



Exploring the effects of the Cape Town water crisis on consumer attitudes and buying behaviour towards water-efficient personal care products.

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## **PLAGIARISM DECLARATION**

I, Zinhle Dlamini, hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the B.Com Honours in Strategic Brand Management degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

## **ABSTRACT**

With the water crisis in Cape Town, consumers are faced with changing their water consumption behaviour and even their purchasing behaviour in order to save water. The purpose of the research study is to explore whether Cape Town residents buying behaviour with regards to water-efficient personal care products will be affected by the water crisis. Water-efficient products are personal care products which have been specifically formulated to use less or no water when in use. Therefore, making them a potential option in decreasing water usage in the hygiene category. Understanding the effect of the water crisis on purchase intentions for these water-efficient personal care products is essential for brands interested in introducing these products into the market or for existing brands to increase usage. Furthermore, this research aims to fill a gap in literature where no research has been conducted with regards to a specific green product category: water-efficient. The Theory of Planned Behaviour was used as the theoretical framework to assist in the understanding consumer behaviour and purchase intentions. The interpretivist research paradigm was used in this study, utilising in-depth interviews to collect the data from the respondents. A major insight from the study indicated that there is a struggle between environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness, whereby consumers are willing to purchase these products in order to save water but are worried about the effects of the products on their appearance. Thus causing an attitude-intention gap for water-efficient personal care products.

**Keywords: Water Crisis, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Personal Care Products, Water - efficient**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1	BACKGROUND .....	6
1.2	RATIONALE .....	7
1.3	PROBLEM STATEMENT .....	8
1.4	RESEARCH PURPOSE .....	8
1.5	RESEARCH QUESTION .....	9
1.6	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	9
1.6.1	Primary Objective .....	9
1.6.2	Secondary Objectives .....	9
1.7	CONCEPTUALISATION .....	10
<b>2</b>	<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1	INTRODUCTION .....	11
2.2	OVERVIEW OF PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS.....	11
2.2.1	Academic Research on Personal Care Products.....	11
2.2.2	Academic Research on Water-Efficient Personal Care Products.....	11
2.3	THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR.....	12
2.3.1	Values.....	13
2.3.2	Attitude .....	15
2.3.3	Subjective Norms.....	15
2.3.4	Perceived Behavioural Control .....	16
2.4	ATTENTION - BEHAVIOURAL GAP.....	16
<b>3</b>	<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS.....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION .....	18
3.2	RESEARCH PARADIGM .....	18
3.2.1	Interpretivism .....	18
3.3	RESEARCH DESIGN .....	19
3.3.1	Exploratory .....	19
3.4	RESEARCH STRATEGY .....	19
3.4.1	Qualitative .....	19
3.5	POPULATION AND SAMPLING.....	20
3.5.1	Population .....	20
3.5.2	Sampling .....	20
3.6	DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	21
3.6.1	Semi-structured, in-depth Interviews.....	21
3.6.2	Interview Questionnaire Construction .....	21
3.7	DATA ANALYSIS METHOD.....	22
3.8	TRUSTWORTHINESS.....	24

<b>4</b>	<b>CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION .....	25
4.2	CHARECTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS .....	25
4.3	CATEGORY 1: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS .....	25
4.3.1	Theme 1: Concern for the Water Crisis .....	26
4.3.2	Theme 2: Scepticism of Water Crisis.....	27
4.4	CATEGORY 2: APPEARANCE CONSCIOUSNESS.....	27
4.4.1	Theme 1: Hygiene.....	27
4.4.2	Theme 2: Perceptions of the outcome of water-efficient products on appearance. ....	28
4.5	CATEGORY 3: ATTITUDE .....	29
4.5.1	Theme 1: Feeling positive about the outcome of saving water .....	29
4.5.2	Negative feelings toward effect on body.....	30
4.6	CATEGORY 4: SUBJECTIVE NORMS .....	30
4.6.1	Theme 1: Pressure from the City of Cape Town (Day Zero Campaign).....	31
4.7	CATEGORY 5: PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL .....	31
4.7.1	Theme 1: Accessibility .....	31
4.7.2	Theme 2: The perception of the price of water-efficient personal care products.....	32
4.8	PURCHASE INTENTIONS.....	33
4.9	CATEGORY 6: OTHER THEMES.....	34
4.9.1	Theme 1: Awareness and Knowledge of water-efficient products.....	34
4.9.2	Theme 2: Temporary vs Permanent Solution.....	35
4.10	DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....	36
<b>5</b>	<b>CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>39</b>
5.1	LIMITATIONS .....	39
5.2	ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY.....	40
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	40
5.3.1	Personal Care Industry.....	41
5.3.2	Government (City of Cape Town) .....	41
5.4	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	42
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	42
<b>6</b>	<b>REFERENCE LIST .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>	
7.1	APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM	
7.2	APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER	
7.3	APPENDIX C: FINAL RESEARCH REPORT SUMMARY DOCUMENT	



# 1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

According to the Mintel Beauty and Personal Care 2017 Report, by 2025 two thirds of the world's population will be faced with water shortages (Mintel, 2017). During the height of Cape Town's water shortage, it resulted in the city implementing preservation restrictions (Watts, 2018). The City of Cape Town introduced the "Day Zero" campaign to bring attention to the water crisis and to manage water consumption by pressuring individuals into reducing their water usage (Winter, 2018). These restrictions include introducing residential water restriction levels, which limit residents to a specified daily water limit in order to avoid 'Day Zero' (Robles, 2016). 'Day Zero' will result in the city's water supply being cut off completely and force the residents of Cape Town to collect a limit of 25 liters per day at various water collection points across the city (Watts, 2018). With the threat of the water supply being cut off, the residents of Cape Town were pushed to reassess how they use water in their households every day.

Sustainable household water use is an essential part of achieving global water sustainability (Unilever, 2017). Household water is used for activities such as drinking, cooking, personal hygiene, cleaning and laundry. In South Africa the emphasis on introducing water-efficient products has been on laundry products however, there now is a shift to focusing on water-efficient personal care products (Unilever, 2017). Personal care products, which are also referred to as cosmetics or toiletries include the following categories: make-up, deodorants, fragrances, hair care (shampoos, conditioners, styling products and hair dye), shaving, skin care (face lotions and face wash) as well as soap and bath products (shower gels/creams, body washes, soaps, bath foams/gels/additives) (Mintel, 2017). This study will focus particularly on the products in the categories, which require water in their usage stage, which are: hair, face and body personal care products.

### Water consumption in production stage vs. usage stage

One of the areas of concern, with regards to the personal care industry, is the amount of water which is used by the consumer during the use of the products (Paaschen, 2015). According to Unilever, the biggest use of water is during the consumer usage stage, which is 85% (Unilever, 2017). When examining water sustainability, with regards to the personal care industry, much of the emphasis has been placed on reducing water in the production stages but recently there has been a shift to introducing products, which reduce the amount of water used in the usage stage (Mintel, 2017). An example of this is DryBath Gel, which is

a waterless body wash gel, created by the South African start-up company HeadBoy Industries Inc. (Robles, 2017). However, conventional personal care products are still leading sales in the beauty and personal care personal industry rather than water-efficient personal care products (Robles, 2017). This then requires for further exploration into consumers behaviour with regards to water-efficient personal care products.

Understanding consumers' purchasing behaviour is critical for the personal care industry as there are various motives that influence consumer behaviour (Symons, 2017). Consumer behaviour not only looks at the physical activities (that consumers carry out when obtaining and consuming products and services) but also consumer's emotional and mental processes (Andaleeb & Latiff, 2016). In current literature there are many research studies on consumer behaviour with regard to 'green' or 'organic' personal care products. Despite many saying they would make green purchases, there still seems to be a significant gap to consumers actually making these purchases (Rahman, 2013).

Whilst residents of Cape Town are highly aware of the water shortage, it is to be said whether the higher levels of public awareness of the water crisis will directly translate into actual buying and consumption of water-efficient personal care products. With the aid of the Theory of Planned Behaviour the goal of this study is to investigate how the water crisis may affect Cape Town residents purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products. Furthermore, this research looks to further explore some insights into why there might be a possible attitude-behaviour gap.

