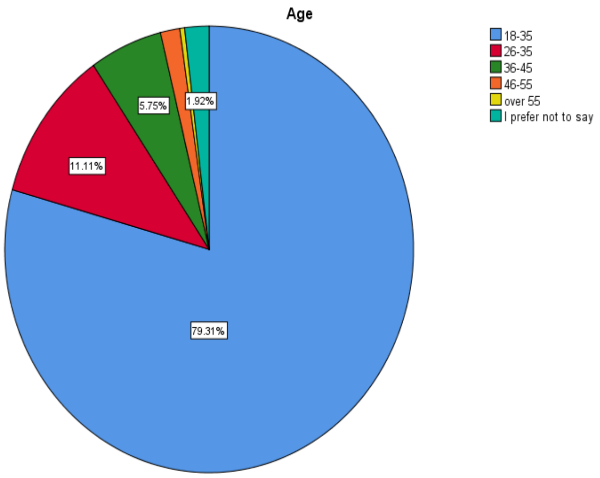
Gender



	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	121	46.4	46.4	46.4
Female	137	52.5	52.5	98.9
Other	3	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	261	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.1: Gender analysis of the study respondents

Age



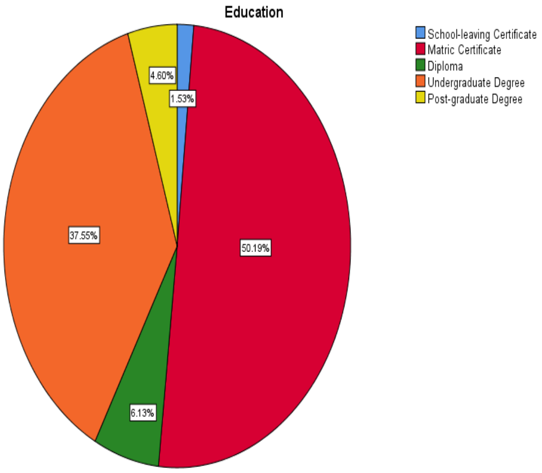
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-35	207	79.3	79.3	79.3
26-35	29	11.1	11.1	90.4
36-45	15	5.7	5.7	96.2
46-55	4	1.5	1.5	97.7
over 55	1	.4	.4	98.1
I prefer not to say	5	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total	261	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.2: The age analysis of the respondents in the study

Figure 4.2 above shows the age range of the respondents. Most respondents were in the age range of 18-35 which made up 79.3 %. This was followed with the age range of 26-35 which was 11.1%, followed by the age range 36-45 which was 5.7% and the lowest age range was over 55 which gave 0.4 %. This reflected that most active mobile users were youth between 18-35.

Figure 4.3 below shows the dimension of education of the respondents. Most them had Matriculation, which was 51.7%. This was trailed by the respondents who held a degree which was 37.5% and 4.6% of the total. At that point, the reposndents who held a diploma were 6.1% of the total. This reflected that matriculation holders were the most flexible group in terms of mobile device usage.

Education

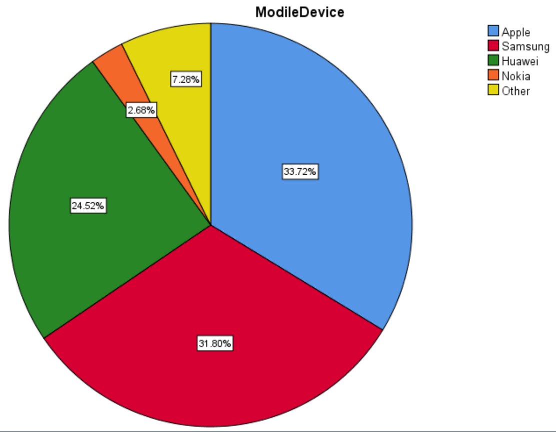


	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
School-leaving Certificate	4	1.5	1.5	1.5
Matric Certificate	131	50.2	50.2	51.7
Diploma	16	6.1	6.1	57.9
Undergraduate Degree	98	37.5	37.5	95.4
Post-graduate Degree	12	4.6	4.6	100.0
Total	261	100.	100.0	

Figure 4.3: The educational history of the respondents

Figure 4.4 below shows the most preferred mobile device which was being used from the chosen sample of respondents. Apple showed to be the most popular and common mobile device being used at 33.7% , however it was neck-and-neck with Samsung which had an almost equal user base of 31.8%. Huawei was fairly popular at 2.5% , Nokia had the lowest respondent base at 2.7% which was overtaken by other unmentioned brands which had 7.3% of the repondents' user base.

