

Adding bricks-to-clicks: An exploration to determine whether Millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model



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Qualification: Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Brand Communication

Module: Research (RESE8419)

Research Report

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Submission date: 14 December 2020

Word count: 12000 (Excludes cover page, contents page, reference list, appendices)

Declaration

I hereby declare that this research report submitted for the Bachelor of Arts Honours in Strategic Brand Communications degree to The Independent Institute of Education (The IIE) is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for a postgraduate qualification



Date: 14 December 2020

Abstract

Over the past couple of years, there has been a lot of focus on online retailing predicting it as the future of retail. However, in South Africa, only 2% accounts for the online retail spend, thus contradicting this prediction. In light of this, a new trend has emerged in which online only brands are expanding onto other channels of retail business. This is necessitated by the fact that millennials enjoy visiting stores and South Africa is known to have a dominant mall culture. It is for these reasons why this study followed an Interpretivists paradigm, with a qualitative methodology, using a cross-sectional hermeneutic phenomenological exploratory design and explored the online shopping and brick and mortar phenomenon and determine whether South African millennials think South Africa's leading online retailer, Takealot, should add brick-and-mortar to its business model. To address the research problem, purposive and convenient sampling were employed to sample the millennial target population.

Data was collected through standardised open ended semi-structured and in-depth interviews through Zoom Meetings platform which allowed the researcher to understand and explore millennials subjective perspectives of the phenomenon. Data was analysed using thematic analysis enabling the exploration of themes embedded in interview transcripts. Findings indicated that although online is predicted as the future, South African millennial consumers prefer to purchase products instore as they can experience them. Millennials channel choice is influenced by personal characteristics as well as the product type data revealed that electronics, clothing and appliances are suited instore while books are suited and preferred online. Additionally, searching of products online and then purchasing products instore is prevalent consumer behaviour. This implies that an experiential store would benefit Takealot and that seamless online experience needs to be maintained and enhanced as online is still used. Overall, this study contributes to the minimal research available pertaining the phenomenon and multichannel retailing and also serves to inform a business problem for Takealot and other online-only retailers.

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Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

This section presents a background a new retail trend where online retailers expand into Brick-and-Mortar stores, rationale, the problem and purpose statement. In addition, research questions and objectives are outlined and discussed. This section creates the development and projects the significance of the study to provide context.

Retail remains a highly competitive market globally, especially in South Africa. The number of purchase channels has grown extensively. This means that retail business models may adapt one channel or multichannel (LaSalle, Lang, James, Atherton & Burnet, 2012). Over the years, there has been a lot of focus on online retailing and that everything will be bought online in the future (Lai, Ulhas & Lin,2014).

Even though online shopping is predicted to be the future within retail, several companies have added brick-and-mortar stores to their business model thus making it a new trend (Lai, et al., 2014). Consumer behaviour, channel preference, the deeply rooted mall culture in South Africa , generational cohort preference, online retailing accounting to approximately 2% online retail spend and internet and credit card penetration in South Africa are some reasons for this trend (Dall'Olmo, Daniele & Manaresi, 2007); (LaSalle, et al., 2012); (Goga, Paelo & Ngamwena,2019). Adding to this, in the year 2018, an estimated R1-trillion was spent through traditional brick-and-mortar channels compared with almost R20-billion spent through shopping directly online (WorldWideWorx, 2019); (Goga, et al., 2019)

This contradicts the prediction that online is the future of retail because in spite of the ever increasing use of online shopping, internet sales figures indicate that online selling is far from replacing traditional channels (Dall'Olmo, Daniele & Manaresi, 2007).

Contextualisation

The history of retail and channels dates back to the 1900's with the first South African shopping mall opening in 1930 (Maydon, 2017). Prior to technological advancements and online retailing, Brick-and-mortar stores as well as markets, were the only purchase channels. Due to growth of the internet, businesses have adapted an online-only business model or integrated it with other channels such as Brick-and-mortar stores thus embracing the multichannel phenomenon (WorldWideWorx, 2019); (Cao, 2018). Today, consumers have acknowledged and embraced the online shopping phenomenon. The Covid-19 pandemic which led to a national shutdown in South Africa saw many consumers purchase products online thus accelerating the phenomenon (WorldWideWorx, 2019) ; (Amaro, 2020).

The different types of online businesses range from pure product online shopping to mobile shopping, affiliate marketing, advertising, creating and selling digital products, drop-shipping, software as service and online sponsorship (Doherty, 2020); (Fellenstein & Wood, 2000). Arguably, this shows without a doubt that in recent years, technology and digitisation has changed business models and shaping retail markets (Hodson, Perrigo & Hardman, 2019).

A brand that has adapted an online-only business model since its inception is Takealot. Takealot.com is South Africa's largest online retailer owned by Naspers group (Naspers, 2020). Takealot's point-of-differentiation lies within the fact that it is a customer-centric innovative retailer selling an incredibly broad range of products (Briefly, 2020); (Takealot.com, 2020). Products range from automotive products, baby/toddler essentials (food, clothing and equipment), electronics, apparel, luggage, homeware appliances, grocery and household essentials, health products, office equipment, stationery, books, sports and training equipment, just to name a few (Takealot, 2020). Takealot has two distribution centres to despatch products for delivery. For this study, Takealot is the brand being studied as it is a South African brand with growing popularity and the outcome of this study is to explore whether the brand should add brick-and-mortar stores to the already existing business model.

Studies by Wilmot (2014) and Mustakallio (2015) show that brick-and-mortar stores are still prominent and have a high preference with consumers. This is because

consumers can experience products (Willmot, 2014); (Mustakallio, 2015). CNBC (2020) reveals that consumers especially millennials still prefer to buy in physical stores amid the Corona Virus (Covid-19) pandemic with some happy to que for hours before being allowed inside malls and stores. Multichannel retailing has become common as it offers several channels allowing retailers to reach more consumer segments and create synergies (Avery, Thomas, Deighton & Caravella, 2013). Similarly, a study by Bovik and Pålsson (2015) found that online only retailers add brick-and-mortar channels to their existing online business model as a marketing tool to reach a larger customer groups and ultimately enhance brand image and company's profit.

Suryandari & Paswan (2013) assert that some products are more suited for online retail and others are easier to purchase in a physical store. However, both retail types serve various needs. Researchers have found that multichannel retailers are significantly more profitable than single-channel retailers (Kumar, Thomas, and Werner, 2005). A study by Statista (2019) revealed that 68% of millennials prefer to shop in physical store stating that it has psychological benefits. Another study reveals that millennials prefer to view products online and purchase them in a store (Hodson, et al., 2019); (Amaro, 2020). This made the generational age cohort worthy to fulfil the study and extract information for this study's research questions.

In 2017, Amazon, the leading e-commerce retailer, opened a store in which products rated 4-star on its online site are sold in-store and later opened a whole food stores (Turner, Wang, & Soper, 2017); (Welch, 2018). The list of online retailers opening brick-and-mortar stores also includes Yuppichef and Warby Parker (Moran, 2017). Bovik and Pålsson (2015) argue that retailers should consider this trend as a possible opportunity to create a competitive advantage. In order to embrace this trend, which could lead to great opportunities, companies would need to rethink their current market and channel strategy (Bövik & Pålsson, 2015).

There is minimal research on this new trend and no studies that have explored, to the best of this researcher's knowledge, in this field relating to whether an online-only South African brand should add brick-and-mortar as a purchase channel. Furthermore, there is also currently no study that has been done on the Takealot brand and whether Millennials think a brick-and-mortar store should be added for physical purchases to

the brands model. This indicates a gap in the field of research and motivated this researcher to carry out the study.

Rationale

Online-only retailers have a tough decision to make based on this trend. Furthermore, many brands seem to not have not embraced millennials physical shopping preference given the deeply rooted mall culture in South Africa. This could be beneficial for brands in terms of growth and for the millennial cohort. This research topic was selected to gain deeper insights for Takealot about online and physical retail (Suryandari & Paswan, 2013). The dissimilarity between theory and the prediction (online is the future) and reality (brands adding brick-and-mortar stores) shows a dissimilarity (Vertigo, 2019). This serves as a motivation for this study. This research could also contribute to the increasing body of knowledge regarding online and offline retailing specifically in a South African context.

Addressing this phenomenon aids in taking and justifying decisions for brands, assists in possible brand expansion and business model strategy, possibly reaching unidentified market segments and increasing profits, adds a competitive advantage and fulfils functional and psychological needs of millennials (Bövik & Pålsson, 2015).

This research is conducted under the Strategic Brand Communication discipline, where key focuses is brand building and channel planning and strategy. Exploring trends as well as consumer and channel preferences to possibly leverage in business models is important for brand building.

Problem Statement

Lai, Ulhas and Lin (2014: 273-289) state that globally, researchers have, for a long time studied and celebrated online retailing predicting it as the future of retail. However, approximately 2% of the total retail spend accounts for online shopping in South Africa (Goga, et al., 2019). Many online retailers such as Yuppichef, Amazon, and Warby Parker have added channels by opening brick-and-mortar stores thus embracing the multichannel concept (Naidoo, 2019). This phenomenon being online

only stores opening brick-and-mortar stores is seen as the new trend. This shows a contradiction and a dissimilarity between the theoretical prediction (online is future) and reality (online-only retailers expanding to physical).