## **1.2 RATIONALE**

Due to the water crisis, there is a growing interest amongst businesses, the government and consumers with regards to water sustainability and water conservation. Consumers have become increasingly aware of the impact that the products they consume may have on the environment (Maria, 2011). Therefore, it is suggested that environmental issues may force consumers to rethink their decisions and might lead them to change their actual purchase behaviour (Rahman, 2013).

Much of the available research has focused on the general topic of "green" or "organic" purchase intentions and has focused on general environmental concern. However, as stated by Sim (2012) there is a gap to focus on a specific environmental issues which will drive the markets for specific green products. Thus, this study aims to make a theoretical contribution to research conducted within the field of water-efficient/water sustainable consumption and in particular regarding consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Furthermore, to

enhance the knowledge of consumer behaviour within the personal care industry and in particular within the sector of green personal care products.

The current water crisis is a huge threat to the to the Cape Town population however, not only can this research be used in the context of the current water shortage, but also to assist in understanding other consumers' behaviour with regards to a water crisis. The interest for sustainable personal care products has resulted in a shift of consumers showing interest in products that are waterless, less water dependent or non-rinse (Robles, 2016). According to the Mintel 2025 Trends Report for Beauty and Personal Care, it was found that 24% of consumers in the United Kingdom aged between 18-25 years old and 28% in France, were interested in using waterless bath and shower products (Mintel, 2017). However, there is a gap in research on South Africans interests, awareness and perceptions of water-efficient, personal care products.

Furthermore, when specifically looking at personal care, research shows that are psychological barriers that consumers are confronted by when changing their personal care habits (Robles, 2016). Currently there is limited research, which explores and understands these barriers. The research study aims to explore whether the purchase intentions for these products will only be present during critical stages of the water crisis or become long term purchasing behaviour habits. Additionally, this research study can help personal care brands understand the consumer as Symons (2017) states that brands can benefit by assisting consumers during potential water shortages.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

This research study proposes the following problem statement:

During the water crisis in Cape Town, residents were expected to only use 50 litres a day. Therefore, residents were expected to use less water for personal care/hygiene. Consequently, consumers were forced to consider switching their conventional personal care products for water-efficient personal care products.

### **1.4 RESEARCH PURPOSE**

The purpose of this research study is to examine and understand the effect the water crisis will have on consumer purchasing behaviour with regards to personal care products. More specifically to analyse the purchase determinants (attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control) that will influence consumers' purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products. The study also aims to gain an in-depth understanding of consumer intentions by conducting interviews to gain valuable insights.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION**

Primary Question:

*To what extent, if it at all, will the water crisis influence consumers' purchase intentions towards water-efficient personal care products?*

Secondary Questions:

- What attitudes do consumers have towards water-efficient personal care products?
- What factors influence purchasing intentions for water-efficient personal care products?
- What are the causes of the attitude-behavioural gap, if any?

## **1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This section presents the objectives of this study. These are separated into primary and secondary objectives.

### **1.6.1 Primary Objective**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate consumer purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care product, whilst taking into consideration the water crisis in Cape Town.

### **1.6.2 Secondary Objectives**

The following sub-objectives will be considered:

- To explore the influence of consumers' values (environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness) on consumer attitudes of water-efficient personal care brands.
- To explore the influence of consumers' attitude on purchase intentions of water-efficient personal care products.
- To explore the influence of consumers' social norms and perceived behavioural control on purchase intentions of water-efficient personal care products.
- To explore potential attitude-intention behavioural gap.

## 1.7 CONCEPTUALISATION

<i>Personal Care Products:</i>	Consumer products, also sometimes referred to as cosmetics or toiletries, which are used for personal hygiene or beauty reasons. These include but are not limited to; hair products, face products, shaving products, shower and bath products.
<i>Water-Efficient Products:</i>	Water-efficient products are products that require less rinse-off water or no water (non-rinse) when in use by consumers (Kraugerud, 2016).
<i>Theory of Planned Behaviour:</i>	This theory is used to predict an individual's intention to participate in certain behaviour. It suggests that behavioural intentions are dependent on the following determinants: "attitude towards a behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control" (Ajzen, 1991).
<i>Environmental Consciousness:</i>	Environmental consciousness refers to when an individual takes into consideration the consequences that their purchases, consumption or behaviour will have on the environment (Iranto, 2015).
<i>Appearance Consciousness:</i>	Appearance consciousness is what influences individuals to be interested in products, which express, alter or maintain their physical image (Maria, 2011).
<i>Attitude:</i>	This refers to the "feeling of favourableness or unfavourableness that an individual has towards a certain object." (Sahney, n.d).
<i>Subjective Norms:</i>	This is the social pressure an individual feels from family or friends to engage or comply with a group's behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).
<i>Perceived Behavioural Control:</i>	This reflects an individual's perception of how easy or difficult it is to perform a behaviour, regarding access to resources and opportunities needed to perform the behaviour. Such as access to money, time as well as the individual's self-confidence in the ability to carry out a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).
<i>Purchase Intention:</i>	Individual's subjective likelihood of performing a certain behaviour, it is "related to the behaviour, perceptions and attitudes of consumers" (Mirabi & Akbariyeh, 2015).
<i>Attitude-Behaviour Gap:</i>	Although consumers may have positive attitudes towards a specific behaviour and may have strong intentions to perform, it may not be translated into actual behaviour.

## **2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The section below looks at theories and literature collected from previous research studies related to the research topic. This study aims to gain insight into young consumers (18-25 year olds), who are currently residing in Cape Town, purchase intentions of water-efficient personal care products, whilst taking into consideration the water crisis. By analysing and exploring current literature, it provides for a foundation for the research study. The first section looks at research related to personal care products as well as water-efficient products. The second section will explore the following relevant theoretical themes for this study, which include The Theory of Planned Behaviour, Consumer Values (particularly environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness), Attitudes, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control and the Attitude-Behavioural Gap.

### **2.2 OVERVIEW OF PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS**

#### **2.2.1 Academic Research on Personal Care Products**

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of the research problem previous research studies were examined. The research studies, which are available, focus on the broad category of either 'green' or 'organic' products (Kim & Chung, 2011; Paul, Modi & Patel, 2016; Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Green products are defined as a "product that contains recycled materials, reduces waste, conserves energy or water, uses less packaging, reduces amount of toxics disposed or consumed" (Kim & Chung, 2011). On the other hand, organic products are products, which are either produced without pesticides; artificial fertilizers harmful chemicals or they are made with natural ingredients (Kim & Chung, 2011). Therefore, water-efficient personal care products fall under the green product category.

To the best of the author's knowledge, previous research previous research studies have not explored specifically water-efficient products In South Africa, a study conducted by Starkey (2017) looked at *Low-Income Consumer-Buying Behaviour in the Personal Care Industry* and Synodinos (2014) looked at the *Antecedents Of Green Purchase Behaviour Amongst Black Generation Y Students*. Nevertheless, these current research studies conducted can be used as foundation to explore the local consumer.

#### **2.2.2 Academic Research on Water-Efficient Personal Care Products**

Water-efficient personal care products are products that require less rinse-off water or no water (non-rinse) when in use by consumers (Intel, 2017). These products contain formulations or ingredients which result in less rinse-off water required when in use (Robles,

2017). These products include dry shampoos, non-rinse hand and body washes, micellar water products and leave-in conditioners (Robles, 2016). These products, however, have been targeted at specific consumers or for specific users, such as campers, festival attendees and hospital patients (Paaschen, 2015). However, recently these products are now being targeted for everyday use. This has been seen especially with the younger generation as younger consumers (usually under the age of 30) have now become more interested in environmental causes with many saying they look for personal care items, which are “water-efficient and sustainably sourced” (Sangeetha, 2016).

Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in research by looking at how the current Cape Town water crisis affects consumers’ purchasing behaviour with regards to water-efficient personal care products. As this research study aims to get an in-depth understanding of consumers, this study can be used by personal care brands for new product developments or improvements in order to address water scarcity problems in Cape Town, South Africa as a whole or in other developing countries. The next section looks at how the theory of planned behaviour can assist in understanding the consumer and ultimately evaluating purchase intentions.