Mobile Device



	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Apple	88	33.7	33.7	33.7
Samsung	83	31.8	31.8	65.5
Huawei	64	24.5	24.5	90.0
Nokia	7	2.7	2.7	92.7
Other	19	7.3	7.3	100.0
Total	261	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.4: The various mobile brands used by the respondents

4.2 Questionaire Results

The questionare used a 5-point Likert scale. A complete number of 261 respondents were recorded. The following variables were used: brand self-connection (SBC) which originally had eight instruments and was left with seven instruments after running the results. The second variable was emotional brand attachment (EBA) which began with two instruments and was left with one instrument after running the results. The third variable was brand trust (BT) which used four instruments. Brand passion (BP) was the fourth variable which originally began with seven instruments and ended with six instruments after running the results. The fifth variable was brand loyalty (BL) which had six instruments and the last variable was brand repurchase intention (BRI) which had six instruments, as well.

4.2.1 Reliability

It can be noticed that Table 4, Cronbach Alpha coefficients are accomplished at a scope of 0. 795 to 0.955; this implies that the majority of the Cronbach's Alpha has surpassed the suggested edge of 0.7, according to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), along these lines affirming that the measures utilised in this investigation are dependable. The normal fluctuation extricated (AVE) of brand self-connection (SBC) is 0.893 and is higher than the rest of the variables.

Research Constructs		Scale Item			Cronbach's test		α value	CR	AVE	Factor Loadings
		Mean		Standard deviation		Item-total				
	SBC1	3.05		1.18		0.71				0.697
	SBC2	3.18		1.14		0.706				0.638
	SBC3	2.9		1.22		0.757				0.723
	SBC4	2.83		1.2		0.751				0.717
	SBC6	3.13		0.97		0.6				0.702
	SBC7	3.03		1.07		0.712				0.775
SBC	SBC8	2.64	2.96	1.14	1.13	0.604	0.893	0.5	0.86	0.671
	EBA1	3.07		1.182		0.662				0.821
EBA	EBA2	2.9	2.99	1.101	1.14	0.662	0.795	0.8	0.66	0.804
	BT1	3.63		1.152		0.799				0.927
	BT2	3.71		1.143		0.801				0.94
BT	BT3	3.93	3.76	1.054	1.11	0.736	0.864	0.83	0.71	0.737
	BP1	3.57		1.159		0.726				0.839
	BP2	3.46		1.177		0.721				0.76
	BP3	3.63		1.099		0.811				0.874
	BP4	3.62		1.09		0.728				0.792
	BP5	2.82		1.211		0.719				0.722
BP	BP7	2.5	3.26	1.247	1.16	0.538	0.89	0.73	0.48	0.526
	BL1	2.66		1.44		0.779				0.726
	BL2	2.66		1.35		0.782				0.746
	BL3	2.73		1.34		0.881				0.864
	BL4	3.33		1.205		0.739				0.847
	BL5	2.83		1.23		0.831				0.896
BL	BL6	3.13	2.89	1.22	1.29	0.854	0.937	0.73	0.48	0.913
	BRI1	3.26		1.218		0.877				0.914
	BRI2	3.46		1.247		0.893				0.912
	BRI3	3.42		1.226		8.48				0.861
	BRI4	3.23		1.175		0.812				0.836
	BRI5	3.27		1.241		0.904				0.934
BRI	BRI6	3.5	3.35	1.302	1.23	0.821	0.955	0.73	0.48	0.847

Key: CR= Composite Reliability   AVE= Average Variance Extracted

Table 4.1: Questionnaire Results

***Composite Reliability* (C.R.) : CRη = (Σλyi)2 / [(Σλyi)2 + (Σεi)]**

Composite reliability was another pointer of dependability which was utilised and agreeing with Hair et al. (2006), a range which is more than 0.7 is satisfactory, however values between 0.5 and above can be considered. In table 4 above, all the instruments were in an adequate range, therefore reflecting reliability.

