



**ANALYSING FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE INTENTIONS,
PERCEPTION AND CULTURE FOR CONSUMERS OF WOMEN'S LUXURY
FOOTWEAR IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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BRDSHE005

A Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of

Master of Business Science in Marketing

School of Management Studies

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02nd August 2018

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Dedication

In loving memory of Kaydees Louboutin Bridglall: Biology is the least of what makes one a mother.

Acknowledgements

The success of this project is attributable to many people who supported, encouraged and played various roles during my studies. Firstly, I would like to thank God for His love, perception and who beholds everything in me, never loses sight of me, nor do I ever lose sight of Him-The Bhagavad Gita V1:30.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr Joel Chigada, my academic study leader for his unwavering support, encouragement, constructive criticism and for holding me throughout this journey that I traversed. To you, Dr Chigada, I say thank you for showing me how to conduct research and in you, I learnt a lot. May the Almighty God richly bless you. You were a source of inspiration.

My sincere thank you to my loving family, mother, dad, brother and granny for their continuous support and encouragement throughout this journey. Without you and your support, I would have easily given up. Thank you Shriya for a being a supportive friend. You motivated me when the chips were low. In you, I gained inspiration. I would like to thank Elle South Africa for helping with data collection, professional assistance and support during the period of the study. My sincere gratitude goes to the respondents for their time, input and responses which enabled me to complete this study. Had it not be you folks out there, I would not have successfully conducted this study. I would like to thank the University of Cape Town, Commerce Faculty for allowing me to pursue this project. I thank everyone for making things happen.

Abstract

Consumer behaviour and purchase intention are some of the most discussed topics in marketing academia and practice alike. A rich and constantly developing body of literature complements this field. However, even though many theories exist, one's understanding remains limited in some areas. The motivation for conducting this study was attributable to the researcher's experience who has worked with luxury footwear brands in South Africa, Europe and Asia. In addition, marketers' failure to understand consumer buying behaviour and purchase intentions are difficult tasks that have driven the researcher to undertake this study. The primary objective was to determine the factors that influenced the purchase intentions of consumers of luxury footwear

This study explored South Africa and the literature around propositions of the model of purchase intentions proposed by Vigneron and Johnson through a positivist lens. Data was collected using Elle South Africa's Instagram social media networking platform. A total of 1350 participants were involved in the survey, which was only limited to Cape Town and Johannesburg. Only 200 participants met the criteria of women spending money on luxury footwear. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used in this study because the sample elements were readily available using the Elle South Africa Instagram social networking platform. Quantitative data was analysed through Structural Equation Modelling and the findings were presented in frequency tables.

The results showed that culture moderated the relationships between luxury perception and the purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear; extrinsic factors were more relevant than intrinsic factors in the purchasing of luxury footwear; and that luxury perception positively influences the purchase intentions for consumers of the luxury footwear market in South Africa. Knowing what motivates women's purchase intentions is critical to growing brand customer bases, which is possible through improving market segmentation. Suggestions for improving segmentation are possible through greater definition of variables. Additional research was suggested to establish details which encourage this market to buy luxury footwear brands. This is particularly important in terms of South Africa, which is home to many different cultures where these ethnic groups are confined to a small region. Customers need to be able to make trade-offs between intrinsic and extrinsic factors and costs in this market, which is critical knowledge especially in economic downturns.

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List of Acronyms

CPI	:	Consumer Purchase Intention
BLI	:	Brand Luxury Index
TPB	:	Theory of Planned Behaviour
BC	:	Behavioural Control
TRA	:	Theory of Reasoned Action
PEM	:	Product Evaluation Model
BP	:	Brand Perception
CD	:	Cultural Dimensions
SI	:	Social Influence

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APPENDIX A: Questionnaire on Luxury Footwear Purchase Intention.....74

Definition of Terms

The section below contains an explanation of terms frequently used in this study.

Bandwagon Effect	The Bandwagon Effect is driven by social value and the notion that if other people are using a specific product, it must be appropriate and of high quality (Liebenstein, 1950).
Culture	The characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts (Zimmerman, 2017).
Extrinsic Value	In this study, extrinsic value is considered to be of a dual nature; on the one hand there is the direct emotions of pleasure in the enhanced self-concept, that a luxury purchase elicits and on the other, an improvement of the consumer's social status among their group of peers (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).
Hedonic Effect	The Hedonic Effect is the emotional experience thought of as a gauge that ranges from bad to good and the primary motivation is to keep the needle on the gauge as close to good as possible (Liebenstein, 1950).
Intrinsic Value	The value gained from a product, which satisfied one's conscience (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).
Luxury Footwear	For the purposes of this study, it is suggested that an item of footwear with an entry price point of R8000 be considered luxury.
Luxury Product	A high priced good that is perceived to be positioned on the extreme end of the market and is affiliated with symbols of wealth, status, quality and prestige (Brun & Castelli, 2013).
Millennials	The demographic cohort following Generation X; typically born between the 1980's and mid-1990's (Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010).
Perfectionism Effect	The Perfectionism Effect is when consumers pursue quality value. This effect is related to the superior quality of goods in luxury and also reflects in the price (Liebenstein, 1950).
Purchase Intention	The conscious plan and effort that an individual makes to purchase a product (Morinez, 2007).

Snob Effect

The Snob Effect is when consumers pursue unique value. They wish to possess footwear that has authentic, prestigious features that cannot be replicated and aim to belong to the extreme few who have a similar product (Liebenstein, 1950).

Veblen Effect

The Veblen Effect is when consumers pursue conspicuous, unique and quality value. This effect attributes the actual implication of a luxury good to the unique reaction as literature shows that consumers attach more quality to a luxury item that is highly priced (Liebenstein, 1950).

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The macroeconomic environment in South Africa is challenging; unemployment and inequality are high, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is slow and only recently stabilizing and there are many structural deficiencies that make it difficult for the country to unlock its potential (Arora & Vamvakidis, 2007). In 2016, consumer demand in South Africa was constrained by low levels of consumer confidence, high taxes and a drop in real wages in the face of an expansion of the country's large low-income consumers from the inflow of migrants from neighbouring countries (United Nations, 2016). However, even in this testing macroeconomic environment, luxury consumption continued to grow, fuelled by the upper class, tourists and notable growth in the middle class.

Comparatively though, the African luxury goods market is still smaller than in Asian and European regions. Idahosa (2017) posits that the African luxury goods market is growing at a fast rate. According to Bain & Co (2016), the global luxury market was worth €217bn in 2013, with Africa accounting for just under 1%, or €1.5bn-2bn – half of which came from South Africa. This is partly attributable to international luxury brands setting up shops in South Africa and South African brands have also performed well locally and on an international scale (Euromonitor, 2016).

Bain & Co (2016) has forecast double-digit luxury sales growth for the continent, with a strong demand for “hard” luxury items such as jewellery, footwear and cars. However, it is the South African market that provides a longer-term growth opportunity for this segment, primarily because of its relatively small and niche customer base which is driven by two main consumer groups, namely, high net worth individuals and Millennials (Euromonitor, 2016).

The growing consumer body of Millennials provides not only for a potentially lucrative target for luxury brands currently, but an opportunity for the long-run since it is projected that in the next few years the incomes of Millennials will reach high levels. Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the motivations between the buying process, intent and final purchase need to be accounted for and then additional value needs to be provided through enhancement of services to nurture this lucrative consumer market. Management needs to be aware of the

vast array of complex factors when developing strategies for the South African luxury footwear industry to continue to generate growing sales and enhance growth in this developing economy. This study focuses on female consumers of luxury footwear in South Africa and explored their purchase intention.

1.2. Contextual Setting

This section contains a summary of the context in which this study is premised. The researcher provides the background of the study, followed by the contextual setting of the South African women's luxury footwear industry.

1.2.1. Background of Study

Luxury brands have been present in the South African market for several decades, offering new markets and new growth for global companies wishing to expand their business opportunities (Euromonitor, 2016). South Africa, the third biggest economy on the African continent by measure of GDP (World Bank, 2017) is one of the most advanced and diverse consumer markets. By extension, the South African population provides a very interesting testing ground for insights regarding consumer behaviour, due to the richness in texture (race, ethnicity, religion, economic background) present within its borders.

Although there is ample research on luxury consumption and consumer behaviour within the bounds of this specific category, little is known about how the theoretical predictions outlined in previous literature, manifest in the general African, and more specifically, the South African perspective. Research on the subject has been most notably performed by Sharma and Gautam (2015), Hattingh, Magnus and Ramlakan (2016), as well as various market reports from market research agencies with a global reach, such as Euromonitor (2016). This study proposes to fill a gap in existing research to add value to this field. Furthermore, the amplitude of choice within the luxury footwear space makes this a challenging yet exciting study, with regard to the output potential.

South Africa's geographical segments represent the largest market for luxury goods on the African continent (Stiehler, 2017). This is underlined by a fast-growing aspirational middle class, quality shopping centres and good infrastructure (Cant, Van Heerden & Ngambi, 2010). Government policies in place support investments in luxury goods by allowing

franchises and providing attractive offers for foreign investors (Stockburger & Wisenblit, 2013). Even more, the country is composed of a rich mix of races, ethnicities and traditions and each sub-group has traditional native wear which can be related to it (Reeves & Daimler, 2011).

The two main consumer groups driving this growth in luxury are high net worth individuals, also referred to as the Top Enders in the South Africa market ; and Millennials (Euromonitor, 2016). “Top Enders” is a term devised in a recent study conducted by University of Cape Town Professor John Simpson of the Unilever Institute of Marketing in conjunction with several South African businesses to gain further insights into the South African luxury market (Nevill, 2011). Millennials are the demographic cohort following Generation X; typically born between the 1980’s and mid-1990’s (Deal *et. al.*, 2010). A growing consumer body of Millennials provides not only for a potentially lucrative target for luxury brands currently, but a fantastic opportunity for the long-run, as in the next few years the incomes of Millennials are projected to reach high levels; with consumption of luxury increasing accordingly.

With reference to increasing globalisation, global firms are investing and entering into South Africa, thus, most consumers are becoming more familiar with international luxury brands. Present trends indicate a growing tendency to evaluate brands online prior to making a purchase, with online shopping further promoting further sales in this lucrative market (van Rensburg, 2017). Deloitte’s (2016) survey indicated that Millennials and Generation Y have also become a prominent market segment with influential purchasing power and are projected to form 40% of purchasing power by 2020 (Scheepers, 2016). Being frugal cohorts of consumers Millennials and Generation Y have potential to influence both younger and older generations to further influence the purchase of luxury brands (van Rensburg, 2017). Insofar as challenges are concerned, South Africa’s luxury goods environment enjoys stable growth despite a weak economy and is anticipated to attract greater investment to the continent together with overseas visitors who wish to take advantage of the pricing of luxury goods in the country (Scheepers, 2016). Further challenges have been experienced in terms of economic growth on the African continent and in South Africa (Deloitte, 2017). Sporadic growth in different regions indicates the need for diversification in industries due to extensive variations in geographies, inadequate infrastructure related to connectivity, minimal integration at regional levels, low skills and knowledge networks and training (Dalziel, 2016). Fluctuations in currencies and exchange rates have also challenged local markets,

which have impacted economic growth. The market for luxury goods in South Africa, however, continues to retain promise with foreign direct investment remaining an option to enhance the success of this industry (Dalziel, 2016).

1.3. Research Problem

There is a dearth of information or literature that describes the extent to which culture and other factors influence women in South Africa to purchase luxury footwear. The little or non-existence of such information and literature poses challenges for contemporary marketers in the luxury footwear industry to understand women's behavioural intentions of purchasing these luxury products. Thus, marketers will not have customer insights and knowledge required to devise competitive strategies for their firms to attract more customers whilst improving the image and revenue of the firm. Lack of customer insights is a huge barrier to creating customer relationships. Involving customers in the product and service design strategy, thus, customers can easily be swayed by competitors leading to a firm's image in disrepute or closing down business. This study tested the intrinsic and extrinsic high order values with the objective of understanding women's behavioural intentions to buy luxury footwear (Vigneron and Johnson (2004).

1.4. Purpose of the Study

As South Africa has a rich, diverse culture and a growing market for luxury goods, there is large platform for women consumers in the luxury footwear industry (van Rensburg, 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore and understand the behaviour of women purchasing luxury footwear and whether cultural differences in South Africa have any effect or is related to their purchasing criteria. Srinivasan, Srivastava and Bhanot (2015) posit that most women prefer luxury or top-end dress-code, thus, this study is correctly positioned within the domain of luxury apparel. In order to uncover the consumer opinions that drive purchase intention, the study bases its analysis on an adaptation of the model proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) while segregating the value system behind shaping purchase intention between extrinsic and intrinsic values. Since the Vigneron and Johnson (2004) model is limited to the formation of luxury perceptions, this study included perception as a predictor for purchase intention as suggested by Wee *et al.*, (2014) while also including culture as a moderator of luxury perception and purchase intention, as proposed by Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016).

1.5. Research Question and Objectives

The research question and objectives of the study are outlined in the section below. In order to better define the scope of the study, the aims and goals were formalized as primary and secondary research objectives.

1.5.1. Research Question

- *What factors influence purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa?*

1.5.2. Primary Objective

The primary objective of this study was:

- *To determine factors influencing purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa.*

1.5.3. Secondary Objectives

The secondary objectives of this study were:

1. *To determine if culture moderates the relationship between luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa;*
2. *To determine if intrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa;*
3. *To determine if extrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa;*
4. *To determine if luxury perception influences purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa.*

1.6. Justification for the Study

There is ample research on luxury consumption and consumer behaviour outlined in previous literature, however, there is a geographical knowledge gap on how luxury manifests in African regions based on cultural differences. This study is significant because it aims to reconcile and reduce this gap presented by previous studies, thus, new literature on purchase intentions of luxury goods is generated. Research on the subject has been most notably performed by Sharma and Gautam (2015), Hattingh, Magnus and Ramlakan (2016), as well as various market reports from market research agencies with a global reach, such as

Euromonitor (2016). The researcher attempts to determine factors that influence purchase intention for women's footwear and whether cultural differences influence luxury perception of South African consumers (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Therefore, the study will help contemporary marketers to determine which specific factors influence purchase intentions. As soon as marketers have this information, appropriate strategies will be developed and implemented to ensure the firm's products attract more customers.

The information in this study, will be helpful to South African footwear retailers as they would be able to target their advertising to prominent purchase intentions and possibly increase sales. It will aim at providing more insight and provide more useful information that local footwear retailers could use to help gain a better understanding of how to brand their footwear products based on the perceptions and opinions of women consumers. This will not only help local retailers to market their brands but also provide extensive knowledge that could assist different stakeholders, government, various footwear suppliers and even marketers with the general aim of improving the value carried by the luxury footwear industry.

1.7. Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a structure developed to review previous research works on the variables that are involved in the study (Tishkoff & Reed, 2009). It is a well-supported rationale that is organized and helps the reader to assess and understand perspective (Kastanakis, 2010). Development of the theoretical framework enables clarification of the author's implicit theory in a clearer manner (Sitter, 2008). An adapted version of the framework proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) was selected and used in this study. The Vigneron and Johnson (2004) study is aimed at deciphering luxury brands with the intention of creating a continuum with which to measure perceptions of a specific luxury brand. Earlier studies provided for various perspectives of luxury brands and the motivations to purchase these, but none offered a scale on which to measure different luxury brands or comparisons of luxury, and non-luxury brands (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). The framework in question is one of the most widely used and cited where the study of perceptions of luxury applies. However, the model is limited to the formation of luxury perceptions and yet the aim of this study is to uncover what prompts purchase intention for South African consumers.