### **2.3 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR**

In order to understand the significant determinants of intentions to purchase water-efficient personal care products, the Theory of Planned Behaviour model has been adopted as the theoretical framework for this research study. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which was developed by Ajzen (1991), illustrates that an individual's actual behaviour can be predicted by looking at their intentions to perform that specific behaviour. The theory suggests that an individual's behavioural intention is influenced by the following three components: attitude towards the specific behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Many research studies have applied TPB in order to predict the consumption of ‘green’ or ‘organic’ products (Kim & Chung, 2011; Paul, Modi & Patel, 2016; Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016).

The TPB is an appropriate model for this research study as it allows for researchers “to examine the influence of personal determinants and social surroundings as well as non-volitional determinants on intention” (Han & Kim, 2010). Therefore, with the aid of TPB, this research study will be able to explore whether the water crisis together with Cape Town consumers own personal factors (such as attitude) will affect their intentions to purchase water-efficient personal care products. This theory has also been shown as useful in research, as intention has been shown to assist in the prediction of actual behaviour (Kim &

Chung, 2011). The theoretical framework will also explore how consumer values may influence consumer attitudes towards a specific behaviour, which then influences their behavioural intentions.

### 2.3.1 Values

In the case of this research study value is defined as an individual's belief about a desirable end state (Paul, Modi & Patel, 2016). Values are important, as they are the “fundamental parts of a consumer’s belief system, which are used for the evaluation of attitudes and behaviour” (Maniatis, 2015). Examining consumer values for this research study is critical as the values, which an individual has, are more than likely to influence their attitude and drive consumers to purchase products, which satisfy their values (Maria, 2011). As consumers have different value systems, it is expected that they will show different attitudes as well as behaviours towards water-efficient personal care products (Kim & Chung, 2011).

As values influence consumer attitudes, it is important to explore what type of values are connected to consumer attitudes toward purchasing water-efficient personal care products. The study will consider the following consumer values that may affect consumer’s attitudes towards buying water-efficient products: environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness.

#### ***Environmental Consciousness***

Environmental consciousness refers to when an individual takes into consideration the consequences that their purchases, consumption or behaviour will have on the environment (Irianto, 2015). Research shows that environmental consciousness affects a consumer's attitude to purchase a product (Kim & Seock, 2009; Kim & Chung, 2011). It was also found that environmentally conscious individuals are more likely to change their current buying behaviour in order to improve the environment (Paul, Modi & Patel, 2016). According to Chen & Chang (2012) consumers have become more aware of the deterioration of the environment and as a result are demanding products which are less damaging to the environment. Therefore, as stated by Vongmahadlek, (n.d.) environmental consciousness is a critical factor to consider when analysing consumer behaviour with regards to the purchase green products. In some literature, which focused particularly on personal care, it was found that environmental consciousness considerably influences consumers’ attitudes towards the purchase of “green” and “organic” personal care products (Kim & Chung, 2011; Kim & Seock, 2009; Cherian & Jacob 2012, Stüve & Strauß, 2016). However, according to a research study, which looked at consumers’ purchasing behaviour towards green products in New Zealand it, was an insignificant factor in influencing consumer’s attitudes towards

purchasing green products (Gan, Ozanne & Kao, 2008). Furthermore, much of the research focuses on consciousness of the deterioration of the environment in general, such as global warming and pollution, and not particularly on the threat of a water crisis.

As the water crisis in Cape Town is an environmental issue it is essential to analyse the environmental consciousness of residents. This will further assist in looking at their consciousness with regards to the various water restriction stages, which have been implemented over the last months. Therefore, environmental consciousness will look specifically at whether consumers take into account the consequences, considering how much water the product requires, that their choice of personal care product brand will have.

### ***Appearance Consciousness***

Appearance consciousness is what influences individuals to be interested in products, which express, alter or maintain their physical image (Maria, 2011). The purchase and use of personal care products is a purchasing behaviour that assists in satisfying a consumer's need to take care of their appearance (Kim & Chung, 2011). According to Matic & Puh (2015) the perceptions that consumers have of their physical appearance influences their behaviour. If a consumer believes that a product will provide them with a favourable outcome (such as smooth skin, anti-ageing or healthy hair) they are likely to have a positive attitude towards purchasing the personal care products (Tajeddini & Nikdavoodi, 2014). Previous research studies have shown appearance consciousness is an important factor when considering consumer attitudes towards personal care products (Kim & Chung, 2011; Stüve & Strauß, 2016). However, a research study conducted by Maria (2011) on the attitudes and intentions toward purchasing organic cosmetics in Greece, found that appearance consciousness was insignificant, as there was a lack of information for consumers on the benefits of the organic products.

In the case of this research study, appearance consciousness will look at consumers concern on how personal care products will impact the cleanliness, smell, feel and look of their skin (face and body) as well as their hair. According to Euromonitor, consumers are following a new “grooming trend” as they are concerned with looking attractive and smelling good (Starkey, 2017).

As there is very little research showing the benefits of water-efficient personal care products, consumers may not have a highly positive attitude towards the products. By looking at appearance consciousness, it will further be able to delve into which personal care product category and products consumers are likely to consider switching. As mentioned earlier the

product categories that will be assessed are Hair Care, Body Care and Face Care. Now that consumer values have been considered, these values can in turn influence consumers' attitude towards purchasing water-efficient products.

### 2.3.2 Attitude

Attitude refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or assessment of a specific behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Consequently, if a person is found to have a positive attitude towards performing a specific behaviour they are more likely to act on that behaviour and if they have negative attitude they are unlikely to perform that specific behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Consumers are more likely to have a positive attitude if they perceive the outcome of the behaviour to be favourable resulting in them being more likely to engage in the behaviour (Tajeddini & Nikdavoodi, 2014). A few research studies show that consumers who have favourable attitudes towards organic or green products are more likely to have intentions to purchase those products (Ling, 2013; Kim & Chung, 2011). However, whilst it was found that consumers had positive attitudes towards environmental issues, it did not ultimately always lead to actual environmentally friendly behaviour purchases, this will be considered under the Attitude- Behaviour Gap section (Erve, 2013). Therefore, it is expected that if residents in Cape Town have a positive attitude towards purchasing water-efficient personal care products, they may possibly have stronger intentions of purchasing the products.

### 2.3.3 Subjective Norms

Subjective norm shows an individual's perceived social pressure from important people (such as family, friends or society) to perform a certain behaviour. If an individual believes that people approve of the behaviour there is a higher chance of them intending to perform the behaviour (Kim & Chung, 2011). Subjective norm is an important factor to consider as it ultimately represents an individual's feeling about the social pressure they may feel about a certain behaviour, which will then reveal their intentions (Paul, Modi & Patrel, 2015). When looking at research studies that focused on environmentally conscious purchases, subjective norm has shown to be a significant determinant of intention (Chen & Chang, 2012; Paul, Modi & Patrel, 2015). Furthermore, research that specifically looked at 'green' skin personal care products subjective norm had a great effect on behavioural intention (Kim & Chung, 2011). Therefore, it is assumed that subjective norm may strongly influence Cape Town residents purchase intention, such that if an individual's significant others approve of them purchasing water-efficient personal care products, they are likely to have stronger intentions to purchase water-efficient personal care products.

### 2.3.4 Perceived Behavioural Control

According to Ajzen (1991) perceived behavioural control is “an individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the particular behaviour.” This component looks specifically at the degree of control that a consumer perceives they have in order to perform the behaviour (Chen, 2009). If an individual feels their perception of control is high, such as if they have more resources to be able to perform a specific behaviour) then their intentions to perform a specific behaviour are higher (Kim & Chung, 2011). Usually this degree of control is when an individual has the ability and motivation to perform the behaviour (Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016). Perceived behavioural control is an important factor for green product consumption as the cost of green products are significantly higher than those of conventional products (Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016). Perceived behaviour control will allow for this research to explore the obstacles that may be faced by the consumer in order to perform certain behaviours. Therefore, if consumers in Cape Town perceive more control over buying water-efficient products, their intention to buy these products will be higher.

The theory of planned behaviour has been used in various studies, which look at consumers purchasing behaviour with regards to organic/green products, and shown to explore consumer intentions, which makes it useful in this study. As this study aims to research whether, if at all, the water crisis will change consumer behaviour towards water-efficient products therefore, it is essential to further explore why it is possible that consumers may have intentions to purchase these products however, it may not result in actual purchases.