Two-thirds of the millennial population are reported to value and prefer to purchase in brick-and-mortar stores as it has proven to lead to purchases as well as functional and psychological fulfilment (Howland, 2018) ; (Statista, 2019); (Ungerer, 2020) (CCV, 2020). Therefore, not having a physical retail store that consumers can go into and purchase potentially results in Takealot losing on profit and market segments thus impacting the market share as well as losing the chance to form closer relationships with customers (Swiegers, 2018). It is therefore unclear for leading online South Africa' retailer Takealot, if the brand should respond to and follow the offline shopping trend. (Ariffin, et al., 2018) (Suryandari & Paswan, 2013). Furthermore, previous research has focused on adding Online to Offline (Clicks-to-bricks) while research on the opposite is limited and minimal indicating a gap in research.

Purpose statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to explore the online shopping and brick-and-mortar phenomenon and determine whether South African millennials think South Africa's leading online retailer Takealot, should add brick-and-mortar to its business model.

Research Question

What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add brick-and-mortar to its business model?

Subsidiary questions

- What kind of products in the Takealot offering are suitable for a brick-and-mortar store?
- What kind of products in the Takealot offering are suitable for online shopping?
- How does consumer behaviour influence channel choice?

Objectives

- Determine whether Millennials think Takealot should add brick and mortar to its business model.

- To explore what kind of products in the Takealot offering are suitable for brick-and-mortar.
- To explore what kind of products in the Takealot offering are suitable for online shopping.
- Investigate how consumer behaviour influences channel choice.

Summary

This section introduced the problem and significance of the study. Theoretical concepts and literature is will be discussed in section two and aids the researcher to further explore and understand whether millennials think the Takealot brand should add a Brick-and-mortar store to its business model. The chosen two theoretical frameworks will be discussed in-depth to relate to the problem.

Section 2: Literature Review

Literature Review

This section will lay the foundation for this research study and present key concepts, theories, and literature on online retailing, channel preference, millennials, consumer behaviour, multichannel retailing and online to brick-and-mortar retail trend. The research problem identified in section one being how online is predicted as the future but online retail accounts for 2% of the total retail spend in South Africa will be placed in context of the literature (Goga, et al., 2019); (WorldWideWorx, 2019).

Moreover, all literature and theories will later be considered in the development of the methodology, analysis and findings sections.

Conceptualisation

The following concepts will be defined to provide meaning in relation to the study and are operationalised to establish their purpose for this study.

Adding Brick-and-Mortar to Online

Online to physical is the addition of traditional store to online-only retail space (Dougherty, 2019). For the purpose of this study this concept is understood as adding a brick-and-mortar store to an already existing online shop. Retailers do it to complement an online store (Lai, et al., 2014). For this study this concept is the phenomenon the researcher aimed to explore.

Online shopping

Online shopping means to use the internet to conveniently buy products and services online (Bourlakis, Papagiannidis & Fox, 2018) H (Bourlakis, et al., 2018). For, this study the concept behind Takealot is online shopping and this study aims to explore whether the brand should add brick-and-mortar to its already existing online channel. This concept is used interchangeably with online retailing, e-commerce, online platform, clicks, and virtual shopping.

Brick-and-mortar stores

Brick-and-mortar stores are physical stores located in a shopping mall or standalone premises (Press & Linsenman, 2010). Dougherty (2019) adds that a brick-and mortar-store is a physical store that provides consumers with the physical brand and product experiences. The researcher aims to explore whether Millennials think South Africa's leading online retailer should add brick-and-mortar to its business model. Therefore, this concept was used to explore the outcome of the study. Used interchangeably with offline, instore and physical stores.

Multichannel

A strategy that makes use of more than one channel by an organisation for communication or distributing goods and services (Carlson & O'Cass, 2011). This study seeks to explore whether millennials think Takealot should add brick-and-mortar store to its already existing online only business model. Therefore, this transition and expansion is widely studied and referred to as a multichannel outcome.

Millennials

Pew Research (2019) defines Millennials, also known as "Generation Y", as individuals born between 1980 to 2000. There proves to be a general lack of definitive consensus regarding exact dates of this generation as they are constantly revised and defined differently by many sources and researchers (Rouse, 2017). Therefore, the more recent age parameters provided by Pew Research (2019) will be followed. This generational cohort is close to the new millennium and raised in the age of digitisation and technology (PewResearch, 2019). This generational cohort values experiences over consumerism and are very influential (Montes, 2017); (Almog & Almog, 2019). In this study, South African Millennials will be used as the population needed to explore the research problem.

Channel preference

Furey and Friedman (2012: 31-32) define channel preference as the channel consumers subjectively prefer or select for purchases and communication. In this study, this concept will be used as a measure for the researcher and explore its influence for an online retailer to add brick-and-mortar.

Consumer behaviour

The user action during searching, buying and using products (Rahman & Islam, 2018). The concept will be used as a measure that leads to channel preference based on decision making process (Kotler, 2003).

Literature Review

This literature review provides an exploration of the research problem identified being how online retailing is predicted as the future. As already indicated, approximately 2% of the total retail spend account for online shopping in South Africa. Moreover, there is a growing phenomenon where online only retailers are expanding to and adding brick-and-mortar.

Online Retailing

Online retailing had its first secure transaction in 1995 and since then has proved to be a channel to reach customers, enhance experiences and provide personalisation (Baran & Galka, 2016). Many individuals have embraced shopping online for reasons such as easy product searching, variety, convenience, not being restricted by trading hours, price comparison, cost-effectiveness and allowing instant communication (Tse & Tsang, 2017); (Jönsson, Richard & Sammartini, 2018). Furthermore, in today's competitive global marketplace, e-commerce provides lower risk, faster avenue to enter and penetrate international markets (Deloitte, 2015).

Ensari and Eser (2016) posit that individuals fear online platforms due to the perceived security risk, logistics, and whether items will arrive, high mobile data costs and the difficulties in returning goods. For online retailers, this means that consumers are scared to purchase or enter their details as they fear of their information being exploited for criminal use alongside the perceived logistical risks whether products will arrive. Adding to this Bonifield, Cole & Schultz (2017)'s study found that even though

some online retailers may offer a lenient returns policy, they do not have the possibilities to offer customers the same service level as offline retailers because of the lack of personal interaction. This indicates as reason motivating online only retailers to respond to the new clicks-to-bricks identified trend and phenomenon (Dougherty, 2019).

In South Africa, 2% of the retail proportion accounts for the total e-commerce spend compared to other countries with 20% online spending of the total retail proportion (Goga, et al., 2019). This is because South Africa's internet penetration sits at 51%. Therefore, 49% of the population does not have the opportunity to purchase online thus supporting reason for the low online retail proportion (Poushter, Caldwell & Hanyu, 2018). Guerriero (2015) argues that due to digital divide, the government should be assisting with lowering Internet costs for online access potentially increasing retail sales.

Research by Antinoja & Scherling (2019) highlights payment systems and bank card acceptance as a barrier to purchase online. Furthermore, most online sellers require credit cards for purchase as they provide protection against fraud in most advanced countries around the world (Johnson, 2020). However, South Africa is a developing country and ranked at 61 out of 67 countries that were surveyed for being advanced in technology. This comes as no surprise given the low internet penetration (Bakari, 2017); (Getzoff, 2020). In addition, there are approximately only three million credit cards in circulation in South Africa, which seems to be a supporting factor pertaining to the 2% online retail spend (BIS, 2019). The global Covid-19 pandemic saw an increase in online purchases thus changing consumer behaviours and perceptions (Akram, 2018).

Most research studies have predicted that online is the future have been conducted quantitatively utilising Generation X cohort in countries such as Netherlands, America, England and China and have a high credit card penetration and society (Smith & Anderson, 2016); (Akram, 2018). Yet, in the South Africa context, it is different and is deemed as a cash society with cash consumers accounting for about R23-billion (Deloitte, 2019) (Bohannon, 2019).

Many research studies have focused on the "brick-and-mortar to online " phenomenon while others oppose it, saying online transactions will not overtake physical shopping

as the internet penetration still remains below average and that online channels serve as complementary channels to offline channels (Kennedy & Coughlan, 2006); (Wollenburg, et al., 2018) ; (Amerongen, 2018).

Channel preference

Online retailing adds to the already existing purchasing multi-channels. Consumers choose and use channels based on their specific goals at a particular point in time or external influences (Dholakia, Kahn, Reeves, Rindfleisch, Stewart,Taylor & Earl,2015) .This infers that consumers have purchase channel preferences over other channels. Arguably, reasons for channel preferences is purely because products differ in complexity, purchase frequency, tangibility and some are better suited to be sold in a specific channel than others. This identifies as reason why online-only retails expand (Liu, et al., 2018).

Lynch and Ariely (2016) support Liu,Lobschat and Verhoef (2019) arguing that “high-touch” products as products that consumers want to inspect before buying such as clothing, food, and electronics. “Low-touch”/“no-touch” products are products that do not need inspection before buying such as books and tickets just to name a few. These concepts are arguably seen as variables that influence consumer channel preference (Lynch & Ariely, 2016). In addition, Amidogen (2018) postulates expert advice, leisure shopping, convenience orientation, delivery time, size and weight, logistics, price, and age are other variables that influence channel preference (Lynch & Ariely, 2016) (Amerongen, 2018).

Millennials

The Generation Y cohort who are regarded as millennials have a higher purchasing power and overtake other cohorts. This is because millennials are argued to be the largest cohort dominating population globally specifically in South Africa (PewResearch, 2019). Furthermore, the generation is influential or can be influenced more than Generation Z cohort; and have a love/hate relationship with the internet given perceived risks (Musa, 2018); (PewResearch, 2019); (Deloitte, 2019).