This study included perception as a predictor for purchase intention as suggested by Wee *et al.*, (2014). As proposed by Ahmad, Ashraf & Shaikh (2014) in addition to perception of luxury, which is driven by functional, symbolic and experiential value, culture also has a strong influence on purchase intention of luxury items. Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016), who similarly based their research on the Vigneron and Johnson (2004) framework, state that culture was a strong moderator between luxury perceptions and purchase intention. Therefore, culture was also included as a moderator in the theoretical model that the study proposed (Appendix A).

1.8. Research Design and Methodology

The section below highlights the research design and methodology chosen to best cater to the research question of the study.

1.8.1. Research Paradigm

The study was classified as experimental (positivist), with a realist ontology - there was a single reality or truth, and an empiricist epistemology - in that reality was measured and the focus was on the extent to which the tools used to measure it was reliable and valuable (Malhotra, 2010). Chigada (2014) states that positivist approaches are informed by an objective epistemological perspective which allows the researcher to be distant from subjects where data is collected.

1.8.2. Research Methodology

The research took a quantitative approach in measuring purchase intentions of South African consumers in the specific product category chosen. Quantitative data brought the advantage of increased objectivity and the use of statistical analysis, specifically descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling (SEM), aided to find patterns in a consumer's purchase intention for luxury footwear (Malhotra, 2010).

1.8.3. Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design as it set out to describe characteristics of South African women who consume luxury footwear, without manipulating any variables present or absent in the existing environment.

1.8.4. *Target Population*

The target population of this study comprised of females that frequently purchased luxury footwear exceeding a single item value of R8000. This price point was suggested, as it was consistent with the entry price point for global luxury footwear brands.

1.8.5. *Sampling*

The study was conducted on 200 South African female respondents who have previously purchased a luxury footwear item exceeding R8000. The sampling technique of the study was that of convenience and consequently the sampling method used was of the non-probabilistic type.

1.8.6. *Data Collection*

The measurement instrument utilized for the study was an online questionnaire. After successful completion of the pre-test, the measurement instrument was used to conduct the study on the intended sample.

1.8.7. *Data Analysis and Presentation*

The study adopted a quantitative approach. The data gathered was analysed using descriptive statistics to describe and examine basic characteristics of the data. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was then conducted to determine structural relationships between the measured variables and latent constructs.

1.8.8. *Ethical Considerations*

There were various ethical considerations that had to be taken into account when conducting the study, most of which draw from the framework proposed by Bryman and Bell (2007). The participation of respondents in the questionnaire was completely voluntary and under their full consent. Measures were taken to ensure that the questionnaire was described by high integrity and that no questions were likely to offend any of the participants by design, in the way they were formulated.

The measurement instrument was verified by the researcher's supervisor at The University of Cape Town and further approved by the Commerce Ethics Committee. Additionally, guarantees were provided to the respondents regarding their anonymous participation in the

research via a disclaimer that expressed the commitment of the researcher to respect the personal data of those participating in the research. All communications with survey participants were performed with absolute truthfulness and transparency, regarding the motivations of the research as well as its objectives. Finally, the work of other authors is fully respected throughout the study, with the use of the UCT-Harvard referencing system, ensuring that the research maintained a high level of trustworthiness.

1.9. Scope and Limitations

The scope and limitations of the study are discussed in two sections namely: the scope and limitations.

1.9.1. Scope of Study

The scope refers to the boundaries or depth of issues covered with the focus in this study being in the area of consumer behaviour and purchase intention formation (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). The approach taken by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) was based on the model of purchase intentions where the model sought to measure behavioural elements such as consumer perceptions of conspicuousness, uniqueness, quality, emotional, and social value. However, in this study, the abovementioned behavioural elements were translated into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of luxury perception. Since the Vigneron and Johnson (2004) model is limited to the formation of luxury perceptions, this study included perception as a predictor for purchase intention as suggested by Wee *et al.*, (2014). Culture was also included as a moderator of luxury perception and purchase intention for luxury women's footwear in the South African landscape as proposed by Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016). The scope results in the research performed were narrowed down to South African Millennial female's attitudes to luxury footwear and elicited clear answers to what drove the formation of opinion and ultimately purchase intention in this specific domain.

1.9.2. Limitations of Study

The study was defined and also constrained by several limitations that were generally attributable to the scope and context, as well as resource limitations that were mainly discerned between time and capital committed. That is to say, the generalized findings originated from a small sample of 200 respondents which may have inadequately depicted the formulated results of the study and as a result undermined the generalizability of the

conclusions reached; for example, while the study aimed to analyse the attitudes of Millennial women in South African, the sample was predominantly composed of individuals from Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Furthermore, whilst the study was conducted in the South African context, not all respondents were South African citizens, including foreign students and professionals that although might have been living in South Africa for more than 5 years, did not represent the population that the research aimed to describe, with accuracy. Consequently, the results achieved were discounted to relatively reflect the constraints they were reached under. The study concluded, urging further research to take place in order to extend the generalizability of the nonetheless crucial insights that were produced post-analysis.

1.10. Organisation of Study

The study is comprised of five chapters, organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

In the first chapter of the study the introduction, background, statement of problem, aim, research question and objectives were presented. The importance of the proposed study was highlighted in the significant subsection and the theoretical framework was briefly analysed. The ethical considerations, scope and limitations of the study was discussed, followed by a detailed structure of the entire study which comprises six chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In the second chapter of the study, literature pertaining to the luxury footwear market and drivers of purchase intention was critically presented. Information was sourced from various academic, business articles, company reports and other sources to form a strong body of literature on which the study was based.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

In order to design an effective research plan for the study, the research methodology and design, in addition to other key concepts, was discussed in chapter three.

Chapter 4: Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Data

All collected quantitative data was processed using Structural equation modelling (SEM) and presented in the fourth chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Research findings and conclusions were presented in the fifth chapter and compared to findings in previous studies to give meaningful insights about the luxury footwear market in South Africa. Research recommendations and managerial implications were also presented in this chapter of the study. The suggested recommendations attempted to address suggestions for management and future studies.

1.11. Conclusion

The introductory chapter provided the background, problem statement, purpose and justification of the study while also highlighting the research methodology, design, scope and limitations which is further discussed in chapter three. The research objective and questions were presented and aided with determining the attitudes of South African Millennial women, with regard to luxury footwear in South Africa. The research case and justification for conducting this study were presented in this chapter. In addition, it was revealed that the study, understanding factors influencing purchase intentions by women of luxury footwear is a complex challenge confronting marketers. The African luxury market, while still nascent, is a highly dynamic and fast evolving category, making it a point of interest from which deep and meaningful insights could be elicited; insights that would come to the benefit of both academia and the professional world. The researcher highlighted that the study was beneficial to marketers, manufacturers or retailers to understand what drives sales, traffic and brand loyalty to their products. The proceeding chapter critically presents literature pertaining to the luxury footwear market and drivers of purchase intention.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The literature review discusses the luxury footwear industry and elicits insights about purchase intention to determine how previously tested theoretical predictions in the market apply to South African women. The concept of purchase intention and its development in literature is reviewed to deduce the study's hypotheses and determine which specific factors influence purchase intention amongst women in the South African context. Pandey and Srivastava (2016) provide a list of antecedents that could be used in determining and influencing what the purchase intention is of women. The factors mentioned generate the idea as to why women in particular would use it to make decisions for purchasing luxury footwear. The researcher provides a synopsis of the South African women's luxury footwear industry, followed by a discussion of the theoretical works that describe purchase intentions by consumers and then the chapter is concluded by empirical studies from other countries.

2.2. South African Women's Luxury Footwear Industry

This section highlights the general landscape, purchase intention, demographic and cultural idiosyncrasies of the South African luxury footwear market.

2.2.1. The Luxury Footwear Market

Wordiq (2004) defines an item of luxury as a good that is of the highest price and quality in a market. A luxury product is perceived to be positioned on the extreme end of the market and is affiliated with symbols of wealth, status, quality and prestige (Brun & Castelli, 2013). Luxury goods are further regarded as items that are not essential, but are desirable due to the sense of enjoyment which they generate like embodying sophistication and elegance (Zhang & Kim, 2013). Accessories have traditionally been the leading category among specific categories in the luxury goods market (Choi, 2012).

Luxury footwear has always held a spot of prominence in the category of luxury goods due to the fact that the entry price point (R8000) is sufficiently low for aspiring consumers to be able to participate in the consumption of this particular goods category (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). As a result, the luxury footwear market is forecast to grow at an increased rate, driven primarily by volume growth, rising disposable incomes among Millennials and retail

innovation (Deloitte, 2017). Deloitte (2017) states that developing economies provide opportune markets for luxury goods, with destinations such as Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America capturing 25% of projected growth figures of the entire market by 2025 (Botha & Reyneke, 2016). Offering extended growth potential, the Sub-Saharan market has been identified as the second fastest growing market behind Asia Pacific indicating that the luxury goods market in South Africa encompasses excellent growth potential (Botha & Reyneke, 2016).

Seo (2015) suggests that luxury brands are promoting their products whilst mimicing the democratization of the accessories category which is not limited by predefined fashion seasons. In a market that is set to be highly competitive, it is prudent then to examine the complexities surrounding the purchase behaviours of potential customers, with a specific focus on their purchase intentions (Aghdaie, Sanaei & Sharabiany, 2014). Doing so will enhance a brand’s competitive advantage by increasing the information that goes into developing strategies to promote their specific luxury footwear brands (Aghdaie *et al.*, 2014).

2.2.2. Purchase Intention in the Luxury Footwear Market

The intention to purchase a product is driven by personal actions and tendencies that relate to a specific brand (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). Purchase intention differs from attitude as attitude is seen as the person’s motivation in the sense of his or her conscious plan to exert effort to carry out a behaviour (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). For the purpose of this study, purchase intention was seen as the conscious plan and effort that an individual makes to purchase a luxury footwear product. Evidence of this consciousness can be seen in some of the antecedents of purchase decisions discussed in Table 1 below. Table 1 contains a literature study by Pandey and Srivastava (2016) that constitutes a list of elements that have been known to affect the customer’s intention to purchase (CPI). It is helpful in discussing CPI to consider some of the factors that influence it as shown below:

Table 1: Antecedents to Customer Purchase Intentions

Brand Image
Price
Trust
Attitude

Perceived Quality
Perceived Value
Demographic
Normative Beliefs & Self-Efficacy
Promotion
Country of Origin (COO)
Health Consciousness
Customer Satisfaction
Convenience
Motivation
Subjective Norms
Perceived Behavioural Control

Source: Pandey & Srivastava (2016)

Some of the driving factors on the purchasing intentions of luxury footwear amongst women in South Africa are listed in Table 1 above. Some of these ‘other’ antecedents are intuitive and can be seen when a woman’s intention to purchase luxury footwear is guided by her unique desires and specific preferences. For instance, women who are struggling with self-esteem issues and are therefore focused on being attractive, consider an appealing wear to be of relevance to raising their confidence (Amatulli & Guido (2011). Perrin, Lent and Tour (2013) suggest that women purchase luxury products in an attempt to portray their wealth or social status and to stand out from the crowd. In purchasing luxury products, the intention might be related to shared cultural beliefs and self-esteem. Social esteem is directly related to groups who share similar values, community status, and behaviours, making social class and status another motivating factor in the purchase of luxury footwear amongst women in South Africa (Dalziel, 2016). Social class can further increase peer pressure in an environment where education, income, class and social status are regarded as attractive attributes which can be enhanced by the use of desirable luxury items (Dalziel, 2016).

Still more, another observation is that women are enticed by models’ and fashion influencers tastes (Rein, 2017). Women are more inclined to purchase an item just because a favourite celebrity or influencer has endorsed it and is known widely (Sarmaniotis, Wickens, Wright &

Harker, 2014. If consumers from different countries have similar intentions to purchase luxury footwear products, these intentions may still differ based on the personal cultural values of a consumer in a specific country.

2.2.3. *Cultural Landscape in South Africa*

Culture is defined as the values, traditions and family heritage of an individual (Sharma & Gautum, 2015). Amatulli & Guido (2011) state that culture is a factor that widely covers preferences as relating to attachment to a given ethnic group. The attachment is mainly because the individuals in the group have been introduced to particular foods, mode of dressing, language, and other factors, which define culture (Mazzalovo & Chevalier, 2012).

South Africa is referred to as a rainbow nation as this encapsulates the country's rich cultural and ethnical diversity which comprises four predominant racial groups; black, white, coloured and Indian (Finestone & Snyman, 2005). The black population of South Africa comprises approximately 69% and is partitioned into four social gatherings; specifically Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swazi), Sotho, Shangaan-Tsonga and Venda. There are various subgroups inside these, of which the Zulu and Xhosa (two subgroups of the Nguni gathering) are the biggest (StatsSA, 2018).

As indicated by the mid-year gauges done StatsSA (2017) and Deloitte (2017) the white population of South Africa includes roughly 19% with majority (around 60%) being Afrikaans and approximately 40% being of British or European decent. The coloured population of South Africa comprises of roughly 9% and have a blended heredity which includes the indigenous Khoisan qualities joined with African slaves and white pioneers (Tishkoff & Reed, 2009).

The Indian population of South Africa consists of approximately 3% with individuals of Hindu, Tamil and Muslim decent who were brought into the country during the slave trade (Tishkoff & Reed, 2009). Amongst these cultures that are present in South Africa, The UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing (2014) places consumers in the South African market into different income groups and gives an indication of how these groups spend their money.

2.2.4. Demographic Landscape in South Africa

South African demographics differ significantly from other countries in the world. The living standard model (LSM) concept ranks South Africa among rich countries around the world, this is counter intuitive when compared to South Africa's Gini coefficient which ranks among the lowest in the world (UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing, 2012).

The UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing (2012) states that the South African consumer market can be analysed in groups informally known as Survivors, Forerunners, Aspirants, the Middle Class (also referred to as Black Diamonds) and Top End consumers. These groups were defined in terms of their culture, income, social class, spending patterns, attitudes, social relations, and other consumer behaviour traits. Top Enders are known for their massive spending power exceeding R500 000 per family annually while the combined expenditure of Top Enders accounts for approximately R300 billion annually, despite only constituting 10% of the South African population (UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing, 2012). There is a strong relationship between the wealth of this group and level of education, with 55% of the wealthiest Top Enders possessing post-graduate qualifications and 75% having a post-matriculant qualification (Nevill, 2015). The higher level of education of Top Enders have driven them to succeed and accumulate wealth, have a strong entrepreneurial mind-set, and inclined them to invest up to 10% of their earnings (Nevill, 2015). A study conducted by UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing (2012) pointed to the fact that wealth in this group equated to asset growth rather than a lifestyle characteristic

To remain competitive then, it is essential for companies to understand their market. Nduna (2017) maintains that knowing the target market is not enough as each consumer is an individual who is attempting to make a purchase decision within the framework of their personal situation. Thus, in order to facilitate improved marketing initiatives aimed at Top Enders, researchers have divided this group of consumers into Drivers, High Flyers and Astronauts. The Top Enders idiosyncratic cultural section is discussed along with its subsections in greater detail below.