## 2.4 ATTENTION - BEHAVIOURAL GAP

The attitude-behaviour gap, which is sometimes referred to as the Intention-Behavioural gap, indicates that whilst it may be found that consumers have positive attitudes towards a specific behaviour and may have strong intentions to perform, it may not be translated into actual behaviour (Erve, 2013). This is due to the fact that when looking at the broader purchasing decision, positive attitudes

about making environmentally friendly behaviours do not necessarily reflect in actual “green purchasing behaviour” (Erve, 2013). This can be due to any type of personal or situational factors (Terlau & Hirsch, 2016). Personal factors include factors such as trust, priorities or awareness and situational factors include money, opportunity or availability (Terlau & Hirsch, 2016). These are viewed as barriers, which prevent consumers from acting on their attitudes (Witzel & Aagaard, 2014). For example, if consumers cannot find the products in their local convenience store or if they have a lack of knowledge about the products, it is likely to prevent actual purchase of the product (Maichum, Parichatnon, Peng, 2016). In

literature the attention-behavioural gap has been found in many research studies, which focus on green purchasing (Erve, 2013; Machium, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016; Carrington & Caruana, 2015). Therefore, according to the theory it may be found that whilst young adult Cape Town residents may have strong positive attitudes towards purchasing water-efficient personal care products it will not translate into an actual change in their purchase behaviour.

However, as shown above in the literature there are certain factors or barriers, which may not result in actual purchases. Therefore, it is clear that this research study can fill a gap in understating the consumer's individual's viewpoint. Whist Cape Town residents may have good intentions to lower their water consumption, it will be interesting to explore the psychological or physical barriers which may prevent them from saving water with regards to the personal care products they choose.

### **3 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The next chapter will discuss in detail the research methods that were applied in this research study specifically the research paradigm, research strategy, research design and the data collection and analysis methods.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

##### **3.2.1 Interpretivism**

As mentioned earlier the aim of this research is to explore and understand the effects of the water crisis on Cape Town residents purchasing intentions for water-efficient personal care products therefore, the interpretivist paradigm has been adopted. As defined by Zikmund & Babin (2007) the interpretivist paradigm is the “philosophical approach to studying human experiences, based on the idea that these experiences are subjective and determined by the context in which the individuals live.” This approach was appropriate as the study aimed to explore consumer intentions, which are subjective to a consumer's attitudes.

This research study will be able to gain an understanding into the consumer's experience of how the water crisis affects their purchase intention. As this research is looking at specifically consumer behaviour and their intentions the interpretive paradigm allows for the researcher “to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants” (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This means that the researcher is focused on understanding human behaviour from the individual's own frame of reference.

The main goal of interpretivism is to achieve an understanding of consumer behaviour. Furthermore, interpretivism allows for the research study to be more inclusive, as it allows the researcher to explore different views from different individuals (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Therefore, the study can explore and understand the differences between consumers as the paradigm views participants as different and does not try to generalize their views (Maree, 2016). The use of this paradigm means that this study will ultimately provide a more in-depth understanding of consumer behaviour as the aim of interpretivist research is to “understand the meanings in human behaviour rather than to generalize and predict causes and effects” (Neuman, 2000). The research study therefore, will be allow for the researcher to understand and interpret Cape Town residents perspectives on the factors that could influence their purchase intentions for purchasing water-efficient personal care products.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.3.1 Exploratory**

Exploratory research involves exploring a situation or a specific problem (Starkey, 2017). The goal of this research design is to “provide insights and understanding of a research problem and provide further understanding and direction” (Creswell, 2009). Exploratory research was employed as there is limited or no information available about the research problem (Starkey, 2017). The design was chosen as it is implemented when a phenomenon needs to be explored from a new insight or new angle (Yang, Al-Shaabani & Nguyen, 2014). As mentioned, whilst the topic of green/organic purchase intentions of South African consumers has been explored, this research study aimed to explore a intentions for a specific green product category (water-efficient) whilst taking into context the water crisis in Cape Town.

### **3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY**

#### **3.4.1 Qualitative**

The chosen research strategy for this research study is that of a qualitative nature. The emphasis of qualitative research is to find meaning and interpret the experiences of the participants, particularly looking at how they understand the social world (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative data is usually collected from participants, in the form of focus groups, in-depth interviews or case studies (Maree, 2016). Once the data is collected, it is then organised and analysed with the aim of developing concepts or even theories (Creswell, 2009).

A qualitative approach was chosen due to the nature of the problem statement, which was to understand Cape Town residents purchasing intentions of personal care products during the water crisis. Qualitative methods have been found to be useful in “understanding the context in which decisions and actions take place” (Creswell, 2009)

Whilst the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is mostly associated with quantitative research, many studies have used the TPB theoretical framework for qualitative research (Klobas & Renzi, 2008; Fleming, 2016; Zoellner *et al*, 2012). A study conducted by Fleming (2016) titled “Consumers’ perceptions and attitudes towards firms’ green marketing initiatives: How do they influence green consumption? used qualitative research methods with the TPB as the theoretical foundation. Using qualitative research will help to further explore why the different antecedents (environmental consciousness, appearance consciousness, attitudes...) may have different influences on purchase intentions and to explore as to why there might be an attitude-intention gap. This is due to the fact that a qualitative approach allows for an in-depth analysis of consumer attitudes and perceptions

towards a phenomenon (Berkwits & Inui, 1998). This aligns with interpretivist paradigm as Creswell (2009) states that “qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.”

### **3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

#### **3.5.1 Population**

The population for this study is defined as 18-25 year old consumers who reside in Cape Town. The study will be conducted within the city of Cape Town therefore; the criterion for respondents to take part in the research study is to reside in Cape Town. This is to ensure that the consumers are directly affected by the water crisis.

For this research study the target age is 18-25 year olds. As mentioned earlier, younger consumers tend to be protective and concerned about the environment (Phungwong, 2015). Furthermore, according to research conducted by Mintel (2017) consumers in this age group state that they would purchase water-efficient personal care products and are therefore, the key target market for future solutions for water-efficient products.

The unit of analysis of the research study will be individuals aged between 18-25, currently residing in Cape Town.

#### **3.5.2 Sampling**

In order to determine the sample size the researcher took into consideration the following factors, financial costs, time constraints as well as the data analysis methods (McDaniel & Gates, 2010). For phenomenological research studies, Creswell (1998) recommended between 5 and 25 interviews. A sample size of  $n=5$  has been employed for this study.

Non-probability sampling was used as the research is qualitative. The study specifically made use of convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a sampling method whereby, participants are chosen from the target population based on availability, easy access, geographical proximity or willingness to participate (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). Due to time constraints the researcher made use of this method as the sample was easy and quick to access. Convenience sampling has been critiqued due to the fact that there is a chance that the sample may be biased, however the method has been recommended for exploratory research as it can help produce insights and insights (Chawla & Sodhi, 2011).

### 3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

#### 3.6.1 Semi-structured, in-depth Interviews

To gain insights on individual consumer behaviour with regards to water-efficient personal care products, the research study used in-depth interviews. This method was most appropriate as it allowed for the researcher to explore in depth the attitudes, perceptions, opinions and motives of individuals (Given, 2008). This method was also appropriate for this research study as interviews are useful in gaining a deep understanding of the respondents thought paths and choices (Pleming, 2016). In-depth interviews were chosen and not a focus group as the researcher did not want participants to be influenced by the opinions of others as it may not reflect their own views (Maree,2016).

#### 3.6.2 Interview Questionnaire Construction

The interview made use of predetermined open-ended questions, which gave space for respondents to give more detailed explanations whilst still giving the interviewer control (Given, 2008). With open-ended questions the respondents were able to answer in their own words as they were giving their own perspective and experiences (Starkey, 2017). The interviews were voice recorded, to assist the researcher in the data analysis stage. Questions for the interview have been adopted from research studies conducted by (Kim & Chung (2011) and Samarasinghe (2015).

The interview questions were defined on the basis of the TPB model adopted for the study.