Millennials engage heavily on social media and purchase fast food online (Dorie & Loranger, 2020). Yet, PwC's 2019 Global Consumer Insights Survey reveals that

millennials benefit psychologically when visiting stores and malls (PwC, 2019). This indicates that millennials are a difficult generation to please because both technology and experiences seem to have equilibrium. Furthermore, the equilibrium gives brands an opportunity to tap and leverage to provide a seamless and integrated service and channels.

Most empirical research studies seem to agree with millennials preferring the meaningful experience economy above anything (ZenithOptimedia, 2016); (Seligman, 2019). It is important for brands to consider this population as a pivotal market segment to aid in increased profits due to their dominance and influence (Cherrez-Ojeda, 2020). The above justifies reason for the significance of this cohort for this study.

Consumer behaviour

Seminal authors state that the consumer behaviour theory is based on the behaviour of consumers to process consumers search, select, consume and dispose of a product or service and would go through five steps a consumer namely problem recognition, information gathering stage, evaluation of alternatives stage, purchase decision stage, post-purchase behaviour stage (Howard & Sheth, 1969); (Engel, et al., 1990); (Kotler, 2003, p. 2014); (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007); (Parumasur & Roberts- Lombard, 2016).

The result of the purchase is a combination of different channels, or the choice of a single channel. Takealot utilises one channel being online thus contributing to the 2% retail spend (Ewerhard, Sisovsky, & Johansson, 2019). Arguably, studying consumer behaviour is essential in the agile landscape of brand building especially if brands need to expand, improve, and innovate as well strategize to remain competitive and enhance brand equity.

Technological advances make the buying process even more complex as consumers are now shopping across a variety of channels especially during the decision making process. This allows brands to optimise and enhance experiences (Baran & Galka, 2016). For example, a consumer might use the internet for product information, then visit a retail outlet supporting the fact that South Africa is deemed to have a deeply rooted mall culture to view and purchase (Vasquez, 2017); (Limlahapun & Tatiana, 2018); (Pantano, 2019); (Naidoo, 2019). Foroud, Gupta, Sivarajah, and Broderick

(2017) argue that although technology can positively influence consumers it also poses a lot danger such as cyberbullying, identity theft and other crimes.

Researchers contend that the stage in which the consumer is active in the decision making process is important in explaining the choice of a channel (Stankevich, 2017); (Ewerhard, et al., 2019). these studies focus on slow-moving goods (SMG) (goods with longer shelf life) and they utilise the millennial age cohort which is similar to the cohort of this study however look at single category global SMG's such as furniture only whereas Takealot has a broad range of goods which some could be regarded as SMG's.

Li, Konus, Langerak, and Weggeman (2017) claim that many consumers are hesitant to employ multiple channels and in-depth empirical reasons for this are minimal. Therefore exposing a gap in knowledge of consumer behaviour in a multichannel environment (Li, et al., 2017).

Studying consumer behaviour is pertinent as it explores shoppers' behaviour and provides basis for what motivates channel preference and is a critical factor for performing successful channel strategy (Reddy, 2016).

Multichannel retail

The strategic nature of distribution channels has been researched and well established in the literature suggesting that multichannel retail is becoming more prevalent and offers many opportunities to organisations and consumers (Fornari & Grandi , 2016); (Jo & Kim, 2020). Multi-channel marketing is, however, more complex to implement and measure than single-channel retailing and marketing (Jo & Kim, 2020).

Customers are more likely to purchase from a retailer that operates from different channels (Bedgood, 2015); (Baran & Galka, 2016). This is because the findings of Himanshi and Shailja (2019) show that consumers will seldom only rely on a single channel because influences have a major influence of channel choice. For instance, a consumer may need to buy a product which is available at a specific retailer's multiple channel. In one situation, the consumer may be influenced by a person to buy online and in another situation, be influenced by another factor to buy the same product in a physical store. This contradicts the hesitance finding from Jo and Kim (2020).

Researchers claim that multichannel shopping is a fairly recent development that has just begun to capture the attention of consumer researchers (Teltzrow, Berendt & Günther, 2015) ; (Bedgood, 2015); (Jo & Kim, 2020). Consumers have only recently begun to fully experience multiple media and channels within a particular retailer, or among various brick-and-mortar and online retailers. Therefore, using multiple channels provide better customer service, where customers could use different channels according to their needs. Therefore, multi-channel strategies increase the customer base, revenue, and market share (Teltzrow, et al., 2015).

The study of Teltzrow *et al.* (2015) contradicts the abovementioned and points out that channel conflicts such as sales cannibalisation results from multiple sales and communication paths (Teltzrow, et al., 2015) while the studies of Reyneke and Barnardo (2019) posit that an omni-channel approach is the best-suited paradigm in an environment with a multitude of channels because it has less conflict as the aim of it is to provide a seamless experience (Reyneke & Barnardo, 2019) .

A study on participants aged 50 and above, found that the probability of a customer purchasing online is reduced by the physical store opening, but tends to increase in the long term (Fornari & Grandi , 2016). This indicates that opening a store results in customers buying in-store only for a while then begin to embrace the multichannel integration. Brands are moving to multichannel so shoppers are influenced and move through channels in their search and buying process. These results were from generation X (Verhoef , Kannan, & Inman, 2015). Minimal research has been done on millennials and multichannel marketing. Most research on multichannel retailing focuses on apparel and food and minimal research has been done on retailers that sell an incredibly broad range of products.

[Online to Brick-and-mortar \(Click to Brick\) phenomenon as the new retail trend](#)

Scholars have identified a recent phenomenon where purely online retailers are extending to offline outlets. Yuppichef, Amazon and Warby Parkers are brands that have embraced this phenomenon (Jönsson, et al., 2018); (Stubbs, 2019); (Dougherty, 2019). In support of the latter, Stephens (2020) argues that physical stores seem to be becoming a powerful media channel, and very often the first point of contact

between brands and consumers (Stephens, 2020). When a brand has both physical and online channels it is also referred to as a digitally native brand.

Minimal research has been done on this trend with studies being done between the year 2015 to date. A study similar to this study is by Reyneke and Barnado (2019) that makes a case with leading South African Kitchenware brand, Yuppichef, that explores adopting an omni-channel approach. Also, digital-native brands are influenced by consumers .The study revealed that physical stores are influenced by online data (Dougherty, 2019) .

Brands, however, cannot ignore the fact that brick-and-mortar stores are more costly thus challenging the primacy of this phenomenon (Herhausen & Schoegel, 2015). Despite this, according to KPMG International (2017),consumers highly rank the try/touch experiences in store making it the main advantage (KPMGinternational, 2017).

Research by Ensari and Eser (2016) uses a case study of e-Bebek (A Turkish baby and mother products retailer) and analyses its business model and determines the actions, strategies and decision processes of e-Beek that led to the transition from an online to a physical store. The study acknowledges that a move to a physical store is beneficial to the brand for competitive advantage as well as how e-commerce is not as cheap and profitable as it is thought to be and researched by academics (Ensari & Eser, 2016). The abovementioned gives the reverse results of widely studied research that states that online is cheap and cost-effective for brands (Tse & Tsang, 2017).

Theoretical Foundation

The identified models that aid in exploring and addressing whether Millennials think that Takealot should add a brick-and-mortar store to its business model are discussed below. Furthermore, the models guide data collection and analysis.

Consumer purchase behaviour model

The first theoretical foundation of this study is based on Constantinides (2004) adapted model of Kotler's Forces Influencing The Online Consumer's Behaviour (2003) framework.

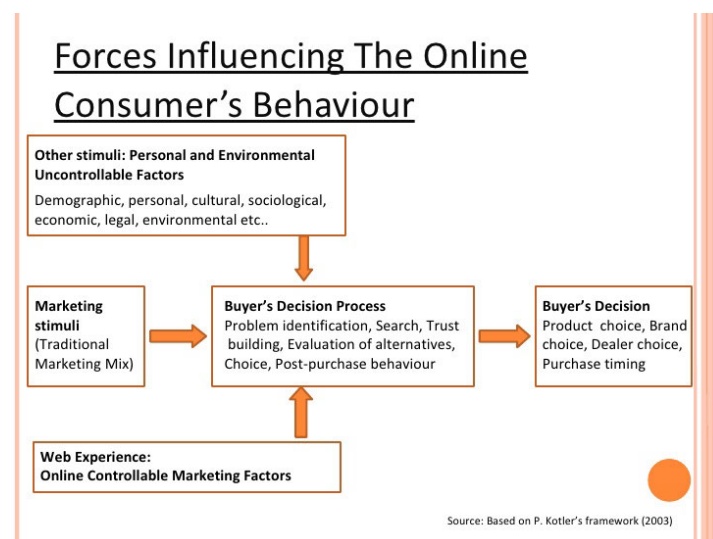


Figure 1 Constantinides (2004) extended model of P. Kotler's forces influencing The Online Consumer Behaviour (2003) framework

According to the model, online purchase behaviour is exhibited by customers while browsing a retailer's website to search and purchase products (Constantinides, 2004). Kotler's (2003) definition describes consumer behaviour as the experiential process of identifying, selecting and purchasing products on an online platform. Similarly, seminal authors define purchasing behaviour as the decision process of actions directly involved in obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007); (Parumasur & Roberts- Lombard, 2016).

Kotler's (2003) model is similar to traditional consumer behaviour models but include web experience which was added by Constantinides (2004) therefore considered a seminal author for the adapted model (Kotler, 2003). In essence, the model is based on the premise that marketers may influence the buying decision process of online consumers through an adequate online experience or else consumers will go for a competitor or choose the physical store (Constantinides, 2004).

The model includes the following factors that include elements within them.