2.2.4.1. Drivers

The majority of these Drivers as they are called in Professor Simpson's study of the South African luxury market have high debt levels, which they want to reduce through abstaining

from further credit purchases since the recent 2008-2009 global financial crisis (D'Arpizio *et al.*, 2017). Spending behaviours have therefore changed, leading to increased shopping focused on the purchase of larger items such as vehicles, with 61% stating that their spending on luxury items had decreased (Arienti & Deloitte Staff, 2017)

Drivers enjoy their newfound wealth and are generous with their purchases, which is demonstrated through their selection of well-known luxury brands like Louis Vuitton, Gucci and Christian Louboutin to indicate their success levels (Desjardins, 2018). However, drivers have a greater focus on purchasing assets to augment their lifestyle rather than making purchases to advertise their status levels (Kochhar and Morin, 2014). Their spending habits are both moderate and cautious, although they continue to welcome advertising efforts, the quality of which they believe has improved (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitne and Gremler, 2012). Despite their wealth, this group remain open to bargains available at familiar South African chain stores such as Woolworths or Mr. Price (Nevill, 2015). Although not particularly price sensitive, they will weigh the costs of items carefully against their perceived value, with many brands boosting their sense of success and quality (Jaffe, 2018). In terms of fun, the Drivers enjoy socializing, going out to restaurants, listening to music, reading, and treating themselves to movies (UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing, 2012).

2.2.4.2. *High Flyers*

High Flyers is a flamboyant group which wants to be noticed but research indicates that their needs are not being met by the South African financial sector despite their high earning potential (StatsSA, 2018). High Flyers are willing to pay higher prices if the returns will parallel their purchases but since they appreciate value, they are not attracted to products or services, which have not been differentiated to add value (Anvar, 2014). Due to possessing a penchant for the status associated with specific brands, they are also prepared to spend more money on time to extract that value.

High Flyers are status-oriented and are also conspicuous consumers, enjoying the attention, which is paired with certain brand items. This status value is said to meet reputational desires, distinguish them from lower income groups, and reduce the gap between themselves and the Astronaut group. Their idea of fun is similar to the overall Top Enders entertainment

requirements but they also enjoy Do-It-Yourself home activities. Lastly, High Flyers invest great value in the opinions of their friends.

2.2.4.3. *Astronauts*

The Astronauts form 28% of Top Enders with an individual net worth exceeding R5 million (Nevill, 2011). This group is financially successful and is not conspicuous about its wealth (Haffajee, 2017). Astronauts appreciate the value of money and spend their earnings wisely, rather than squandering their hard-earned gains on superfluous items (Hazelhurst, 2011). Astronaut lifestyles are characterized by authenticity, where experiences rather than possessions enjoy great value. This group enjoys a simple existence, protect their wealth and social status, while making discreet purchase decisions (Hazelhurst, 2011). With little interest in brands, Astronauts are not easily tempted by advertising initiatives in which they take little notice (Thompson, 2018).

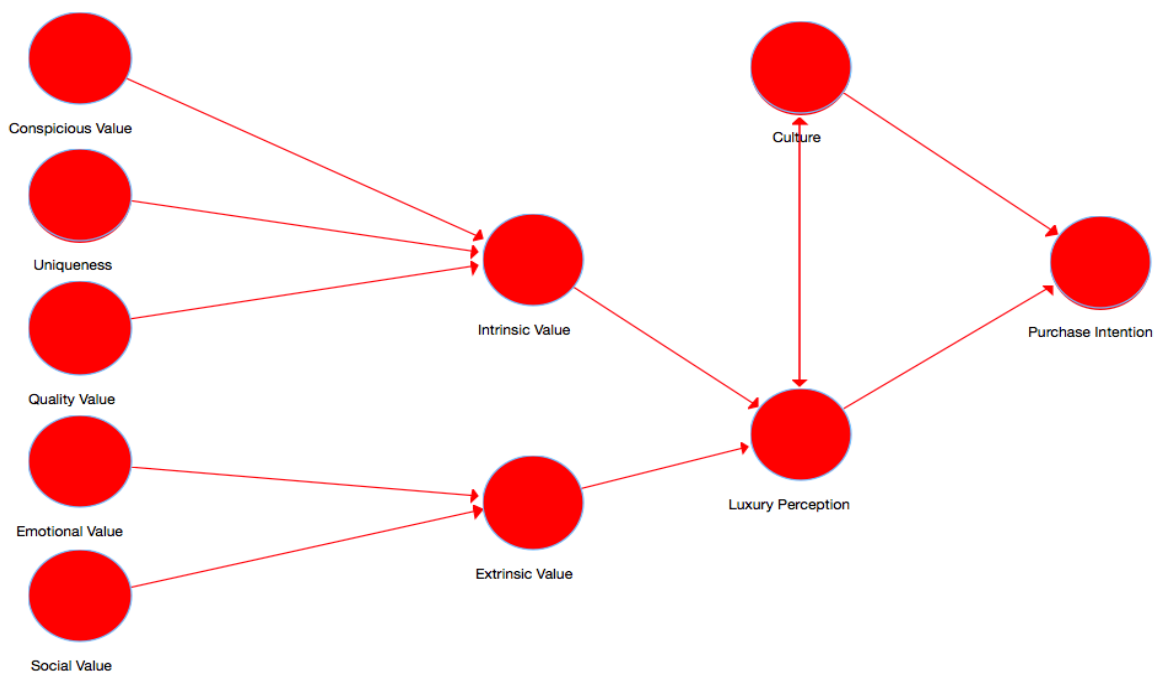
Being a highly independent group, the Astronauts are less susceptible to marketing, searching for their own information when attracted to a purchase decision. As much as Astronauts are convinced they are disinterested in advertising, however, and value television PVR and Netflix since this allows them to skip advertisements, they do make expensive purchases (Haffajee, 2017). Despite their aversion to branding and advertising, this group is susceptible to marketing but simply require a subtler approach. In terms of fun, this group adds experiential entertainment to the Top Enders list in the form of participative activities such as wine-tasting (Nevill, 2011).

2.3. **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework is a structure developed to review previous research works on the variables that are involved in the study (Tishkoff & Reed, 2009). It is a well-supported rationale that is organized and helps the reader to assess and understand perspective (Kastanakis, 2010). Development of the theoretical framework enables clarification of the author's implicit theory in a clearer manner (Sitter, 2008). The Vigneron and Johnson (2004) framework is one of the most widely used and cited where the study of perceptions of luxury applies. However, the model was limited to the formation of luxury perceptions, while the aim of this study was to uncover what moved purchase intention for South African consumers. Wee *et al.* (2014) found that perception is a strong predictor of purchase

intention, therefore this was included in the theoretical framework for this study. The study conducted by the author used the five steps of consumer decision processes within the framework of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), where four categories of consumer behaviour were identified together with 18 sub-dimensions. These dimensions were comprehensive and were applied to generate a greater understanding of consumer behaviour as this relates to the purchase of organic foodstuffs in the Malaysian market. This study was considered pertinent since the organic food market in Malaysia is in its infancy and further knowledge is required to ascertain consumer perception, purchase intention and actual purchase behaviour (Wee *et al.*, 2014). Malaysia is a developing economy as is South Africa and organic produce is also regarded as a luxury item in many societies, which is why this study was introduced to add value to the present research.

Figure 1: Purchase Intention Model

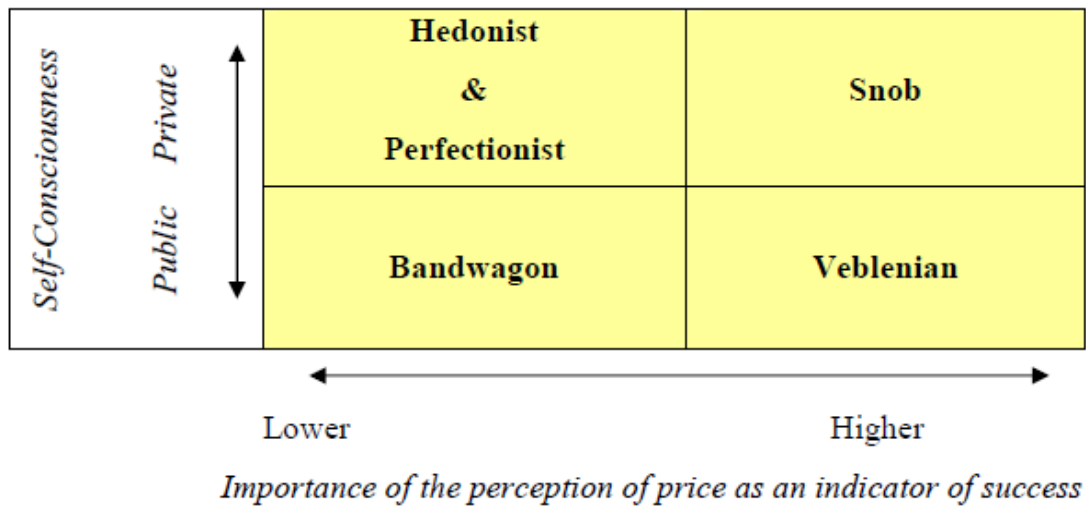


Source: Adapted from Vigneron and Johnson (2004)

2.3.1 Defining Perception in the Luxury Footwear Market

Perception is defined as the way humans recognize and interpret stimuli (Sitter, 2008), while when focused on the consumer it is an essential determinant of product choice (Zenithal, 1988), and therefore purchase intention. There are five key drivers proposed in this study that contributed to the perception of luxury and shown in the below; the drivers can be classified as either intrinsic (non-personal) or extrinsic (personal) by Vigneron and Johnson (2004).

Figure 2: Prestige-Seeking Consumer Behaviours



Source: Vigneron & Johnson (2004)

In the context of the study, it was expected that a consumer’s personal, cultural value may alter their perception of luxury.

H₁: To determine if culture moderates the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention for consumers of luxury women’s footwear in South Africa

2.3.2 Intrinsic Value in the Luxury Footwear Market

Intrinsic value is said to be driven by an inner intuition and the value gained from a product, which satisfies one’s conscience (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). The section below discusses the drivers of intrinsic value.

2.3.2.1 The Veblen Effect

The Veblen Effect refers to the reality of conspicuous consumption, and the desire to be seen to purchase luxury goods (Liebenstein, 1950). The Veblen Effect attributes the actual implication of a luxury good to the unique reaction because consumers attach more quality to a luxury item that is highly priced (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). These luxury consumers do not prefer a product that can be afforded by many because they wish to remain outstanding. Bian and Forsythe (2012) stated that price is a critical issue in determining demand as a product that is lowly priced attracts a high demand, given another substitute that is more expensive.

However, luxury items are an exception to the norm, as they are subjected to what is known as the Veblen effect, creating a positive correlation between price and desirability regardless of the ability of the consumer to afford the item (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). One of the effects of the Veblen effect is that the price of the product increases due to higher demand for the product (Liebenstein, 1950). Additional outcomes of this effect are that consumers either wish to separate themselves from those of a lower social status or emulate those of a higher social class with the intent of deriving certain benefits from their association (Kastanakis, 2010). This outcome is confirmed by other authors who maintain that consumers wish to advertise their wealth, under the perception that this will improve their social status (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996).

Lowering the price of luxury items will result in a lack of interest in such items, causing a loss of sales and subsequent loss in profits (Bagwell *et al.*, 1996). In line with the abovementioned, it was expected that attitudes in luxury footwear be influenced by the Veblen effect represented by the second hypothesis.

H₂: Conspicuous value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

2.3.2.2 *The Snob Effect*

The Snob Effect is in a way related to Veblen Effect in that consumers pursue uniqueness. They wish to possess footwear that has authentic prestigious features that cannot be replicated and aim to belong to the extreme few who have a similar product (Perrin *et al.*, 2013). Subsequently, they will not purchase a product that is highly demanded. The high price of luxurious goods is one of the measures that ensures the Snob Effect remains at its peak, thus becoming a psychological manipulator on the sale of footwear (Husic & Cacic, 2009).

Interestingly, there is a degree of correlation between the Veblen effect and the Snob effect. Vigneron & Johnsons (2004) state that if some consumers recognize that specific goods are in short supply, this will strengthen their attraction for these goods, and drive them to make a purchase. This type of purchase typically occurs when a new product is launched, and the consumer wants to be among the first people to own this product (Vigneron & Johnsons,

2004). Should the product be perceived to be available to the populace, this will be a strong motivator to avoid purchasing the product, thus creating a cultural and social distance between the status - concerned customer and the general population (Vigneron & Johnsons, 2004). Once the perception of exclusivity is lost, so is the interest and desire to own the object. It is therefore expected that rarity will correlate with higher desirability for luxury footwear, provided that income is not a constraint in the purchase decision.

H₃: Unique value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

2.3.2.3 The Perfectionism Effect

The Perfectionism Effect related to the superior quality of goods in luxury is reflected in the price (Berghaus & Müller-Stewens, 2008). For example, a pair of shoes from a high fashion brand is expected to outperform its competition both in terms of design and quality of the materials used. The consumer precisely knows what she wants before even purchasing (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015).

However, it is sometimes difficult to ascertain whether the footwear meets some of the physical aspects such as durability, before it is used. The metrics that cannot be identified at the point of purchase are endorsed by the price, whereby the consumer acquires the mentality that the high price considers the metrics is satisfactory (Vigneron & Johnsons, 2004). This perception is embodied in the prestige that consumers perceive that luxury brands contain (Vigneron & Johnsons, 2004). Because the brand is synonymous with luxury and is priced at a far greater level than other lesser known brands, customers trust the brand and the quality that they expect it to deliver (Vigneron & Johnsons, 2004). Consumers are also attracted to luxury footwear because they are crafted by hand, offering even greater aesthetic value, resulting in a heightened sense of pleasure in the sophistication that the product affords them (Kastanakis, 2010). It is therefore expected that higher quality footwear will be more desirable.

H₄: Quality value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

2.3.3 Extrinsic Value in the Luxury Footwear Market

Extrinsic value is driven by external factors like social aspects that arise as a result of interaction and manifest as a material reward (Vigneron & Johnsons, 2004). In the case of this study, extrinsic value was considered to be of a dual nature; on the one hand there was the direct emotions of pleasure in the enhanced self-concept, that a luxury purchase elicits (Husic & Cicic, 2009), and on the other, an improvement of the consumer's social status among their group of peers (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). The section below discusses the drivers of extrinsic value.

2.3.3.1 *The Hedonic Effect*

The Hedonic Effect appeals to the emotions of customers (Rein, 2017). According to the hedonic principle, the emotional experience can be thought of as a gauge that ranges from bad to good and the primary motivation is to keep the needle on the gauge as close to good as possible. Many consumers who trade up to luxury brands may not necessarily be wealthy, but nevertheless like to spend their increasing disposable income on hedonic goods and services (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003).

Kastanakis (2010) confirms that hedonistic consumers have become more focused on personal gratification over time, in contrast to purchasing luxury items to impress others. These consumers tend to rely largely on their own emotions, and thoughts when it comes to purchasing luxury items, and tend to rely on the purchase of such items to boost their morale rather than because they need luxury shoes or because these serve a specific physical function (Kastanakis, 2010). As explained by Vigneron and Johnson (2004), individuals who are prone to the Hedonic Effect are primarily motivated by “unconscious, non-cognitive” forces that cause them to value emotional pleasure over functionality. They are not influenced by the opinions of others, and price is irrelevant in relation to their pleasure (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Depending on whether the resultant satisfaction of purchasing footwear comes from social validation or not, determines whether this is an extrinsic or an intrinsic motivator. For the purpose of this study, it was treated as the former.

H₅: Emotional value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

2.3.3.2 *The Bandwagon Effect*

The Bandwagon Effect is driven by social value and the notion that if other people are using a specific product, it must be appropriate and of high quality (Cant *et. al.*, 2010). Footwear is guided by fashion; which means that the latest fashion trends are more marketable as more women that are exposed to tastemakers such as magazines, celebrities and Instagram personalities, will be eager to wear a trendy footwear product. The effect proves that if a person that an individual looks up to is using a footwear product, this leads to the other person desiring to have similar footwear (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). Group acceptance is generally desired in this situation, so the more individuals in the valued group purchase the luxury good, the more desirable it becomes for others to follow suit (Kastanakis, 2010). Conformity in this situation is encouraged to share the same social status as the group since this promotes social status and cohesion (Kastanakis, 2010).