Constructs	Questions
Screening Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How old are you?</li> <li>• Do you currently reside in Cape Town?</li> </ul>
General Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you know of any water-efficient personal care hygiene products such as dry shampoos, hand sanitizers, non-rinse body washes, micellar water products or leave-in conditioners?</li> <li>• Have you purchased any of them?</li> </ul>
Environmental Consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the height of the water crisis earlier this year, did you believe that it was one of the most important environmental issues in Cape Town (why or why not)?</li> <li>• Did you take any steps to save water when day zero was looming? (if yes what, if no why not)</li> <li>• Have you switched to green/water-efficient personal care products for environmental reasons before the Day Zero campaign?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you switch to green/water-efficient personal care products for environmental reasons during the Day Zero campaign?</li> <li>• Have you been using green/water-efficient personal care products for environmental reasons after the Day Zero campaign?</li> </ul>
Appearance Consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How important is your hygiene to you?</li> <li>• What are your expectations in terms of quality, when purchasing personal care products?</li> <li>• How do you feel about water-efficient products on your appearance and hygiene?</li> </ul>
Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your feelings and thoughts (positive/negative or advantages/disadvantage) towards water-efficient personal care products?</li> </ul>
Subjective Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the Day Zero campaign earlier this year, did you feel any social pressure (society, neighbours, family, friends, city of Cape Town) to switch to water-efficient personal care products?</li> </ul>
Perceived Behavioural Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you feel that you could easily purchase water-efficient personal care products (accessible, price)?</li> </ul>
Purchase Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the Day Zero campaign, were you willing/considering to purchase water-efficient personal care products to help save water?</li> <li>• Would you be willing or consider to purchasing water-efficient personal care products to help save water, why?</li> </ul>

### 3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

In order to analyse the qualitative nature of the data, a thematic analysis was conducted. As defined by Braun & Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is method for “identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data.” Thematic analysis is a flexible qualitative data analysis method as it is not tied to any specific theoretical framework or epistemological perspective (Olive, 2017). The thematic analysis followed a deductive approach. A deductive or theoretical approach was more appropriate for this study as the coding was done with a specific research question in mind and taking into consideration the theoretical framework (Theory of Planned Behaviour) (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

With this method the researcher is able to identify themes and relationships that represent the respondents view of the research question (Pleming, 2016). The data analysis process

involves transcribing the recordings of the respondents into text, creating codes for any themes identified and then analysing the themes (Starkey, 2017). After analysing the themes conclusions are drawn to assist in answering the research question. The data analysis process followed six steps as prescribed by Braun and Clarke (2006):

#### Step 1: Familiarisation

The first step of data analysis involves the researcher preparing and organising the raw data (Pleming, 2016). This includes transcribing the interviews from the audio recordings and then reading through the interview transcripts (Olive, 2017). In this step the researcher engages with data and can begin to identify common topics mentioned by the participants which assist in the next stage of the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This part of the data analysis is important as the researcher needs to have a comprehensive understanding of the data collected.

#### Step 2: Generate Initial Codes

This stage of the data analysis involves producing the initial codes, which assist in pointing out key elements of the data collected (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). These are numerous elements in the data which are interesting or meaningful that will help to answer the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As this research is based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the coding will be done whilst taking into consideration that the themes of this research study are theory-driven. Therefore, the data will be approached with specific questions in which the researcher will code around.

#### Step 3: Search For Themes

After the data has been coded the third step of the thematic analysis involves identifying any themes in the data. A theme can be defined as “a pattern that captures something significant or interesting about the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This step involves sorting, organising and merging the codes into broader themes. The codes that are put together usually have similar meanings or they have a significant relationship to one another (Olive, 2017). For this study, the researcher used a separate piece of paper with tables to sort the codes into various “theme-piles”.

#### Step 4: Review themes

This step is a deeper review of the themes which ultimately involves deciding whether to “combine, refine, separate, or discard initial themes” (Wigdorowitz, 2016). This step is to

ensure that all the themes represent the data has been collected and the themes have enough data to support them (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### Step 5: Defining and Naming Themes

The next step of the thematic analysis looks as creating a name that describes the meaning or relationship in the various themes that have been identified (Olive, 2017). A definition is then give to each of the themes which gives a summary of what has been discussed under each theme (Wigdorowitz, 2016).

#### Step 6: Write- Up

The final step of the thematic analysis is the writing of the report, this is where the findings and interpretation of the data will be presented for this research study.

### **3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

As the research study consists of qualitative research it is also important to ensure trustworthiness. Trustworthiness in this research study was ensured by attending to four criteria namely transferability, dependability, reliability and confirmability

This first criterion for trustworthiness is transferability. In order to ensure that respondents gave answers in their own words and therefore gave their own opinions, the questions in the in-depth interview are open-ended. This will mean that the researcher will not try to make generalizations about the whole population and have the data represent the sample (Olivia, 2017).

A pre-test of the interview was conducted. This will ensure the dependability of the interview questions. This will check whether the questions are easy for respondents to understand and answer (Jaju, 2016). Once the pre-test is done and dependable, it will be ready to use for the in-depth interviews. Furthermore, to ensure confirmability a sufficient sample size will be collected and an important aspect is to make sure that conclusions are drawn from all respondents (Starkey, 2017).

## **4 CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This next chapter of this study is the presentation and interpretation of the findings. A theoretical thematic analysis, as discussed in Chapter 4, was conducted in order to answer the research question. This was a small-scale qualitative research study where there were five interviews completed.

The following will be discussed in chapter four: the presentation of the characteristics of the respondents. This is followed by the analysis and interpretation of the findings. In the presentation of each theme, an interpretation will be included with reference to the theoretical framework and literature review. The theory of Planned Behaviour has been used as a guide to understand Cape Town residents purchase intentions with regards to personal care products.

### **4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Five Cape Town residents who were all between the ages of 18 and 25 were successfully interviewed for this research study. Two of the interviews were conducted face-to-face in Cape Town and three were conducted over video call. All of the respondents answered all fifteen of the questions in the interview.

For this study similarly to Gurigarid (2016), the data will be organised into two clusters: the first presenting the themes with regards to the Theoretical Framework (Theory of Planned Behaviour) and secondly, other themes that were significant. This was done as the TPB was chosen to specifically assist in understanding the participants water-efficient personal care product intentions. Citations for the interview transcripts have been included to explain the themes that have emerged.

#### **Categories within the Theoretical Framework**

In order to analyse the data, themes will be identified under the consumer values which influence attitude namely: environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness. Followed by the categories within the Theory of Planned Behaviour. namely: Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control.

### **4.3 CATEGORY 1: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

In order to look at environmental consciousness, participants were firstly asked whether they felt the water crisis was an important environmental issue in Cape Town and whether they

had taken any necessary steps to save water. Furthermore, the participants were asked if they had purchased any water-efficient personal care products before, during or after the 'Day Zero Campaign'. This was because environmental consciousness looks at whether the participants took into consideration the consequences that their behaviour as well as their purchases have on the environment (Irianto, 2015). The themes that emerged with relation to environmental consciousness are as follows:

#### **4.3.1 Theme 1: Concern for the Water Crisis**

All of the respondents felt that the water crisis was an important environmental issue. The respondents expressed that they were concerned that there would be no running water in Cape Town. One respondent further mentioned the importance of water in their everyday activities. Below are responses from the interviewees.

Respondent one stated:

*“Yes, it was because water is one of the most important things we need for our everyday lives. And um at some point I really believed that we would have no water supply and it would be a big crisis, without water we wouldn't be able to carry on with our normal activities such as cooking, cleaning and also showering...”*

Respondent three stated:

*“I definitely thought it was an important issue in Cape Town, uh I did fear that we would actually reach Day Zero at one point”*

Respondent four stated that:

*“At the moment I felt that it was deep, because if we didn't have any water the city could have potentially collapsed. It was pretty serious at the time...”*

Many mentioned that they had made an effort to reduce the amount of water they used in their daily activities. Most respondents mentioned similar actions which can be summarised by respondent two who stated:

*“I tried to spend less time in the shower, I didn't flush the toilet every single time, I tried to wash my dishes together and I also tried to do laundry less. I also tried to not leave the water running like when I brush my teeth. Oh and I also purchased water from the shops.”*

At the height of the water crisis it is clear that many of the respondents felt that the water crisis was serious. This was significant as research has shown that environmentally conscious individuals are more likely to change their buying behaviour to help the environment (Paul, Modi & Patel, 2016). Furthermore, the researcher found that all five respondents general behaviour with regards to water consumption had changed due to the water crisis. However, the researcher wanted to explore whether their purchasing behaviour of water-efficient personal care products would be affected due to this environmental concern.