***Average Variance Extracted* (AVE) :Vη = Σλyi2/(Σλyi2+Σεi**

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to gauge legitimacy of the instruments in accordance to Fornell and Larcker (1981). AVE is satisfactory when it is equivalent or more than 0.5, however a value more than 0.4 can be considered. Table 4 above demonstrates that AVE is within the satisfactory range therefore the instruments could be utilised in the investigation.

4.2.2 Factor Loadings

Factor loadings were utilised to prove convergent validity, as indicated by Gerbing and Anderson (1988); loadings which are more noteworthy are equivalent to 0.5 and greater. Table 4 above demonstrates that factor loadings of the instruments all reflected convergent validity.

Correlations

		SBC	EBA	BT	BP	BL	BRI
SBC	Pearson Correlation	1					
EBA	Pearson Correlation	.562**	1				
BT	Pearson Correlation	.529**	.393**	1			
BP	Pearson Correlation	.656**	.515**	.768**	1		
BL	Pearson Correlation	.559**	.342**	.614**	.701**	1	
BRI	Pearson Correlation	.520**	.364**	.702**	.736**	.814**	1

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

Table 4.2: Correlation between the research instruments

Confirmatory Factor analysis of the research

Key: Brand self-connection=(SBC); Emotional brand attachment= (EBA); Brand trust = (BT; Brand passion= (BP); Brand loyalty= (BL); Brand repurchase intention= (BRI)

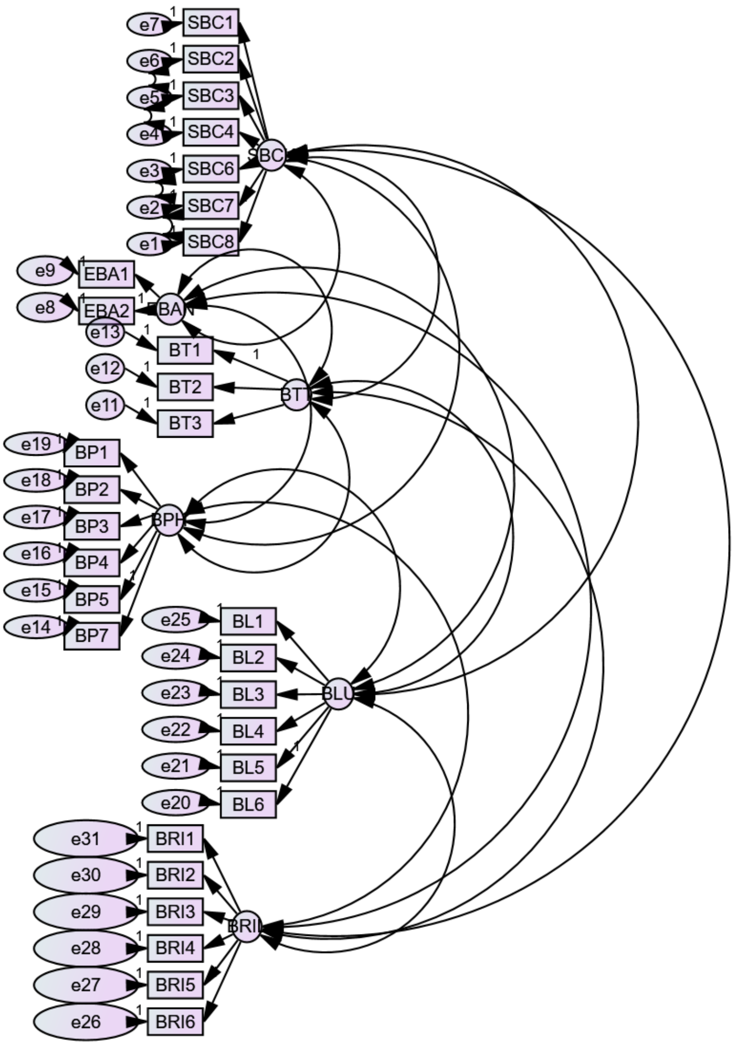


Figure 4.5: Confirmatory Factor analysis model

The model was run and had the following outcomes. Chi-square ($\chi2$/df) = 1.634, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = ,868;Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = ,968; Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = ,961; Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = ,968; Relative Fit Index (RFI) = ,904; Normed Fit Index (NFI) = ,921; Random Measure of Standard Error Approximation (RMSEA) =,049.