Personal and environmental uncontrollable factors

These include demographic, personal, cultural, sociological, economic, and environmental influences (Kotler, 2003); (Constantinides, 2004). This factor allows the researcher to determine elements that would address the research problem.

Marketing mix

The marketing mix includes price, product, place, and promotion collectively known as the 4P's. These factors are important as they influence channel choice behaviour. For example, prices are lower online than in-store or vice versa (Price and place) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001) (Kotler, 2003) (Brassington & Pettitt, 2003).

Buyers decision Process

This is a 6 step process in which the consumer identifies a need, search the web for products in which trust building is pivotal, they evaluate against criteria then select the final choice to purchase. Finally, post-purchase behaviour is where the consumer assesses whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the online channel for final buyers decision (Kotler, 2003); (Kotler, 2003) (Constantinides, 2004). This factor allowed determining how the process influences channel choice for millennials which could be justifying the 2% online spend.

Buyers decision

The buyer's decision includes product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, and purchase timing. These factors are important for this study as they provide insight on what leads to channel selection. For example purchasing online because the timing is quick (Kotler, 2003); (Constantinides, 2004); (Lee, 2012) .

Web experience

The web experience is conceptualised as the combination of functionality, and marketing mix factors. (Kotler, 2003); (Constantinides, 2004); (Lee, 2012); (Swiegers, 2018). This factor allows the researcher to determine if web experience is a contributing factor to the research problem.

All these factors above allow understanding and operationally measuring whether Takealot should add a brick-and-mortar store to its business model. The decision process factor of the model will be used to analyse the data developed by the model

Channel Preference Theory: Person-object-situation paradigm

The second model of this study is the person, object and situation model which is an adaptation of the interactionist theory by Lewin developed in 1936. All theorists of this model define The Person-object-situation paradigm according to Lewin (1936) in defining it as channel choice derived from the interaction of the personal characteristics, the object (a given product) which in turn influence the situation such as channel choice (Belk, 1975); (Mehrabian & Russell , 1976).

Due to the rise in digital revolution inclusive of the online shopping phenomenon Heitz-Spahn, Yldazy and Belaud (2018) adapted the model as per Belk (1975) to align with the current context/digital revolution adapted model and operationalises channel choice (situation) as multichannel.

Figure 1
THE PERSON-OBJECT-SITUATION PARADIGM IN THE CONTEXT
OF CHANNEL- AND RETAILER RELATED CONSUMER BEHAVIOR
IN AN OMNICHANNEL SETTING

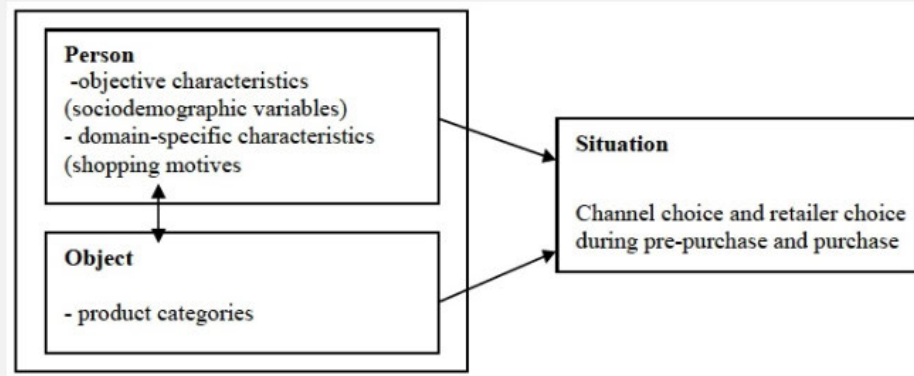


Figure 2 Adapted Person-object-situation paradigm model by Heitz-Spahn, Yldazy and Belaud (2018) from Belk (1975)

The adapted model by Heitz-Spahn, *et al*'s (2018) model proves to be suitable for this study as the theorists used it in a study on Omni-channel which is a concept that includes online shopping (Pozza & Texier, 2019).

The first elementary factor is of the model is person who has a product need and in this study it is a Takealot consumer or prospect affirming the population for the researcher. The theorists suggest that shopping motive and sociodemographic factors explaining channel-related behaviour (Belk, 1975). Secondly, is the object factor of the model which is based on the premise that product category can also explain consumer channel (Heitz-Spahn, *et al.*, 2018). Lastly, the situation concept of this model refers to the circumstance that influences channel choice and in this model a single or multichannel (Heitz-Spahn, *et al.*, 2018). Object and situation enable the researcher to gain understanding of their influences on channel choice. This which could indicate reason online retail has a 2% retail spend in South Africa and justify channel (Goga, *et al.*, 2019).

Holistically, this model assists the researcher in exploring how the models conceptual elements address the research problem. The data and findings of this are crucial, for

justifying channel strategy especially for brands like Takealot that sell a broad range and variety of products (Takealot, 2020).

Moreover, personal characteristics, product category, and situation elements of the model enable exploration and used to model questions while the situation factor will be used to analyse the data. This model is prominent for this study as it embodies the Interpretivists paradigm allowing for in-depth subjective exploration to address the research.

In conclusion, the two theories that were analysed for this study show that channel preference is influenced by factors.

The literature review suggested that although online retailing is regarded as the future, brands have now embraced the new brick-to-click phenomenon. Therefore, worthy of further academic investigation. The literature further seems to imply that a multichannel approach is suitable even though it poses challenges.

There are also no previous studies conducted on an online only retailer with a diverse product range within a South African context that uses millennials to extract information as well as consumer behaviour to model the study.

Literature review enables the researcher to conduct primary research to address and explore the gaps through a suitable research design and methodology.

Section 3: Research Design and methodology

This section will present the methodology, design, paradigm, population sampling approach, data collection and analysis that was suitable to explore whether Millennials think that Takealot should add a brick-and-mortar store to its business model.

Research Paradigm

A paradigm involves the worldview a researcher approaches and conducts a study for meaning (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2016). There are three paradigms that the researcher has studied namely positivism, Interpretivism, and critical realism. Each paradigm takes the ontological, epistemological, axiological methodological and theoretical positions (Guba, 1990).

This research followed the Interpretivists paradigm as it lends itself to qualitative research methodology as it is exploratory in nature. This provided insightful in-depth meaning based on millennials experience. Another reason for this study was conducted through the Interpretivists paradigm is that the unit of analysis is human beings and Interpretivists believe that people are different from one another and cannot be studied the same way (Guba, 1990); (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2016).

Every millennial that interacts with Takealot or knows about Takealot is not an object that can base choice on the objective world because human realities are different (ontology) experience the phenomenon differently, have different subjective experiences that cannot be generalised (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2016). The metatheory of Interpretivism indicates that Millennials form a narrative about their knowledge and experiences of the Takealot brand enabling in-depth understanding. Therefore, making the paradigm unique to address the problem.

The Epistemological and Ontological position of Interpretivism

The ontological position means that there are multiple realities which are subjective and different for any phenomenon due to social constructions (Speziale & Carpenter, 2003) (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2016); (Nieuwenhuise, 2016). This aligns to the purpose of this study as individuals are different and have different experiences or knowledge of Takealot because their social interaction affected the way they construct the phenomenon (Hesse-Biber, 2016).

The epistemological position of Interpretivism believes that knowledge is subjective and fluid because millennials determine what is true (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2016); (Moon & Blackman, 2017). The results of this study used truth to create meaning to address the research problem.

Research design and approach

The design and approach is the plan implemented on how the research was done and its systemic logical sequence in achieving the aims of the study (Polit & Hungler, 1999); (Holloway, 2005). This justifies what, why and how the researcher selected the methodology, population and sample as well as collected, analysed and interpreted data to addressing the research problem (Davis, 2016).

Exploratory research was adapted and applicable because experiences are constantly changing, new areas/research emerge and this research problem has minimal research. This particular research had the purpose of gaining new insights for the Takealot brand and for this, explored the research problem (Stebbins, 2001). The methodology enabled in-depth understanding of the problem and how individual experiences address whether South African millennials think whether Takealot, should add brick-and-mortar to its business model or not (Nieuwenhuise, 2020).

Furthermore, hermeneutic phenomenological design was appropriate for this study as lived subjective millennial gave meaning and insight to the topic and allowed the exploration. This ensured alignment to the interpretative paradigm that this study followed allowing millennials, through in-depth interviews, to elicit their own meaning of their experience through storytelling. (Nieuwenhuis, 2020)

A cross-sectional research design was best suited as it allowed the researcher to obtain information at a specific moment in time. This design involved only one contact with the study population given time limitations of conducting this study under the interpretative paradigm and is comparatively cheap to undertake given resource limitations (Kumar, 2011).

Inductive theorising which is reasoning that develops concepts, insights and understanding from patterns in the data was employed as it is applicable to qualitative

research that this study followed. This means codes and themes emerged from data collection (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

Population

The population includes all elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in a study (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The nature of a population can be objects or people which is the unit of analysis (Pascoe, 2014).

For the purpose of this study the researcher aimed to explore whether Millennials think Takealot should add a brick-and-mortar store to its business model. Therefore, making the unit of analysis for this study and population people. This is because an exploratory interpretative and phenomenological qualitative methodology employed for this study is made possible by humans (Pascoe, 2014); (Mouton, 2002). This means that people are the only units that experience or know of Takealot. For this study the population consisted of specifically South African millennials in Johannesburg.

This is because research regarded millennials to have a higher purchasing power, are the largest cohort in South Africa and they are familiar with online retailing and visiting malls (Hodson, et al., 2019) (Montes, 2017); (Almog & Almog, 2019); (CNBC, 2020).