#### **4.3.2 Theme 2: Scepticism of Water Crisis**

Whilst all respondents mentioned that they thought the water crisis was serious, two of the five respondents however, did mention that they were sceptical of the water crisis at a certain point.

Respondent two stated:

*“But sometimes I did wonder if it was like really serious, I would hear stories that it was not real, especially when the day kept on being pushed back and back. Then it just seemed as if it was something that was not going to happen.”*

Respondent five stated:

*“I guess I was in between, for some reason, I did not think it was possible for the city to like completely run out of water.”*

A study conducted by Albayrak, Aksoy & Caber (2012) looking at the effect of environmental concern and scepticism on green purchase behaviour found that scepticism decreased the effects of the environmental concern on consumers green purchase behaviours. Therefore, in the case of this study scepticism of the water crisis may be a contributing factor in decreasing positive attitudes towards purchasing water-efficient products.

### **4.4 CATEGORY 2: APPEARANCE CONSCIOUSNESS**

In order to explore appearance consciousness, the researcher explored the importance of hygiene for the respondents, their expectations of quality when purchasing personal care products and their thoughts of water-efficient personal care products on their appearance and hygiene.

#### **4.4.1 Theme 1: Hygiene**

One of the themes that emerged is the importance of hygiene to the respondents. As mentioned in the literature, the purchase and use of personal care products is a purchasing

behaviour that assists in satisfying a consumer's need to take care of their appearance (Kim & Chung, 2011). All of the respondents stated that their appearance and hygiene is important to them:

Respondent three stated:

*“My hygiene is extremely important to me, I want to feel clean and washed. I want to look clean and I want to smell good. Just so that I do not feel self-conscious and I am not worrying throughout the day if I smell or not.”*

Respondent four stated:

*“Not only do I want to be clean but I actually want to feel clean. Like I want to make sure that I smell good and fresh and don't have strong body odour or feel dirty.”*

All the respondents mentioned that feeling clean was just as important as actually being clean furthermore, they emphasised the importance of not smelling. Establishing the importance of hygiene amongst the respondents was necessary for this study as it showed that consumers felt their hygiene and appearance was important to them. Therefore, when analysing purchase intentions for water-efficient products respondents had certain expectations of the effects of the products on their hygiene. According to a study conducted by Tajeddini & Nikdavood (2014), if an individual believes that a product will provide them with a favourable outcome, such as moisturised skin or healthy hair they are likely to have a positive attitude towards purchasing the personal care products. Therefore, the next theme looked at the respondents beliefs of the outcomes of water-efficient personal care products.

#### **4.4.2 Theme 2: Perceptions of the outcome of water-efficient products on appearance.**

The next theme that emerged was the perceptions that the respondents had of water-efficient products. Respondents were asked how they felt about water-efficient products on their appearance and hygiene. Whilst some had tried certain water-efficient products, some had not. Three of the respondents stated that they thought they would not feel as clean as they would of if they used conventional products.

Respondent three stated:

*“I have not tried many water-efficient products but I feel that when I use my usual products I feel clean, I guess I have this idea that using these water-efficient products wouldn't make me feel as clean as normal, or they wouldn't make me smell as good.”*

*Respondent four stated:*

*“ I just uhm for some reason feel like I would feel sticky and dirty, or not as clean as I would with feel with my normal products. And I guess with my hair I would just be worried whether it looks dirty.”*

*Respondent five stated:*

*“So I guess for example using the non-rinse body wash, I would feel worried about not feeling moisturised or not feeling super clean you know what I mean and sometimes you just need water, you need a shower to refresh you.”*

Much of the respondents perceptions of water-efficient personal care products is that they would not look or feel clean or that they would smell. Previous research studies have shown appearance consciousness is an important factor when considering consumer attitudes towards personal care products (Kim & Chung, 2011; Stüve & Strauß, 2016). Therefore, these negative perceptions of the outcome of using water-efficient products suggest that consumers are likely to have a negative attitude towards purchasing these products. As mentioned in the literature, environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness are values which are likely to influence consumers attitude (Maria, 2011). The next section looks at the attitudes of the respondents with regards to water-efficient personal care products. Many of these attitudes have been influenced by the themes above.

#### **4.5 CATEGORY 3: ATTITUDE**

The first predictor of intention to a behaviour is the respondents attitude towards purchasing water-efficient products, which as mentioned earlier refers to the “the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question” (Ajzen, 1991).

##### **4.5.1 Theme 1: Feeling positive about the outcome of saving water**

The interviewees were asked what their feelings and thoughts were with regards to water-efficient products. It is important to note that respondents were taking into consideration the water crisis in Cape Town. Most of the positive feelings were associated with the fact that respondents felt that the products were beneficial as they would help save water. Below are experts from respondent one and two:

*“My positive feelings, are not necessarily what I feel the products would do for me, but the positive impact that it can have on the environment, obviously if the product can help save water and assist in preventing the water crisis then I think it is useful.”*

*“Sometimes I feel like it’s great because yes it will help save water.”*

Attitudes can be split in to two components, affective and instrumental attitudes. Affective attitudes is the emotions an individual has with regards to performing the behaviour, while instrumental looks at the individuals beliefs about the effects of performing or not performing a certain behaviour (Gorokhova, 2015). The responses above can be referred to as instrumental attitudes. Therefore, the findings suggest that respondents have positive attitudes towards water-efficient products due to the potential positive outcome that it could have for the environment, in this case saving water.

#### **4.5.2 Negative feelings toward effect on body**

While there were positive feelings towards purchasing water-efficient products, many respondents mentioned their negative feelings. Majority of these were concerns of the products not being suitable for their skin or hair:

Respondent one stated:

*“I think I would not feel as fresh as I would like too even though I have not used many of those products I feel that they would not have the same effect..”*

Respondent three stated:

*“I am not sure it would be safe on my skin, just because I don’t really know the products. When I think of the products I guess I also think about the fact that I would not be really clean.”*

Respondent five stated:

*“I don’t think that I could use dry shampoo as it’s not made for my hair type, I think it would be damaging to my hair so I don’t think it is an option for me..”*

Here respondents have a negative attitude towards water-efficient products due to the potential negative outcome that it could have on their appearance (skin or hair). This could negatively affect purchasing intentions for water-efficient products, as there is positive relationship between the two (Kim & Chung, 2011)

#### **4.6 CATEGORY 4: SUBJECTIVE NORMS**

In the interviews, the following themes emerged with regards to subjective norms which refers to the “perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour” (Ajzen, 1991). In the case of this research paper the behaviour is purchasing water-efficient personal care products.

#### **4.6.1 Theme 1: Pressure from the City of Cape Town (Day Zero Campaign)**

Three of the four participants mentioned that they felt pressure from the City of Cape Town or the Day Zero campaign to save water. However, the pressure did not directly translate to specifically purchasing water-efficient personal care products but more to save water. One described the pressure they felt from Cape Town as follows:

*“I definitely felt a little pressure from the City of Cape Town, due to the restrictions that they placed, also the campaign was everywhere on signs, in the media and also social media. So I was reminded all the time to save water but I did not really feel pressure to switch to those types of products.”*

However, one participant did mention that they were directly influenced to purchase a water-efficient product (hand sanitiser).

*“Yes, definitely because of all the signs I would see all over Cape Town such as in the bathrooms.....you feel a lot of pressure to save water. That is why I bought hand sanitiser as I didn't want to use water in public bathroom, well I knew many taps were switched off, as I saw the signs in the bathroom.”*

Perceived social pressure is a central component of the subjective norm (Gurigard, 2016). As how the participants directly or indirectly perceive pressure from anyone or any conditions (in this case the water crisis) will influence whether they will switch to water-efficient personal care products. As Kim & Chung (2011) found there was a strong relationship between subjective norms and intention, specifically looking at green products, which may result in consumers purchasing the products.

#### **4.7 CATEGORY 5: PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL**

The next themes fall under the category of perceived behavioural control, according to Ajzen (1991) this refers to “the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour.” In order to purchase water-efficient personal care products it has to be explored whether the respondents feel that they are easily able to purchase products. Respondents were asked whether they felt they could easily purchase water-efficient products.