Model Fit Criteria	Chi-Square ($\chi2$ /DF)	GFI	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Indicator value	1.625	0.865	0.921	0.905	0.968	0.961	0.968	0.49

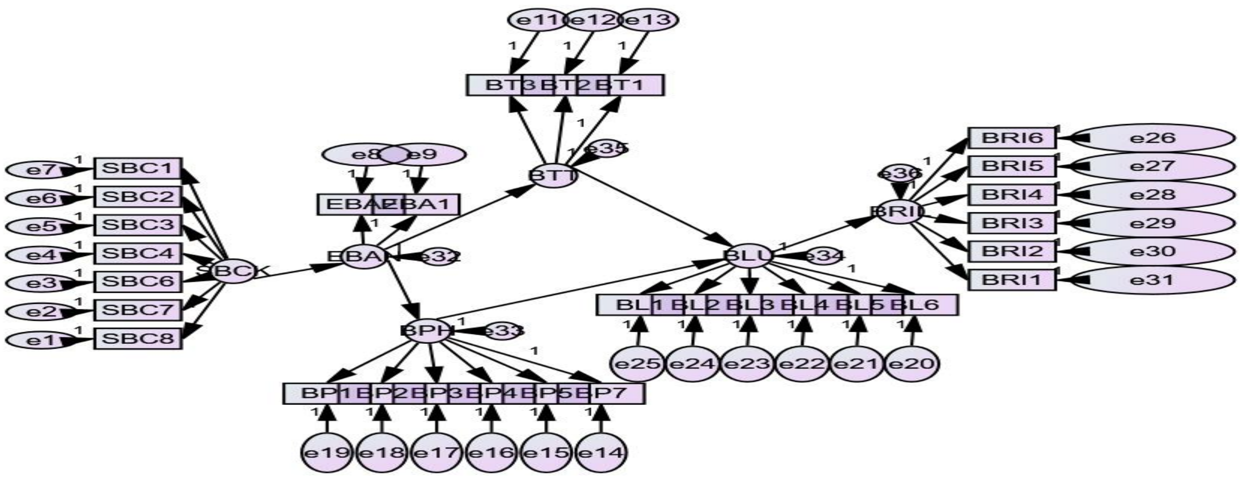
Table 4.3: Conceptual Model fit

4.2.2.1 CONCEPTUAL MODEL FIT RESULTS

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to look at scale precision which included reliability, dicriminat validity and convergent reliability of the instruments which utilised AMOS 25. An affirmed two-route system for evaluating model fit involves confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and the testing of hypothesis (Anderson & Gerbing, 2003). The model fit for validity was demonstrated by chi-square with an acceptable level ($\chi2$/df) of results somewhere in the range of 1 and 3, followed by the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI) Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and equivalent to or more prominent than 0.90, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) values to be equivalent to or under 0.08. Prescribed insights for the last in general model appraisal uncovered a worthy model to the data fit.All connection values of the study reflected model fit as displayed in table 6 above. Once an adequate CFA estimation model fit was created, the study went further to the hypothesis testing stage utilising results obtained from the AMOS 25 programming system.

Path model analysis and hypothesis

Key: Brand self-connection =(SBC); Emotional brand attachment= (EBA); Brand trust = (BT; Brand passion= (BP); Brand loyalty= (BL); Brand repurchase intention= (BRI)



Hypothesis	Hypothesised Relationship	Path Coefficient	P-Value	Results
H1	Brand Self connection (SBC) → Emotional Brand Attachment (EBA)	0.741	***	Supported and significant
H2	Emotional Brand Attachment (EBA) → Brand Trust (BT)	1.013	***	Supported and significant
H3	Emotional Brand (EBA) → Brand Passion (BP)	0.868	***	Supported and significant
H4	Brand Trust (BT) → Brand Loyalty (BL)	0.145	0.168	Supported and insignificant (P<0.05)
H5	Brand Passion (BP) → Brand Loyalty (BL)	0.651	***	Supported and significant
H6	Brand Loyalty (BL) → Repurchase Intention (BRI)	0.999	***	Supported and significant

Table 4.4: Summarized Results for the Hypothesis tested

Chi-square ($\chi 2$/df) = 1.625, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = ,868;Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = ,865; Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = ,961; Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = ,968; Relative Fit Index (RFI) = ,905; Normed Fit Index (NFI) = ,921; Random Measure of Standard Error Approximation (RMSEA) =,049. Significance level p <0.05; Significance level <0.01; Significance level <0.001.