H₆: Social value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

A combination of the above-mentioned drivers ultimately deduced the final hypothesis of the study.

H₇: Luxury perception influences purchase intention for South African consumers of luxury footwear

2.4. The Development of Purchase Intention

The development of consumer purchase intention (CPI) is a complex process. Many scholars have researched the framework of purchase intention, which has been modified and improved over the years (Kakkos, Trivellas & Sdrolas, 2015; Mirabi, Akbariyeh & Tahmasebifard, 2015). In the following section, an overview of literature regarding the development of purchase intention will be discussed to serve as the foundation for the proposed model of purchase intention utilized in this study.

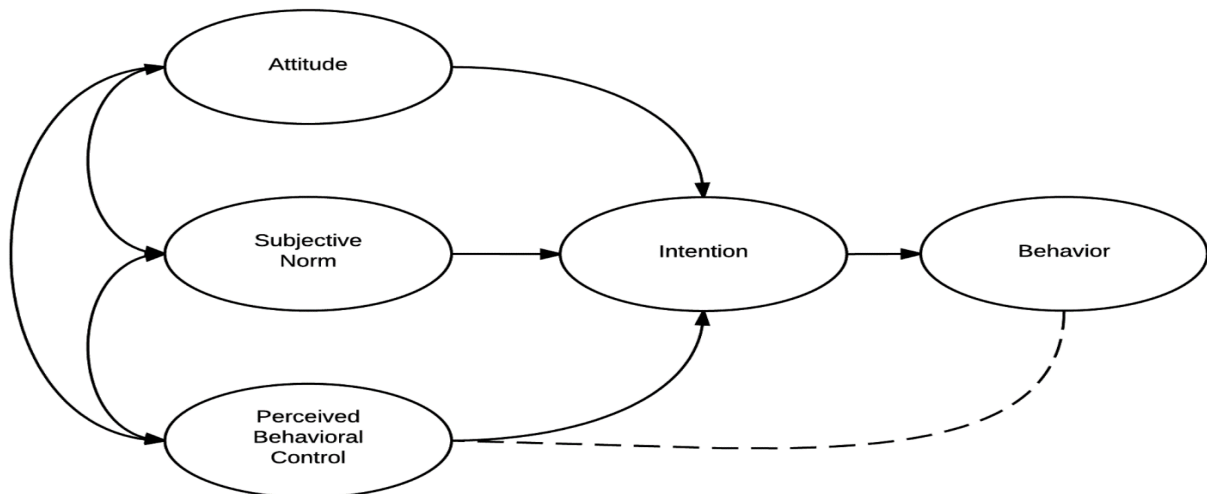
2.4.1. Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

A discussion of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) contributes to understanding of how consumers make decisions to purchase luxury goods. The TPB has been developed in an attempt to understand how behaviour influences the customers' intention to purchase a

product (Ajzen, 1991). In Ajzen's (1991) study, the author focused on developing a TPB framework, which was successfully able to predict behaviours quite accurately within the parameters specific contexts and past behaviours (Ajzen, 1991). Components of this TPB consist of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural controls allowing the individual to form perceptions (Ajzen, 1991). These elements then generate individual intentions, which ultimately inform behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

The framework for this theory is shown in Figure 3 below, with each factor creating an opportunity for intervention and improvement in marketing efforts for luxury footwear and other products (Ajzen, 1991).

Figure 3: Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)



Source: Ajzen (1991)

2.4.2. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) was developed to predict how individuals will behave based on their pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions. TRA influences behaviour in a given situation because of attitude, and the subjective norms which drive behaviour (Vahdati & Nejad, 2016).

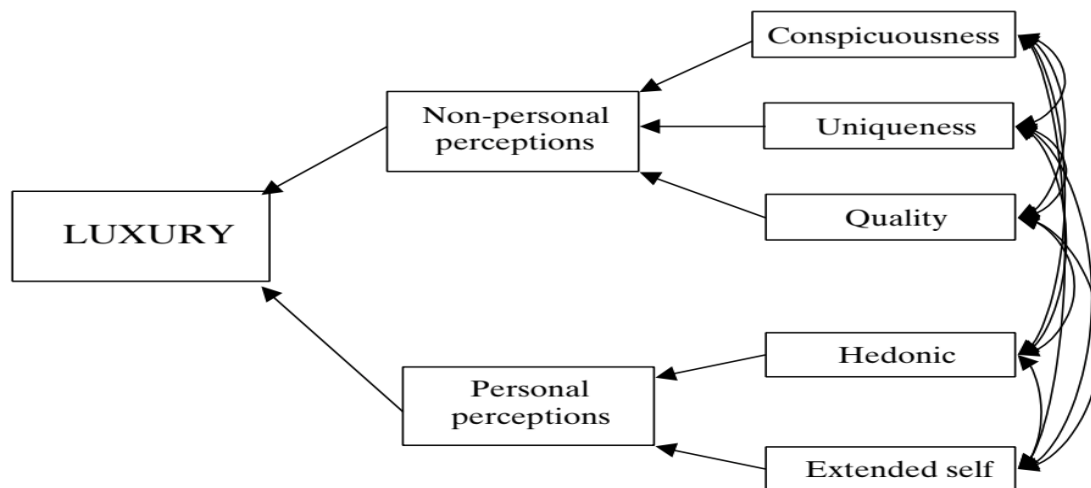
As confirmed by Ajzen (2015), TPB does not examine perceived value of a product, but rather focuses on the interest levels that the consumer develops in relation to a product, which ultimately forms an intent to purchase. On a foundation of the TRA, the intention to purchase will then precede the behavioural action (Kumar, 2012). The more favourable the attitude of

the consumer is towards the behaviour, the more subjective the norm and the greater the levels of perceived behavioural control and the higher the likelihood that the consumer will generate an intention to execute the behaviour. In relation to this study this gives a clear depiction of how TPB and TRA is mapped out and how the factors mentioned are intertwined in determining the purchasing intentions of women as each behaviour has a consequent reaction on their choices in luxury footwear.

2.4.3. Brand Luxury Index (BLI)

The TPB and TRA acts as a link between the concepts of luxury perception proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) and its effect on purchase intention being translated to conversion or action. The Brand Luxury Index (BLI) aimed at measuring perceptions of a specific luxury brand (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Personal effects incorporate elements such as perfectionism and hedonism, while interpersonal aspects relate to bandwagon, veblen and snob effects (Vigneron & Johnsons, 2004). Figure 4 below illustrates the theoretical framework for the BLI.

Figure 4: Framework of Brand Luxury Index (BLI)



Source: Vigneron & Johnson (2004)

Non-personal perceptions include the conspicuous, uniqueness, and quality values, while the personal perceptions encompass hedonic and extended self-values. Combined, these concepts can be measured to determine the degree of perception of luxury. Essentially, the non-personal elements describe external values, with personal perceptions being focused on

intrinsic, internal factors (Sari & Kusuma, 2014). Breaking the index down into non-personal elements, the BLI is explained by Table 2 below:

Table 2: Non-Personal and Personal Elements

Non-Personal Perceptions	Linked Elements	Personal Perceptions	Linked Elements
Conspicuous Value <i>(correlates luxury items with a signal and is associated with both wealth and social status)</i>	The brand or item must be conspicuous	Hedonic Value <i>(Subjective emotional benefits, and happiness)</i>	Very beautiful
	Portrays elitism / superiority		Extremely glamorous
	For the extremely wealthy		Highly stunning
Uniqueness Value <i>(symbolic of rarity and exclusivity that enhances desire)</i>	Very high prices	Extended Self <i>(Subjective benefits of how item makes one feel and appear to others)</i>	
	Uniqueness / one-of-a-kind item		Leadership
	Very rare		Sense of power
	Extremely exclusive		Very rewarding
Quality Value <i>(attraction to luxury brands due to excellent craftsmanship)</i>	Original		Sense of accomplishment /
	Highly skilled workmanship		
	Advanced technology		
	Extreme luxury		
	Excellent quality		
	Sophistication		
Superior quality			

Source: Adapted from Vigneron and Johnson (2004)

2.5. Empirical Studies

Nowadays, for luxury fashion brands, the most vital target market in the world is the Chinese and Arabic consumer followed by the American and European consumer (Choi *et al.* 2008; Liu *et al.* 2011). Therefore, it is subsequently not astounding to see numerous academic studies on luxury fashion around these purchasers. The section below discusses international empirical studies with regard to the luxury fashion market.

Jung and Shen (2011) directed an experimental examination to inspect mark value of luxury fashion brands and its associations with social introductions. They concentrated on investigating the purchaser bunches who are school ladies from a college in China and a substantial state funded college in the USA. The study found that the Chinese example has a more prominent level of cooperation and power separate than the American example. Strangely, they uncovered that the USA test demonstrates a higher level of vulnerability shirking. For the customer based brand value measurements, they additionally recognized the social contrasts in which the American example has higher score in apparent quality, mark mindfulness, and brand relationship than the Chinese partner. Li *et al.*, (2012) analysed Chinese customers' "eagerness to pay" for luxury fashion marked items in relationship with their own particular fashion way of life. The study uncovered that fashion way of life, saw social and enthusiastic esteem, saw utilitarian esteem, and saw monetary esteem on the whole fundamentally impacting the eagerness of Chinese buyers to pay for luxury fashion. Zhang and Kim (2013) researched the elements that impact the Chinese buyers' state of mind towards obtaining luxury fashion products and their acquiring goal. The study gathered that purchaser contributions to three noteworthy urban communities in China which showed that brand cognizance, social correlation, and fashion ingenuity all have a measurably huge effect on shopper mentality towards obtaining luxury fashion products (Zhang and Kim, 2013). The study affirmed that the obtaining goal of Chinese buyers for luxury fashion items is unequivocally affected by their demeanour towards acquiring luxury fashion products.

Al-Mutawa (2013) considered the Muslim female buyers' practices towards western luxury fashion brands. The author directed a primer subjective investigation comprising of 12 top to bottom meetings in Kuwait. The discoveries uncovered that in Kuwait, Muslim female shoppers produce "unassumingly hot" pictures that can help reproduce certain emblematic significance for western luxury fashion brands. It was contended that luxury fashion brands ought to perceive the significance of overseeing "buyer produced portrayals." Al-Mutawa (2013) additionally showed that the development of shopper portrayals could be made by ad plot or in light of the "genuine social clients" of the luxury fashion mark. In an alternate point of view, Arrigo (2011) investigated the brand improvement approaches of luxury fashion. The author concentrated on Milan, a prestigious fashion city in Italy and showed how unique luxury fashion organizations embrace fashion mark improvement strategies in Milan.

In relation to luxury counterfeit brands, Kim and Karpova (2010) applied the TPB in their study and discovered that the design and appearance of the product was a strong motivator of intention to purchase. Kim and Karpova (2010) stated that prior purchase habits strongly impacted the attitude to acquire counterfeit products, with Asians and Caucasians considering these to be souvenirs, regardless of the ethical implications of these purchases. Value consciousness played a role in encouraging this positive attitude along with value for money (Kim & Karpova, 2010). Normative beliefs, however, were negatively correlated with attitude in connection with consumers who belong to groups that do not approve of this behaviour, even though integrity has been linked with some studies and not with others in this respect (Kim & Karpova, 2010). In contrast, subjective norms were strongly associated with CPI (Kim & Karpova, 2010). Behavioural control had a negative correlation when these goods were easily accessed as they are typically less expensive and often readily available for purchase on the internet, (Kim & Karpova, 2010). When counterfeit items were not easily accessed, the intent to purchase, however, declined. Ultimately, subjective norms were tied to attitudes and perceived behavioural control as valuable elements of the TPB framework (Kim & Karpova, 2010).

2.6 Synthesis with Theory

The TPB and TRA acts as a link between the concepts of luxury perception proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) and its effect on purchase intention being translated to conversion or action.

This study based its approach on the model proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004). Since the aforementioned model was limited to the formation of luxury perceptions, this study aimed to determine the drivers of purchase intention for South African consumers. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) created the Brand Luxury Index (BLI) to measure the continuum of the perception of luxury between brands such as a Rolls Royce, Ferrari and/or Mercedes Benz. This was done as affordable luxury and status at the upper level of working members of society may differ completely from upper elite echelons. The work concluded by Wee, Ismail & Ishak (2014), Ahmad *et al.*, (2012) and Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) have further broadened the study of consumer behaviour in terms of purchase intention.

Wee *et al.* (2014) found perception to be a strong predictor for purchase intention. The similarities in consumer perceptions of luxury goods and organic food, which is considered

an item of luxury, have been widely documented in literature, primarily taking the standpoint that one is a subset of the other (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003; OECD, 2003).

Ahmad *et al.*, (2012) adds a layer of culture specific influence in the process of purchase intention formation, adding to the building blocks mentioned previously. Ahmad *et al.*, (2012) explored intercultural and social dimensions to examine interrelationships between consumer brand perceptions (BP), culture dimension (CD) and social influence (SI) in predicting CPI in Malaysia. Study outcomes noted a negative relationship between SI and CPI's (Ahmad *et al.*, 2010). Extended social perception, functional and experiential perception were negative regarding purchase intentions for luxury handbags (Ahmad *et al.*, 2010). A negative correlation in respect of long-term orientation and PI contradicts prior studies, but Ahmad *et al.*, (2010) proved that it will benefit other readers. Despite other studies consulted which showed a positive link between SI and CPI, these authors also found no such correlation based on their framework. Ahmad *et al.*, (2010) also discovered that functional and experiential perception had a negative link to PI, which also contradicts other studies consulted.

Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) reinforced the concept of culture being a positive moderator in the consumer's intention to purchase and their perception of a luxury item. Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) aimed to determine whether consumers in Romania and Tunisia responded differently in terms of uniqueness, conformism, quality, hedonism and ostentation, to demonstrate cultural nuances. Using Hofstede's cultural values in terms of individual and collective values, these authors combined male/female, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance to discover consumer responses to luxury brands (Bezzaouia & Joanta, 2016). Outcomes of this study illustrated a social and personal motivation for purchase of luxury goods (Bezzaouia & Joanta, 2016). As noted by these authors, cultural values vary greatly across markets, and luxury brands can either standardize or refine their strategies to cater for these differences (Bezzaouia & Joanta, 2016). In the process of uncovering what cultural values correspond to which types of consumer motivation, Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) provide a convincing framework upon which an analysis of the South African luxury consumer market can be built. Cultural values are considered important to this study due to the diversity of cultures present in the South African consumer luxury footwear market and because of historical segregation where the white consumer was the dominant purchaser of luxury items in this environment. Additionally, the growth of the so-called Black Diamonds

has presented a further market segment along with new generations in the form of Millennials and Generations X and Y.