##### **4.7.1 Theme 1: Accessibility**

All the respondents mentioned that they felt water-efficient products were accessible, such as that they have seen them in certain stores and could find them in all the types of stores. when asked if they could purchase water-efficient product.

Respondent one stated:

*“Yes I feel like I could, I do know these products exist and they are available to me.”*

Respondent five stated

*“Yes these products are everywhere, you can get them anywhere like at the store I have seen them.”*

Looking at whether the respondents felt the products were accessible is important for this study, as accessibility can be factor which affects consumers intentions to purchase water-efficient products as they feel they cannot purchase them, which ultimately discourages consumers. Therefore, because consumers feel they can access these product may positively influence purchase intentions.

#### **4.7.2 Theme 2: The perception of the price of water-efficient personal care products.**

This focus of this theme was to understand and determine the respondents' perception of how water-efficient personal care products are priced within the market. Perceived affordability is a significant determinant of purchase intentions (Vongmahadlek, n.d). Two of the five respondents stated that they thought water-efficient products were expensive:

Respondent four stated:

*“I think that water-efficient products are pricey, like if i think of other green or like organic products they are more expensive than normal products, so it would be stretch for me to purchase these products.”*

Respondent five stated:

*“I just think that some of these products are expensive.”*

Respondent two mentioned they would be willing to spend more:

*“ If they were too expensive I would probably get whatever else I could afford even if it was just my normal conventional personal care products. But I would want value for money so if they are better quality, I am willing to spend a little more for certain things because sometimes cheaper alternatives don't work, so I would pay extra if they worked.”*

While two of the other respondents felt that the products were affordable, respondent one and two both stated:

*“They are quite affordable”*

Perceived behavioural control is an important factor for green product consumption as the cost of green products are significantly higher than those of conventional products (Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016). This is because if the respondents perceive that they cannot afford the products they are likely to not choose water-efficient products

#### **4.8 PURCHASE INTENTIONS**

The last question of the research study looked at whether consumers, were willing to purchase water-efficient personal care products at the height of the water crisis and after the day zero campaign.

##### **Theme 1: Water-efficient purchase intentions**

When consumers were asked whether they were willing or considering to purchase water-efficient products during the Day Zero campaign, all respondents stated that they would switch to water-efficient personal care products.

Respondent one stated:

*“Yes I was willing, I only did purchase hand sanitizer but I guess if things got worse further I may have been willing to consider other types of products.”*

Respondent two stated:

*“Yes I would, if it got to a critical point I would make it work with whatever products were there.”*

Respondent five:

*“ I guess because I use some of the products already I would be willing to use them more regularly as it would help me save even more water”*

Many of the respondents stated that they were willing to purchase water-efficient products. However, two of the respondents mentioned that they would be willing if the water crisis was at a “critical point” or if it “got worse”

However when respondents were asked whether they willing to switch to water-efficient personal care products now, most stated no.

Respondent one stated:

*“Not really because the Day Zero campaign has died down so I do not feel as much pressure to switch to the products, I don't really see them as being part of my long-term hygiene care.”*

Respondent four stated:

*“Probably not, I don’t think it’s necessary at the moment.”*

Respondent five stated:

*“To be honest I don’t think so. If I can use my normal products which I know work I would rather stick to them, but I definitely would try still watching how much water I use like still taking shorter showers.”*

#### **4.9 CATEGORY 6: OTHER THEMES**

The next section explores the themes that emerged which did not fall under the theoretical framework.

##### **4.9.1 Theme 1: Awareness and Knowledge of water-efficient products.**

Whilst this research aimed to explore whether consumers were environmentally conscious, it specifically wanted to further explore whether consumers took into account the consequences their choice in personal care products will have on the water crisis. Throughout the interviews the researcher found that whilst the respondents knew of these water-efficient products, they were not aware of the fact that they save water. A few of the respondents highlighted the fact that during the water crisis they were not made aware of it that these products could be used to save water. Two respondents mentioned that during the campaign much of the emphasis was placed on saving water through actions such as showering less, not flushing too many times or buying bottled water. When respondents were asked whether they had switched to any water-efficient personal care products during the Day Zero campaign respondent three stated:

*“No, I didn’t to be honest, but I did not really know my choices in products would help save water, I don’t really know much about personal care products and how they help save water so it did not really cross my mind.”*

Respondent four stated:

*“I did not really consider that the products I use would influence the amount of water I use.”*

Respondent five also stated:

*“No, In terms of products I was not really aware of any, there was not really any advertising that was like these are the type of products you should use, it was more we were told of the things you can do to save water.”*

This is in accordance with a research study conducted by Maria (2011) where they found that appearance consciousness was insignificant because there was a lack of information for consumers on the benefits of the organic products. Therefore because respondents were not aware of the benefits of using water-efficient products it may not influence their purchase intentions.

#### **4.9.2 Theme 2: Temporary vs Permanent Solution**

Another theme that emerged is that the general feeling from respondent is that water-efficient products are temporary fixes:

Respondent two stated:

*"I feel like they are a temporary fix, I wouldn't really feel comfortable fully switching to these products in my normal routine as I don't think I would feel as clean. For example hand sanitiser and dry shampoo are temporary solutions, I would not permanently switch to them you always need actual soap and actual shampoo at the end of the day. It's a quick fix and not a permanent option."*

When respondents were asked whether they were willing to switch to water-efficient personal care products now. Many of the respondents stated they were not:

This can be summarised by respondent four who stated:

*"No, Since the water crisis or Day Zero is not really happening anymore i didn't really think about it anymore."*

#### **4.10 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The purpose of this study was to explore Cape Town residents purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products during the water crisis. This section looks at how the findings answered the research question, as well as how the research objectives were reached.

*In order to answer the research question the first two secondary research questions will be addressed first:*

##### **Secondary Question One: What attitudes do consumers have towards water-efficient personal care products?**

The first objective of the study was to investigate the influence of consumers' values (environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness) on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions of water-efficient personal care brands. In the findings it was found that the environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness of the respondents had both a positive and negative influence on consumer attitudes. With regards to environmental consciousness it was found that some of the respondents were concerned about the water crisis, as they regarded it as a serious environmental issue in Cape Town. Due to their environmental concern, the respondents had a positive attitude towards water-efficient products. This included respondents mentioning that it would be beneficial as well as useful to purchase water-efficient products. This was because the respondents had a favourable outcome of the products as they would ultimately assist in saving water. This aligned with a study conducted by Kim & Chung (2011) who found that consumers who were concerned about the environment had a positive attitude to green personal care products. However, the findings also showed that there was also scepticism with regards to the water crisis. Therefore, this could alter consumers positive attitudes for personal care products as they may feel that the water crisis is not as important which would ultimately not influence their purchase intentions.

When looking at appearance consciousness there was a clear consensus that Cape Town consumer's feel that their hygiene and appearance is important. All respondents mentioned that feeling and looking clean was essential when using personal care products. As it was established that appearance consciousness was significant, the respondents perceptions of water-efficient products significantly affected their attitudes. The perceptions that consumers had of water-efficient products is that they may not be as effective on their body, skin and hair. Respondents had the perceptions of water-efficient products being drying to the skin,

not effectively cleaning and not reducing body odour. As the respondents did not have favourable outcomes (such as harmful, harsh, drying) of water-efficient products this resulted in negative attitudes toward the products.

Attitudes is not the only contributing factor to intentions. For example, as shown in some studies, whilst there might be positive attitudes towards purchasing water-efficient personal care products, this may not always lead to intentions to purchase the products. This is due perceived social pressure (subjective norms) and perceived behavioural control which also purchase intentions for water-efficient products.

### **Secondary Question Two: What factors influence purchasing intentions for water-efficient personal care products?**

#### Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control.

The third objective of the research study was to explore the influence of consumers' social norms and perceived behavioural control on purchase intentions of water-efficient personal care products. The findings showed that consumers felt significant pressure not from significant others but more from the City of Cape Town. This perceived social pressure was significant as many of the respondents changed their water usage behaviour. However, it was found that their most of the behavioural changes was related to certain activities such as showering for less and not necessarily using water-efficient personal care products. Therefore, the social pressure from the Day Zero campaign did not directly influence consumers purchase intentions for water-efficient products.