4.2.3 HYPOTHESIS

As seen in table 7 above all the results were supported and significant except for one which was supported, however it was insignificant.

4.2.3.1 BRAND SELF CONNECTION AND EMOTIONAL BRAND ATTACHMENT- H1

As indicated by the proposed hypothesis, brand self-connection positively influences emotional brand attachment. Eventually, the study discoveries demonstrate that this investigation agrees with the hypothesis, as reflected by the results. It may be inferred that brand self-connection does lead to an emotional brand attachment.

4.2.3.2 Emotional Brand Attachment and Brand Trust- H2

As shown by the proposed hypothesis, emotional brand attachement positively impacts brand trust. In the end, the study shows that this examination concurs with the assumed hypothesis as reflected by the outcomes with a supported outcome which was positive and at a significant level <0.001. It might be surmised that emotional brand attachement positively leads to brand trust.

4.2.3.3 Emotional Brand Attachment and Brand Passion -H3

As seen in the proposed hypothesis, emotional brand attachement positively impacts brand passion as well. The study shows that this result concurs with the assumed hypothesis as reflected by the outcomes with a supported outcome which was positive and a significant level <0.001. It might be surmised that emotional brand attachement positively leads to brand passion.

4.2.3.4 Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty- H4

The relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty is supported, however it has an insignificant confidence level which is not within the ($p<0.05$) acceptable range. This meant that there was a relationship between the two variables but the level of the incidence occurring was low. Therefore, the hypothesis will not be acceptable due to the confidence level being unacceptable.

4.2.3.5 Brand Passion and Brand Loyalty-H5

As indicated by the proposed hypothesis, brand passion positvely influences brand loyalty. The study shows the proposed hypothesis agrees with the results with a supported outcome which was a positive value and a significant level <0.001. It very well may be agreed that brand passion does lead to brand loyalty.

4.2.3.6 Brand Loyalty and Brand Repurchase Intention-H6

According to the proposed hypothesis, brand loyality positively impacts brand repurchase intention. The study shows that these results concur with the assumed hypothesis as reflected by the outcomes with a supported outcome which was positive and a significat level <0.001. It might be surmised that brand loyality leads to brand repurchase intention.

4.3 Chapter summary

Chapter four presented the results obtained during the investigative proceedings of this study. The hypothesises were tested on the questionnaires and the results were deduced to be either negative or positive with an accounted for confidence significant level. A confident significant level below the 0.05 is deemed acceptable and that above the threshold, not.

5. CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study was to determine the influence of emotional brand attachment on brand love, brand trust and brand re-purchase intention in the mobile phone industry among millennial students within the Johannesburg metropolitan area and how this creates long-lasting brand-consumer relationships. This objective was achieved through the facilitation of questionnaires that tested respondents on questions that causally related to the objective.

5.1 DISCUSSIONS

The main research question to be answered in this paper was the influence of emotional brand attachment on brand love, brand trust and brand repurchase intention in the mobile phone industry. This study was conducted among millennial students within the Johannesburg metropolitan area and the extent to which the repurchase intention built long-lasting brand-consumer relationships was investigated and determined. To answer this question, the researcher divided it into sub-questions with individual hypotheses that could be tested and concluded. As can be seen in Chapter 4; the devised sub-questions around the relationships between the variables returned positive confirmations, except between brand trust and brand loyalty; where, although it was apparent that brand trust did positively influence brand loyalty – the significance to the buyer's repurchase intention was not conclusive.