The research study's target population was all South African millennials born between 1980 to 2000. This is because Takealot is a South African brand thus required South Africans to extract information because it is their ontology (Takealot.com, 2020). The accessible population of this study was South African millennials who fit the parameters and are located in Gauteng, Johannesburg. This is because the researcher had access to this population and is located in Gauteng, Johannesburg and attends Vega which is based in Johannesburg. The accessible population met the parameters below:

- Nature: Individuals who belong to the millennial cohort. Literature proved the importance of this population (PewResearch, 2019).
- Size: All millennials in South Africa born between 1980 and 2000 (PewResearch, 2019).

- Unique characteristics: Male and Female South African millennials born between 1980 and 2000 who have purchased from or know of Takealot. For the purpose of this research this characteristic was important because Takealot is a South African brand therefore the population could only be South Africans (Takealot, 2020). Both male and female were included for gender representivity.

Sampling

A sample is a subset of the population that is representative of the target population that obtains data within the given time period (Taherdoost, 2016); (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

This study followed exploratory qualitative methodology through the Interpretivists paradigm, thus making non-probability sampling applicable for this study. This is because it is impossible to gain access to the entire millennial population who have purchased from or know of the Takealot brand and findings cannot be generalised (Pascoe, 2014).

Purposive sampling and convenience sampling was appropriate for this study because the study required specific homogenous units to answer the research questions as they experience the phenomena (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011); (Pascoe, 2014). This technique allowed the researcher to purposely select units that fit the population parameters. This was followed by convenience sampling (Maree & Pietersen, 2020).

Convenience sampling applied to this study as the researcher only decided to sample known millennials participants who were conveniently available for the research. Therefore, the sample was carefully selected and approached personally through WhatsApp messenger from the accessible population using the researcher's judgement being female and male millennial Vega Johannesburg campus students (Pascoe, 2014).

This researcher intended to sample 8 participants but sampled 5 units (size) due to data saturation as descriptions from participants became repetitive (Maree & Pietersen, 2020); (Halkias & Komodromos, 2015). Moreover, the cross-sectional design, limitations (section 5) allowed the researcher to obtain information from 5 units

(Enslin, 2016). The sample was selected from female and male millennials who study at Vega, Johannesburg campus.

The selected sampling techniques were beneficial for this research study as they are cost efficient and convenient (Sharma, 2017). To avoid bias, the first responses to the WhatsApp were selected to participate.

Data collection methods

Data collection is the systemic gathering of information to obtain insights and answer to address the research problem (Kumar, 2014). Data collection is dependent on the methodology of the study. The purpose of this study was to explore and determine whether the millennial generational cohort think Takealot, should add brick-and-mortar to its business model. A qualitative data collection method of standardised open and close ended semi-structured digital interviews instrument with a cross-sectional design was utilised as it aligns to the purpose and paradigm. A semi-structured interview is a guided conversation in which topics and or questions are predetermined and new questions or insights arise because of discussion (Doyle, 2018)

This is because the study is exploratory by nature following a hermeneutic phenomenological design under the Interpretivism paradigm following the ontological and epistemological philosophical assumptions.

Boyce and Neale (2006) asserts that conversations allow participants in openly sharing information thus aiding in in-depth insights fulfilling the exploratory nature of this study (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Furthermore, the open-ended nature of this instrument allowed the millennials participants to answer freely and further elaborate on their knowledge narratively on Takealot agreeing to the hermeneutic phenomenological design of this study (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

The researcher formulated semi-structured open and close ended questions (*Appendix3*) in-line with the identified gaps in the literature review as well as the theoretical frameworks adapted by Constanndines (2003) and Heitz-Spahn, *et al.*(2018) that addressed the research question (section2).

Before commencing with data collection, The instrument was inspected by the researchers supervisor to ensure that it upheld the standards and was ethically sound (Hanekom, 2018).The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the institution(*Appendix1*) to ensure that the study is conducted in a responsible and ethical manner and enhanced legitimacy and trustworthiness of research findings (Hanekom, 2018); (Maree, 2020).

The researcher conducted a pre-test study on the 6 September 2020. A pre-test is a small-scale study that is conducted before the main research study in order to ensure that the research instrument is trustworthy and procedures work as they are intended (Loewen & Pionsky, 2015). This was done with one individual not included in the sample yet still representative of the sample under actual conditions of the study (Kumar, 2014). The pilot study informed the researcher to articulate questions to avoid participants from asking the researcher to repeat.

The researcher approached the accessible population through WhatsApp messenger who fit population parameters and explained the purposed of the study and asked if they are willing to participate because the study adapted a purposive and convenient sampling technique (Pascoe, 2014); (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).The researcher scheduled digital interviews to happen between Monday 7th and Wednesday 9th of September 2020 at a time suitable for the participant.

The selected sample that agreed to participate received a consent forms (example in *Appendix2*) and a Zoom meeting invitation link sent through email or WhatsApp messenger for the digital interviews. The participants required a smartphone or personal computer as well as mobile data or Wifi to utilize Zoom. Furthermore, interviews happened from the participants' home/spaces as they required no physical interaction due to covid-19 regulations (sacoronavirus, 2020). This researcher conducted the study from her home.

Zoom was chosen as the interview channel as it proved to be the most convenient channel for participants and researcher , has a recording and is free thus addressed any financial constraints concerning the study (Carman, 2020). This researcher assisted participants who did not know Zoom Meetings by explaining how it operates.

Before every interview began, this researcher prepared by going through the interview guide, and checking that the additional recording device is functioning and has

sufficient battery (Jamshed, 2014). The researcher had to obtain consent forms before conducting interviews with every participant to comply with ethical considerations.

During the interviews, the participants were then asked to confirm that they have read, understood and signed the consent form and were informed about their anonymity and confidentiality. Furthermore, the researcher reminded the participants about recording the interview. The participants were also informed of their ability to withdraw their participation. All of the above was communicated to ensure that ethical standards were maintained.

The researcher then began recording on two devices (zoom built in recorder and mobile smartphone) and asked the participant the 16 pre-determined questions based on theoretical framework and literature by following the interview guideline (Appendix3). Finally, the researcher thanked participants for their time and participation. Recording was stopped once all questions were completed. the Interviews were between 15 to 35 minutes long. After all the interviews were conducted, the data was then transcribed, analysed and interpreted using a thematic analysis to derive findings (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of reasoning to analyse and report data for inferences (Perez, 2019). Only qualitative data analysis methods were considered.

Therefore, the research design and approach made this research compatible to analyse findings through a thematic content analysis which is the process of identifying patterns or themes (Clark & Braun, 2019) .This analysis method was best as it, captures themes address the research (Clarke & Braun, 2006).

Data was analysed through the decision process factor of the Philip Kotler (2003) model adapted by Constantinides (2004) model as well as the situation factor of the Heitz-Spahn *et al.* (2018) adapted Person-object-situation paradigm model. The models enabled codes and themes.

Furthermore, the researcher followed an inductive approach as it aligns with the Interpretivists paradigm as codes were deduced gradually from the data (Pope, 2000).

This researcher followed Clark and Braun's (2006) steps in putting together the data.

Familiarization

the researcher carefully transcribed interviews verbatim to get familiar with and organise the data (Clarke & Braun, 2006). To ensure confidentiality they were referred to as P1 to P5 respectively.

Coding

The researcher made use of open-coding as there were no pre-set codes prior to coding stage (Clarke & Braun, 2006).

Generating themes

Once the researcher identified codes became themes based on the theoretical frameworks and literature took place (Mortensen, 2018). The codes that were highlighted the same colour, emphasized that they are in relation to one another.

Reviewing themes

This stage of the analysis the researcher reviewed themes for and determine if they align to the essence of the study (Mann, 2016). This is essentially a cross-case analysis (Mortensen, 2018).

Defining and naming themes

The researcher had final list of themes which where succinctly named and defined (see section 5) (Clark & Braun, 2006).

In conclusion the, the methodology has been comprehensively discussed and identified how the researcher arrived to the data and analysis. This then enabled findings for interpretation which will be discussed in the next section. In the process of the data collection and analysis, the researcher ensured the quality of the results and the study in general remained trustworthy and was ethical.

Section 4: Findings and Interpretation

This section will present findings from the data collected and analysis (see section 3) from interviews conducted (transcripts available on request).

The research problem for this study is how online retail is predicted as the future of retail yet 2% of the retail spend accounts for online shopping in South Africa (Lai, *et al.*, 2014); (Goga, *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, a newly identified phenomenon where online only stores are opening brick-and-mortar stores motivated the researcher in which the purpose of this study was to explore if Millennials think Takealot should add brick-and-mortar to its business model (Naidoo, 2019).

The specific aims were to:

- Determine whether Millennials think Takealot should add brick and mortar to its business model.
- To explore what kind of products in the Takealot offering are suitable for brick-and-mortar.
- To explore what kind of products in the Takealot offering are suitable for online shopping.
- Investigate how consumer behaviour influences channel choice.

The researcher will present and interpret the most meaningful findings based on themes. Each theme will be defined and operationalised, and interpreted followed by a discussion integrated with literature for cohesion. The researcher has displayed the data in a table format. The blue represents the theme. Followed by this is the number of the interview question asked as per interview guide (Appendix3) relating to the theme. In italics is verbatim quotes from participants who are referred as P1 to P5. Appearing above the verbatim quotes in bold are the codes derived from the analysis.

Theme 1: Shopping Situation and motivation

This theme is defined by the ability of all the participants to describe and name what influences or motivates their channel choice in a given situation (Heitz-Spahn, et al., 2018) . This theme is used as indicator to determine what influences channel choice within millennials.