2.7 Conclusion

Chapter two aimed to highlight literature associated with the purchase intention for luxury women's footwear. A dynamic segment and a multifaceted market provided challenges in the luxury footwear market in South Africa. In order to tame the varied nature of the inquisition in question, the study based its approach on the model proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004). Since the aforementioned model was limited to the formation of luxury perceptions, this study aimed to determine the drivers of purchase intention for South African consumers. The work concluded by Wee *et al.* (2014), Ahmad *et al.*, (2012) and Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) have further broadened the study of consumer behaviour in terms of purchase intention. Wee *et al.* (2014) found that perception played a positive role in the intent to purchase. Ahmad *et al.* (2014) confirmed that culture has a significant effect on the consumer's intention to purchase and Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) reinforced the concept of culture being a positive moderator in the consumer's intention to purchase and their perception of a luxury item. The literature review, helped provide insight into the specific context of the market analysed, as well as the theoretical underpinnings of the model and the variables that it was composed of. These variables were then broken down into hypotheses that will be interpreted in chapter four of this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the theoretical underpinnings of purchase intentions of luxury footwear in the Western Cape and globally. In the present chapter, the focus is to describe the plan of action that was used to collect, analyse and interpret data in this study. The researcher uses the Onion research methodology map illustrated in in Figure 3.1 to describe the processes that were followed in this study. Key concepts that formed the research plan were the research paradigm/philosophy or worldview, followed by the research design that enabled the researcher to collect appropriate data for the current study. While many options are available in the research foundational and design process, which may be criticised and questioned, the fact remains that each researcher must make a choice based on their own knowledge, the knowledge of the study to be conducted and the resources available within the timespan provided. Dealing with a little-researched theme of luxury footwear purchases in the South African market, therefore, lent itself to a positivist approach based on the realist's ontological perception of reality. This basis was augmented by a primary quantitative methodology in an effort to understand the purchasing behaviours of women in the luxury footwear market in South Africa.

3.2. Research Paradigm

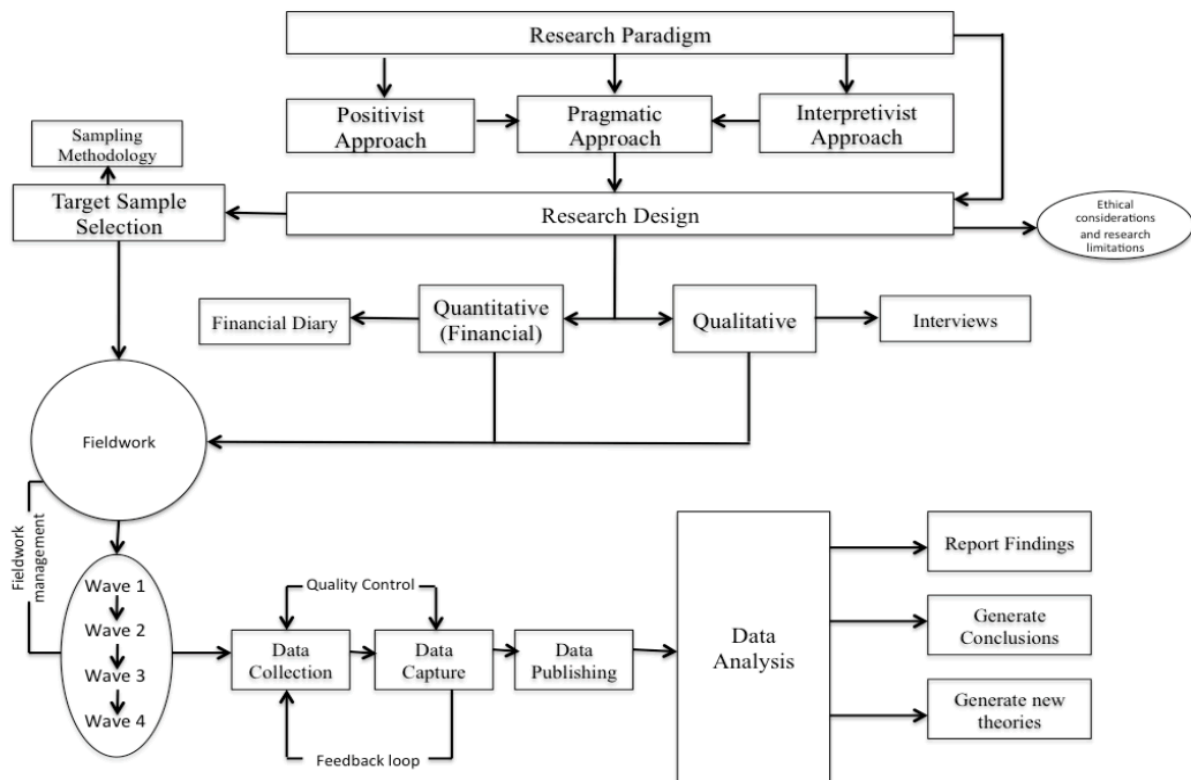
Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a paradigm as a collection of logical concepts, propositions, or assumptions that determines one's thinking in a research process. Müller and Urbach (2017) maintain that shared beliefs are clear when based on a body of knowledge and opposing views must be verified while Stott, Karoly, and Zwiers (2017) also describe the phenomenon as a specific motivation for undertaking research. Therefore, a research paradigm is a shared understanding of how reality should be.

Saetren (2014) asserts that both qualitative and quantitative research apply different research methods, which have different assumptions about the process of conducting the study and the functions of the researcher. Therefore, a research paradigm refers to any set of agreements and common beliefs shared among researchers. Furthermore, the common belief of how problems should be perceived and solved represents an element of the research paradigm. In a systematic study, Lederman and Lederman (2015) point out that paradigms are theoretical

frameworks, which should be selected on the basis of the research problem and the methodology to be used to address that problem, thus having a direct or indirect influence not only on any study but the interpretation of the results as well. As a result, these aspects need to be considered in the early stages of the research since circumstances will direct and influence the study’s research design and the choices of the methodology to be adopted.

Ultimately, the discipline with which a study is conducted will determine whether the results may be considered transferable to other studies (Taylor & Medina, 2013). Furthermore, it is the objectivity of the researcher and the methods employed, which provides strong indication of whether the study will comply with the requirements of “validity, reliability and objectivity”, which will denote whether the outcomes will serve as valuable inputs towards other research initiatives (Yasar & Cogenli, 2014). Disciplined, scientific research is the cornerstone of the scientific study if the researcher wishes to advance knowledge in a certain area and ensure that the study conducted is authentic and reliable enough to be confirmed through keen external examination for use in the academic arena or the business environment (Taylor & Medina, 2013).

Figure 5: Research Methodology Road Map



Source: Adapted from Lappeman, Chigada and Pillay (2017)

The research methodology road map illustrated in Figure 3.1 above illustrates the most appropriate approach and techniques undertaken to meet the study's objectives as well as the reasoning motivating the research paradigm, research design, research method, target population, sampling and scaling techniques, data collection method and measurement instruments selected. When selecting the research paradigm and research design, the author considered all the available options to arrive at the choices made.

3.2.1. The Positivist Approach

According to Aliyu, Bello, Kasim, Rozilah & Martin (2014), the positivist approach is suited to the quantitative study as reality is seen as ambiguous, an aspect that often prompts efforts to measure a particular reality. Succinctly, positivists prefer research methods such as official statistics, structured questionnaires, and social survey. According to Burton-Jones and Lee (2017), the rationale behind this approach is that they possess good representativeness and reliability.

Positivists believe that the society shapes individuals, which implies that social facts influence individual actions. The positivist tradition emphasizes the significance of doing quantitative research including large-scale surveys (Burton-Jones & Lee, 2017). For instance, the positivist approach is an ideal method of identifying the relationship between social class and educational achievement. Therefore, this kind of research is interested in patterns and trends rather than individuals. Based on the French philosopher August Comte's views, the positivist further believes that it is only through the observation of human behaviour and the rational analysis thereof, that one can extract the facts of a situation (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). This extraction of facts is scientific due to the quantifiable measures employed and is, therefore, perceived as preferable to other methods in revealing the truth of a given situation in combination with the relationships present between the associated variables (Antwi *et al.*, 2015).

3.2.2. The Pragmatist Approach

The pragmatist approach consists of a variety of perspectives. These include a classical and neo-classical approach and equates to reality being subjected to vigorous debate (Gronda & Tullio, 2015). Pragmatism avoids being "caught up" in philosophical dilemmas about the approach used in any given research. As Popa, Guillermin and Dedeurwaerdere (2015) state,

this means that by using Pragmatism, researchers afford themselves flexibility and freedom in using any of the procedures, techniques, and methods, associated with both qualitative and quantitative research. The researchers identify the fact that all methods have limitations and that different approaches can complement each other (Popa *et al.*, 2015). Pragmatic research can apply different techniques together or in a sequence. Though many proponents have justified the use of a mixed-method approach to studies, within the pragmatic approach this has typically been based on a practical methodology rather than that of the intended philosophical approach but one which now associates beliefs with actions (Morgan, 2014). Shannon-Baker (2016) warns that the paradigm employed must, however, be used as a tool rather than a concrete set of beliefs, which are inflexible and exclude all other research possibilities.

3.2.3. The Interpretivist Paradigm

The use of the interpretivist and constructionist paradigms have increased over time in qualitative studies (O'Neil & Koekemoer, 2016). As interpretivists focus on understanding the world of experience in different aspects, Scotland (2012) denotes that they often rely on the view of respondents on the circumstances that are studied. This contrasts to the view of positivists, where observation via numerical measures is the main source of information.

According to Stott, Karoly & Zwiers (2017), interpretivists tend not to begin research with a theory, an aspect that also makes them different from positivists. As a result, they research and develop a pattern of meaning or theory throughout the process of research. As noted by Thanh & Thanh (2015), the interpretivist approach has not been popular but is now attracting further attention for its application in qualitative studies, which allow for the creation of several differing perspectives and versions of the truth as collected from research participants.

Furthermore, the interpretivist approach in qualitative studies may be frowned upon by qualitative researchers, but the iterative nature of the interpretivist paradigm requires an intense focus and disciplined coding of categories, repeatedly, before the researcher is able to gain a clear perspective of the participant responses collected for interpretation (Ponelis, 2015). This intense process is, however, a prerequisite for the identification of themes prior to final interpretation.

3.2.4. The Research Paradigm for the Study

Despite the many paradigms available, both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, the researcher elected the positivist paradigm. The study adopted a positivist approach, with a realist ontology - in that there was a single reality or truth that could be measured within the parameters of this study. The focus was on the extent to which the tools used to measure the survey results would be quantifiably, reliable and valuable for future studies in this area. Hence quantitative research methods were adopted in an attempt to measure the reality of the factors affecting the consumers purchase intentions behind luxury footwear in the South African market. The positivist paradigm formed an ideal framework within which to frame the results obtained from the data collected for this study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Hence, the positivist paradigm reflects the accuracy of this formula, providing a realist's outcome in terms of results, which cannot be disputed. The use of the positivist philosophy was motivated by the desire to separate the researcher from the subjects under investigation (Creswell, 2014). Chigada (2014) states that positivist approaches are informed by an objective epistemological perspective which allows the researcher to be distant from subjects where data is collected.

3.3. Research Methods

The section below highlights the research methods adopted in the study. Firstly the research design is discussed followed by the research approach that were used in this study.

3.3.1. Research Design

The general research design types found in research studies are correlational, which is more related to case control studies and observations; experimental where experiments are carried out for specific assignments; and descriptive which involves case-studies, natural observations and surveys (CIRT, 2018). A descriptive research design was selected for this study. The research design adopted by a study is a determinant of the success or the failure of the results according to Thompson and Aplin (2014). Lans & Voordt (2002) reinforce the position that descriptive research is reliant on facts instead of the need to prove hypotheses or to develop theories. Furthermore, the descriptive research design is also based on an objective stance or one of neutrality in arriving at answers to the circumstances studied and describing the reality thereof (Lans & Voordt, 2002). Descriptive research is founded on facts in contrast to prescriptive studies, which are reliant on normative values (Lans & Voordt, 2002).

Malliari and Togia (2016) confirm that the use of surveys in the descriptive approach is due to this method being fairly inexpensive, convenient to apply, well-understood, also delivering results which lend themselves to simple descriptive or inferential analysis. Due to these, and several other reasons, this study employed a descriptive research design as it set out to describe the characteristics of South African women who consume luxury footwear, without manipulating any variables present or absent in the existing environment (Phelps *et al.*, 2007; Robson, 2002; Titchen *et al.*, 2005).

3.3.2. Research Approach

The research method used in this study is quantitative research. Quantitative research provides a structured platform in collecting as well as analysing data that is retrieved from various sources (De Franzo, 2011). This type of research method makes use of computational and other statistical tools to obtain effective results. The purpose of quantitative data is conclusive and aims at understanding what and how prevalent the problem is by analysing the results. Quantitative research can simply be defined as a method used to quantify a particular issue by generating numeral data or just data that can be converted into statistics that is usable (Robson, 2002). In exploring the research objectives cited in this study, it was fitting to draw conclusive resolutions whereby a structured method and representative sample produced quantitative data. Quantitative data brought the advantage of increased objectivity through the use of statistics to find patterns in the consumer's behaviour (Malhotra, 2010).

3.3.3. Target Population

The target population is the entire set of units for which survey data is to be used to make inferences. Therefore, the target population defines those units for which the findings of a survey are meant to generalize. McLeod (2014) stated that target populations must be specifically defined and clear, as the definition determines whether sampled cases are eligible or ineligible for the survey.

The target population of this study comprised of females who frequently purchased luxury footwear exceeding a single item value of R8000. The questionnaire was administered to female individuals via an online survey using Qualtrics. This survey was implemented online through Elle South Africa's Instagram account since the majority of their audience are fashion conscious South African women. This approach was taken since it was anticipated that the

response would be large enough to produce sufficient data for analysis leading to a meaningful outcome for this study. Elle South Africa's Instagram page therefore served as the sampling frame for the selection of survey units to complete this study.

3.3.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting an appropriate sample, or a representative portion of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Polit & Beck, 2010; McLeod, 2014). There are two types of sampling methods, namely, the probability and non-probability approach. The probability approach is a sampling method that makes use of random selections and ensures that the various units that is used in the population selection have an equal opportunity of being selected (Web Center for Social Research Methods, 2018), The non-probability approach is taken when it is unknown to what extent the chance exists that a specific unit in the sample will be selected (Sushani, 2018).

The sampling technique of this study was that of convenience and consequently the sampling method used was of the non-probabilistic type. This was due to there being no specific sampling frame for the study on which to base the probability of a specific respondent being selected (Malhotra, 2010). Having mentioned the lack of a traditional sampling frame, however, the followers of Elle South Africa's Instagram (approximately 80 thousand) effectively served as an adequate sampling frame for the selection of survey units to complete this study. (Sushani, 2018) notes that selection of a sample of participants from the sub-group interested in luxury items is a process, which takes place to measure their “attitudes, beliefs and characteristics”.

A sample of convenient elements was chosen at the discretion of the researcher to rapidly collect a large amount of data whilst using judicious locations to reach the target population (Malhotra, 2010). (Sushani, 2018) confirms that convenience sampling is one which is an easily accessible, financially viable manner in which to collect data from the target group but may attract criticism due to the biased manner of the selection process. However, a traditional method without replacement was exercised where a respondent was surveyed only once and their data was not duplicated.

According to Bryman & Bell (2011), sample sizes can either be fixed (when they are determined in advance of the study) or sequential (when more data can be collected if the initially collected data does not answer the research question). Additionally, the sample size needs to be large enough to yield results, which are the most accurate reflection of the market whilst remaining achievable to the scope (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2005). In general, the more data collected, the better, but a sample size of 200 is often regarded as optimal (Ghauri *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, the sample size for this study was limited to 200 respondents.

3.4. Measurement and Scaling Procedure

The following section will discuss the measurement and scaling procedure that was implemented. The conceptual model for the purchase intention of luxury footwear (Appendix A) prompted various scales as discussed in the literature review and which measured eight constructs.

These constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale in which respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a series of statements. The degree to which respondents agreed with the statements were measured on a continuum where: 1 = “completely disagree” and 5 = “completely agree” (Kumar & Advani, 2005). An odd number of points was used to allow the respondents to answer with a ‘neutral’ response when appropriate so that they were not forced into giving an answer that negatively affected the accuracy of the results.

The Likert scale is a commonly used tool for measurement of participant responses, with the five-point scale often being preferred to the seven-point option to minimize participant frustration levels (Rahi, 2017). Additionally, this approach was considered appropriate since it also encourages an increase in the quality of responses and the rate of participant responses (Rahi, 2017). A summary of the constructs and their scales are shown in the table below:

Table 3: Summary of Constructs and Scales

Name of Construct	Origin of Scale	Cronbach Alpha
Conspicuous Value	Truong & McColl, (2011)	0.85
Unique Value	Moawad, (2007)	0.79

Quality Value	Truong & McColl, (2011)	0.85
Emotional Value	Shukla & Purani, (2012)	0.70
Social Value	Zhou & Wong, (2008)	0.81
Luxury Perception	Shukla & Purani, (2012)	0.75
Culture	Sharma, (2010)	0.72
Purchase Intention	Shukla & Purani, (2012)	0.87

3.4.1 Measurement Instrument

Below are some key considerations that were installed in the research instrument, in order to maximize its effectiveness.

The length of the questionnaire was approximately 7 minutes as McPeake, Bateson & O'Neill (2014) advice that shorter questionnaires yield better response rates. In order to shorten the time necessary to complete, close-ended questions asking respondents to provide binary (yes / no) answers, as well as rating scale type answers were preferred to longer form answers. As per the suggestions of Singer, 2008; Church, 1993; Edwards *et al.*, 2002, appropriate incentives were also provided, in the form of a donation offering for every completed survey. Moreover, the questionnaire wording, form and order of questions was chosen with a minimisation of various biases in mind. As per (2003) a well-designed research tool is simple, appropriate for the intended use, acceptable to respondents, and should include a clear and interpretable scoring system.

As such, the researcher opted for a well-designed, clearly and accessibly worded questionnaire with an easily comprehensible rating scale for the majority of questions. Following the guidance of Hyman & Sierra (2016), the questions on the survey were also developed by repeatedly referring to the research question. Questions were designed to elicit specific responses and where relevant, were created to encourage mutually exclusive and exhaustive responses (Hyman & Sierra, 2016). Further, a clear and concise disclaimer preceded the actual questionnaire, opting to alleviate any security and privacy concerns. Gunn (2002) noted that this is frequently a high-level concern for survey participants.

The researcher made every effort to avoid leading questions and ensured that only one question was asked at a time, using language with which the survey participants would be familiar (Hyman *et al.*, 2016). In short, the author endeavoured to ensure to safeguard against the potential for responses to the survey questions being biased (Hyman *et al.*, 2016), thus increasing the reliability of the process.

3.5. Data Collection

Data collection is the systematic approach to assembling and measuring information from an assortment of sources to get a complete and accurate picture of an area of interest. It enables a person or organization to answer relevant questions, evaluate outcomes and about future probabilities and trends (Nijhowne, 1995).

In this instance, the measurement instrument, the questionnaire (Appendix B), was first pretested on students at The University of Cape Town. Pretesting is an essential part of the survey process because it can help in estimating a response rate, pointing to factors that can improve the response rate or remove bias, such as difficult wording or formatting, understanding points of likely dropout and providing a more accurate estimate of the time necessary to complete the survey (Sue & Ritter, 2012).

The platform and organization, namely Elle South Africa, used to aid in the data collection process were first informed about what the purpose was of the study as well as the components of the questionnaire that would help in the study. No incentives were used in the conduction of the study as the Instagram account already had existing followers which provided easy access to obtain respondents for the questionnaire. This online platform also made the data collection process easier, cost effective and saved time as the information could easily be transferred and computerised, instead of using physical questionnaires where respondents needed to write down information using a pen which would incur more costs especially when travelling to the location of the respondents.

3.6. Pilot Study

The researcher carried out pilot study to refine the data collection tool. Chigada (2014:111) defines a pilot study as a small-scale study conducted prior to carrying out the main study. The objective of conducting a pilot study is to test the validity and reliability of the research

instrument. The research instrument should measure what it is designed to measure and produce the expected results. Creswell (2012) states that pilot studies act as quality assurance processes. After successful completion of the pilot study, the measurement instrument in the form of the said questionnaire was then used to conduct the study on the intended sample.

The pilot study was initially conducted on the researcher's own Instagram account to ascertain if respondents understood the questions. In addition to understanding the questions, the pilot study was conducted to test if the measurement instrument measured what it was designed to measure. Conducting a pilot study is frequently recommended in the initial stages of research to test the research instrument, detect errors and obtain helpful feedback from respondents.. The purpose of the pilot study was to receive feedback from respondents to fine-tune the questionnaire and to correct errors. The results from the pilot study revealed that some questions were duplicated and respondents recommended the need to integrate the questions. With reference to this feedback, the researcher revised the questions as suggested and integrated some questions into one to mitigate duplication. The other finding from the pilot study was the number of grammatical errors in the questions. The suggestion was to have the research instrument edited and formatted. The recommendation was adopted and the research instrument was edited and formatted to improve the quality of the research instrument. Respondents also indicated that some questions were too long and shortening of the questions was suggested. This feedback included shortening of the questionnaire, removal of repetitive questions and changing to an online administration method. All the suggestions recommended were adopted and implemented to fine-tune the research instrument. This was imperative because Ngulube (2010) posits that insights and recommendations from pilot studies also help to understand the subject under investigation as well as improve the quality of the instrument. No statistical data was analysed during the pilot study due to the small sample size.

3.7. Data Analysis

Data analysis can be described as the process in which statistical and logical practices are systematically applied in order to describe, illustrate or evaluate collected data (Shamoo & Resnik, 2003). In analysing the data, the study adopted the utilisation of both descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling (SEM). SEM is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is used to analyse structural relationships (Smith & Noble (2014). This

technique is the combination of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, and it is used to analyse the structural relationship between measured variables and latent constructs (Van der Mortel, 2008). A detailed illustration of how the model was constructed, including the moderating effect of culture between luxury perception and purchase intention is shown in Figure 6 of this study. Descriptive analysis is used in the explanation of fundamental features of the research and plays a crucial role in the provision of summaries about the sample combined with the measures used in the research; therefore, they are crucial in all quantitative data analyses (Bedeian, 2014). Mathur and Kaushik (2014) confirm that descriptive statistics are useful in the generation of easy to understand graphs and summaries regarding the target population.

The data used to generate textual and graphic descriptions may be subjected to further statistical analyses or be adequate in presenting the results obtained (Mathur & Kaushik, 2014). Such results may then be valuable for further use in decision-making in the marketing environment of the organization (Mathur *et al.*, 2014). Descriptive analysis is also pertinent when a generalized comprehension of buying behaviour patterns are sought from the target population rather than in-depth knowledge (Loeb *et al.*, 2017). The data gathered in this study can, therefore, stand alone as valuable descriptive information of the target population. Since this is a little-researched population, identification of data patterns will be valuable for decision-makers as the data explain the present circumstances whereas a follow-up causal analysis can be applied at a later date to expand on this study (Loeb *et al.*, 2017). In contrast to descriptive analysis, structural equation modelling is a multivariate statistical analysis approach applied in the analysis of structural relationships (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Succinctly, the technique applies a combination of multiple regression analysis and factor analysis.

An ideal study, which can apply descriptive analysis and structural equation modelling is referred to as a market research. Concisely, a market study needs to have well-defined features, which cater to the different sources of information. Furthermore, a market study means that there are many participants, indicating that structural equation modelling is crucial to identify and efficiently analyse the different structural relationships within the market. For instance, a market study focusing on the market's response to a new product introduction will include various structural relationships including demographics, gender, ethnicity, and religion.

In the luxury goods market, it is also necessary for management to understand that the attractiveness of brand management in combination with the coherence of the brand remains a significant pull for the target population (Rodrigues & Costa, 2016). Furthermore, decision-making based on market research enables management to use the knowledge obtained for greater investment in their brands when they understand consumer attitudes and perceptions regarding the brand (Rodriguez *et al.*, 2016). Not only this but, decision-making in relation to luxury consumer relationships is also enhanced through additional market research initiatives (Rodriguez *et al.*, 2016). The quantitative data gathered from the online questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics. Structural relationships were also measured by the use of structural equation modelling in Smart PLS.

3.8. Elimination of Bias

Smith & Noble (2014) explain bias as an unfair attitude towards a group or a specific interest. These authors further aver that bias influences the validity and reliability in a study and can result in misleading information, which can have critical consequences in real-world applications (Smith & Noble, 2014). The section below discusses potential biases that could occur and provides an explanation of how the researcher aims to reduce these biases. Response biases have great impact on the validity of the online questionnaire posed in this study and can be divided into five sections namely acquiescence bias, demand characteristics, extreme responding, question order bias and social desirability bias (Holbrook *et al.*, 2003; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003; Sain, 2001; Guun, 2002; Van der Mortel, 2008).

Acquiescence bias refers to the tendency of the respondent to reply yes to or agree with all the questions asked in the questionnaire; this creates dishonesty and irregular results (Holbrook *et al.*, 2003). Acquiescence in this study was avoided by including negatively worded questions Demand characteristics refers to when respondents change their original response because they know that they are part of a study (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). This was avoided by administering the questionnaire online so respondents could answer the questionnaire in their own privacy; there was no one on one contact between the researcher and respondent to maintain neutrality.

Extreme responding involves respondents only selecting answers in the questionnaire that appear to be the most risky or extreme for example respondents extremely agree or disagree

to questions (Sain, 2001). This was avoided by administering the questionnaire online to eliminate the feeling of the respondent being judged and by providing fewer answers for the respondent to select.

Question order bias is when respondents have a different reaction to the questions posed as a result of the order in which the questions are represented on the questionnaire Guun (2002). To avoid this in the study, questions were grouped by scale being measured to unfold in a logical order.

Social desirability bias is when the respondent answers the questions in a way that makes them feel that they can be more favoured by the person or people conducting the study; therefore, the respondent will deny traits that are undesirable in order to adopt traits that are more desired on a social level (Van der Mortel, 2008). To avoid this, the respondents remained anonymous.

3.9. Limitations of the Study

The study was defined and also constrained by several limitations that were generally attributable to the scope and context, as well as resource limitations that were mainly discerned between time and capital committed. That is to say, the generalized findings originated from a small sample of 100 respondents which may have inadequately depicted the formulated results of the study and as a result undermined the generalizability of the conclusions reached; for example, while the study aimed to analyse the attitudes of Millennial women in South African, the sample was predominantly composed of individuals from Johannesburg and Cape Town. Furthermore, whilst the study was conducted in the South African context, not all respondents were South African citizens, including foreign students and professionals that although might have been living in South Africa for more than 5 years, did not represent the population that the research aimed to describe, with accuracy. Consequently, the results achieved were discounted to relatively reflect the constraints they were reached under. The study concluded, urging further research to take place in order to extend the generalizability of the nonetheless crucial insights that were produced post-analysis

3.10. Ethical Considerations

There were various ethical considerations that had to be taken into account when conducting the study. Most of the ethical issues are drawn from the framework proposed by Bryman and Bell (2007) coupled with suggestions made by The University of Cape Town (UCT) Faculty of Commerce Ethics in Research. These ethical issues include ensuring participants have given informed consent, ensuring no harm comes to participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and ensuring that permission is obtained.

Sain (2001) denotes that all respondents taking part in any study need to participate on an informed consent basis. It was ensured that participants were not subjected to any harm such as forcing them to complete the questionnaires despite being unwilling. As a result, there was a voluntary participation of the respondent while giving the opportunity for anyone to withdraw at any stage should they not feel comfortable with the information the study expected them to provide.

In a systematic review, Gordon *et al.*, (2011) pointed out that ethical considerations form an integral part of any research. As a result, this study had to be considered in a way that would ensure ethically morality. The measurement instrument was verified by the author's supervisor at The University of Cape Town and further approved by the Commerce Ethics Committee. At the same time, guarantees were provided to the respondents regarding their anonymous participation in the research via a disclaimer that expressed the commitment of the researcher to respect the personal data of those participating in the research.

In addition, measures were taken to ensure that the questionnaire was described by high integrity and that no questions were likely to offend any of the participants by design, in the way they were formulated. All communications with survey participants were performed with absolute truthfulness and transparency, regarding the motivations of the research as well as its objectives.

Finally, the work of other authors has been fully respected throughout the study, with the use of the UCT-Harvard referencing system, ensuring that the research maintained a high level of trustworthiness.

3.11. Conclusion

Chapter three aimed at giving a complete breakdown of the research design and methodology by focusing on the various approaches and techniques involved to produce cognitive results. A quantitative research method, descriptive research design type and a non-probability approach was used in this study. A target population was selected and the measuring instrument used in this study, namely a questionnaire, was given to the respondents and the data was then analysed. The sampling technique used in this study was that of convenience. A total of 200 respondents were selected for this study. The measurement and scaling procedure for this study made use of a Likert scale where the responses of participants were measured. The errors in the methodology were discussed, ways to avoid bias in questionnaires, limitations and ethical considerations were also mentioned which would help to improve the study in the future. In the following chapter, the findings are presented.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a continuation of the methods described in Chapter 3 by taking a closer look at the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data. The first section of the chapter discusses the demographics of the respondents in terms of the criteria selected for respondents. The findings from the study are presented in the next section, followed by a description of the structural model. The data was cleaned to obtain the most suitable candidates to provide more accurate results for the study. Based on the research design and methodology, followed the findings of the study which consisted of making use of two theoretical models namely a measurement model using the indicators reliability and validity and determine what effect it had on the variables identified in this study and a structural model which determines the variance in luxury perception and purchase intention and discusses hypothesis that aims at determining whether these variables mentioned have an influence on the luxury perceptions for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. By taking a closer look at the results, this chapter will determine whether the objectives of the study were met as explained in Chapter five.

4.2. Demographics of Respondents

1350 people took the survey which was administered via the Instagram account of Elle South Africa. Of these participants, only 210 (15%) were consumers of luxury women's footwear exceeding R8000; after cleaning and coding, only 200 respondents were suitable to use for statistical analysis (excluding missing values/ incomplete surveys). All respondents were female Millennials, consumers of luxury footwear exceeding R8000, and predominantly from Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa. These regions of South Africa are the most commercialised, therefore, explaining the bias in demographics.

4.3. Findings of the Study

Each construct exhibited non-normality and hence the sample data exhibits non-normality. Therefore, it was suitable to employ partial least squares using Smart PLS (Wong, 2013). This method was preferred as it is less sensitive to distributional abnormality (Wong, 2013). In reporting the PLS-SEM results, first the measurement model with its scale validity and reliability measures are discussed, followed by a discussion of the structural model.

4.3.1. Measurement Model

In the section below, the measurement model is addressed by analysing the reliability (internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability) and validity (discriminant validity, convergent validity and factor loadings) of the Purchase Intention Model.

4.3.1.1. Reliability

For internal consistency reliability, both the Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability measures exceeded the 0.7 benchmark and are illustrated in Table 4 below. Only Emotional Value and Luxury Perception has a Cronbach Alpha lower than the required 0.7 (Emotional Value's Cronbach = 0.64; Luxury Perception's Cronbach = 0.60). According to Malhotra (2010), a Cronbach Alpha value of higher than 0.6 is acceptable in social science research. Therefore, the measurement model displays internal consistency reliability. For indicator reliability, all items loaded onto the corresponding latent variable structure and all items exhibit loadings greater than 0.7 with the exception of one item (QV3) in the Quality Value scale which had a loading of -0.24. It was decided to remove this item, as the t-value (0.64) was also not significant. After removal, all the scales used to measure the key constructs were found to be reliable.