5.1.1 BRAND SELF CONNECTION POSITIVELY INFLUENCES EMOTIONAL BRAND ATTACHMENT

The study found that the students at the University of Witwatersrand's emotional brand attachment was influenced by how they connected themselves to the brand on a personal level. Majority of the students were found to be using the Apple brand, often associated with prestige and quality; a fact that can draw in students who identify with those traits or even aspire to them. This is significantly supported by literature that denotes that the extent that the consumer 'sees themselves' at the current state or where they 'aspire to be' greatly influences the relationship to be developed with that brand (Bagozzi, 2017). Those who see the Apple or even Samsung brand as a representation of what they want to become in the future, will show positive affinity for the brand and will begin developing a sense of attachment, as explained by Bilotti (2011).

5.1.2 Emotional Brand Attachment positively influences Brand Trust

The results of the study also show that the respondents displayed a positive relationship between brand attachment and brand trust. Assuming an affirmative emotional brand attachment, which introduces a sense of experience and history with the brand that led to that attachment to begin with – the development of trust is inevitable. Trust has been defined by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) as the "willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function". Brand trust arises after consumers' evaluation of companies' offerings; and if the company provides beliefs of safety, honesty and reliability about their brands to consumers, brand trust will be generated subsequently (Kabadayi & Kocak, 2012). It can be interpreted that brand trust is created and developed by direct experiences of the consumer via brands (Kabadayi & Kocak, 2012). One of the ways emotional brand attachment is developed is through the experience of brands and that continued experience, can be one of the contributing factors to the resulting trust between brand and consumer.

5.1.3 Emotional Brand Attachment positively influences Brand Passion

Emotional brand attachment was found to have a positive influence on passion, a finding consistent with logic and literature. Brand passion has been found to be more about the measuring of the volume of social content or sentiment and also the intensity of passion and feeling (Edwards & Day, 2007). Brand passion is like a fuel that propels consumers towards specific brands from a place of deep emotional connection and drive (Edwards & Day, 2007) and it makes plausible sense that this factor would be influenced by another emotional factor; brand attachment. Brand attachment has been described as the emotional closeness between the consumer and the brand, where, in the absence of the brand, consumers have a negative feeling (Albert & Merunka, 2013). This looming negative feeling could be the fuelling factor for passion and desire for the brand, justifying the positive correlation between the two found in the study.

5.1.4 Brand Trust positively influences Brand Loyalty, but its significance factor is inconclusive

Brand trust was found to be influence brand loyalty but insignificant, in the pool of students chosen for the study. There are two categories of trust; these are organisational trust and personal trust (Ekelund & Sharma, 2001). Brand trust is a part of personal trust and is influenced by the consistent delivering of the brand on the agreed upon service at the agreed upon quality standard. Consumer satisfaction with a brand has a direct and indirect effect on brand loyalty (Setyawan & Imronudin, 2015). Satisfaction is a matter of a promise from a service provider to their consumer (Setyawan & Imronudin, 2015). It gives a suggestion to a brand to fulfil their promise to consumer. Literature therefore supports and expects that brand trust will positively influence brand loyalty, as it is only plausible that good and satisfactory performance does not chase the consumers away, instead draws them in. The fact that the results could not prove significance is an anomaly that could be influenced by the limited sample size and sample group. One group of students do not represent the entire South Africa and the compromised sample size could negatively impact the viability of the results found.

5.1.5 Brand Passion positively influences Brand Loyalty

Brand passion has already been described to be more about the measuring of the volume of social content or sentiment and the intensity of passion and feeling (Edwards & Day, 2007). Brand loyalty, on the other hand, can be understood as the tendency of consumers to continuously purchase one brand's products over another brand offering a similar product and functionality (Setyawan & Imronudin, 2015). If consumers register a positive intense feeling (passion) for a brand, logic follows that they remain loyal to that brand, that managed to invoke those positive emotions in them and keep the cycle going.

5.1.6 Brand Loyalty positively influences Repurchase Intention

Brand loyalty had been investigated as it relates to brand trust and brand passion, where it showed positive relation coefficients and was no different in the ultimate determination of whether brand loyalty influenced the consumer’s repurchase intention. According to Oliver (1997), customer's loyalty is "a deep held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to cause switching behaviour" (Habib & Aslam, 2014). This literature supports the finding of loyalty leading to repurchase intention, as loyalty can be defined to include the purpose of repurchasing, which further determines the consumer’s predetermination of one brand over another.