Table 4.1 Table presenting theme 1 data

Theme	Question asked as per interview guideline	Code and verbatim quote
Shopping Situation/motive	2 and 10	Product type <i>P1: "depends on product"</i> Purchases when there is a need <i>P2: "once there is a need"</i> Person influence <i>P1: "it's my sister"</i> <i>P3: "what people are saying also sister"</i> <i>P5: "some of the people "</i> Finances have biggest influence <i>P4: "Biggest influence its finances"</i>

When asked what influences channel choice, because according to the model by Heitz-Spahn, *et al.*, (2018), channel behaviour is the interaction between the person, object and the situation. The findings of this theme show people, product type, need recognition and finances motivate/influence channel choice. These are elements that are underpinned in the Person-object-situation model.

A participant mentions "*depends on product*" which essentially falls under the product category underpinned in the "object" factor of the model.(Heitz-Spahn, et al., 2018).

Theme 1 in context

The responses can be attributed to the millennial cohort as they are influential or can be easily influenced because of how they live (Musa, 2018); (PewResearch, 2019). The overall findings of this theme agree that channel choice is influenced by product and external influences (Heitz-Spahn, et al., 2018). This finding agrees that consumers will never only rely on a single channel for their entire life and have different influences in different buying situation which ultimately influence channel choice at that moment (Himanshi & Shailja, 2019). Therefore, this supports reason why online-only retailers added brick-and-mortar store (Goga, et al., 2019).

Theme 2: Channel Preference

This theme infers that consumers have purchase channel preferences over other channels. This is because products differ in tangibility and some are better suited to be sold in a specific channel than others (Liu, et al., 2018). This theme is of particular importance to this research study as it provides a measure for the researcher to explore its influence for an online retailer (Furey & Friedman, 2012).

Table 4.2: Table presenting theme 2 data

Theme	Question asked as per interview guideline	Code and verbatim quote
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Channel Preference	1	Fear online P1: <i>"fear. online"</i> Generally, prefers to shop instore P1: <i>"I. shop uhhm in store". "never shopped online"</i> P2: <i>"shop in store."</i> P4: <i>"I'm a very tactile person"</i> P5: <i>"I generally shop in store to try on products"</i> Online P3: <i>"shop online. Its. Convenient"</i>
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When asked whether they generally prefer to shop online or in a store, majority of participants generally, prefer to shop in store as some have never shopped online or fear to shop online. Channel preference towards in-store is due to its ability to utilise multiple sense in store. For example, Participant 4 reveals that *"I'm a very tactile person"*. This suggests that millennials prefer in store over online and contradicts the online is future trend (Liu, et al., 2018).

This finding can be attributed to how millennials benefit psychologically when visiting malls (PwC, 2019). It is interesting to note that with Covid-19 changing and shifting behaviours, consumers still prefer brick-and-mortar store. This supports the reason why online retail spend accounts to 2% (Burt, 2013); (Goga, et al., 2019); (WorldWideWorx, 2019).

Participant 3 states that they *"shop online. It's convenient"*. This suggests that online shopping is still relevant and indicates that online retailers have and require strategies that attract consumers who require convenience (Goga, et al., 2019).

Theme 2 in context

The findings of this theme revealed that consumers prefer in-store over online which supports reason for South Africa having a deeply rooted mall culture as well as justifies the new and identify phenomenon of online retailers adding brick-and-mortar stores (Naidoo, 2019); (Jönsson, *et al.*, 2018); (Stubbs, 2019); (Dougherty, 2019). Moreover, the channel preference towards brick-and-mortar contradicts the online is future prediction and is in agreement literature that states that millennials prefer physical store (Lai, *et al.*, 2014); (ZenithOptimedia, 2016); (Seligman, 2019) (PwC, 2019). This seems to support why online retail spend accounts 2% because most purchases are being made in store (WorldWideWorx, 2019). This suggests the need for a physical store.

Fear stated as a factor that motivates channel choice towards brick-and-mortar thus agrees with Ensari and Eser (2016) as well as Poushter *et al.* (2018)'s argument which pointed out that consumers fear to purchase online and it influences an alternative channel such as physical store. This justifies as reason for the low 2% online retail proportion. This implies that a brand like Takealot should be cognisant of this fact that and alleviate fear.

Theme 3: Decision making – Consumer Behaviour

Heinhuise (2016) states that the result of the purchase is a combination of different channels, or the choice of a single channel (Heinhuis, 2016). This theme is defined by consumer behaviour process decision factors that influence channel choice. This theme is important as it is a channel preference measure (Kotler, 2003).

Table 4.3 Table presenting theme 3 data

Theme	Question asked as per interview guideline	Code and verbatim quote
Decision making– Consumer Behaviour	2,5,6,7,8,9	Logistics P1: “fear that items will arrive late” Searches online before going in-store P1: “went to website ...but bought in-store”

		P2: <i>"online. to start the research"</i> P4: <i>"go online if I'm also comparing prices"</i> Online throughout P3: <i>"Search and buy online...more convenient and I can do it from home"</i> P5: <i>"Offline I actually get to try on the products, feel and see what they look like."</i> Marketing mix -Price and product quality and Specials P3: <i>"prices, quality of products the specials"</i> P4: <i>"Sales and promotions"</i> P5: <i>"because its online and it's easy to use"</i> Fear P1: <i>"fear online because of scams"</i> Functionality P1: <i>"I want to know how it functions you know so I go in-store."</i> Trust of Website P5: <i>"If it is a well know brand and well known website"</i>
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This theme gathered findings from asking several questions related to consumer behaviour and the decision making process as per the table above. This is because the stage in which the consumer is active in the decision making process is important in explaining the choice of a channel (Stankevich, 2017); (Ewerhard, et al., 2019) . From the findings, it is evident that a number of factors which can be found in the Philip Kotler (2003) adapted model by Constantinides (2004) model are influences of channel choice.

Majority of the participants stated that they search online to compare prices and products and then purchase in-store. Participant 4 revealed that they “*Search and buy online...more convenient and I can do it from home*”. This finding can be attributed to millennials embrace online because they are born in the digital era (Dorie & Loranger, 2020). This means that the online channel plays a pivotal role and affirms in-store purchases (Vasquez, 2017); (Limlahapun & Tatiana, 2018).

It is important to note that worries and logistical concerns, people and marketing mix elements such as the price and promotion (advertising and sales) are factors that participants expressed to influence the channel choice in the decision making process. This means consumers are influenced to move from one channel to another in a multichannel setting or choose a competitor (Constantinides, 2004).

Theme 3 in context

The above findings dispute Li *et al.* (2017)’s claim that many consumers are hesitant to employ multiple channels and adds to the gap identified in both consumer behaviour and multichannel literature as and it provides in-depth empirical reasons for the disproof. (Li, et al., 2017); (Jo & Kim, 2020) .This indicates that consumers are not hesitant to multichannel brand.

The findings that reveal that consumers search online and purchase in-store are similar to the findings that revealed that a customer of a multi-channel retailer can use either the same or different channels, for each stage of the buying process (Heinhuis, 2016); (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2015). This means that brands with multi-channels have an advantage because a consumer can search for a product online and chose to purchase it in-store at that same retailer. Therefore disputes the argument that online retail is the future (Lai, et al., 2014).Moreover, the situation of consumers searching online and moving in-store justifies the new identified phenomenon where online-only retailers are adding brick and mortar (Naidoo, 2019).This identifies as a probable reason why online retail has approximately 2% retail spend (Furey & Friedman, 2012).

The finding from one participant who states that they complete the entire buying process online confirms Foroud *et al.* (2017)'s research that found that single-channel users seek information and make their purchase in the same channel.

Theme 4: Product suited online and offline

This theme is defined according to literature by Lynch and Ariely (2016) that supports Liu, Lobschat and Verhoef (2019) by conceptualising “high-touch” products as products that consumers want to inspect before buying. “Low-touch” or “no-touch” products are products that do not need inspection before buying. These concepts are arguably seen as variables that influence consumer channel preference (Lynch & Ariely, 2016).

Table 4.4 Table presenting theme 4

Theme	Question asked as per interview guideline	Code and verbatim quote
Product suited online	11	Tangible items like clothes P1: “clothing, I don’t mind buying that online” Textbooks P2: ‘because I know exactly what kind of books they are” books, chargers, everyday items P3: “books, chargers and like everyday essentials like supplements” P3: “gadget essentials” Shops online if familiar with product P4: “Gym equipment then I would shop online” P4: “novels, games, board games, camera accessories” P5: “clothing or gaming/gaming accessories because those are hard to find”. Earphones and headsets:”

Product suited offline	12	Electronics P1: <i>“digital devices. like computers, a watch, maybe tv,”</i> P2: <i>“things like Laptops”</i> P3: <i>“electronics appliances and like gadgets”.</i> Prefers to buy clothes in a physical store. P2: <i>“clothes obviously”. “trying on clothes see how they look”</i> Home accessories, kitchen ware. P4: <i>“more inclined to buy like home accessories and kitchenware. clothes”</i> P4: <i>Running shoes, gym attire,”.</i> Grocery and Clothes P5: <i>“clothing, obviously grocery’</i>
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Participants were asked to name what products they prefer online. This is because some products are better suited to be sold in a specific channel than others (Liu, et al., 2018). Participants responses show books/textbook to be the overriding products preferred in-store. Furthermore, participant’s responses show products variance for example P1 stated “clothing.”, P3 states “*gadget essentials*” This means that these products do not need inspection and are considered “Low-touch” products (Lynch & Ariely, 2016)

It is interesting to note that P4 states that they prefer “*gym equipment then I would shop online*”. This finding can be attributed to the fact that during the lockdown in South Africa necessitated by Covid-19, a number of stores that sell exercise equipment shutdown, thus shifting consumer behaviours towards online shopping (CNBC, 2020).