The next factor that was considered was perceived behavioural control. Most of the respondents felt that these products were easily accessible to them, which means their intentions of purchasing water-efficient products increases as they feel that it would not be a difficult behaviour. Furthermore, there was a mixed perception of the prices of water-efficient personal care products with some consumers thinking they are expensive and some affordable. Those who found the personal care products affordable may have increased intentions to purchase the products than those who thought they were expensive.

**Primary Question One: To what extent, if it at all, will the water crisis influence consumers' purchase intentions towards water-efficient personal care products?**

After considering all the factors above it is clear that there are situations which will result in intentions to purchase water-efficient personal care products. Due to the high levels of environmental consciousness, amongst Cape Town residents with regards to the water crisis, this has increased purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products. All respondents stated that they were willing to purchase these products during the height of the water crisis. Furthermore, respondents stated that they felt the products were accessible which increases intentions as residents will not feel that they have to struggle to purchase water-efficient products.

However, there are some factors which have prevented purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products. Scepticism of the water crisis, was reported in the findings, which explains why when respondents were asked whether they would purchase water-efficient products now that the day zero campaign had died down, many said no. If consumers feel that the water crisis is not a serious concern they are likely to stick with their conventional personal care products. Another big barrier in purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products is consumers perceptions of the effect on their appearance. Most of the respondents perceptions to these products were negative therefore which ultimately prevents purchase intentions for these products.

**Secondary Question 3: What are the causes of the attitude-behavioural gap, if any?**

As discussed above whilst there may have been positive attitudes, social pressure as well as perceived easy access this may not lead to actual intentions to purchase water-efficient products. As mentioned in the literature, the gap that can occur can be due to personal or situational factors. Personal factors include trust, priorities or awareness and situational factors include money, opportunity or availability (Terlau & Hirsch, 2016). Besides scepticism of the water crisis and perceptions of water-efficient personal care products other factors emerged which may be the cause of the attitude-behavioural gap:

Awareness

Most of the respondents were not aware of the fact that some of these water-efficient products could specifically save water. Whilst consumers were aware of the products they were not aware of their potential to save water during the water crisis. Findings showed that consumers felt that the products were not marketed in that way or the City of Cape Town

did not present them as options during the Day Zero campaign. Most of the awareness had been placed on activities to save water and not necessarily purchasing different personal care products. Therefore, whilst consumers may have been concerned about the water crisis and willing to save water, they were not aware of the fact that switching to these products would contribute to saving more water. This may be the cause of the attitude - behavioural gap, awareness is a barrier which prevents consumers from acting on their positive attitudes.

### Temporary Fix

Another factor preventing consumers from purchasing water-efficient products is the perceptions on when these products can be used. Many respondents mentioned that these products are a temporary fix or for convenience sake and therefore do not view them as products they could use in the long-term. One respondent specifically highlighted that using these products was insignificant as it was avoiding the inevitable whereby they would use conventional products eventually. This therefore, is a barrier to purchasing these products as the respondents would rather purchase their conventional products as it is their permanent option.

## **5 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings were presented in the previous chapter, this chapter aims to discuss these findings in relation with existing literature and the theory of planned behaviour. This chapter also deals with the study's limitations and recommendations for the government, brand managers as well as further research.

### **5.1 LIMITATIONS**

As this research study was cross-sectional, it meant that the research study was only able to look at consumer purchase intentions for water-efficient personal care products at a certain point in time. Therefore, it will not be possible to observe changes in consumers' behaviour and to look at whether purchase intention becomes actual purchases. However, because the water crisis became less critical the researcher was able to ask the respondents in the in-depth interview on purchase intentions under different stages (*Scenario 1*- before the water crisis, *Scenario 2* – at the height of the water crisis *Scenario 3* – after the water crisis)

Secondly, another limitation was accessing respondents from all parts of Cape Town. As there was limited time and resources it was not possible to access responses from different locations in Cape Town.

Thirdly, as this research study aims to use the convenience sampling technique it may not allow for the data to be generalised to the broader population of all 18-25 year olds residing in Cape Town.

In order to address these limitations, future researches can collect data over a period over time and observe the changes in of intentions. Furthermore, data can be collected from all over the country to see purchase intentions over a wide range of consumers.

## **5.2 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY**

Academic researchers who intend to study the theoretical foundations (The theory of planned behaviour and the attitude- behavioural gap), which were applied in the study, may find this study useful. Furthermore, the research study added to literature whereby the Theory of Planned Behaviour was used in qualitative research and not quantitative.

Much of the research available focuses on consumer behaviour with regards to general green products. There is limited research, which focuses specifically on water-efficient personal care products therefore; this research study aimed to fill this gap. Additionally as the city of Cape Town continues to try save water, looking into the behaviour of the consumers, with regards to these products, the study can help brand managers develop solutions and offer products that will be more effective, as they will be able to understand consumers.

This research is also necessary, as not many researchers have conducted their research studies whilst there was a critical environmental issue. With a critical water crisis, which has resulted in water restrictions phases and fines and the threat of no water being a close reality, the intentions of consumers may be altered. It may be possible that the research will reveal different opinions and intentions as the water crisis directly impacts them.

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The personal care industry needs extensive knowledge of consumer behaviour in order to expand into the green industry. Therefore, one of the anticipated beneficiaries of this study includes the green personal care industry, particularly in Cape Town. This research study will possibly assist personal care brands in new water-efficient product development or assist existing brands, which offer these products. This will be done by:

- Increasing awareness about which factors may influence consumers purchase intentions,
- Increasing the understanding of the water-efficient personal care market potential

- Understanding purchase behaviour of Cape Town consumers with regards to personal care products

### **5.3.1 Personal Care Industry**

The personal care industry could use the results and findings in order to understand consumer behaviour. From the findings the following recommendations have been made.

- Increase awareness of the environmental benefits of water-efficient personal care products

Many of the consumers were not aware that using these products could help save water, therefore, weakening their purchase intentions. If consumers are aware of the benefits they are more likely to purchase these products as many of the consumers are environmentally conscious and were willing to consider switching to these products.

- Increase knowledge and change perceptions of water-efficient personal care products

Most of the perceptions towards these products are negative, especially for many respondents who have not tried the products. Therefore, consumers need to be made aware of the benefits of this products on their appearance. Consumers need to know that the products are moisturising, will leave them smelling clean as well as most importantly feeling clean. Another barrier for consumers is the perception of the products only being temporary, therefore the branding of some of these products that can become long-term solutions needs to be emphasised. Many water-efficient personal care products have associations of being temporary therefore, products which can become conventional should be highlighted.

### **5.3.2 Government (City of Cape Town)**

- Water saving campaigns should increase awareness of water-efficient personal care products

It was found that the consumers felt that the City of Cape Town only stressed the importance of saving water through behavioural change such buying bottled water, standing in a bucket in a shower, showering for less time and shutting of taps. Therefore, to further change behaviour and in this case purchase intentions the City of Cape Town or any government can create awareness of these personal care products. The social pressure from the City of Cape Town was found to have a significant impact on the consumers water usage therefore, it is possible for it to significantly influence purchase intentions for water-efficient products.

#### **5.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The first ethical concern of this research study was ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of each respondent (Maree, 2016). Therefore, participants were made aware that their identity would only be known to the researcher, throughout the research process. It is also important to ensure that individuals are not forced or threatened to participate (Maree, 2016). Each participant requires consent therefore; in this case all respondents were required to sign a consent form. A copy of a consent form has been attached in the Appendix A.

#### **5.5 CONCLUSION**

This exploratory research aimed to explore purchase intentions, with regards to water-efficient personal care products whilst taking the water crisis in Cape Town into account. The findings are representative of 18-25 year olds residing in Cape Town. To conclude, the attitudes and purchase intentions are complex amongst consumers in Cape Town. Whilst consumers are environmentally conscious and want to help save water, intentions for water-efficient personal care products are not as strong. The biggest barrier for consumers in Cape Town is the perceptions of water-efficient personal care products. Ultimately, consumers want to feel clean and look clean, and feel that products cannot meet these needs. This causes a significant decrease in purchase intention's for water-efficient products. There are various factors that can affect intentions and this research fills a small gap in understanding consumer behaviours.

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