5.2 Limitations of the investigation

The main limitations encountered during the investigation were resources and time. The lack of resources resulted in the small sample size for the questionnaires, leading to the results being non-representative of every student in South Africa, let alone the entire South African demographic. The study was limited to the University of the Witwatersrand students within the marketing department at the school of economics because that also allowed for easy control of the information flowing out as questionnaires and coming back as raw data. However, the saturation of the sample size also presents another secondary limitation, the introduction of bias in the results. Students are often travelling in packs and are heavily influenced by what their friends say and do. As the questionnaire was not conducted in a monitored, controlled environment, it is plausible that the answers received do not fully represent the respondents' truest reality. A lot could come from discussions held with friends who also received the questionnaire, and the common social phenomenon of 'peer pressure'. All these factors should be considered when designing an investigation.

Subsequently, the other limitation experienced during this investigation was time. Had the researcher had enough time to see through all angles of this research, she would have been able to scatter the questionnaires across campus and across faculties. The risk in this case would have been sending out questionnaires and students not returning them as agreed or disappearing; introducing the difficult factor of tracking them down within the time boundaries set for this project.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the limitations experienced during this investigation, the researcher would recommend the following actions for any further research conducted for the same research question:

- **Further studies on the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty:** The significance factor of the investigated relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty suggests that there are more variables that influence this correlation. Further studies on this one dimension can help better understand all the influences and how they relate to each other and the final relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty.
- **Further studies on how a buyer's economic state influences the repurchase intention:** In an economic climate like South Africa's, brand affordability often fluctuates due to the changing environment that does not favour the buyer. A study on how buyer choices get affected by this climate can better assist the brand to position itself for times of lowered and limited affordability. This study to take into consideration: the buyer's dire need for the brand, the buyer's sacrifices, the buyer's choices and what they choose to replace in such times. Brands can use this research to

determine just how important being ‘essential’ and ‘necessary to have’ is to their business.

- **Further studies on the maintenance of brand attachment and the repurchase item:** Brands can also benefit from the investigation of how to maintain brand attachment once it has been established with the buyer. This study can encompass the life cycle of the brand-buyer relationship after this establishment point and what outside influences can have an impact on the relationship. Understanding these influences can assist brands maintain their buyers by knowing how well to position themselves when there is a change in dynamic.
- **Time allocation**: Six months alone should be given to the process of collecting data if there is to be a substantiate sample size used. Students can be unpredictable and hard to control, therefore making any pre-assumed response to the questionnaires unhelpful. Time should be factored in for any occurrence, that the sample size may never be compromised and that there is a backup plan to meeting the target number of responses.
- **Allocation of resources**: The results of the study would be better representative of the larger demographic if they did not come from one university. However, the travelling and allocation of suitable universities to join the investigation would require money for travel and calling. It is therefore recommended that these factors are considered during the planning stage of research.

5.4 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

By investigating brand attachment and its impact on creating long lasting consumer brand relationships in doing so increasing brand repurchase intention, the findings provide marketing practitioners with a better understanding of strategies that may be employed to influence consumers’ attachment to the various brands by using many innovative ways to achieve emotional connection— from advertising and the quality of frontline consumer contact, to consumer membership organizations and company-sponsored consumer events. Emotional connection can take your customers beyond brand loyalty to the ultimate measure of a compelling brand: brand advocacy (VanAuken, 2015).

Consumers become emotionally connected to a brand for several reasons:

- The brand stands for something important to them. It shares values with them.
- The brand is intense and vibrant. It connects with people on multiple levels across several senses.

- The brand is unique.
- The brand is admirable.
- The brand consistently interacts with them. It never disappoints them.
- The brand makes them feel good.

By brands focusing on positioning their products in the consumers mind to convey the brands value as well as its uniqueness through emphasis of product offering, they can increase the emotional attachment consumers will have with their brands. Apple Electronics is one brands that is known for being a driver in the mobile phone industry. A customer chooses a brand because their values reflect their values and resonates with them (VanAuken , 2015).The go to slogan "Think Different" embodies the what the brand stands, resulting in consumers identifying themselves within the slogan.