When asked about which products are suited and preferred in-store, all participants could name products and responses seem to favour technological items. This means that these products according to this study’s participants, are “high-touch” products and need to be inspected before purchasing (Lynch & Ariely, 2016). These responses can be attributed or influenced to how millennials embrace both digital and tangible

experiences (Musa, 2018); (PewResearch, 2019); (Deloitte, 2019). The above supports the new phenomenon where retailers are moving instore.

Interestingly, when asked to recall the last time they went to the mall, majority of the respondent's mall visits were recent. This provides further recommendation that if Takealot where to open a store then a mall would be suitable supporting why South Africa has a dominant mall culture (Naidoo, 2019).

Theme 4 in context

Literature by Lynch and Ariely (2016) states that the type of product type is seen as an influential variable that influences consumer channel choice. The same authors conceptualize "High-touch" and "Low-touch" products as determinants of channel choice. (Lynch & Ariely, 2016) ;(Amerongen,2018). The responses from participants see to indicate that indeed there are products that are suitable for online as well as products suited for in-store.

Furthermore, findings pertaining to this theme see to agree with literature that states that reasons for channel preferences are purely because products differ in complexity, and tangibility and some are better suited to be sold in a specific channel than others (Liu, et al., 2018). This is because participants were able to list items they prefer to buy online and products they want to purchase in store. Therefore, this indicates reason why online retailing has an approximate 2% retail spend. This is because some products are bought online while some are bought in-store. Overall this suggests that consumers go into stores to experience high touch products and that online is still prominent for products that do not require human senses.

Theme 5: Single channel or Multichannel

This theme is based on the premise that customers are more likely to purchase from a retailer that operates from different channels (Bedgood, 2015); (Baran & Galka, 2016). This theme is important as it explores and could indicate whether the new and identified trend is something Takealot should look into or not.

Table 4.5: Table Presenting theme 5 data

Theme	Question asked as per interview guideline	Code and verbatim quote
Single channel or Multichannel	13	Multichannel P1: <i>“more than one channel”. I “feel better”:</i> P2: <i>“multiple channel. Gives me flexibility”</i> P3: <i>“I prefer a brand with more channels because I feel safer”</i> P4: <i>“more channels”</i> P5: <i>“More than one channel... leaves me with more options”</i>

When asked whether participants prefer to buy from a brand with one channel or multiple channels, the researcher’s analysis of data revealed that all participants prefer multichannel brands. Reasons as per the table above varied from flexibility to safety and ease and identifies as reason as for the approximate 2% online retail spend as profit comes from various channels in retail (Goga, et al., 2019).

These findings align with the premise made about consumers preferring brands with many or multiple channels. This also contradicts Li *et al* (2017)’s claims from literature that assert many consumers are hesitant to employ multiple channels. Moreover, the data justifies reasons for online retailing having approximately 2% retail spend. This is because budget is spread and profits come from the multiple channels (Goga, et al., 2019). This suggests and indicates that multichannel strategies thrive in a South African context.

This study and findings adds to millennial multichannel marketing research as findings show the preference towards multichannel (Verhoef , et al., 2015).

The data has been reported interpreted and discussed for meaning. The next section addressed the problem and objectives, implications and recommendations as well as limitations, ethical considerations and lastly trustworthiness

Section 5: Conclusion

This section presents and discusses the inferences and outcome of the study (Kretchmer, 2008). Findings presented in section 4 were obtained through open ended semi-structured in-depth interviews and analysed thematically. The research questions will be presented and addressed. Finally, managerial, theoretical as well as future research implications will also be discussed. This study sought to explore whether South Africa's leading online retailer should add a brick-and-mortar store to its business model. Focus was placed on seeking an understanding reasons for the outcome.

This researcher will start off by addressing the subsidiary questions followed by the primary research question and then the research problem. This is because the secondary questions cohesively inform the primary question.

Subsidiary questions

What kind of products are suitable for a brick-and-mortar store?

Even though Takealot sells a variety of products millennials preferred electronics, appliances, clothing and shoes in a brick-and-mortar store. Therefore, it is evident that brick-and-mortar will benefit Takealot's bottom-line. This recommends that Takealot should have an actual store in a mall. This disputes the "online is future" prediction and is in agreement with theory and new phenomenon where online-only retailers are adding brick-and-mortar store. This is also why South Africa is deemed to have a dominant mall culture (Naidoo, 2019).

What kind of products are suitable for online shopping?

Literature states that some products are "low-touch" and do not need to be touched or inspected (Lynch & Ariely, 2016). This was evident in all participants listing items such as books, supplements, chargers, accessories, games/board games. Given that Takealot has a broad range of products this recommends to the brand that these products should not be in a brick-and-mortar store (Takealot.com, 2020). Overall, this concludes that the Takealot should stay online and will still thrive.

How does consumer behaviour influence channel choice?

Generally, once a need has been identified, online searching occurs and the final purchase happens in-store. During the decision making process, marketing mix elements influence final choice decision. It can be concluded that a brick-and-mortar store is compatible to alleviate or combat situations whereby a purchase cannot happen online. It is therefore recommended that Takealot ensures a seamless online experience as search still happens during the consumer decision.

Primary Research Question

What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model?

Based on the holistic findings and interpretation, it is evident that product type, shopping situation, consumer behaviour decision making influences, and multichannel preference factors that prove that millennials prefer brick-and-mortar. Millennials being able to list items suited offline is another indicating factor that concludes that brick-and-mortar stores are beneficial. Therefore, there is a gap that the Takealot can leverage and it is recommended that Takealot should add a brick-and-mortar store

Overall, the research problem was addressed as the findings disprove the “online is future” prediction and fills a gap within the new and identified phenomenon that is seeing online-only retailers add brick-and-mortar stores (Naidoo, 2019). With participants stating that they prefer multichannel retailers justifies why the online retail spend accounts for only 2% of the total retail spend as well as is in alignment with findings that reported millennials to value and prefer to purchase in brick-and-mortar (Goga, et al., 2019); (Howland, 2018) ; (Statista, 2019); (Ungerer, 2020) (CCV, 2020).

The implications of the findings include enhancing online strategies and opening experience stores preferably in malls.

Trustworthiness

In a research study, metrics are crucial to measure trustworthiness and quality, accuracy and integrity of the research (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The researcher played a critical part in the study (Koonin, 2016). Therefore, trustworthiness was crucial.

Trustworthiness consists of four dimensions as criteria which are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Koonin, 2016); (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

To achieve these, this researcher endeavoured to address principles of credibility which refers to the accuracy of the study; by in-depth lengthy interviews with participants by only researching millennials who have purchased or know of Takealot, prolonged engagement, probing questions during the interviews, re-reading transcripts, cross-cases analysis and meeting the research supervisor for guidance and debriefing sessions (Korstjens & Moser, 2018) .

Transferability which is reapplying the research process to a similar phenomenon and obtaining similar results (Koonin, 2016) This was done by describing context in detailed manner. To enhance transferability the interview guideline has been provided (Koonin, 2016).

Dependability which is the replication was ensured by providing the research methodology for audit trail and confirmability which is the neutrality of the research and this was ensured by providing the recorded digital interviews, in-depth thick descriptions for verifiability and for transparency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); (Koonin, 2016); (Sarvimaki, 2017); (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017).

In addition to ensuring quality and enhancing trustworthiness throughout ethical considerations were adhered. These are described below in detail.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Ethical Considerations

Holloway and Wheeler (2002) contend that ethics and standards determine behaviours of the stakeholders (Louw, 2016). Throughout this study, this researcher ensured ethical considerations in the following way (Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani & Fatemeh, 2014):

Ethics issues for the participants:

Informed consent

The researcher obtained informed consent by providing participants with consent forms (Appendix2) for permission to make an informed choice to participate in the study or not (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). S

Confidentiality and anonymity

Protection of participant's identity is at most relevant to avoid any anomalies. Therefore, the researcher informed participants that their identities would be protected to reduce the likelihood of any harm. Also, the participant's anonymity was practiced by referring them to codes such as P1 to P5 and information kept in the strictest confidence (De Vos, 2004).

No harm to participants

The researcher developed questions that may do not result in harm or psychological trauma (De Vos, 2004).

Ethics for the researcher

Ethical Clearance

The research study commenced once the researcher obtained ethical clearance(Appendix1) from the IIE institution as well upheld the institution's ethics throughout (Maree, 2020); (VegaSchool, 2019).

The research safeguarded the image of Vega School of brand leadership and did not defame the Takealot brand. This is because the above mentioned are entities whose names are protected legally (Scott, 2016).

The researcher adhered and complied with what was stated in the participant consent forms (Louw, 2016).

The researcher did not falsify or distort information and prevented bias through remaining neutral throughout (Louw, 2016) .

Limitations

Enslin (2016) acknowledges that no study is perfect. Limitations are the flaws or shortcomings of a research study (Enslin, 2016). Limitations of this study included:

Resources: limited financial and human resources prevented the researcher from conducting extensive research across South Africa (Murnan & Price, 2004). Purposive and convenience sampling was employed in Johannesburg to mitigate this shortcoming (Pascoe, 2014) .

Time constraints existed as this study had to be completed by the prescribed date. Therefore, this hindered the researcher from interviewing more samples (Enslin, 2016). This was avoided by having a small sample size and comprehensive literature review (Aguinis & Edward, 2004).