Table 4: Reliability Indicators for the Measurement Model

	AVE*	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	R²
1. Conspicuous Value	0.94	0.98	0.97	-
2. Culture	0.63	0.89	0.88	-
3. Emotional Value	0.71	0.83	0.64	-
4. Luxury Perception	0.55	0.78	0.60	0.78
5. Purchase Intention	0.63	0.89	0.84	0.74
6. Quality Value	0.74	0.85	0.70	-
7. Social Value	0.80	0.92	0.88	-
8. Unique Value	0.72	0.91	0.88	-

***AVE = Average Variance Extracted**

4.3.1.2. Validity

For convergent validity, each item loaded significantly onto its latent variable with a t-value greater than 1.96. All the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of the latent variables

were greater than 0.5 as illustrated in Table 4 above. Therefore, the measurement model exhibited convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was analysed in two steps. First, the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion was used to test whether the square root of a construct's AVE was higher than the correlations between it and any other constructs within the model. Second, the factor loading of an item on its associated latent variable had to be greater than the loading of another item on that latent variable. Table 5 below shows the result of the Fornell-Larcker analysis.

Table 5: Latent Variable Correlation Matrix

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Conspicuous Value	0.98	0.01	0.97							
2. Culture	0.61	0.06	0.31	0.79						
3. Emotional Value	0.71	0.04	0.70	0.42	0.84					
4. Luxury Perception	0.55	0.05	0.50	0.46	0.54	0.74				
5. Purchase Intention	0.63	0.04	0.50	0.39	0.39	0.79	0.86			
6. Quality Value	0.70	0.12	0.40	0.56	0.41	0.14	0.05	0.86		
7. Social Value	0.80	0.03	0.73	0.32	0.71	0.76	0.69	0.26	0.90	
8. Unique Value	0.70	0.07	0.14	0.16	0.08	0.47	0.28	0.15	0.20	0.85

***Square root of AVE on diagonal**

As can be seen from Table 5, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was met. Each item also loaded onto its respective latent variable. The measurement model therefore exhibits good discriminant validity.

4.3.2. Structural Model

In the section below, the structural model is addressed. First, the R-squared values shown in Table 4 were analysed to determine the extent to which the model explains the variability of the response data around its mean. Second, each path was discussed by examining the hypotheses of the study. Lastly, the sizes of the significant effects were discussed.

4.3.2.1. Analysis of R-Squared

According to Wynn Chin (2005) an R^2 value exceeding 0.67 is seen as substantial. The model exhibits substantial power as it explains 78% and 74% of the variance in luxury perception and purchase intention respectively.

Figure 6: Path Coefficients & T-Values

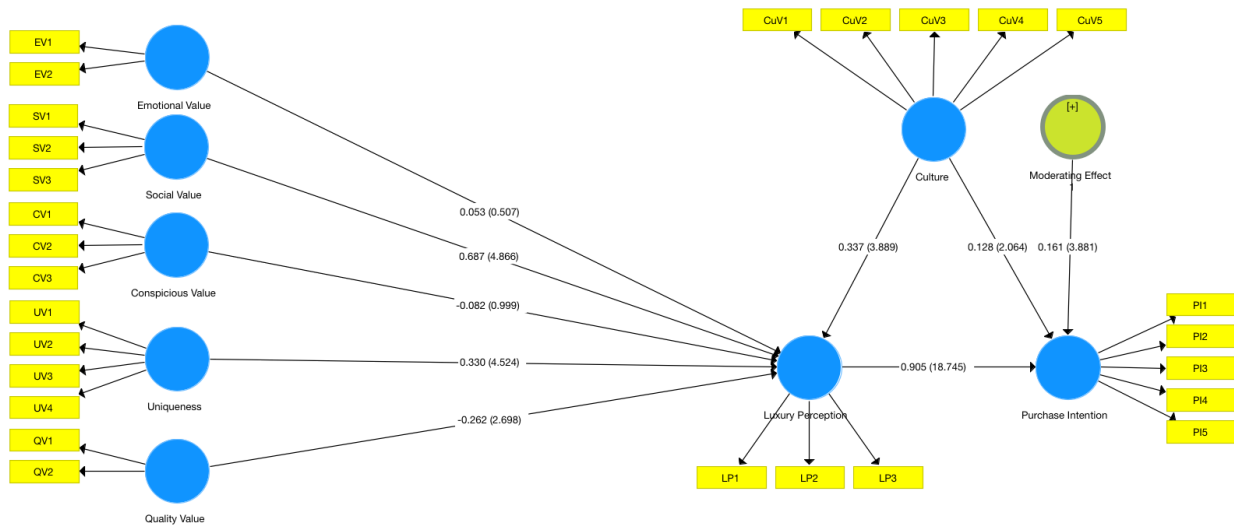


Table 6: Results of Path Analysis

	Hypothesized Relationship	B	T-Stat	Result
H ₁ :	Culture (Moderating Effect) → Luxury Perception	0.161	3.881	Significant
H ₂ :	Conspicuous Value → Luxury Perception	-0.082	0.999	Not Significant
H ₃ :	Unique Value → Luxury Perception	0.330	4.524	Significant
H ₄ :	Quality Value → Luxury Perception	-0.262	2.698	Significant
H ₅ :	Emotional Value → Luxury Perception	0.053	0.507	Not Significant
H ₆ :	Social Value → Luxury Perception	0.687	4.866	Significant
H ₇ :	Luxury Perception → Purchase Intention	0.905	18.745	Significant

***p<0.05 is considered significant**

4.3.2.2. Analysis of Hypotheses & Size of Effect

The section below uses data from Table 6 to analyse the significance of each hypothesis and the associated size of the effect.

H₁: To determine if culture moderates the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa

Hypothesis one addressed the first secondary objective of the study; to determine if culture moderates the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 3.881 and an accompanying beta coefficient of 0.161, it was concluded that culture is a moderator of the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention. Therefore, culture influences the strength of the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention; based on the beta coefficient (0.161) this effect is weakly positive. The specific cultural group (Venda, Zulu, Afrikaans etc.) to which a consumer belongs, interacts and shares the same values and norms, influences the consumers perception of luxury and their intention to purchase a luxury footwear product in South Africa.

H₂: Conspicuous value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

Hypothesis two addressed the second secondary objective of the study; to determine if intrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. For this study, conspicuous value was seen as a driver of intrinsic value. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 0.999 and an accompanying beta coefficient of -0.082, it was concluded that conspicuous value does not influence luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear.

H₃: Unique value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

Hypothesis three addressed the second secondary objective of the study; to determine if intrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. For this study, unique value was seen as a driver of intrinsic value. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 4.524 and an accompanying beta coefficient of 0.330, it was concluded that unique value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear; based on the beta coefficient (0.330) this effect is weakly positive. The consumer's perception of luxury footwear is influenced by a product's unique characteristics and non-conformation to the rest of society.

H₄: Quality value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

Hypothesis four addressed the second secondary objective of the study; to determine if intrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. For this study, quality value was seen as a driver of intrinsic value. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 2.698 and an accompanying beta coefficient of -0.262, it was concluded that quality value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear; based on the beta coefficient (-0.262) this effect is weakly negative. The findings affirm the conventional belief that consumers perceive luxury footwear as of high quality. The results reveal that quality was a significant consideration among the consumer. However, the impact of quality consideration had a negative influence on the perception of luxury as indicated by the negative beta. Therefore, consumers perceived quality as important by assumption that the product is luxurious but this was not fundamental in their perception of luxury as a whole.

H₅: Emotional value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

Hypothesis five addressed the third secondary objective of the study; to determine if extrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. For this study, emotional value was seen as a driver of extrinsic value. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 0.507 and an accompanying beta coefficient of 0.053, it was concluded that emotional value does not influence luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear.

H₆: Social value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear

Hypothesis six addressed the third secondary objective of the study; to determine if extrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. For this study, social value was seen as a driver of extrinsic value. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 4.866 and an accompanying beta coefficient of 0.687, it was concluded that social value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear; based on the beta coefficient (0.687) this effect is strongly positive. The

findings affirm that social value plays a significant role in developing a consumer's perception of luxury. Therefore, a consumer's perception of a luxury product is based on where the luxury product ranks based on the opinion of their social group (e.g. Christian Louboutin is perceived to have a higher social standing than Michael Kors). Social value puts pressure on a consumer to display their social status by use of luxury footwear products.

H₇: Luxury perception influences purchase intention for South African consumers of luxury footwear

Hypothesis seven addressed the fourth secondary objective of the study; to determine if luxury perception influences purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. At a 5% level of significance, with a test statistic of 18.745 and an accompanying beta coefficient of 0.905, it was concluded that luxury perception influences purchase intention for South African consumers of luxury footwear; based on the beta coefficient (0.905) this effect is strongly positive.

4.4. Conclusion

Overall, evidence of the outcomes of this study point to the fact that extrinsic benefits have far greater value than intrinsic benefits in the luxury footwear market in South Africa. The extrinsic value inherent in the social value and luxury perception as drivers of purchase intention were over three times greater than the intrinsic value assigned to the other variables for unique and quality values, with conspicuous and emotional values producing the least significant outcomes. However, emotional satisfaction was connected to the pleasure associated with social value and the perfectionism concept of a quality product, reinforcing the extrinsic value of the luxury footwear market. The Bandwagon Effect stood out the most in this research, demonstrating the strong significance of social and group acceptance and pressures in this society. Accordingly, advertising and marketing efforts should be directed at harnessing the opportunities presented by these results and focus on the obviously extrinsic outcomes produced in this study.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the behaviour of women in terms of their attitudes and purchase intentions that drives South African females towards purchasing luxury footwear. Therefore, this chapter provides a very detailed summary of the conclusions of this study based on the findings expressed from chapter one which provided the foundation of the purpose of the this study, chapter two which provide the literature that expressed reasons for the motives, buying behaviour, values and perceptions of consumers when making decisions for luxury items, chapter three, which describes the research and design methodology which provides the basis for providing cognitive results, and chapter four, which provides an interpretation of the data. The findings mentioned will give a broader view of the different secondary research objectives of the study and this will be compared with previous research on the subject in order to produce a more valuable conclusion.

5.2. Summary of Findings and Conclusions of the Study

The section below summarises the findings from the secondary objectives of this study and contrasts the findings of this study to previous studies to deduce conclusions based on the South African market. The first point of the secondary objective focussed more on how culture is able to moderate the relationships between luxury perception and the purchase intentions of the consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. The second point of the secondary objective aimed at determining whether intrinsic values influenced the luxury perceptions of consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. The third point of the secondary objective determined whether extrinsic values influenced the luxury perceptions of consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. Lastly the fourth point of the secondary objectives aimed at determining whether luxury perception influences purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in the South African market.

5.2.1. Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Secondary Objective One

The first objective of the study aimed to determine if culture moderates the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. It was concluded that culture influences the strength of the relationship between luxury perception and purchase intention. It was also found that this relationship was

weakly positive, suggesting that culture as a moderator has some influence on the intent to purchase luxury footwear.

Abalkhail (2015) noted that South Africa had a highly individualistic culture, which typically denotes a culture where self-gratification is highly-valued (Mohasoa, 2016), as is evident from the results obtained in this study. Contrasting the findings of Abalkhail, a study conducted by Mohasoa (2016) found that South African consumers of luxury brands possessed a collective cultural perspective, creating the potential for further studies on the segmentation of marketing in this area. Mohasoa (2016) further confirms that the South African market appreciates the social opinions of others and can be described as interdependent in this respect.

The differences between these two studies may be attributable to South Africans who are Caucasian and, therefore, demonstrate individualistic characteristics in contrast to South Africans who have African origins and are typically perceived to have a collectivistic nature. However, culture remains difficult to define, since this is a market aspect which is ever changing and reliant on various societal and other influences over time (Stephenson, 2016). Results from this study and others in relation to South African culture, point to the need for further research to distinguish between Caucasian and African ethnicities that would in turn inform marketing research efforts based on the conflicts noted.

5.2.2. Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Secondary Objective Two

The second objective of the study aimed to determine if intrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. The drivers of intrinsic value were conspicuous, unique and quality value. It was concluded that unique and quality value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear. Unique value has a positive influence while quality value has a negative influence (but this is unusual). Overall, intrinsic value was recorded to have a lower value than extrinsic value demonstrating that the South African market appreciates luxury footwear for its external benefits.

Mohasoa (2016) noted the functional value was associated with the element of uniqueness. Uniqueness is the desire expressed by the individual to be different or to make different choices, thus avoiding conformity (Abalkhail, 2015). The conspicuous value would have

been linked to the unique value should the respondents have indicated that this aspect was important. However, the conspicuous value was not significant, signifying that the respondents did not feel a need to demonstrate their differences as individuals or their personality preferences to distinguish themselves from others (Mohasoa, 2016). The outcome of this study supports the collectivist viewpoint.

The element of uniqueness was also discovered not to be a significant factor in research conducted by Malhotra and Choudhury (2017) in India, leading these authors to the conclusion that marketers need to be aware of studies where results are atypical in developing countries such as South Africa.

In terms of quality, the customer can form a bond with a brand when the costs and sacrifices linked with the benefits and utility of the product are perceived as being high (Alasaad, 2012). Both quality and uniqueness were important results in this study, although unrelated to the conspicuous element. Quality, however, showed a negative influence on perceptions about luxury, providing the opportunity for further research in this area to ascertain the causes of this response.

5.2.3. Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Secondary Objective Three

The third objective of the study aimed to determine if extrinsic value influences luxury perception for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. The drivers of extrinsic value were emotional and social value. It was concluded that social value influences luxury perception for South African consumers of luxury footwear. This influence was positive. Emotional value encourages greater emotional interaction with the luxury brand, allowing the consumer to enjoy an often-inconspicuous pleasure with their luxury purchases and relationship with luxury footwear (Makkar, 2014). The symbolism associated with these goods frequently encourages a loyal brand following, with consumers appreciating their value while also knowing that few can afford such items (Makkar, 2014). Results from Makkar's (2014) research support the present study in confirming that the South African market does not place excessive value on the conspicuous value of their luxury footwear purchases.

The results of this study also confirmed that the social value experienced with luxury footwear purchases was of far greater value than the emotions generated by such purchases.

This social value motivated a deeper appreciation for the worth offered by these items, which, in turn also contributed significantly to the perception of luxury represented by luxury footwear. This final element had strong influences on the intention to purchase, providing marketers with valuable information to leverage the social elements associated with luxury footwear purchase intent.

5.2.4. Summary of Findings and Conclusions for Secondary Objective Four

The fourth objective of the study aimed to determine if luxury perception influences purchase intention for consumers of luxury women's footwear in South Africa. It was concluded that luxury perception positively influences purchase intention for South African consumers of luxury footwear.

Purchase intention is affected by a variety of elements as have been described in this study with the greatest motivating factor being the perception of luxury footwear. This perception is a factor, which contributes to the social status as an extrinsic motivator for purchase intention since luxury footwear serves to enhance individual wellbeing and status (Roda, Raisa, Schwarza & Čermáková, 2015). Consumer behaviour is also considered to be one of the forms where individuals 'signal their social status, wealth, values and political orientation (Roda et al., 2015).