Apple stands out by using its advancement in technology as well as its basic philosophy of simplicity, which is the key reason the brand uniqueness and admirability of Apple. Apple understood this feature very well and reflected it in the corporate culture, Apple's success is also due to the high quality of its products which increases its brand trust (Gorpeli, 2019). By successfully implementing these strategies, consumers may develop strong emotional bonds with the brand thus increasing the likelihood of repurchase of the product.

Emotional attachment to a brand can result in a consumer developing a loyalist mentality towards that brand (Thomson, et al., 2005). Managers are constantly looking for ways to increase brand loyalty. They need to appreciate the importance of consumer engagement with their brand through positive brand relationships. Therefore, they need to try to develop brand identities and project brand images that will make the brands look as appealing to the consumers as relationship partners. (Velostou, 2015).

Attachment is critical because it affects behaviour that directly influences brand profitability and customer lifetime value (Fedorikhin, et al., 2008). By brands focusing on creating brand trust which the construct that critical to attachment.

The findings of our study recommend that once a consumer is attached to a brand, then he/she will prefer to purchase that brand, so the mobile industry marketers should concentrate on uniqueness of the product offering as well as increasing the brand love that consumers can develop (Shaid and Farooqi , 2019) . A consumer is interested if a brand is enhancing their life and is adding a certain value (Mishra, 2019) which results to a development of brand love.

These consumers are moving to personal self-concept, but still these consumers are found to display their consumption during the social functions, especially during parties and wedding seasons, along with their reference groups where the Indians spend maximum money. So, the international luxury consumers should design, develop, and deliver the mobile phone according to the needs and desires of the consumers. (Shaid and Farooqi, 2019)

The management can develop improved strategies for using with customer's emotions to brands and by applying a deeper understanding of how customers' brand loyalty changes their attitude towards brand repurchasing.

By establishing good relationship with customers, brand can increase their profits. As the results suggest the emotional attachment between the customer and brand is an important pre-requisite to a successful long-term relationship. Brand managers must understand the emotional connection of the customers and then accordingly customise their products and services.

As the dissertation highlights the significance of brand love, brand trust and brand loyalty in acquiring and keeping loyal customers, the brand manager should try to earn customers' trust and commitment. Brands can earn customers' trust and build quality relationships with them through connecting with them on an emotional level through adverts and producing quality products and services.

There are a lot of advantages linked with customer loyalty, including profitability (Ndubisi, 2003) and cost reduction. Customer loyalty increases profits and can reduce the business operating cost five to six-fold (Rosenberg and Czepiel, 1983). Loyal customers also attract new customers by positive word of mouth about a service provider (Ndubisi, 2003).

5.5. CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this investigation was to determine the influence of emotional brand attachment on brand love, brand trust and brand re-purchase intention in the mobile phone industry among millennial students and to relate how this creates long-lasting brand-consumer relationships. Emotional brand attachment was found to have a positive influence on brand love and brand trust, all factors that showed a positive relation to brand loyalty. Brand loyalty was then determined to have a positive influence on the intention to repurchase by consumers, a fact that is instrumental in the building and maintaining of long brand-consumer relationships. It can therefore be concluded that emotional brand love, brand trust and brand loyalty – all contribute to the consumer's decision to repurchase and the building of long-lasting brand-consumer relationships, should be considered from the bottom to the top.

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7. ANNEXURE A: EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

CONFIRMATION OF PROOFREADING

This serves to confirm that I have proofread this thesis and have made the necessary corrections, suggestions, and recommendations:

The Role of Emotional Brand Attachment in Creating Long Lasting Consumer- Brand Relationships.

By

Fanisile Mabuza

I have been proofreading articles, Honours, Masters and Doctoral dissertations, research reports and theses for the past 15+ years for, *inter alia*, the following institutions: University of the Witwatersrand; GIBS; University of Cape Town; Milpark; Mancosa; University of KwaZuluNatal; University of Johannesburg; Unisa; Tshwane University of Technology; Stellenbosch; Henley Business School, Regenesys and, more recently, the Da Vinci Institute.

I have also undertaken proofreading for publishers, such as Oxford University Press and Juta & Company, companies, institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

I have a major in English, and excellent knowledge of Afrika