Lockdown regulations and social distancing restrictions hindered the researcher from conducting face-to-face research (sacoronavirus, 2020). Research was conducted digitally.

The researcher intended to take note of the participant's non-verbal body language because it is a formidable source of information and enhances thick descriptions (Duncan , 1969); (Mehrabian, 2009);(Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Two participants did not switch on their Zoom Interview camera's which hindered the researcher from noting their body language. The researcher therefore decided to discard noting body language noting (Egger, 2012).

Heuristic value

According to Regoniel (2015), research contributes in many ways. This study has led to the following implications and recommendations

Managerial implications

It is possible for Takealot or online only retailers in South Africa with a broad range of products or those who seek to target millennials to use the presented material and apply to their own business for their channel strategies.

Theoretical implications

Researchers may use the findings of this study as it adds to the growing body of knowledge (Regoniel, 2015). Prior to conducting this study, there was minimal qualitative studies for a South African brand with a broad range of products.

Future research recommendations

Sampling a larger number of millennials for greater findings pertaining the phenomenon that accurately represent the population.

Replicating the study in another province may determine if the findings of this study can be confirmed and enhance trustworthiness and quality.

Extending the time frame for this research would achieve more comprehensive holistic results.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance Letter



06 October 2020

Student name: Vhutali Liphosa

Campus: Vega Bordeaux

Re: Approval of RESE 8419 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

ADVTECHHOUSE

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Directors: RJ Douglas (UK), JDR Deich, MD Aitken, FI Coughlan
Group Company Secretary: KN Piki

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GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

Supervisor: **Mrs Nicole Mason**



Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC): **Dr Tish Taylor**



Appendix 2: Example of a consent forms



Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Vhutali Liphosa about Exploring whether millennials think the Takealot brand should add brick-and-mortar stores.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature

Date

Consent form for audio-recording/ video recording

I, _____, agree to allow Vhutali Liphosa to audio record my interviews as part of the research about Exploring whether millennials think the Takealot brand should add brick-and-mortar stores.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve.

I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.
3. Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.

Signature Date

Appendix 3: Data collection Instrument- Interview guideline

Semi-structured In-depth Digital Interview guideline

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing and taking the time to participate in this research study. My name is Vhutali Liphosa and as you are aware, This Research is about the Takealot brand and whether the brand should add brick-and-mortar / physical stores. The interview should take between 15-40 minutes long.

Before we begin, please may you confirm that you have read, understood and filled in the consent forms (Participant consent form and Audio/video recording).

Just a reminder that this interview will be recorded because the researcher does not want to miss any of your comments and it will also allow the researcher to refer back to it for transcribing and analysing.

Please note that your responses will be anonymous and will be kept confidential. This means that your responses will only be shared with the research supervisor, the marker and institution. The researcher will also ensure that any information that will be included in the research report does not identify you as a respondent.

Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview at any time.

Lastly may I please ask that your Phone or Laptop has enough battery life or if its charging. Also may your phone please be switched off or be put on silence to avoid distractions.

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

Objectives

Determine factors available that will explore whether millennials think Takealot should add brick and mortar to its business model.

Determine the kind of products suitable for brick-and-mortar.

Determine the kind of products suitable for online shopping.

Investigate how consumer behaviour influences channel choice.

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Theme/Model	Question	Probe	Research Objective	Rationale of Question
Introduction	1) Do you generally shop online or in store/mall? 2) What entices you to buy online or in store? 3) When last did you buy from Takealot? 4) When last did you go to the mall or your favourite shop?	Why? Why and what did you buy? Why did you go? What did you buy?	What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model?	These question explore general question to allow the participants become comfortable and establish meaning, recall experiences.
Forces Influencing the Online Consumer Behaviour 1) Other Stimuli 2) Buyers Decision process: Product identification 3) Buyers Decision process: Trust	5 Between your income/finances or the people you surround yourself with. Who or what influences you the most to buy from the channel you buy from? 6 Does the product you need to buy influence the channel you buy it from? 7 What kind of worries or	Why? /tell me more Can you tell me more	1) Investigate how consumer behaviour influences channel choice. 2) Investigate how consumer behaviour influences channel choice.	This model suggest that elements such as income and stimuli influence channel

building/ Web Experience? 4) Buyers Decision process: Trust building/Web Experience? 5) Marketing Stimuli?	concerns do you have when you choose to shop online? 8 What Kind of worries or concerns do you have when you choose to shop in a physical shop? 9 What entices you to buy from Takealot and why? Is it the price, products, marketing and advertising or is it because its online?			
Person-object-situation Paradigm model 1) Shopping motive 2) Object: product category 3) Object: Product categories	10 What motivates influence your channel choice and retailer/brand choice before deciding to buy online? 11 What products do you prefer to buy online? 12 What products do you prefer to buy in a physical store?	Why? /Please tell me more Why ?/ Please tell me more ?	What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model? Determine the kind of products suitable for online shopping.	Theory suggests that the shopping motive influences the retailer and channel choice. Theory suggests that some products categories are better suited online due to them being low involvement. Theory suggests that some products categories are better suited in

			Determine the kind of products suitable for brick-and-mortar.	a physical sore due to the high involvement.
Single or Multichannel	13 Do you prefer to buy from a brand with one channel (online only or store only) or more than one channels (i.e. shop and online) ?	Why do you prefer it like that?	What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model?	Literature exposed a gap about hesitance to buy from multichannel retailers. Therefore this question explores reasons why ?
Online-to Brick-and-mortar trend.	14 How would you feel if Takealot added a brick and Mortar/ physical shop? In your own opinion do you think that the Takealot brand should add brick and mortar store?	Why? Please tell me more?	What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model?	Literature asserts that online only stores are following a new trend
Channel Preference	15 What kind of goods do you need to look and feel before you need to buy them? 16 what kind of goods are you comfortable with buying online because you are satisfied with what you see online?		What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model?	The literature provided under the theme states that as well as the theory identified in the Person object situation paradigm sates that some products are better suited online.

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Appendix 4: Final Research Report Summary Document Table

Research Purpose/Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
Whether Millennials think Takealot should add brick-and-mortar stores	What would determine whether millennials think Takealot should add Brick-and-mortar to its business model?	Addressing the problem aids in taking and justifying decisions, assists in possible brand expansion and business model strategy, possibly reach unidentified segments and increasing profits, as well may aid in adding a competitive advantage and lastly fulfilling the functional and psychological needs of millennials	Dougherty (2020) Avery et al (2012) Pauwels, & Neslin (2015) Kotler (2003) Belk (1975) (Constantinides, 2004). Heitz-Spabio, Yildazy and Belaud (2018)	Theme 1: Online retailing Theme 2: Channel Preference Theme 3: Millennials Theme 4: Channel Preference Theme 5: Preference Theme 6: Consumer behaviour Theme 7: Multi-channel retailing	Paradigm: Interpretivism Ontological: Ontological position as it will allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding by observing the realities of the millennials and in this way their experiences construct meaning.	Qualitative research Inductive theorizing Hermeneutic phenomenology Population Population Parameters Nature: Millennial individuals Size: All millennials born between 1980-2000 Unique characteristics: need to know of	In-depth interviews Semi-structured Cross-sectional design time frame	Informed consent from participants. Confidentiality and anonymity to protect identities. Make participants aware that recording and interviews will be made available for Vega, Uphold Vega ethics. Refrain from	Moving to a brick-and-mortar is a good move for Takealot. Products with high involvement purchases are best suited for Takealot should they move to Brick-and-mortar. Such as electronics, etc.	du Plooy (2016) Cullis Davis (2016) Bezuidenhout (2016) Cronje (2016) Enslin (2016) Louw (2016) Pascoe (2016) Nieuwenhuis (2020) Petersen (2020) Clark and Braun (2008) Lai et al (2014) Afifa et al (2018) Suryandari and Pawan (2013) Naidoo (2019) Esau and Esterhuysen (2016) Avery et al (2012) Rhodes (2018) Takealot (2020) Zhang et al (2010) (Schramm-Klein & Morschett, 2015) Kotler (2003) Belk (1975) Deloitte (2019) KPM (2017) Hetz-Spabio
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/Hypotheses/ Subsidiary questions What kind of products are suitable for a brick-and-mortar store? What kind of products are suitable for online shopping?	Key Concepts Online to Brick-and-mortar (Dougherty, 2019) Jolico shopping (Boudakos, et al., 2008); (Yu & Wu, 2007); (Rahman, et al., 2018) Brick-and-Mortar stores (Press & Linsenman, 2010); (Dougherty, 2019) Multichannel Retailing (Carlson & O'Casey, 2011)	Key Theories Kotler (2003) factors influencing online consumer behaviour Belk (1975) Person-object situation adapted by Heitz-Spabio, Yildazy and Belaud (2018)	Online to Brick-and-mortar phenomenon	Epistemological position: knowledge is subjective and fluid based on millennial	Non-probability sampling Sampling method: Purposive sampling Size: Millennials born between 1980-1999 who live in South Africa Intended a sample of 8 but data saturation 5 interviewed	Unit of Analysis Individuals Data Analysis method Thematic analysis Manual coding to generate codes	Time Human and financial Resources Covid-19 Some participants may not know Zoom	Assist other scholars Provide insights and inform channel strategies, leadership and management guidance	Rhodes (2018) Takealot (2020) Zhang et al (2010) (Schramm-Klein & Morschett, 2015) Kotler (2003) Belk (1975) Deloitte (2019) KPM (2017) Hetz-Spabio

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