Many studies have explored the factors, which contribute to an understanding of consumer buying behaviour. These include the variables studied here, whether these are stable in various contexts or vary across countries, which has been found to be evident in terms of culture, together with unconscious factors that impact behaviour (Roda et al., 2015). Outcomes of this study clearly indicate that the South African market purchases luxury footwear to improve their personal feelings of wellbeing and to offer evidence of their standing in society, although in a discreet manner. This result supports the growing wealth of the middle classes in the country who clearly want to exercise their financial independence at an external level for internal gratification.

5.3 Recommendations

This section discusses the various recommendations that can be used to enhance the current study based on the findings and conclusions gathered in the study. Culture has shown to be a

significant moderator that exists between luxury perception and purchase intention however this chapter will also reflect the various recommendations that could be used by future researchers to expand on the considerations for quality, the emotions of consumers when purchasing and behaviours. Based on the results, the evidence displayed in chapter five indicates that the decisions of South African female consumers for purchasing luxury footwear is influenced through culture, is based on functional values such as uniqueness and quality, emotional and social values, and that luxury perception positively influences their purchase intention. The luxury footwear industry of South Africa has great implications on the country's economy therefore this section also provides elaborative information for marketing and brand managers who could use the information of the purchasing intentions of consumers to enhance their practices for better results and sales. The values of consumers vary in different cultures and populations all over the world, and companies should adjust its marketing strategies based on the various values of customers that exist the respective industries.

Culture, unique value and quality were all considered significant intrinsic values with social value and luxury perception being important extrinsic values for the South African consumer of luxury footwear. Conspicuous and emotional value were considered less important in this environment.

This study offers potentially important inputs for marketers and advertisers to consider in their strategizing processes. Because purchasing intention is a primary end-goal when disseminating information to consumers, possessing a greater understanding of what prompts purchases is essential to brand success. Culture has been established to be a significant mediator between luxury perception and the purchase decision in the South African market. Consideration of quality and value as secondary objectives should then be considered against what has been determined to be a primarily collective attitude in the greater South African market.

Focusing on these extrinsic social and luxury perceptions should, therefore, be the initial focus of marketing strategies and advertising campaigns to improve sales in this environment. In terms of the secondary objectives it is problematic in the luxury footwear market to suggest that quality be improved in the products delivered to the end customer since quality is

already at a premium in this market. Consequently, marketing can consider various options to add customer value through their services.

Service improvements can be evaluated in the areas of sales staff training in understanding the needs of customers and how to improve their sales techniques when dealing directly with customers in the South African market with a specific focus on diversity training to accommodate all ethnicities.

Digital marketing is another form of advertising, which can be used to personalize services to customer bases and to inform customers of new stock arrivals before they become available. Being placed on a special list of elite customers who receive advance notice of products will enhance elements of social status while ensuring that the conspicuous element is kept to a minimum.

Luxury footwear brands may also evaluate the benefits of greater advertising initiatives through multimedia avenues such as television, the internet and social media platforms to reach a wider audience. Optimization of social media platforms for the South African market can be designed to enhance consumer interaction with the brand to grow brand loyalty, especially since the social variable is important in this market. This interactivity could be implemented in the form of games involving luxury footwear and players could remain anonymous or choose to reveal their identities or club followers could guess the celebrities wearing luxury brands or guess at the brand they are wearing to win vouchers, for example. Brand loyalty can also be enhanced through events and other personalized social events to promote the social standing of their valued customers.

A greater understanding of the cultural, social and luxury perception values exhibited in this study can, therefore, be leveraged in several ways to augment brand loyalty, grow a larger customer base and facilitate greater sales. These suggestions can be facilitated by the expansion of marketing and advertising through a variety of different, but subtle, means to ensure that luxury brands remain exclusive and subtle.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Studies

The primary objective for this study was to determine which variables impacted the purchase intention of South African consumers in the women's luxury footwear market. Secondary objectives were established the influence of culture as a mediating factor in the link between luxury perception and purchase intentions and whether intrinsic and extrinsic variables exerted a positive influence on the perception of luxury. The emotional value was tested to ascertain the perception of luxury footwear. Future studies by marketing researchers can consider more succinct differentiations in the emotion variable and how these differences impact each of the other variables when establishing associations with luxury perception. Despite a weak association between emotion and luxury perception in this study, it is believed that further investigation of this aspect will be beneficial in further studies.

Surveys can be conducted to determine the exact emotions, which customers experience in the process leading up to the purchase intention. For example, a study might provide a list of possible emotions and ask the customer to select three emotions. This approach will not just elicit one global response to an association between emotions and luxury perception but rather highlight different emotions attached to the perception of luxury. Such an approach will assist marketers in addressing these variations throughout the different stages leading up to purchase intentions. Consequently, stronger emotional responses may be leveraged by marketers in their advertising campaigns.

Qualitative studies are also recommended to delve deeper into the emotional variable and the other variables through focus groups or broader surveys of the South African public. Qualitative studies are known to elicit depth, which is not always revealed by the figures obtained through quantitative research. Both further qualitative and quantitative studies therefore can be designed to reveal distinctions in the variables and luxury perception and purchase intentions in relation to different age groups, income groups, ethnicities and genders to ascertain what percentage of the market is male or female or whether ethnicities are largely individualistic or have a collective outlook. Ethnicities can also be broken down to determine which have collective and individualistic outlooks.

Unfortunately, there is so little research available within the South African market regarding luxury footwear purchases, that it is not feasible to conduct a meta-analysis of existing literature. Such research would assist in establishing the ratio between quantitative and

qualitative studies. The significance of this approach would help to determine the statistical versus experiential analyses of the market. In turn, a deeper understanding would be generated from these outcomes, which is essential for marketing managers in the development of new products and service offerings to grow their market share.

More precise segmentation of markets could also be developed with further studies in respect of the various demographics and refinement of the variables within this study, as these relate to the different brands and in respect of demographics and cultural ethnicities within the South African dynamic. Actual behaviours in terms of purchases and re-purchase activities also need to be researched further to enhance future advertising initiatives. Further investigation of the benefits of social media platforms also needs to be established and leveraged since these have become a significant outlet for both online and instore purchases.

5.5 Managerial Implications

The luxury footwear market in South Africa has enormous implications for the country's economy. It is, therefore, important for marketing and brand managers in this industry to accumulate as much information as possible on the purchasing intentions of this lucrative market. It is also essential for management to grow this market. This growth can only be achieved with information to inform corporate, business and marketing strategies from market studies such as this and other research initiatives.

Understanding of how the luxury footwear market impacts consumers is vital in developing effective strategies. Knowing what motivates their purchase intentions is critical to growing brand customer bases, which is possible through improving market segmentation. Suggestions for improving segmentation are possible through greater definition of variables as mentioned in the previous section.

Additional research is suggested to establish details which encourage this market to buy luxury footwear brands. This is particularly important in terms of South Africa, which is home to many different cultures where these ethnic groups are confined to a small region. Customers need to be able to make trade-offs between intrinsic and extrinsic factors and costs in this market, which is critical knowledge especially in economic downturns. Specific

information such as this will help management to plan in advance and mitigate decreasing sales in sub optimal economic conditions.

Further, perceptions of value are key to the field of marketing management in terms of segmentation as mentioned, but also in relation to the differentiation of products among the various brands together with brand positioning when creating a competitive advantage. Perceptions surrounding luxury, value, quality, emotions and other variables inform strategies and enhance strategy along the entire value chain when understanding the luxury concept from a holistic viewpoint. Brand trust is yet another element for consideration, which should be leveraged in providing additional customer value beyond just the physical purchase which is made. All of these elements provide critical information to managers when making decisions and will be useful when used in combinations with the suggestions from the previous section.

5.7 Conclusion of the Study

Luxury markets have existed in South Africa for many years and South Africa has the largest market for luxury goods on the continent of Africa and also has a rich cultural diversity. The South African luxury market has shown promising results and progress and has been recognized as a dynamic and fast evolving country in this category. The introductory chapter of the study provided the research outline and justification for conducting this research project. It was paramount to undertake the research project so as to come up with suggestions that might help contemporary marketers to develop strategies relevant for the firm's survival.

However given the limited studies that exist on interlinking culture with purchasing intentions and the limited information available for how the South African contingent influences the theoretical predictions, the purpose of this study sought to determine the behaviours which motivate the purchase of luxury footwear in the South African environment. An extensive review of existing academic studies was covered in the second chapter in conjunction with the various models appropriate to establishing these purchasing behaviours. The validity and reliability of the results were enhanced by the literature provided and the various theoretical theories and models applied to ensure that the information was accurate and consistent and that all the concepts presented in the study were appropriately measure. All the objectives expressed in this study were well achieved and the measuring tools used in

the study contributed greatly in establishing the findings of the relationship that exists between luxury value perceptions and the purchase intent of South African female consumers. Despite only being able to use only 200 responses from respondents for the self-administered questionnaire, collectively the findings still produced valuable and cognitive results.

The research plan that was used in this study was discussed in great detail in the third chapter-research design and methodology. A quantitative study was implemented to ascertain customer perceptions with regard to intrinsic and extrinsic factors in the form of conspicuous value, quality, unique value and culture, in conjunction with the emotional and social values which informed perceptions of luxury. Data was collected using a quantitative approach leading to quantitative data analysis. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to collect data on the Elle South Africa Instagram social networking platform.

Structural Equation Modelling data analysis helped the researcher to process and add some meaning to raw facts which became information. The results showed that there are various antecedents or factors that determine the purchase intentions of women and are very broad ranging from their attitudes towards the product, demographic factors, influenced by society. Purchasing intentions have also shown to be guided by what a woman personally desires as many women struggle with self-image and place their focus on using tools to be more attractive and therefore use platforms such as luxury footwear to increase their confidence.

The rich culture of South Africa was confirmed to have a significant effect on the purchase intentions of consumers and can be seen as a positive moderator in the customer's luxury perception and intention to purchase as it strengthens the relationship between these two concepts. Findings established that some elements were stronger drivers than others. Intrinsic values such as uniqueness and quality were also contributing factors to influencing the luxury perception of female consumers with uniqueness in this study positively influencing their decisions while quality had a negative influence. Extrinsic values such as emotion and social value also impacted the luxury perception of female consumers. Both emotional and social values had a positive influence on luxury perception as emotional values enhance the interaction that takes place with the luxury brand and the sense of enjoyment female consumers received from purchasing luxury items. Holistically results show that intrinsic values have shown to have a

lower value than extrinsic values which shows that females in the South African market are more drawn to appreciating luxury footwear for the external factors mentioned.

Luxury perception positively influences the purchase intention of female consumers of luxury footwear in South Africa and is affected by many elements as mentioned in the study. Perception contributes to the social status and well-being of female consumers as an extrinsic motivator for their purchase intentions of luxury footwear. Therefore the findings of the study indicate that female consumers of the South African market purchase luxury footwear as evidence to establish their place in society and the more luxury footwear purchased the more it improves their personal feelings and the more it enhances their social standing. The findings therefore support how wealth is increased in the middle classes and how consumers who are able to afford luxury footwear want to express their financial independence at an external platform to feel satisfied internally.

The findings also showed that the luxury footwear industry of South Africa also has a great impact on the economy and therefore the information provided in this study may be used by marketing and advertising managers to improve their strategies in this lucrative industry.

Various recommendations were highlighted as a result of this study and in relation to future studies, which may also be of benefit for future marketing research. The research objective was achieved through a carefully designed and executed research plan which was complimented by literature review, use of various data analysis tools, other studies, leading to the conclusion of the study. There is still great room for improvement but this study provides a great platform to increase our knowledge about not just the luxury footwear industry of South Africa but broadens our understanding about how valuable the luxury perceptions and intentions are for consumers.

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**APPENDIX A:
QUESTIONNAIRE**



Dear Respondent

It will be highly appreciated if you take a few moments to kindly complete the following questionnaire. This research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee. The answers that are obtained in this questionnaire will be strictly **confidential**. Outcomes will be used solely for the purpose of an **academic study** whereby **cumulative findings will be stated**. By completing this questionnaire, you as respondent:

- Partake in the research study with implicit consent.
- Are fully aware that partaking in the questionnaire is voluntary.
- Understand that withdrawal from the questionnaire can occur at any point, with no adverse consequences.
- Have full right of access to clarify possible issues from The University of Cape Town.

If you have any queries, or if you would like to have **access to findings**, please contact The University of Cape Town (brdshe005@myuct.ac.za).

This study explores the purchase intention of female consumers of luxury footwear in South Africa. Your opinion will be greatly appreciated.

This questionnaire should take no longer than **5 minutes** to complete. Please ensure that ALL questions in the questionnaire are answered to the best of your ability.

Please note that the following questions are personal in nature. These questions are asked for statistical purposes only and will remain strictly confidential. Please indicate your choice by selecting the most appropriate answer:

1. Please indicate your gender:

Female	Male
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If you indicated 'Male' in the answer above, please do not continue with the questionnaire as this study is focussed on female consumers only.

2. Do you own two or more items of women's footwear that exceed R8000 per item?

Yes	No
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If you indicated 'No' in the answer above, please do not continue with the questionnaire as this study is focussed on female consumers of footwear exceeding a single item value of R8000.

3. Please indicate (X) your age below:

18 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 35	Above 35	Other
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4. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Emotional Value		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
4a.	It is important to me to own really nice luxury footwear.	1	2	3	4	5
4b.	Buying luxury footwear gives me a lot of pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5

5. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Social Value		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
5a.	I buy luxury footwear because it makes me look good among my social group.	1	2	3	4	5
5b.	I buy luxury footwear because it provides me with a sense of belonging.	1	2	3	4	5
5c.	I buy luxury footwear because it improves how I am perceived.	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Conspicuous Value		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
6a.	Product prestige is my major reason for buying a luxury footwear brand.	1	2	3	4	5
6b.	It is important for me that the luxury footwear brand I buy makes a statement.	1	2	3	4	5
6c.	The luxury footwear brand I buy must be a status symbol.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Unique Value		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
7a.	Rare luxury footwear items appeal to me.	1	2	3	4	5
7b.	I am rather a leader than a follower in terms of luxury footwear fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
7c.	I dislike having luxury footwear that everyone else has.	1	2	3	4	5
7d.	I enjoy trying out new luxury footwear before other people do.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Quality Value		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
8a.	Product quality superiority is my major reason for buying a luxury footwear brand.	1	2	3	4	5
8b.	I place emphasis on quality assurance over prestige when considering the purchase of a luxury footwear brand.	1	2	3	4	5
8c.	A luxury footwear brand preferred by many people that does not meet my quality standards will never enter into my purchasing considerations.	1	2	3	4	5

9. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Luxury Perception		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
9a.	I buy luxury footwear to make me look superior.	1	2	3	4	5
9b.	The uniqueness of luxury footwear is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
9c.	I place more value on higher priced luxury footwear.	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Cultural Value		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
10a.	I am proud of my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
10b.	Respect for tradition is important for me.	1	2	3	4	5
10c.	I value a strong link to my past.	1	2	3	4	5
10d.	Traditional values are important for me.	1	2	3	4	5
10e.	I care a lot about my family history.	1	2	3	4	5

11. Please indicate your **level of agreement** with the following statements:

Purchase Intention		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
11a.	I purchase luxury footwear to show who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
11b.	I would buy luxury footwear just because it has status.	1	2	3	4	5
11c.	Owning luxury footwear indicates a symbol of wealth.	1	2	3	4	5
11d.	I would pay more for luxury if it has status.	1	2	3	4	5
11e.	Luxury brands are important to me because they make me feel more acceptable.	1	2	3	4	5

12. Have you ever purchased a South African luxury footwear brand?

Yes	No
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13. Please provide a reason for your previous answer.

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**Your time and effort is greatly appreciated and we thank you for participating in this survey.
Enjoy the rest of your day.**